

















Apse of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Rome.



# A HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE IN ITALY

FROM THE TIME OF CONSTANTINE TO  
THE DAWN OF THE RENAISSANCE

BY

CHARLES A. CUMMINGS

MEMBER OF THE BOSTON SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS  
FELLOW OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

*WITH NEARLY FIVE HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS*

IN TWO VOLUMES  
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**TO THE MEMORY OF**  
**F. H. C.**

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## PREFACE

SOME half dozen years ago, while engaged in assisting my friend Mr. Longfellow in the preparation of his Cyclopædia, I found myself frequently impatient and not seldom exasperated over the difficulty of getting at any authentic and exact information concerning the construction, design, dimensions, and history of many even of the most important and well-known buildings of mediæval Italy. French writers, German writers, Italian writers, English writers, had passed over the ground, one after another, and had set down with serene confidence their facts and their theories. Unfortunately in many cases their facts and in most cases their theories did not agree, and may be said to have formed as a rule the subject of lively and too often acrid personal controversy, which, however entertaining to the reader, is seldom instructive to the student.

Moreover, the works of these writers, even when most satisfactory (witness those of Mr. Ruskin in Venice, of Boito and Cattaneo in North Italy, of Schulz in South Italy, of Dartein in Lombardy, of Rohault de Fleury in Tuscany, and many others), are fragmentary, covering generally a restricted portion of the field, — the most notable exception being the “*Baukunst des Mittelalters in Italien*” of Mothes, which, although a mine of useful and minute information and exhibiting a truly German patience and thoroughness of research, is yet so much detailed as to dates and fragmentary constructions, and is withal so disconnected and so inadequately illustrated, as to repel and discourage any reader with less patience than its author; while in the English language no writer has heretofore attempted anything like a continuous account of the rise, progress, and decline of the various styles of building which followed one another on the soil of Italy for a thousand years after the decay of the Roman power.

These considerations moved me finally to this attempt to supply,

as best I could, the need which other students in this field must have felt as strongly as I.

I cannot hope that the present work will be found to meet with any completeness the requirements which its perhaps too ambitious title may suggest. A complete history of architecture in Italy would be the work of a lifetime, and could only be written during a prolonged residence in that country, and as the result of a personal examination of all the important works and of the documents contained in the archives of many cities. I can only claim to have used, in writing this book, my best efforts towards substantial thoroughness and accuracy, and to have gone over the greater part of the ground after its completion, manuscript in hand, verifying, correcting, modifying, and amplifying, as far as my opportunities allowed.

I make no claim to have written a philosophical history. In the confusion of traditions in which the annals of Christian Italy are involved, beginning with Imperial Rome, continuing with Gothic kings and Greek exarchs at Ravenna, Lombard kings at Pavia and Milan, Norman counts in South Italy and Sicily, German emperors beyond the Alps with their constant interference, Saracens on the neighboring coasts with their scarcely less constant invasions and harryings, and at the centre all the while the one portentous shape which never changed, — the Papacy, — it is no wonder that the story of architecture, like the story of the political and social life of the people, presents no steady and logical development, but a bewildering mixture of styles and streams of influence, in the midst of which the thread which connects the form of architecture with the conditions out of which it grew is often lost to the student, who requires, to hold and follow it, a more adequate equipment of historical knowledge and training than I can pretend to.

This book, then, is only a narrative and descriptive history, necessarily incomplete and more or less disjointed. I shall be content if it prove to be, in any degree, of service to the student of architecture, or to that somewhat indefinite and uncertain personage, the "general reader," who may yet have a particular interest in the infinitely varied forms which that art has taken in the land which was for so many centuries the home of all the arts and the leader of modern civilization.

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Such as it is, I must not let it go forth without a word of cordial thanks for the more than courteous aid I have received, especially in the preparation of the illustrations, from the directors and attendants of the Boston Athenæum, the Boston Public Library, the Fogg Museum at Cambridge, and the Institute of Technology, who have seemed to take a pleasure in granting me a freedom in the use of their collections far beyond what I should have ventured to ask.

I make my acknowledgments also to Professor Wright, the accomplished editor of the "American Journal of Archæology," for permission to reproduce some of the illustrations of Mr. Frothingham's articles on the Gothic of the Cistercian monasteries.

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# ARCHITECTURE IN ITALY

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE

THE beginnings of <sup>Christian</sup> architecture must be sought very near the beginnings of the Christian religion, and while that religion was yet proscribed and occasionally persecuted. For three centuries the only places in Rome where a body of Christians could meet together with comparative safety, during the frequent periods of persecution when the private houses were closed to them, were the catacombs in which their dead were buried. These consisted primarily of narrow <sup>subterranean</sup> passages, not laid out according to any preconceived plan, but extended step by step as the additional space was required. Where the rock had not strength enough, or where the excavation had left it insecure, the sides of the passages were lined with walls of brickwork. These passages were generally three to four feet wide, excavated from the soft rock which underlies Rome. Their sides were lined with <sup>loculi</sup> or graves, one above another, also excavated in the rock, and closed on the side next the passage by a slab of stone or a thin wall of bricks, bearing an inscription. A little later, single families built special burial chambers, called cubicula, varying in size and shape, but usually square, and seldom more than twelve feet on a side. In these chambers the graves were of a less simple character, often taking the form of an arched recess in the wall, called an arcosolium, in which was placed either a detached sarcophagus or an excavated receptacle serving the same purpose, and covered with a horizontal slab of stone. A chamber of these dimensions could, on occasion, be made to serve the purposes of a small body of worshippers, and some of them have been found surrounded by a stone bench with a stone chair or cathedra on the fourth side for the bishop or teacher.<sup>1</sup> [These chambers had at

The Roman catacombs.

<sup>1</sup> "That the small chapels in the Catacombs were intended chiefly for the performance of the burial service, or for families of pilgrims to pray at the shrines of the martyrs,

first little or no architectural character,— the roof was usually vaulted with brickwork, and the entrance doorways from the corridor were now and then surmounted by a brick moulded pediment, sometimes supported by pilasters. Some of the chambers were lighted by luminaria, or light-shafts, rising to the surface of the ground. As



Fig. 1. Part of the Catacomb of St. Agnes.

early as the second century it was common to decorate the walls and vaults with frescoes.<sup>1</sup> One of the most complete and beautiful of

seems evident from their size, as none of them could contain more than fifty persons, and at the time they were chiefly built, in the third or fourth century, the Christians assembled for public worship in much larger numbers. But in times of persecution they were used for the regular church service, when the Christians were not permitted to meet as usual in the houses of the more wealthy members of the body, who usually received them in their halls, or basilicas. From this circumstance, in later times, when the name basilica became synonymous with church, or ecclesia, these chapels were sometimes called also by that name." Parker, *Catacombs*, p. 36.

<sup>1</sup> Parker maintains, however, that the frescoes were almost always of later date. "The fact is that fully three quarters of the paintings belong to the latest restorations of the eighth and ninth centuries, and of the remaining fourth part a considerable number are of the sixth century, painted originally in the time of John I, who was Pope A. D. 523, and who made one catacomb and restored two others. . . . Still there are many paintings of the fourth and fifth centuries. The earliest are the common God Shepherd and certain well-known scriptural subjects. In the early catacombs of Pretextatus and Nereus and Achilles there are paintings of the second and third centuries, but they are not of religious subjects at all, and might as well be the decoration of a Pagan tomb as of a Christian catacomb. They are the Cultivation of the Vine in Pretextatus, and the Four Seasons in St. Nereus. . . . There are no religious subjects before the time of Constantine, and during the fourth and fifth centuries the paintings are confined entirely to scriptural

these chambers <sup>were</sup> discovered by De Rossi, in 1857, in what has since been presumed to be the cemetery of Pretextatus. He describes it as a large square apartment, with walls of excellent brickwork, which had been lined throughout with Greek marble, — the ceiling being a high elliptical vault terminating in a square luminarium. The whole surface of the vault was covered with a fine white plaster and decorated with bands of floral ornament in fresco of great delicacy and

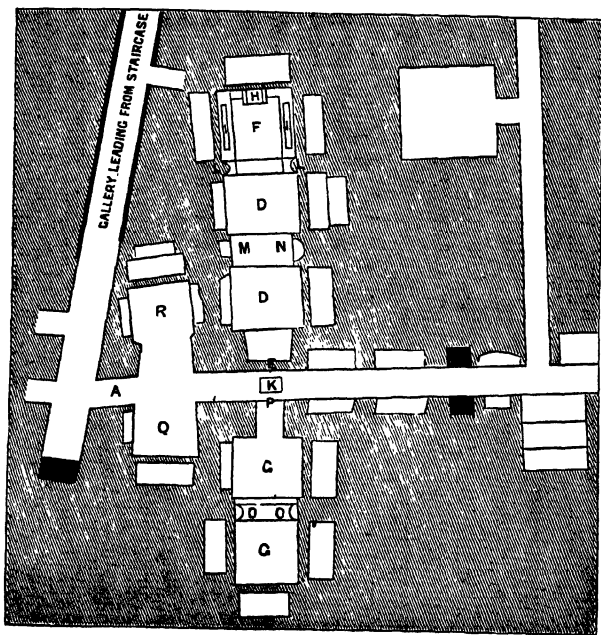


Fig. 2. Cubicula arranged as a Church.

beauty. One side wall was pierced by an arched recess for a sarcophagus, and an inscription here enabled the explorer to identify the chamber as the tomb of St. Januarius. The wall of the tomb towards the corridor from which it opened was "of yellow brickwork, and the

subjects. There is not a figure of a saint or martyr before the sixth century, and very few before the eighth, when they become abundant." *Catacombs*, p. xi., introd.

The vaults were generally divided into geometrical compartments or panels separated by ornamental bands, with a circular or polygonal panel in the centre. The panels inclosed pictorial subjects, generally classical in character and treatment; often symbolic, as, The Vine, The Fish, The Good Shepherd, etc., etc. The walls, especially the wall under the arch of the arcosolium and often above the arch, were sometimes decorated in a similar manner.

doorway was ornamented with pilasters of the same material in red, and with decorated cornices of terra cotta, just like the Pagan sepulchres on the Latin or Appian roads." <sup>1</sup> De Rossi presumed the work, from the analogy of the Pagan buildings above cited, to date from the latter half of the second century.

[One of the most interesting of the structures in the catacombs devoted to the purposes of Christian worship consists of a series of square "cubicula" (Figs. 2 and 3), arranged on both sides of one of the narrow passages or corridors, and so connected as to form together a miniature church whose arrangement prefigured in some respects that of the later churches. <sup>2</sup> It was

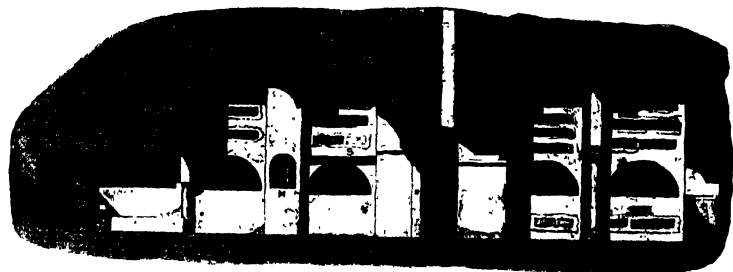


Fig. 3. Section of Cubicula forming Church.

discovered by Father Marchi in 1841 in the catacombs of St. Agnes, near the church of S. Agnese fuori le mura. On one side of the corridor, which is lighted by a luminarium, K, are three, and on the opposite side two chambers about seven feet square, covered by groined vaults at the height of about thirteen feet, and separated from each other by broad round arches, the whole length being about forty-five feet. The innermost of the longer series, F, is much lower than the others, D D, and in the middle of its end wall is an episcopal chair, H, hewn from the rock, and flanked by stone benches, which are continued on the two lateral walls. This was obviously the chancel of the little church, and its separating arch springs from two rude three-quarter columns attached to the side walls. A similar arch, but higher, and springing from taller columns, separates the two compartments, G G, on the other side of the corridor, which were probably devoted to the women of the congregation. In each side wall of every compartment is an arcosolium or arched recess, cover-

<sup>1</sup> Northcote and Brownlow, *Roma sotterranea*, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Northcote and Brownlow, p. 23; Marchi, *Mon. delle Arte Crist.*, p. 185, pl. 35, 36.



ing a double grave or a sarcophagus; the walls above the arch, except in the chancel, being pierced with loculi or single graves one above another. [No trace of painting or other decoration was discovered on the walls or vaults, but in one of the compartments a fragment of marble pavement was still to be seen.] The date of this interesting work is uncertain, De Rossi assigning it to the earliest years of the fourth century, while its discoverer, Marchi, believes it to be a century earlier.<sup>1</sup>

The burial chambers were, however, not always square. Fig. 4 shows two examples from the cemetery of Pretextatus, of private

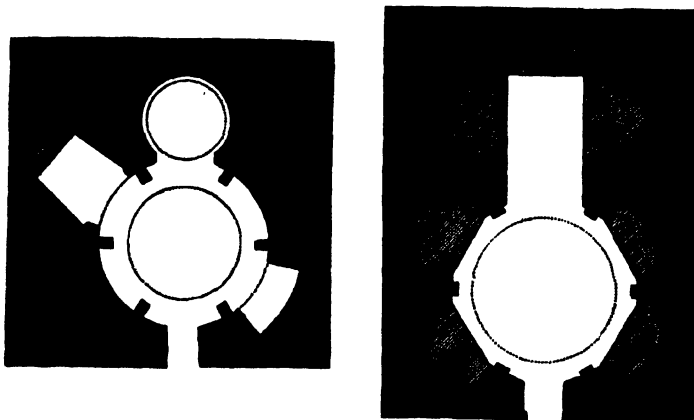


Fig. 4. Two Cubicula in the Cemetery of Pretextatus.

cubicula, round and hexagonal in plan, covered with low domes. Examples have been found in the cemetery of Calixtus and elsewhere of circular, polygonal, and cruciform chambers, of larger size and more intelligently adapted for the assembling of worshipers than those of which I have spoken. After the recognition of Christianity by Constantine, — the peace of the church, as it was called, — in 330, it was no longer necessary (except during brief periods of persecution) that these structures should be concealed beneath the ground. Accordingly we find it common through the fourth century

<sup>1</sup> "This church had not been seen by Bosio, and was only known in a very imperfect way to any of his successors before our own time. It lay buried under a mass of soil, which, having poured down through an open luminarium during centuries of neglect, now covered the whole floor to a considerable depth, incumbering the neighboring galleries to the distance of more than fifty yards, and filling the luminarium itself to the height of fifty feet." Northcote and Brownlow, p. 229.

to build chapels at the entrances of the various catacombs or cemeteries. These buildings were partly subterranean, for the reason that it was still felt desirable that their area should include the tomb of the family by which they were built. But their increased size had naturally been accompanied by a corresponding increase of height, and their walls and vaults, therefore, rose above ground. At the entrance to the catacomb of Pretextatus, near the Via Appia, are two of the most remarkable of these chapels. (Fig. 5.)

The one is a square of about twenty feet internally, with  $\frac{1}{2}$  rectangular recess about ten feet broad and five feet deep opening from each of three sides by a single round arch, — the plan thus becoming nearly a Greek cross.<sup>1</sup> The central vault is gone and the interior is open to the sky, but the greater part of the walls and two of the barrel vaults of the recesses are still complete, and the masonry is

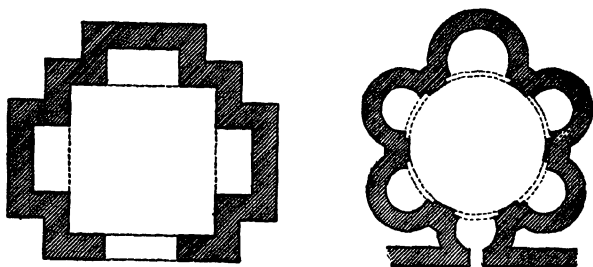


Fig. 5. Chapels at the Entrance of the Catacomb of Pretextatus.

an excellent example of the Roman brickwork of the fourth century, with its long thin bricks, laid with thick joints of mortar.

The second chapel is a circle, somewhat more than thirty feet in diameter, with six semicircular apses opening from it by single round arches, each apse covered by a hemispherical brick vault. In the wall of one of the apses is a narrow entrance doorway, and the apse opposite the door, considerably broader and higher than the others, was evidently the chancel. Above the arches the wall is pierced by twelve rectangular windows. The central vault — doubtless a hemispherical dome — has disappeared. In this building we have the prototype of many of the baptisteries of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries in North Italy.

<sup>1</sup> It is not, however, to be inferred that the cruciform plan had as yet any symbolic significance. The recesses by which the plan took that form were simply the most obvious and convenient preparation for the ponderous sarcophagi which inclosed the bodies of the dead.

A notable example of the larger burial chambers, which may or may not have served as a place of worship, is that known as the apostolic crypt, adjoining the catacomb of St. Calixtus. <sup>The apostolic crypt.</sup> (Figs. 6 and 7.) In plan it is an irregular semicircle, or rather more than a semicircle, about thirty-two feet in diameter, with a range of arcosolia extending quite around the periphery. The chamber is high and vaulted. It derives especial interest, as well as its familiar name, from having been the place of temporary deposit of the body of St. Peter, which was originally laid in the Vatican catacomb. But

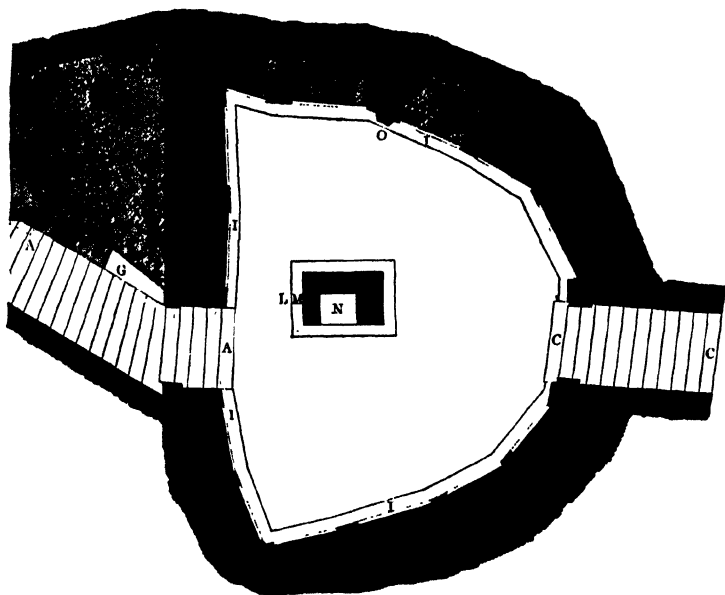


Fig. 6. Plan of the Apostolic Crypt.

when the Emperor Heliogabalus was about to make a circus for racing elephants on that spot, the Christians, fearful that the body of the saint might be disturbed, removed it to this crypt on the Appian Way, whence, after an interval of forty years or so, it was transferred to its original and final resting place.

In the years which followed the recognition of Christianity by Constantine many small churches and chapels were built over or near the entrances to the various catacombs, in honor of the martyrs there buried, as well as to mark and dignify the new entrances. Of these by far the greater number have long since disappeared, but many

remains of such buildings have been brought to light during the more or less systematic explorations of the past half century. The most important of these are two chapels over the cemetery of Calixtus, a little to the west of the Via Appia, discovered by Marchi about 1845, and of which the plans are given in Fig. 8. The plan of the two buildings, which are about two hundred and forty feet apart, is essentially the same, a square of about sixteen feet in the one and twenty-one feet in the other, with semicircular apses opening from three of its sides, and from the fourth a short nave. The apses are



Fig. 7. Interior of the Apostolic Crypt.

covered by hemispheric vaults of brickwork. The naves had probably wooden roofs. In one chapel, the strong buttresses at the junction of the apses and a portion of a similar buttress at the junction of one apse with the nave wall suggest that the central square was also vaulted. From the nave of each chapel a stair descends to the catacomb beneath, and this is sufficient, in the estimation of Marchi, to establish the Christian origin of the buildings, and, taken in connection with certain inscriptions which he found there, to warrant the belief that one was the mausoleum of St. Damasus and the other of St. Mark and St. Marcellianus. The apses are presumed to have contained each a sarcophagus, which was also, according to the custom

of the time, an altar. The chapels thus served the triple purpose of church, mausoleum, and vestibule to the cemetery beneath.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most fully developed of the subterranean chapels yet discovered is one belonging to the cemetery of St. Hermes near the present Via Flaminia, about half a mile outside <sup>S. Basilla.</sup> the Porte del Popolo, and under the hill now known as the Monte Parioli. It is called the Chapel of Santa Basilla. Its disposition will be understood from the plan and section. (Fig. 9.) The length, in all about fifty feet, is divided into three irregular rectangular bays, and a semicircular apse of the full breadth of the nave, about twenty-five feet. The apse is covered by a hemispheric vault; — of

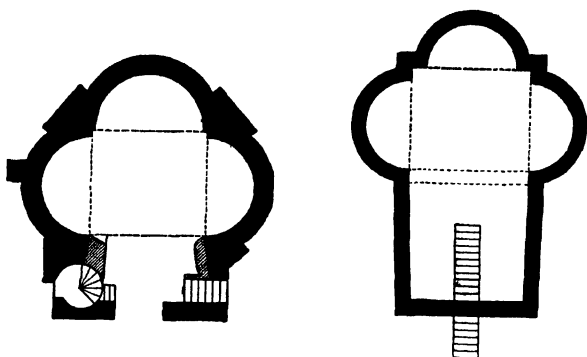


Fig. 8. Chapels over the Cemetery of St. Calixtus.

the nave bays, that next the apse has a barrel vault; the other two are groined, one with a single, the other with a double vault. The height of the interior, together with the starting of what appears to have been an arch covering the nave, about seven feet above the floor, led Marchi to believe that the space now occupied by the church, about forty feet in height, was originally occupied by two churches, one above the other, — or a pagan building two stories in height, of which the upper story rose partially above ground, and of which the

<sup>1</sup> Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 118, calls these chapels *scholæ*, the name given to a small building which was erected for the celebrations of the anniversary of the death of the builder or on his birthday, when the friends were accustomed to meet and to have a feast. "Funeral ceremonies did not cease when the body was laid in the sepulchre. It was the custom to celebrate on that occasion a feast, and to repeat that feast year by year on the birthday of the dead and on other stated days. For the holding of these feasts, as well as for other meetings, special buildings were erected, named *scholæ*, and when the societies received gifts from rich members or patrons, the benefaction frequently took the form of a new lodge-room, or of ground for a new cemetery, with buildings for meetings." Baldwin Brown, p. 17. See D'Agincourt on the *Chapels of the Catacombs*, vol. i. 24.

intermediate floor was removed for the greater convenience of its use as a Christian church. The present staircase of eighty steps, by which the floor of the church is reached from the Casino above, is modern.

But buildings of much greater size and importance than any I have yet mentioned were built in the catacombs both before and just after the Peace of the Church. We have the authority of the "Liber Pontificalis"<sup>1</sup> for the statement that Fabian (Pope 236-250) built many small churches in the cemeteries. Of Pope Damasus, more than a century later (366-385), the same may be said; and one of

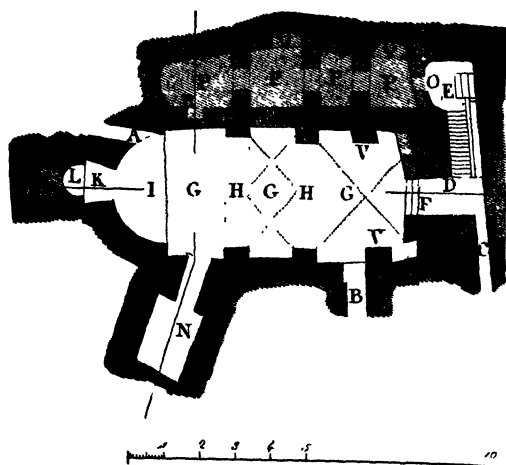


Fig. 9. S. Basilla.

the churches built, or at least begun, by him has been brought to light within the present generation. This is the so-called *S. Petronilla*. Basilica of S. Petronilla, in the cemetery of Domitilla, of which the remains were discovered by De Rossi, in 1873. It was a church with a length of about one hundred feet and a breadth of somewhat more than sixty feet, divided into nave and aisles by four marble columns on each side, the nave entered from a long porch or narthex extending across the whole breadth of the church, and terminating at the other end in a semi-circular apse. The church was only partly subterranean, its floor being some twenty feet below the surface of the ground, or nearly on a level with the upper gallery of the catacomb, with which it communicated by doorways and passages

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Northcote and Brownlow, p. 149.

on both sides, while its walls and roof must have risen to a considerable height above ground.

The basilica of Sta. Sinfiorosa, so called, at Rome is another interesting example. (Fig. 10.) The plan is here also fully developed, with nave and aisles nearly one hundred feet long, separated by square piers, the nave terminating in a semicircular apse preceded by a square compartment. In both

these examples the plan and the construction are very rude, — the wall and colonnade on one side are not parallel with those on the other, the end wall is not at right angles with

either, the brickwork of the walls is poor; but the buildings are interesting as showing the extent to which the development of church building in the catacombs had advanced, and the point at which it stopped.<sup>1</sup>

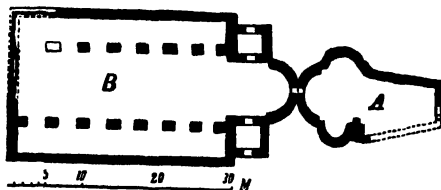


Fig. 10. S. Sinfiorosa.

For with the recognition and adoption of Christianity by Constantine, in 324, all the conditions were changed; and although, as we have seen, the affection with which the catacombs were regarded by the Christians caused chapels and mausoleums, both subterranean and above ground, to be built there for another half century as monuments of private devotion and piety, yet these were quite overshadowed in importance by the great basilicas which the Emperor himself in his new zeal built over the graves of the saints and martyrs. The six years which intervened between the conversion of Constantine and the transference of the seat of

Constantine's basilicas.

<sup>1</sup> Rome was not the only city which built catacombs. It is probable that all the large provincial cities followed in this respect the example of the capital. Naples had an extensive system of catacombs, resembling in their main features those of Rome, but much more spacious and lofty, owing in great part to the superior character of the rock from which they were excavated. Their burial chapels were much larger, their ceilings were often supported by columns or piers left in the rock, and at least one example is recorded of a well-developed church with nave and chancel, the latter provided with its bishop's chair and altar. The catacombs of S. Gennaro, of which the origin goes back to the first century, are important as to their construction, their architecture, and their pictorial adornment. [See Schultze, *Die Catacombe von S. Gen. zu Neapel*, Jena, 1877; De Rossi, *L'Abside dell' antica basilica di S. Giorgio di Napoli*, Naples, 1881.] It is curious that no catacombs appear to have been built in the East. The earliest churches were probably not built much before Constantine's time. What did the Christians do for three centuries? See Vitet, *Études*, ii. 230.

government to Byzantium, saw the building of no less than six of these churches, viz. the Lateran, St. Paul's, St. Peter's, St. Agnes, St. Lawrence,<sup>1</sup> and the Sessorian basilica. These were all built on the outskirts of the city or beyond its walls, and may be said in general to have taken the place of earlier chapels at the entrances to the various catacombs. No one of them has preserved to our day much of its original structure or decoration. Successive destructions by fire or pillage or earthquake have been followed by successive restorations or rebuildings, in some of which the original form has been perpetuated, while in others it has been quite disregarded.

Indeed, it seems probable that most of Constantine's churches had become ruinous as early as the reign of Theodosius, that is, before the end of the century in which they were built. The admirable methods of building which characterized the great works of the elder Romans had been long forgotten. The churches were slightly built, of poor materials, and crumbled at the first touch of war or yielded easily to the slower destruction of time. Most were burned, many fell. The contrast, in respect of construction, between the Christian churches and the Pagan temples and other public buildings seems surprising. But the decay of all the arts, mechanical as well as artistic, had necessarily followed the degradation which had overtaken all departments of the Roman state and all classes of the Roman people.<sup>2</sup>

It should be borne in mind that the great basilicas, not less than the modest chapels, were simply the sanctuaries inclosing the graves of the martyrs. The grave was the central point to which the affec-

<sup>1</sup> Mothes reckons that three of the basilicas were anterior to Constantine, viz. S. Alessandro on the Via Nomentana, — three-aisled, no transept, apse at west end; S. Stefano, Via Latina, — three-aisled, sixteen columns, no transept, west apse long, probably later, small crypt with apse; and S. Pudentiana, with atrium and narthex, three aisles, no transept, segmental apse without windows. But it is probable that none of these was more originally than a chapel at the entrance of a catacomb, enlarged or rebuilt after the establishment of Christianity, — as was the case with S. Agnese, S. Lorenzo, S. Paolo, etc. Mothes, *Baukunst des Mittelalters*, pp. 65, 66. See, also, Parker, p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> Mommsen says: "At the beginning of the fifth century, Rome was still the most populous and wealthy and by far the most sensual city in the world. The population cannot be reckoned at less than one and one-half millions. The court was as bad as the people, — a vain, decaying court, ever increasing in impotence; adventurers, mostly from other lands, at the head of the army; the Senate as arrogant as cowardly."

"The government was at Ravenna, whence masses of troops were sent to the relief of Rome, besieged by the Goths, — but they could not approach the city and were destroyed in detail." The Goths stormed and took the city, which was given up to sack, August 24, 410. The population of Rome, which under Hadrian and the Antonines had been reckoned as high as two millions, had now, after two centuries of decline and disaster, sunk to scarcely more than half that number. Comp. Gregorovius, i. 85, and Platner.



tion and veneration of the faithful clung, and to which all else was only accessory. As the burial of the dead was forbidden within the limits of the city, these graves and the churches which cover them are necessarily without the walls. When, therefore, the original cubiculum in which the body had been deposited became too small for the meetings of the worshippers who gathered about it, it was found necessary to make a further excavation sufficient for the area of the new church. "This was done," says Lanciani, "in conformity with two rules, — that the tomb of the martyr

should occupy the place of honor in the middle of the apse, and that the body of the church should be to the east of the tomb, except in cases of force ma-



Fig. 11. Confessio of S. Marco, Rome.

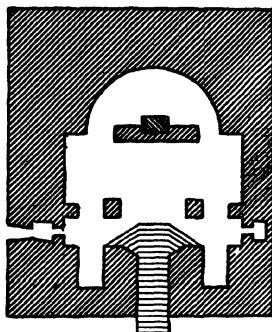


Fig. 12. Confessio of S. Martino, Rome.

jeure, as where a river or public road or some other such obstacle made it necessary to vary this principle. Such is the origin of the greatest sanctuaries of Christian Rome. The churches of St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Petronilla, St. Sebastian, St. Valentine, St. Hermes, St. Agnes, St. Lawrence, and fifty other historical structures owe their existence to the humble grave which no human hand was allowed to transfer to a more suitable and healthy place. When these graves were not very deep, the floor of the basilica was almost level with the ground, as in the case of St. Peter's, St. Paul's, and St. Valentine's; in other cases, it was sunk so deep in the heart of the hills that only the roof and the upper tier of windows were seen above the ground; as in St. Lawrence, St. Agnes without the walls, St. Petronilla, etc. There are two or three basilicas built, or rather excavated, entirely underground. The best specimen is that of St. Hermes on the old Via Salaria." <sup>1</sup>

The cell in which the body of the saint was contained was the point over which the high altar of the church above was placed. In later basilicas this cell, which was called the "confessio," an example of which may still be seen in S. Marco, where a narrow ring surrounds the apse wall and gives access to the cell under the altar, developed into a crypt, at first small, embracing sometimes only the

<sup>1</sup> Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 120.

space beneath the apse, as at Torcello, but later extending under a considerable portion of the nave, and in some rare instances under the whole church. [The *confessio* was often adorned with rich materials, paintings, mosaics, silver and gold and costly hangings.]

The adaptability of the Pagan basilicas of Rome — the great halls of justice, serving also the purposes of the modern exchange — to the uses of Christian worship, where great congregations were to be gathered together, where the sexes were to be divided, where the greater and smaller dignitaries of the church were to be provided with spaces for the ceremonial observances of the new worship, was too obvious to be neglected. But the extent to which they were copied in the Christian basilicas has been greatly over-

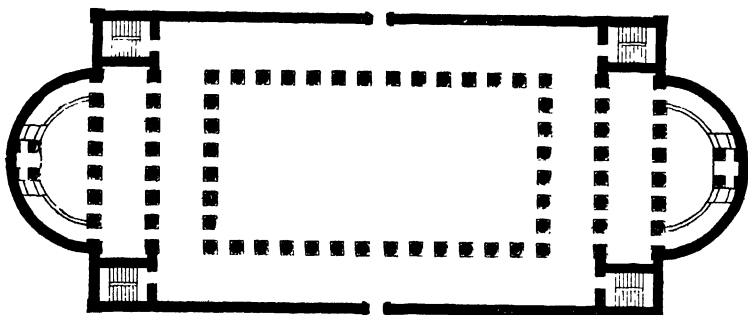


Fig. 13. The Basilica according to Vitruvius.

stated. The Pagan basilica was a rectangular hall, whose length was two or three times its breadth, divided by two or more lines of columns bearing entablatures into a broad central nave and side aisles. It was generally roofed with wood, sometimes vaulted, as in the basilica of Maxentius, and in the larger examples, as the Ulpian basilica, open to the sky except the aisles and apses. At one end was the entrance. From the centre of the opposite end opened a semicircular recess as broad as the nave, called in Latin the "*Tribuna*" and in Greek the "*Apsis*."<sup>1</sup> The nave was the gathering place for all comers; the aisles were sometimes divided into offices for notaries, clerks, etc., but more generally appropriated for the appellants for justice, one aisle being given to men, the other to women. The space in front of the apse was for advocates, and the transaction of business;

<sup>1</sup> At least this was the typical basilica, subject to individual variations, — sometimes the apse was wanting and replaced by a square recess, as at Pompeii, — sometimes the entrance was on the side and an apse at either end, as in the Ulpian basilica.

the tribune was for the presiding magistrate and his assessors. No examples of this important building exist except in a state of ruin, but the remains of the great basilica of Trajan, the basilicas of Julia and of Maxentius in the Forum, and that at Pompeii, are sufficient to establish the general arrangement. Some of the smaller basilicas, as those at Otricoli and Pergamo, exhibit a plan closely resembling that of the Christian churches. (Fig. 14.) The plan in its main features was adopted by Constantine in the churches which he built, and was retained substantially unchanged in most of those which followed in Rome for seven hundred years.<sup>1</sup> Out of this plan grew by natural and

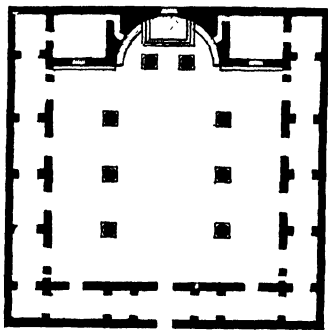


Fig. 14. Basilica of Otricoli.

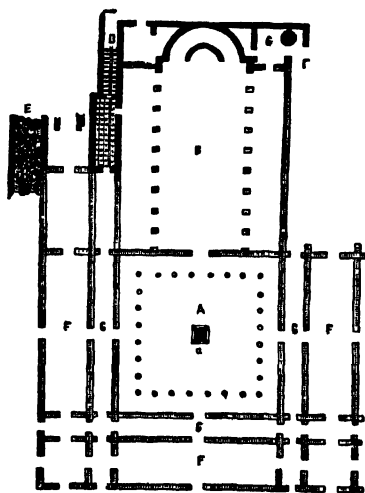


Fig. 15. Xenodochium of Pammachius.

FROM THESE SMALL BASILICAS

easily traced (development the more intricate plans of the Romanesque, Gothic, and Renaissance churches of the Middle Ages, all over Europe. ~~Certain modifications and amplifications of the plan were naturally required.~~ Of these the most important was the addition at first of an open porch in the form of an arcade or colonnade running across the front of the church, its openings sometimes

<sup>1</sup> The derivation of the Christian from the Pagan basilica is strenuously denied by various German archæologists, Zestermann, Hübsch, Dehio, and others, most of whom prefer to trace its plan from that of the Greek and Roman private house, with its atrium or impluvium, and the ample peristylum or colonnaded court which in the more fully developed examples opened from it. Schultze (*Archäologie der Altchristlichen Kunst*, p. 44) adduces a striking example in the Xenodochium of Pammachius, in Porto (Fig. 15 above), in which the central space of the peristylum terminates in a true apse, and the tablinum and the entire arrangement of the interior is precisely that of the simpler basilican church. See, also, Dehio and Von Bezold, *Kirchliche Baukunst des Abendlandes*, p. 67, et seq.

closed by curtains. This was called the "Narthex,"<sup>3</sup> and was for the use of novices or catechumens, and penitents awaiting absolution.<sup>1</sup> Later this feature was continued around the four sides of an open square, and backed by a close wall, forming an inclosed ~~atrium or~~ fore court, through which the church was entered, which served as a burial ground for the faithful, and which secured, for it greater seclusion and sanctity. The central point of the ~~atrium~~ <sup>fore court</sup> was often occupied by a fountain. The ~~porch~~ of the atrium was a conspicuous feature, as at S. Clemente and S. Sabas.

Within, the basilica ~~lent itself by the distribution of its various parts to the usages and traditions of the primitive church.~~ The aisles were appropriated on the one hand to the male, on the other to the female worshippers, enforced separation of the sexes being a rule of the church; the catacombs even had separate staircases for men and women. The ~~nave and~~ aisles in the fully developed basilica abutted against a solid wall pierced at the centre by a single arch of ~~the full breadth of the nave,~~ called the triumphal arch, and by smaller arches at the end of the aisles. By these arches, commonly closed by curtains, the transept was entered, — a great cross hall <sup>a great hall with</sup> ~~as high and commonly as broad as the nave,~~ — its floor raised slightly above that of the nave. The great central tribune ~~or apse~~ opened from the middle of the transept, — the bishop's chair or throne raised high against the wall of it, flanked on a lower level by the seats of the clergy. In some examples, as S. Pietro in vincoli, S. Clemente, S. Maria in Domnica, the central apse was flanked on each side by a similar but smaller apse. (This became later a common arrangement in the Romanesque churches. The altar stood in the middle of the transept) ~~and in front of the apse;~~ or where there was no transept, in the centre of the chord of the apse. Part of the nave, including perhaps a third of its length, was sometimes inclosed by screens, and its floor raised a few feet above that of the nave; this space formed the choir or ~~chancel~~ for the singers and the lesser clergy. On either side of ~~it~~ <sup>the altar</sup> stood a pulpit or ambon, generally of marble, one for the reading of the Epistles, the other for the Gospels.

The altar was generally covered by a ciborium, — a feature which varied greatly in form, but consisted ordinarily of four columns supporting a canopy. The typical form is that of which several examples are still to be seen in the Roman basilicas <sup>particular</sup> notably in San

<sup>1</sup> In some instances the narthex was inside the church, stretching across the front of nave and aisles.

Lorenzo fuori and S. Giorgio in Velabro. (Fig. 16.) The four columns are Corinthian, and support an entablature, above which is a structure in two or three stages of small colonnades, square and octagonal, finishing with a small octagonal roof. Variations of this type may be seen in S. Pietro in Vincoli, S. Maria in Trastevere, S. Clemente, and occasionally in the provinces, as in S. Angelo in Formis at Capua, at Castel S. Elia, and even as far south as Barletta, where we find it in the Cathedral.

A rigid system of orientation was established from the first. The priest stood at the altar facing his congregation, and his face must be turned towards the holy city of Jerusalem, that is to say, eastward. The principal front of the church was thus to the east, and the apse to the west. The ambon or pulpit for the Gospels was on the south side of the choir, that for the Epistles on the north. The men of the congregation occupied the south aisle, the women the north. Early in the fifth century all this was reversed. The priest still

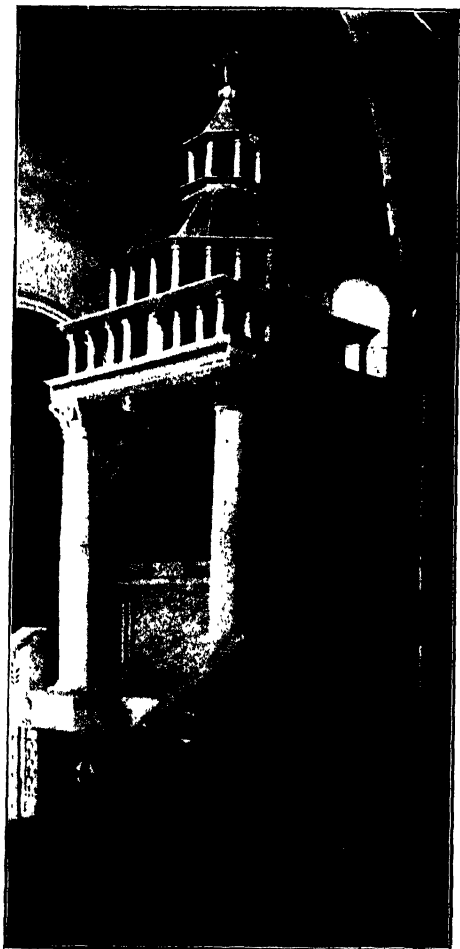


Fig. 16. Ciborium, S. Giorgio in Velabro.

faced the east, but turned his back to the congregation. The apse was therefore at the east end of the church, the main entrance front at the west; and this orientation continued throughout the Middle Ages, and with decreasing strictness to the present day.

In respect of construction, the basilicas followed pretty closely the Pagan model. The nave and aisles were divided by lines of columns carrying either round arches or classic entablatures, above which rose a high, flat clerestory wall, commonly quite without architectural features, pierced by simple round-arched windows. The columns were in almost every instance taken from the temples, Pagan basilicas, or other buildings of classic Rome, by no means always ruined, and were frequently different in material, size, and style.

The question whether the columns of the nave should be joined by an entablature after the manner of the ancient basilicas, or by arches springing directly from the capitals, was generally determined by the possibility of finding among the spoils of the older temples entablatures ready to their hand. The Romans unquestionably preferred, then, as always, to adhere to the old traditions as closely as possible. But they had discovered that the arch offered an easier as well as a cheaper way to span the opening than the lintel. And as it was always more difficult to find entablatures than columns suitable to their purposes, we find the entablature much more rare even in the earlier basilicas of Rome than the arch, while outside the capital the use of the arch was universal. It is curious, however, that the spacing of the columns was pretty much the same, whichever method was adopted of covering the opening, — the interval rarely exceeding in the arcades four diameters.

The nave was covered with a trussed wooden roof, of low pitch, sometimes concealed by a horizontal paneled and decorated ceiling; the aisles had generally simple lean-to roofs. The exterior walls were generally of brick<sup>1</sup> and without any attempt at architectural design, but in the great basilicas the façade was made glorious by profuse mosaic decoration, or where that was wanting, the brickwork

<sup>1</sup> Brick began to be used for facing of walls only in the time of the Empire, and continued to be the common material until the Renaissance. Early brickwork, *e. g.* of the first century, was very carefully laid. The bricks were eight to twelve inches long, one and one fourth inches thick, smooth on face, and laid with very close joint, not more than one eighth of an inch. Where used as the facing of great wall surfaces, the bricks were triangular. The wall was generally laid with an inner and outer face, the core being filled in with bits and fragments of stone, grouted with a quick-setting mortar. The wall was banded at intervals of a yard or so with a layer of broad brick tiles. Arch bricks were twenty inches long, voussoir shaped.

In the second century the brickwork was of the same character, but yellow bricks were used instead of red, as in the first. In the third century, the character of the work has declined, joints are thicker, *e. g.* in the Baths of Caracalla. In the fourth century, further deterioration, — joints grow thicker and bricks larger. — until in the sixth century the joints are almost as thick as the bricks and the bricks are no longer laid in true horizontal courses. Banding courses become rare and finally disappear. Hübsch, *Altchr. Kirchen*, 7.

was covered with a coat of stucco which formed the ground for emblematic or historical paintings. The outline of the façade followed closely the section of nave and aisles, and its predominating feature was the great entrance porch swung across the whole breadth of the church, above which rose the front wall of the nave pierced by windows, mostly small and unimportant, and crowned either by a low pediment or by an overhanging concave cornice. The early basilicas had broad arched windows, filled sometimes with translucent slabs of alabaster, sometimes with thicker plates of marble pierced with circles or lozenges either open or filled with glass, or with a thin film of some translucent material through which light can pass, though feebly.

Great account was made of hangings, curtains, carpets, etc., in the interior of basilicas. Not only were the arches which entered the transept closed by curtains, but also the apses, particularly the side

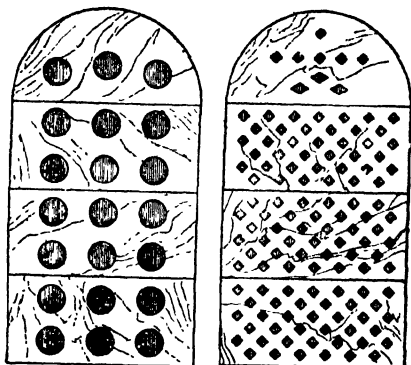


Fig. 17. Window-plates, S. Lorenzo.

apses opening from the aisles, which were called *pastoforia*, used, the one to contain the sacred vessels of the church, the other as a place of deposit for books and papers; and the intervals between the nave columns were hung with rich carpets, generally the gift of some wealthy patron. Hadrian I. decorated many of the Roman churches in this manner, in addition to his costly and splendid gifts of paintings, sculpture, and gold and silver work. Hundreds of artists of various sorts were kept at work by him on the basilicas.<sup>1</sup>

I have said that the columns of the basilicas were in almost every instance taken from older edifices. The extent to which the decorative portions of the buildings of classic Rome were availed of in the buildings of later centuries is a striking evidence of the splendor of the ancient city. The practice of taking columns, friezes, cornices, etc., from the temples, basilicas, baths, and other monuments was well-nigh universal for six hundred years. Repeated efforts on the part of the emperors to put a stop to this spoliation were of small avail. One would suppose the supply of

Plundering  
of ancient  
buildings.

<sup>1</sup> See Gregorovius, *Gesch. der Stadt Rom*, iii. pp. 31, 32.

such material would have been exhausted in a single generation. But the quarry was prodigious. Ancient itineraries of Rome, published before the end of the fourth century, enumerate 424 temples, 304 shrines, 80 statues of gods, of precious metal, 64 of ivory, 3785 bronze statues of miscellaneous character, etc.

The porticoes are not mentioned in this enumeration, but they must have been one of the most fruitful sources of the supply. They were very numerous and in some cases of great extent, *e. g.* those leading from the city gates to the basilicas of St. Paul, St. Peter, and S. Pudentiana, the first named having a length of more than a mile, with probably not less than a thousand columns.<sup>1</sup>

The following is the edict of Majorian, about 457, concerning the destruction of ancient monuments: "We, the ruler of the State, wish to put a stop to the disorder which has long moved us to horror, and by which the face of this noble city has been disfigured. We are well aware that many public buildings, the ornaments of the city, have been destroyed through the criminal indifference of the authorities. Under the pretence that the stones of these buildings are needed for public works, the monuments of antiquity are thrown down, and great buildings are destroyed that small ones may be raised in their places. Hence has arisen this monstrous abuse that whosoever wishes to build for himself a private house is not afraid, through the favor of some judge, to seize and carry away the material therefor from some public building. . . . Wherefore, we command, by a general law, that all buildings which have been of old devoted to the public use and for public ornament, whether temples or other buildings, shall not be destroyed nor laid hands on by any man. And if any judge shall order or permit this to be done, he shall be punished by a fine of fifty pounds of gold; and whosoever, being an officer or assessor (*numerarius*), shall obey such an order, from a judge, shall be punished by whipping, and shall have his hands cut off, because he has insulted and defamed the monuments of the fathers instead of protecting them."<sup>2</sup> Before this, in 408, Honorius had forbidden the destruction of temples; but in 416 Theodosius II.

<sup>1</sup> It was not only for the decorative features of edifices that the ancient monuments were plundered. Lanciani discovered twenty years ago, during some excavations, a foundation wall built of courses of statues below — many fine ones — and of cornices, pilasters, etc., above. It is indeed hard to exaggerate the barbarous indifference of the early Christian builders to the art of classic times. The lime with which their rough brickwork was laid was made from the marbles of the ancient temples, including statues as well as architectural members.

<sup>2</sup> Gregorovius, *op. cit.* i. 221.



authorized by an edict the conversion of temples into churches or other buildings. But Constantine still earlier had set the example of spoliation, and on a great scale, first by using in the basilicas which he built in Rome the columns and entablatures of older temples,<sup>1</sup> and later still more extravagantly by carrying off to Constantinople great quantities of columns, friezes, reliefs, statues, etc., not only from Rome, but from other Italian cities as well, for the decoration of his new capital.<sup>2</sup>

The earliest of the great basilicas was the Lateran. When Constantine entered Rome in triumph, after his victory over Maxentius, in 312 A. D., he installed himself in the palace of the Laterani, an ancient Roman family of great wealth, whose most prominent representative suffered death under Nero, his palace afterwards passing into the hands of the Emperor. As an imperial residence, it included a basilica for the administration of justice; and it was this basilica which, when Constantine in 323 gave the palace to Pope Sylvester, was transformed into the first great Christian church. How great was the transformation, or whether it was rebuilt altogether, it is perhaps impossible now to determine.<sup>3</sup> Its dimensions and its plan are equally a matter of conjecture,<sup>4</sup> since there is no description of it in contemporary records, as in the case of other churches, and it was so completely rebuilt during the first centuries of its existence<sup>5</sup> that nothing of the original construction

The  
Lateran  
basilica.

<sup>1</sup> Speaking of the basilica of St. Peter's, Lanciani says: "In one of the note-books of Antonio da San Gallo, the younger, I found a memorandum of the quality, size, color, and other details in regard to one hundred and thirty-six shafts. Nearly all the ancient quarries were represented in the collection, not to speak of styles and periods. Grimaldi says that he could not find two capitals or bases alike. He adds that the architrave and frieze differed from one intercolumniation to another, and that some of the blocks bore inscriptions with the names and praises of Titus, Trajan, Gallienus, and others." *The Destruction of Ancient Rome*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Dartain, *Étude sur l'arch. lombarde*, etc., p. 7, text.

<sup>3</sup> Constantine is said in some accounts to have assisted with his own hands at the work of laying the foundations. This indicates either enlargement or rebuilding.

<sup>4</sup> Mothes says it had five aisles, as at present, — transepts slightly projecting beyond the outer walls of aisles, columns partly old and partly new, with Ionic and Corinthian capitals, in the inner rows eighteen columns, in the outer, twenty-three. Atrium somewhat narrower than the church. The apse was decorated in 430; the nave had a new ceiling with gold decoration under Leo I., about 446. Mothes, pp. 120, 121.

Hübseh maintains that the plan of the basilica of the thirteenth century was that of the primitive church, because at that date it would have been impossible to get together thirty antique marble shafts ten metres high. On the authority of an ancient Roman coin, of which a cut is given by Ciampini, he gives a conjectural view of the exterior, showing a two-story narthex. Hübseh, p. xvii. pl. 3, 4.

<sup>5</sup> By the middle of the eighth century, the Lateran had been several times enlarged. Pope Zacharius (742-752) enlarged the Patriarchum or Palace of the Popes by adding

was left when under the pontificate of Sergius III., early in the tenth century, the first rebuilding took place, of which any traces are visible in our own day. Before this rebuilding the great church is said to have "lain for seven years a mere heap of ruins ransacked by the Romans in search of the votive gifts which lay buried within. Valuable works of early Christian art and gifts of Constantine, in which the Lateran especially gloried, were then lost forever."<sup>1</sup>

The general proportions of the original basilica were probably preserved by Sergius, who made use of such of the ancient columns — granite, porphyry, verd-antique — as remained, and added a portico or narthex of ten columns to the façade. The transept and the great apse were the only portions of the church of Sergius which retained their ancient form and aspect after Borromini's splendid but tasteless rebuilding of the seventeenth century; but under Pius IX., in 1865, the apse was taken down and rebuilt with the interposition of a square bay between it and the transept. The mosaics were preserved and replaced over rich wainscoting of parti-colored marble and Cosmati-work.

The Lateran basilica was consecrated by Pope Sylvester in 324. The same year saw the commencement of three more of this interesting group of churches, viz. St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Agnes. We may be reasonably certain of the plan and design of all these churches, since the first two, notwithstanding repeated restorations, retained substantially their original form down to recent times, while the third still exists, with its first disposition unchanged in all essential respects.

The basilica of St. Peter, which was built over the catacomb of the

a portico and tower to its façade. The Lateran buildings now included, "besides the great basilica, several smaller churches, many oratories, trilinea or dining-halls, and several chapels, among them the celebrated private chapel of the Popes called S. Lorenzo or the Sancta Sanctorum. Close to the basilica stood the Baptistery, the Monastery of S. John Baptist and the Evangelist, that of SS. Andrew and Bartholomew, and apparently another dedicated to S. Stephen, and a fourth to SS. Sergius and Bacchus, — all forming, as at the Vatican, a little town of labyrinthine plan." Gregorovius, *Travels in Italy*, p. 208, vol. ii.

The Lateran palace continued to be the residence of the Popes for nearly a thousand years, or until the abandonment of Rome as the Papal city, in 1309. On their return from Avignon in 1378, the Vatican was made the official residence. But the church has always retained its position and rank as the first church in Christendom, "Orbis et Urbis Omnium Ecclesiarum Mater et Caput," — the chapter of the Lateran still taking precedence of that of St. Peter's. It was originally dedicated to Christus Salvator, but was known also as the Basilica Constantiniana and as the Basilica Aurea (from its abundant gold decoration). In the sixth century it was dedicated to St. John.

<sup>1</sup> Gregorovius, *Gesch. der Stadt Rom*, iii. 246.

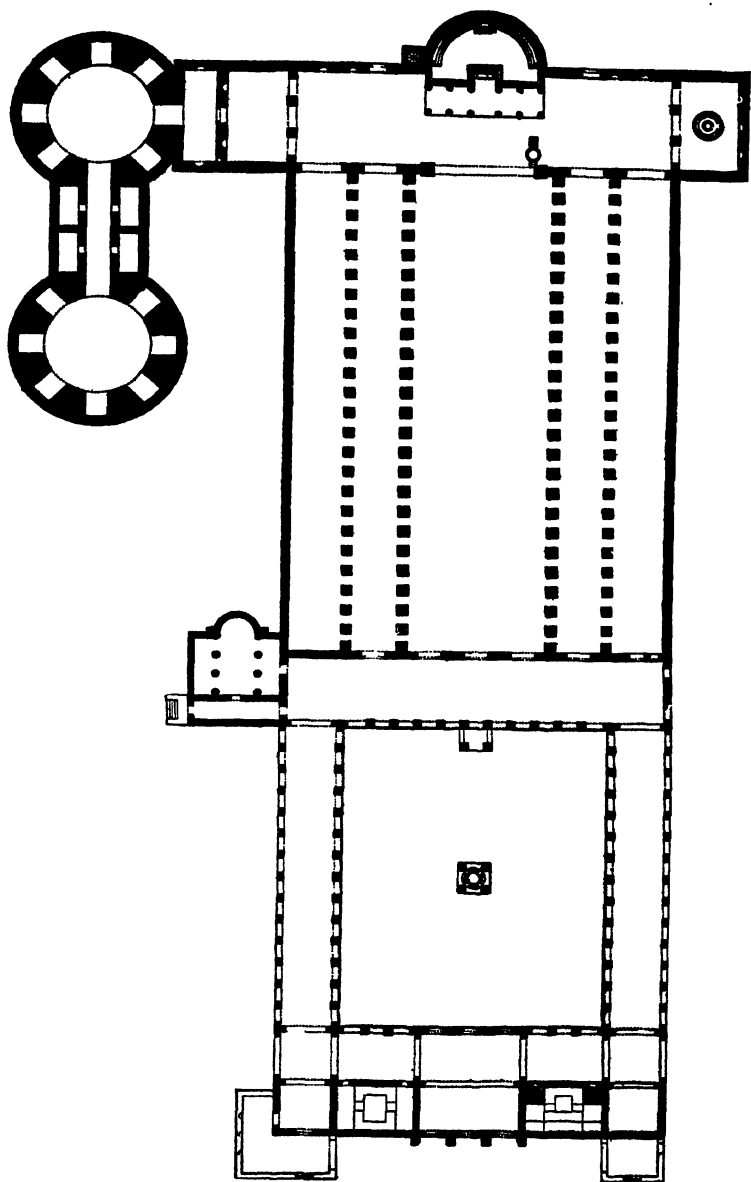


Fig. 18. Basilica of St. Peter.

Vatican, in which many Popes had been buried in the first and second centuries,<sup>1</sup> was probably the largest of the early churches, covering an area of something over 7000 square metres (73,000 sq. ft.) (Fig. 18.) It was a five-aisled church, with a ~~nave~~ <sup>have</sup> 75 feet wide and 285 feet long, separated from the side aisles by two lines of 23 antique<sup>1</sup> monolithic<sup>1</sup> columns of granite and marble, 35 feet high, with Corinthian capitals, carrying a horizontal entablature above which rose the nave walls to a height of more than 100 feet, pierced above the aisle roofs with large round-arched windows. (The two aisles on either side the ~~nave~~ <sup>have</sup> were separated by arcades of round arches on columns.<sup>2</sup> The transept, about 55 feet wide and 245 feet long, projected boldly beyond the outer aisle walls, and was entered by single round arches, from the nave and aisles; that from the nave — the triumphal arch — was considerably stilted, and sprang from detached columns. The great apse had a breadth equal to that of the triumphal arch, — nearly 60 feet ~~it~~ <sup>The Basilica</sup> was covered by a semi-dome, which, as well as the walls, was decorated with mosaics.<sup>3</sup> The ~~nave~~ <sup>have</sup> was covered by a wooden trussed roof of low pitch, and a single lean-to roof covered the two aisles on each side.) The two outer aisles were, about the end of the eighth century, covered with barrel vaults. Before the church was an atrium surrounded by arcades and entered through a sort of propylæum, to which, in 770, two flanking towers were added. The central point of the atrium was occupied by a fountain. The arcade next the church was broader than those on the other sides, forming a spacious narthex from which the church was entered by seven doors, three in the nave and one to each aisle. The façade was probably enriched with mosaics.<sup>4</sup>

St. Peter's was the object of constant care and pride on the part of the Popes, who employed one after another all the resources of their time on its enrichment. Honorius I., in 625, covered the great doors of the main entrance with silver plates, weighing nine hundred and seventy-five pounds, with bas-reliefs of scripture subjects; lined

<sup>1</sup> What remained of the catacomb was entirely destroyed in the sixteenth century, when the foundations of the new church were laid. Parker, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Bunsen gives the following dimensions, following the figures of Alfarano:

Length, including apse,	528 palms.	Nave,	106 palms broad,	170 high.
“ to end of transept,	406 “	Atrium,	256 “ long,	200 broad.
Breadth across aisles,	285 “	Walls,	7 “ thick.	
“ “ transept,	390 “			

P. & B. The Roman palm is a little less than nine inches.

<sup>3</sup> From a point near the apse a stair descended to a small confessio or crypt extending under a portion of the transept, and which contained the sarcophagus of St. Peter.

<sup>4</sup> Wiebeking, *Analyse*, etc., i. 568; Hübsch, p. xvi. pt. 3, 4; Gutensohn and Knapp.

the walls of the *confessio* with silver, and begged of the Emperor Heraclius the gilded roof tiles of the temple of Venus and Rome, which he transferred to the roof of the great basilica.<sup>1</sup>

Hadrian I. also bestowed much attention upon St. Peter's. The basilica was approached from the city gate, near the mausoleum of Hadrian, by a long covered colonnade, which had become more or less ruinous. The Pope restored this colonnade, strengthening its foundations, as the chronicles say, by more than twelve thousand blocks of tufa, probably taken from the ruins of ancient Rome. He restored the atrium and enriched the bell tower, which his predecessor,

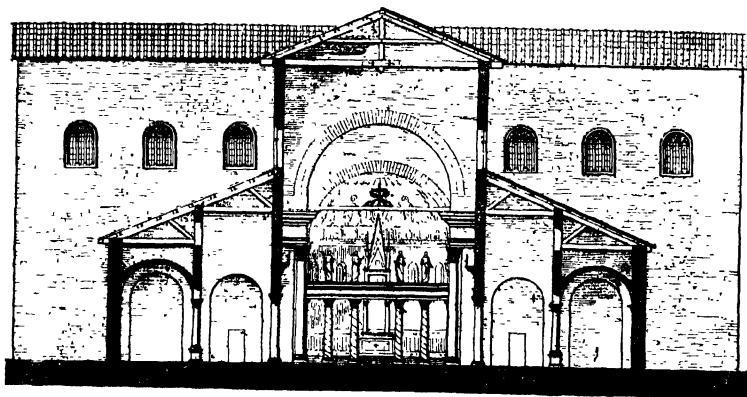


Fig. 19. Section of St. Peter's.

Stephen II., had built at the right of the entrance, with great bronze doors brought from some temple at Perugia.<sup>2</sup> Within, continuing the work of Honorius, one hundred and fifty years before, he laid down before the door of the *confessio* a pavement of solid silver plates weighing one hundred and fifty pounds, and decorated the walls with bas-reliefs of gold. The mosaic had fallen from the vault of the apse. Hadrian replaced and renewed it after the original design.

In the middle of the ninth century, the basilica had become the

<sup>1</sup> These were stolen by the Saracens in the sack of 846.

<sup>2</sup> "Grimaldi climbed the roof at the beginning of 1606 and found it covered with three kinds of tiles, bronze, brick, and lead, — the bronze cast in the time of the Emperor Hadrian for the roof of the temple of Venus and Rome, and transferred to S. Peter's about 630; the brick tiles all stamped with the inscription or seal of Theodoric, fifth century; the lead stamped with names of various Popes in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries." Lanciani, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> Gregorovius, ii. pp. 126-440.

centre of an important group of convents, hospitals, and dwellings, which, standing without the city walls and quite unprotected, had repeatedly been the object of attack from various enemies. In 846 St. Peter's and St. Paul's, on opposite sides of the capital, were both sacked by the Saracens. Leo IV., the reigning Pope, with much effort found means in 849-852 to surround the whole of the Vatican

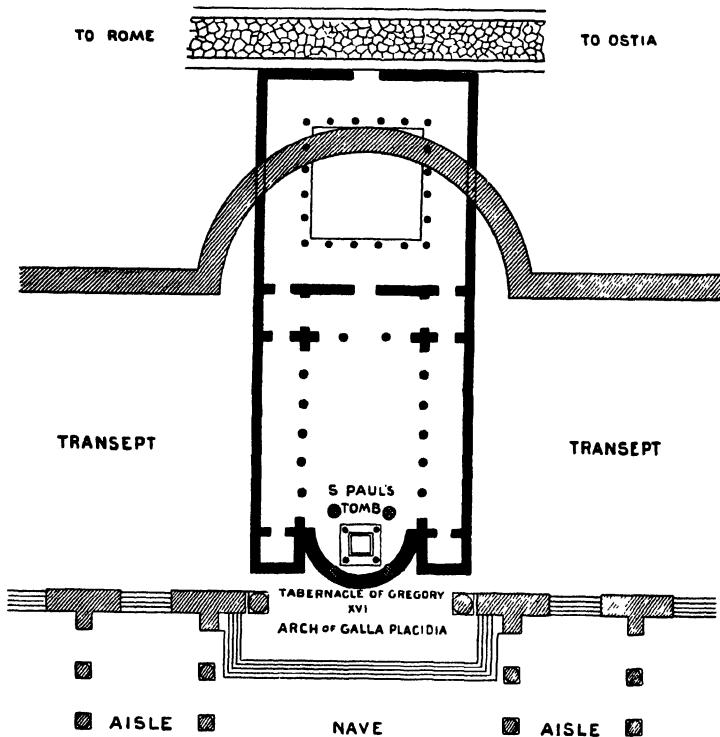


Fig. 20. The Two Basilicas of St. Paul.

district with a circuit of walls and towers, connected with those of the city, and thus to create what he called the Civitas Leonina.

Through successive restorations, in which, however, its essential aspect was not changed, this noble church continued to exist until the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the ambition of Julius II. prevailed over his regard for the venerable monuments of the earlier times, and the great basilica, with all the priceless examples of ancient and mediæval art which it contained, — mosaics, marbles,

gold and silver decorations, monuments of the early Renaissance from Giotto to Mino da Fiesole, — was sacrificed without a scruple, to make way for the splendid edifice of Bramante and his successors. This vandalism was sharply rebuked by Michael Angelo.<sup>1</sup>

The basilica of St. Paul without the walls, over the catacomb of Lucina, begun in the same year with that of St. Peter, and finished in 330, was rebuilt in 386 on a larger scale,<sup>2</sup> and this second church, although injured by earthquakes and war, and subjected to partial restorations in almost every successive century, endured without radical change until its destruction by fire in 1823, after which it was rebuilt on its original lines, but with much greater splendor of material and decoration.

In dimensions and plan, the church was very like St. Peter's, — a five-aisled basilica, 196 feet wide, 350 feet long inside, the aisles separated by lines of Corinthian columns of veined marble, all carrying round arches. Each line consisted of twenty columns; those next the nave were fluted and had a height of 35 feet.<sup>3</sup> The nave

<sup>1</sup> The church appears, however, if we may trust the report of the consistory appointed by Paul V. in 1605, to examine the basilica and describe the condition of the nave and aisles (the transept having already given place to the new work of Bramante and Michael Angelo) to have been in a dangerous state. The two inner lines of columns and the outer aisle wall, on the south or left hand side, had been built on the foundations of the walls of the circus of Caligula, with which they coincided; while those of the opposite side had been built on new foundations. The latter had stood firm; but the former had yielded to such an extent that the walls of the clerestory were found to be out of plumb not less than three and a half feet, — the whole church leaning over southward. The report was conclusive, and was no doubt in accordance with the desires and intentions of the Pope, and the work of demolition was at once completed. See Lanciani, p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> The first church was very inferior in size to the other basilicas of Constantine. This is explained by its situation. The tomb of the martyr was only one hundred feet to the west of the high road to Ostia. As the church must, in accordance with the early and rigorous rule, be built to the east of the tomb, the tomb remaining in the centre of the apse, this distance governed its dimensions. Its plan, as determined by the excavations of 1834 and 1850, is given by Lanciani (*Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 149) from a memoir of Paolo Belloni. When the larger basilica was built in 386, the restriction as to the orientation was no longer *de rigueur*, and the church was reversed, the position of the tomb remaining unchanged and the high altar being placed above it, as before. (Fig. 20.)

<sup>3</sup> "The first twenty-four columns of the nave next the entrance, thirteen on one side and eleven on the other, were taken from some antique monument. Nothing can compare with the beauty of the marble shafts and with the workmanship of the capitals. All the other columns vary in material, form, and spacing, — bases and caps are of different orders. . . . All support arches, above which is a bare wall of excessive height." (D'Agincourt.) He gives (vol. iv. pl. 6, 7) examples at large scale of one of the ancient capitals of the nave and one of those prepared for the basilica. When D'Agincourt wrote, the old basilica was still standing, and his great work was published in 1823, the year of its destruction. Wiebeking's account (p. 567, vol. i.) is also that of a contemporary; his work having been published in 1821. In Gutensohn and Knapp is an elevation of the upper part of the façade.

was nearly 78 feet wide, and 270 feet long. The wall above the columns, rising to a height of 95 feet from the pavement, was pierced with great round-arched windows, one over each of the nave arches. The surface of the wall between these windows and the arcade below was divided by flat pilasters and horizontal bands of marble into three ranges of panels — the two upper ranges filled with paintings, the lowest with medallions of the Popes, with inscriptions.

The clerestory windows were filled by thin, perforated slabs of marble. The nave had a panelled wood ceiling decorated with plates



Fig. 21. St. Paul without the Walls.

of gold, and it is presumed that the transept and the side aisles were also ceiled.<sup>1</sup> The transept, entered by round arches from the nave and each side aisle, was of the same breadth as the nave, but, unlike that of St. Peter, projected but slightly beyond the aisle walls. At some time, not now to be determined, but manifestly subsequent to the completion of the basilica, the transept was divided longitudinally by a continuous arcade, with a broad arch in the centre answering to the triumphal arch, and four smaller arches on each side, supported by columns of granite and cipollino of excessive size and height, and carrying a solid wall, reaching to the apex of the roof. The triumphal

<sup>1</sup> D'Agincourt shows no ceiling, but speaks of the effect of the trusses which support the roof.



arch, 45 feet wide and 68 feet high, sprang from an entablature supported by detached Ionic columns. The great apse, as broad as the nave and on the chord of which stood the high altar, was roofed by a semi-dome, covered with rich mosaics, as was also the end wall of the nave above the triumphal arch.<sup>1</sup> The apse with its mosaics escaped destruction in the fire of 1823, and is preserved in the new church,<sup>2</sup> of which the interior closely follows the old. A small confessio or crypt, of uncertain size, occupied a part of the space under the transept, the tomb of the saint being as usual under the high altar.

In section, St. Peter's and St. Paul's were nearly identical, — the breadth and height being nearly the same in the two churches, and the arrangement of roofs varying but little. The walls were of brick and on the exterior very plain, as usual in this class of buildings, scarcely any example of an attempt at architectural effect being known. Of the atrium, the greater part was destroyed in 1348 by earthquake.<sup>3</sup> It was not rebuilt. The arcade next the church remained and formed the open narthex of nine round arches on Corinthian columns, of which the capitals, like those of the interior, which were not taken from older buildings, were of extremely inferior design and workmanship, and testified strongly to the deterioration of art which had taken place since the days of the republic. Seven doorways opened, as in St. Peter's, from the narthex to the interior, three to the nave, one to each side aisle, the openings of the central doorway being closed by bronze doors incrustated with silver. Above the narthex, the façade followed the outline of the interior, the central portion having two rows of three windows, like those of the clerestory, with a low gable, corresponding to the pitch of the nave roof. The basilica was in an exposed position, far from the city and on the high road from the seaport, and was thus endangered by the approach of every enemy coming from the sea. "In 846, it was ransacked by the Saracens before the Romans could come to the rescue. For these considerations, Pope John VIII., 872-882, determined to put the church and its surroundings under shelter and

<sup>1</sup> These mosaics probably dated from the time of Galla Placidia, about 440. They were replaced, probably in the thirteenth century, by others, possibly copied from the originals.

<sup>2</sup> "The interior surfaces of the walls, as in all the important churches of this period, were covered with thin slabs of marble, so arranged as to form a pattern." (Hübsch, col. 17.) But he says also the nave walls were entirely covered with paintings from Bible subjects on a gold ground.

<sup>3</sup> Before this, however, it had been much neglected, for, in time of Hadrian I., 772-795, cows pastured within it.

to build a fort that could also command the approach to Rome from this, its most dangerous side." He surrounded the basilica with a strong wall enclosing much ground about the church, and further strengthened the position by a castle on the river bank. The place was named *Johannipolis*. It corresponded, but on a probably smaller scale, with the *Civitas Leonina* of the Vatican. No trace of it remains, save an inscription which was over one of its gates. It is not mentioned in any of the old chronicles.<sup>1</sup> The church had a quadriporticus or atrium towards the river, which was standing in the middle of the fourteenth century. A great colonnade of marble two thousand yards long connected the basilica with the city gate. All is gone.<sup>2</sup>

The basilica of St. Agnes without the walls, begun by Constantine in 324, was of inferior dimensions to those already mentioned, but has some features of great interest. It was directly connected with the extensive catacombs of St. Agnes, and its

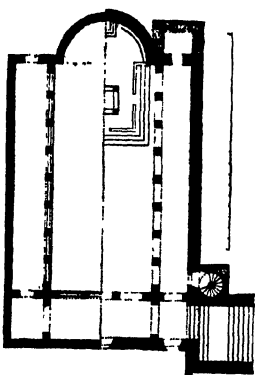


Fig. 22. Plan of St. Agnes.

floor was on the level of their first gallery, some 25 feet below the surface of the ground, from which it was and still is reached by a broad staircase of 47 steps. (Figs. 22, 23.) It is of small size, about 53 feet broad and 83 feet long, measured within the walls and exclusive of the apse. There is no transept, and the side aisles are single, — unlike the great basilicas which preceded it. The nave, about 33 feet broad, is separated from the side aisles by arcades of eight round arches springing from columns taken from older buildings. The columns are of various sizes, with capitals and bases of various designs, and the shafts are of all sorts of materials — light red marble, dark red, black and white, pale yellow, with

<sup>1</sup> Gregorovius, vol. iii. p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> "Here also we find the evidence of the gigantic work of destruction, pursued for centuries by the Romans themselves, which we have been in the habit of attributing to the barbarians alone. The barbarians have their share of responsibility in causing the abandonment, and desolation of the Campagna. They may have looted and damaged some edifices from which there was hope of a booty, — they may have profaned churches and oratories erected over the tombs of the martyrs. But the wholesale destruction, the obliteration of classical and mediæval monuments, is the work of the Romans and of their successive rulers. To them, more than to the barbarians, we owe the present condition of the Campagna, in the midst of which Rome remains like an oasis in a barren solitude." Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 156.

here and there a shaft of gray granite. The arcade is carried around the entrance end of the church, where it forms a narthex. The aisles are divided into two stories, the upper forming originally a gallery for the use of the women; and this gallery, which is also carried around the end of the church, has an arcade like that below, but on a smaller scale. The capitals here are surmounted by small stilt blocks. Above the second arcade, the clerestory wall is pierced



Fig. 23. St. Agnes without the Walls.

with simple round-arched windows. The nave had a wooden trussed roof of low pitch;<sup>1</sup> the aisle galleries had a lean-to roof; but are now groined, like the aisles themselves. The hemispherical vault of the apse is still covered with the original mosaics, three figures on a gold ground. They are of small merit, probably dating from the seventh century, at which period the art of the mosaicist had greatly declined.<sup>2</sup> Over the small confessio, which contains the body of the saint, stands the high altar, in the centre of a square chancel

<sup>1</sup> To which, in the seventeenth century, was added a coffered and richly carved and gilded ceiling.

<sup>2</sup> The wall below retains its facing of marble slabs divided into compartments by vertical lines of darker marble.

enclosed by a balustrade. The altar was formerly covered by a ciborium of gilt bronze, the gift of the Emperor Honorius (638).

It is impossible to say how much, if any, of the church of Constantine remains in the building we see to-day. The basilica was repaired as early as 410, was restored by Symmachus in 500, and by Honorius in 626. It was so much damaged during the siege of Rome in 756 by the Lombards under Astolf that Hadrian I. rebuilt it twenty years later, and it has been extensively modernized in the present century. In spite of all these renewals, we may, however, feel some confidence that we see, if not the substance, at least the essential form of the early basilica, one of the

very few examples in Italy of early churches with galleried aisles and one of the still rarer examples of the carrying of the aisles around the entrance end of the church.<sup>1</sup>

The double basilica of San Lorenzo fuori le mura is one of the most interesting of the Christian basilicas. Its early history is obscure. Two complete and distinct churches appear to have been built, the one by Constantine or by his orders sometime before 336; the other by Sixtus III. about 435. (Fig. 24.) The two were built on the same axis, the former with its front to the east, the latter to the west, but on different levels, the earlier having been built nearly or quite on a level with the catacomb, and the two apses back to back.<sup>2</sup> The theory of Mothes may be accepted as reasonable, to the effect that the grave of the saint behind the apse of Constantine's church was inclosed by Sixtus in a crypt (which still exists), and that over this crypt he built a small basilica with its apse turned to the east, and on the west end an inclosed narthex. About 580 the church of Constantine was rebuilt by Pelagius II., who perhaps added the aisle galleries. Hadrian I., about 720,

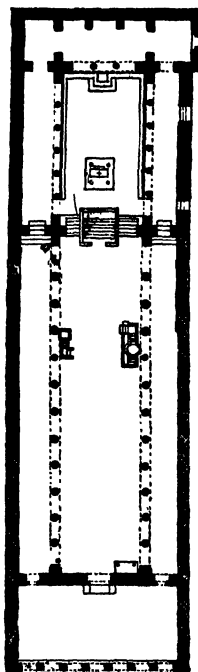


Fig. 24. S. Lorenzo.

<sup>1</sup> Gregorovius, vol. ii. p. 139; Hübsch, p. 85, pl. 36-55; Le Tarouilly, p. 225, pl. 112; Wieb, vol. i. p. 572, pl. 25.

<sup>2</sup> The arrangement was similar to that of the double temple of Venus and Rome in the Forum, built in the reign of Ant. Pius, and of which the ruins still exist. See Hübsch, pl. 1, fig. 16, for plan.

fifty years before he was Pope, being then abbot, restored and enlarged the church of Sixtus, and united the two churches by removing both apses. Finally, about 1216-1227, Honorius III. added the fine entrance porch.<sup>1</sup> In its present aspect there is little harmony between the two portions of the basilica, but the effect of the interior is one of great picturesqueness. The breadth of the two churches is the same, about 62 feet, and the nave colonnades are very nearly in the same line. The length of the front church is 133 feet, that of the rear 65 feet. The whole of the nave of the smaller church

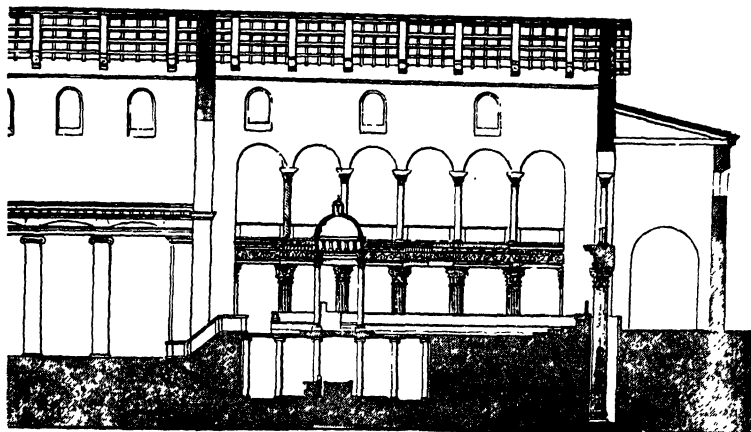


Fig. 25. S. Lorenzo. Section of the Early Church.

was, when the two were thrown together, taken for the chancel or presbytery. But as the floor of the rear church was on a considerably lower level than that of the front, it became necessary to raise it. The level of the chancel was thus made some four feet above the nave, from which it is reached by two stairs of seven steps; while two others descend from the aisles to the crypt. The space between the old floor and the new was utilized for a crypt. The lower range of columns was thus buried for nearly or quite half their height. They have recently, however, been uncovered, and are visible from the aisles, and also from the crypt. (Fig. 25.) The chancel is enclosed on either side by a low marble wall with panels of red and green porphyry, with marble benches, and backed by a screen of mosaic, with the bishop's chair in the middle. The upper and lower ranges of

<sup>1</sup> De Rossi, however, believes it was not till the time of Honorius that the two apses were removed, and the two churches made one. *Bulletin de l'Archéologie Chrétienne.*

columns in this church, both of which are carried around the east end, are so out of keeping as to warrant the belief that the upper is a later addition of Pelagius. The lower columns are extremely fine shafts of Phrygian marble, with Attic bases and Corinthian capitals, and were evidently taken from an older monument. These columns support an entablature composed of miscellaneous fragments of ancient architecture, varying in profile and enrichment. The

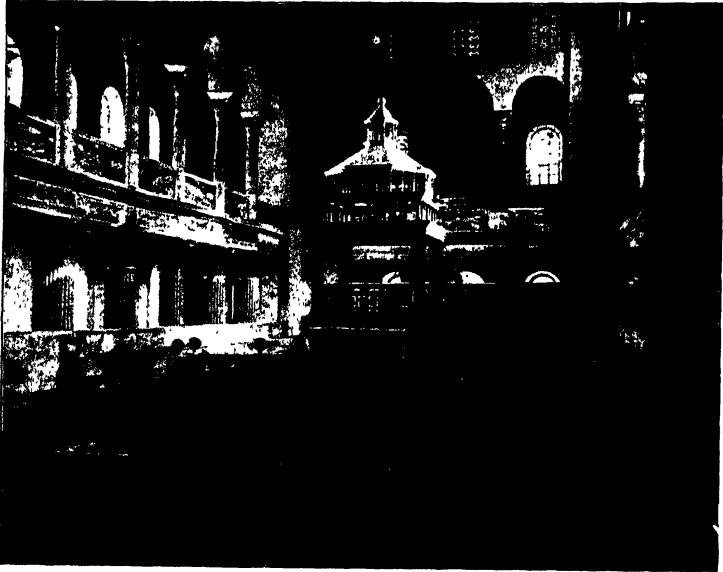


Fig. 26. S. Lorenzo. Interior of Early Church.

upper columns are very much smaller, and their capitals, whose foliage has a distinctly Byzantine character, are surmounted with stilt blocks, from which spring round arches. A very low clerestory<sup>1</sup> is pierced with small round-arched windows. It will be observed that this church had a close resemblance to S. Agnese. The triumphal arch remained after the apse was removed, — its west surface is still covered with the original mosaics and is pierced by two of the original windows, — the openings filled by marble slabs, pierced by circular holes, in which were set thin sheets of translucent alabaster. The nave and chancel are paved with opus alexandrinum.

<sup>1</sup> The height of the galleries in proportion to the clerestory is a strong indication that they were an afterthought.

The front church is of simple form, the nave and aisles separated by colonnades of eleven columns on each side, of granite and marble, the shafts and bases varying in size and design, and with Ionic capitals carrying a horizontal entablature, above which is a plain clerestory, with simple round-arched windows. Two fine ambons stand, one on either side of the nave, of rich marbles divided into panels by borders of mosaic. The roofs were all of wood without ceilings, but a richly panelled and gilded ceiling was added by Cardinal Oliviero Carafa in the sixteenth century. The great porch of entrance has six antique Ionic columns with shafts of various design, supporting an entablature whose frieze is decorated with mosaics and its crown moulding with sculpture. The church is flanked on the south by a thirteenth century campanile and by a cloister,<sup>1</sup> with arcades of grouped arches on columns with stilt blocks supporting the wall of the monastery on four sides. The groups are separated by broad pilaster-like buttresses which are continued through the full height of the wall.

The last of the basilicas attributed to Constantine or to his mother was known at first as the Sessorian basilica, from its occupying the site of the Sessorian Palace<sup>2</sup> of Sextus Varius, father of the Emperor Heliogabalus; but its name was soon changed to that by which it is known at present, of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. S. Croce  
in Geru-  
salemme. The Empress Helena having deposited within it a fragment of the true cross, which she had herself brought from Jerusalem. The original basilica, of which scarce anything is to be traced in the present church, is said by Mothes (p. 105) to have had an atrium, a porch or narthex with six granite columns, an apse without windows, nave with flat ceiling and large windows. In 720, being ruinous and roofless, it was repaired by Gregory II., the side aisles vaulted at mid-height, and galleries built above them. A single roof covered the three aisles, and a broad apse was added. The church was repaired in 1144 and 1432, and in 1743 was rebuilt almost beyond recognition. According to Gregorovius, the ancient building from which the church was formed consisted of a rectangle 52 feet by 85, with five round arches on each of its four sides, and five windows of similar form above. To this was added at one end an open porch of six columns with a closed story above. This porch

<sup>1</sup> Hübsch, p. 34, pls. 3-17; Le Taronilly, p. 555, pls. 268-272; Mothes, p. 82-96; Platner, vol. 3, ii. p. 312; Gregorovius, I. p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Or perhaps the "Sessorium" was one of the judicial basilicas of Rome. Nothing is certain about it. Platner, 3, i. p. 565.

was demolished, and a new façade built (the present one) under Benedict XIV. Whether the interior disposition of the church belongs to this period or to that of the original basilica is a disputed point impossible to determine with certainty.<sup>1</sup>

It is noticeable that the group of Constantine's basilicas includes all the varying forms which the basilica assumed in later centuries. St. Peter's and St. Paul's and perhaps the Lateran were five-aisled churches, the others were three-aisled. St. Peter and St. Paul had the long projecting transept. St. Agnes and St. Lawrence (the smaller part) had the aisle galleries. The longer, later church of St. Lawrence had neither transept nor galleries. The Sessorian basilica had the narrow transept not projecting. The naves of St. Peter and St. Lawrence (the newer part) had colonnades, the others, arches.

It should be understood that the truly cruciform plan, as emblematic, was a later growth. The transept of the basilica, even in the rare cases where it projected beyond the aisle walls, made with the nave not a cross, but a T, and it was, as before stated, separated from the nave and aisles by a solid wall, pierced by the triumphal arch at the end of the nave and by similar smaller arches at the end of the aisles. Beyond the transept there was nothing except the apse or tribune, which opened from it, and belonged to it. Not until the connection became more intimate between the nave and aisles and the transept, and the nave and in some cases the aisles were driven through the transept, and prolonged on the far side of it, did the plan become a true cross. This change was part of the development into the Romanesque.

The group of basilicas thus created in the first years of the recognized establishment of the Christian Church were but the prototypes of a long line of basilicas in Rome and all over Italy,<sup>2</sup> varying

<sup>1</sup> But Hübsch argues with much reason in this, as in other similar cases, that it would have been difficult in the Middle Ages to procure a dozen similar antique columns of the dimensions of those here employed.

The basilica of SS. Pietro e Marcellino is also mentioned by Mothes, Platner, and others as having been built by Constantine. The church still exists (near the Lateran), but with scarce any trace of its original construction, of which nothing is known with certainty.

<sup>2</sup> And not only in Italy. Constantine, whose zeal for church building was by no means exhausted when he left Italy, built, in conjunction with his mother, the Empress Helena, churches in all the places made memorable by events in the life of Christ, — at Bethlehem, at Nazareth, at Bethany, at Mount Tabor, and especially at Jerusalem, where two great basilicas were erected, one on the Mount of Olives, the other on Calvary. (Vitet, *Études*, ii. p. 237.) Constantinople, at the close of the fifth century, reckoned not less



greatly in plan, disposition of parts, and dimensions, as well as in richness of decoration and of material, but retaining with remarkable constancy the essential features of the type. The persistency of the basilican type of churches in Rome is remarkable. But, unlike most other styles, it cannot be said to have had any gradual development either of construction or design. The first examples were the best and most complete; those which followed were, as a rule, but partial examples. St. Peter's and St. Paul's were not only the largest and most imposing, but the most fully typical. People built as they could. In all but the earliest basilicas transepts were exceptional, and atriums and galleries over aisles were equally so.

It is to be remarked that henceforth it is not from the civil power that church building derives its activity, but from the energy and enthusiasm of the Popes. Julius I., who was Pope from 337 to 352, had shared to a considerable extent the interest of Constantine in this work. He was the builder of S. Maria in Trastevere. Under his immediate successor, Liberius, was built the great church of S. Maria Maggiore, sometimes called the Liberian basilica, and the only one not already mentioned which ranks among the basilicas of the first class. (Fig. 27.) It was built between 352 and 356 at the cost of a rich childless patrician, on the site of the private basilica of Sicinius, whence it was at first known as the Sicinian basilica.<sup>1</sup> Eighty years later, it was rebuilt, enlarged, and otherwise somewhat altered by Pope Sixtus III. The original church had no transept and no entrance porch; Sixtus removed the two western columns of each row in the nave, *i. e.* the two nearest the tribune, and turned a single round arch over the opening thus made, and a similar but larger one across the nave for the triumphal arch, which he decorated on its inner face with mosaics, thus gaining an unbroken, though narrow, transept, from one aisle wall to the other. The four columns

S. Maria  
Maggiore.

than fourteen Christian churches besides many oratories and chapels, and Antioch was probably not much behind her.

Constantine's work was continued on an equal scale two centuries later by Justinian, but the churches were no longer of the basilican type. The Byzantine architecture had come in. But in 614, Palestine was invaded and Jerusalem taken by the Persians, who made a point of destroying, as far as lay in their power, every Christian building. What the Persians left, the Mohammedans finished a few years later. Again in 1010, the Caliph Hakim-Biamr-illah ordered and saw carried out the deliberate destruction of all the churches of Jerusalem. Thus the Crusaders, at the end of the eleventh century, found little of the ancient work of the Christian builders. But what the Persians and Mussulmans left, the Crusaders themselves abolished in their rage for new churches during the eighty years of their occupation of the Holy Land. De Vogüé, *La Syrie Centrale*, p. 28.

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, p. 60. Its present name dates only from the eighth century.

taken away were set at the east end of the church, and made the chief feature of a narthex or porch. The clerestory wall was pierced

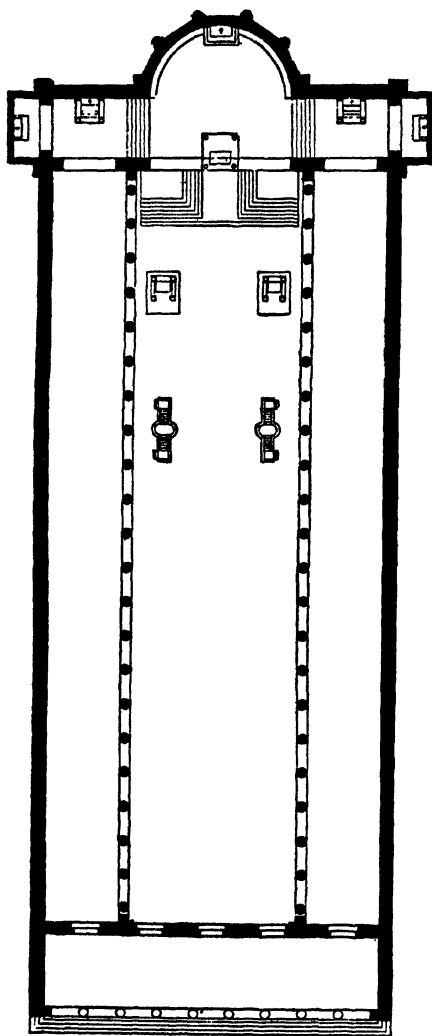


Fig. 27. S. Maria Maggiore.

with round-arched windows by Gregory III. in 732; the apse was rebuilt by Paschal I. in 818. The mosaic pavement was laid towards the end of the thirteenth century at the cost of two noblemen of Rome. Many chapels were added during and after the fifteenth century, and in 1500 the open roof of the nave was concealed by a richly panelled and gilded wooden ceiling. The church was repaired extensively by Benedict XIV. in 1743, but no essential change was made in the interior. The exterior was entirely rebuilt.<sup>1</sup>

The great interior is, in design, perhaps the simplest of all the great basilicas, but its magnificent dimensions, the richness of its materials, and the unbroken continuity of its colonnades combine to make it one of the most effective and imposing of all the Roman churches. It is a rectangle about two hundred and sixty-five feet long and one hundred and ten feet wide inside the walls. The nave, the only original part left, has a breadth of sixty feet and a height of sixty. It is separated

<sup>1</sup> Le Tarouilly, p. 605, *et seq.*

from the aisles by long colonnades of Ionic columns of white marble and granite, 25 feet high, with narrow intervals, carrying a horizontal entablature, with mosaic frieze and decorated cornice, above which rises a clerestory wall, with flat Corinthian pilasters over the columns below, and pierced with large round-headed windows, under which are square panels inclosing what Hübsch believes to be the oldest mosaics in Rome. The face of the triumphal arch is also decorated with mosaics, perhaps of equal antiquity. Those of the tribune itself

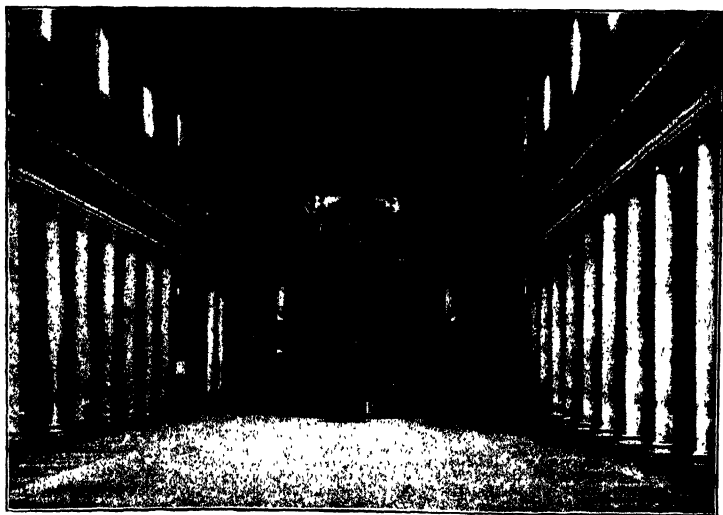


Fig. 28. S. Maria Maggiore.

were given by Nicholas IV. at the end of the thirteenth century, who also adorned the upper part of the front with mosaics of similar character. The nave is covered by a coffered ceiling richly painted and gilded;<sup>1</sup> the aisles are covered with barrel vaults.

The majestic continuity of the great nave colonnades was sadly impaired when the two cruciform chapels were built between 1586 and 1630, one on either side of the church, the one by Pope Sixtus V., the other by the Borghese family, — when, to mark the entrances to these ambitious family monuments, two intervals of the colonnade on each side were thrown into one and covered by a broad and high arch springing from coupled columns.

<sup>1</sup> Hübsch maintains that the present ceiling, which dates from the fifteenth century, replaced an older one, and that the practice of leaving the roof open and visible was one which prevailed only in the poorer days of the church.

The basilica of Sta. Pudenziana, near S. Maria Maggiore, has a singular interest, both historical and architectural. Its origin is variously referred to the second century<sup>1</sup> and to the beginning of the fourth, in either of which cases it would antedate all those of which I have spoken above. It is asserted that this was, before the recognition of the Christian religion by Constantine, regarded by the Christians as the cathedral church. It was first restored under Hadrian I., near the close of the eighth century, and later in the eleventh, twelfth, and sixteenth. Portions of the original work are, however, still to be traced. The interior is a rectangle about 54 feet wide and 94 feet long. The columns which separated the nave from the aisles, seven on each side, of gray marble, with capitals of singular and most unclassic design, are now partially inclosed by the piers from which start the partition walls which now divide the aisles into square chapels. Their bases, or rather the plinths which take the place of bases, are concealed beneath the pavement. They carry round arches, and a clerestory wall pierced with broad round-arched windows. On either side of the entrance door a column is visible, partly inclosed by the end wall of the nave, which seems to point to a former interior narthex, similar to that of the choir end of S. Lorenzo fuori. There are no transepts, but the nave, about 29 feet wide, terminates in a tribune of a form quite without parallel, — a square bay<sup>2</sup> with a flat curve at the back. The wall and segmental vault of this tribune are covered with mosaics of great beauty and of undoubted antiquity, but whether of the date of the original building or of the restoration by Hadrian is not now determinable.<sup>3</sup> Far below the pavement of the church are extensive remains of what is supposed to be the house of the Senator Pudens (the father of St. Praxeda and St. Pudenziana) upon which traces of interesting frescoes are still visible. The façade of the church is brilliant with frescoes, but of no great antiquity.

The basilica of San Clemente has retained through all its successive restorations more of its original character than any other. The original structure is said by Mothes to have been in existence as

<sup>1</sup> Mothes says Pius I., as early as 145, converted the Baths of Novatus into a church at the request of S. Praxeda, which was a little later dedicated to her sister, S. Pudenziana. Hübsch says the conversion dates from the fourth century, basing his conviction mainly on the character of the brickwork. P. 6, pl. vii., viii.

<sup>2</sup> Now covered by a high dome on pendentives.

<sup>3</sup> De Rossi maintains with confidence that these mosaics are of the fourth century. Vitet (*Études sur l'histoire de l'Art*, vol. i. pp. 220-239) declares them to be the finest mosaics in Rome. Mothes, pp. 65-108; Platner, 3, ii. p. 256.

early as 308, forming, then, as in the case of S. Pudentiana, a portion of the house of a Roman citizen. It is mentioned by St. Jerome in 392; it was adorned in 449 by Leo I., and in 532 by John II.; in 570 the adjacent Benedictine monastery was founded by Gregory the Great. In 772 the roof was renewed, and in the arrangement of the choir in the nave was perfected. A destructive fire in 1084 greatly injured the church, which was, however, restored in 1099.

The history of this restoration is one of the most singular and interesting in the annals of architecture. Some soundings, made in 1857 preparatory to certain repairs on the adjoining convent, resulted in the accidental discovery of a church below the basilica, whose existence had not been suspected. Excavations were at once undertaken by De Rossi, which brought to light the lower part of the ancient basilica destroyed in 1084, of which the walls and colonnades had been used as the foundations in rebuilding. The floor of the old church was about 12 feet below that of the new. Its nave had the breadth of the nave and right aisle of the upper church, nearly 50 feet. Its columns, which were strongly Byzantine in character, supported horizontal entablatures, and were divided by two piers on each side into three groups of openings each. The wall of the aisles had been covered with fresco paintings on stucco, and some of these are still in a tolerable state of preservation. The columns of the left hand row had been enclosed by square piers, the sides of which were also covered with frescoes in much better condition than those on the walls. At the west end of the church was the flat apse, somewhat larger than the new one, and at the other end a narthex extending across the whole breadth of nave and aisles, backed by a solid wall of brick, and opening to the church by an open range of

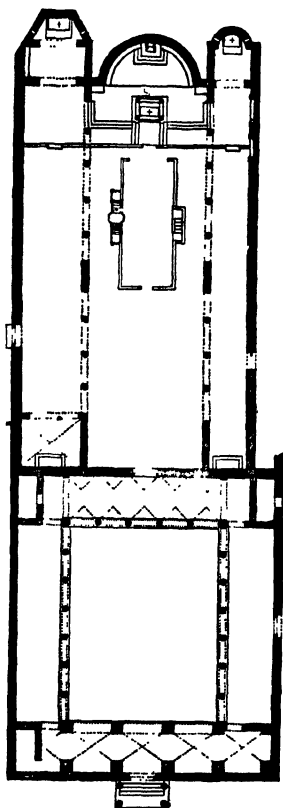


Fig. 29. S. Clemente.

eight marble columns also joined by a later wall, covered, like the aisle walls, with paintings.

In its present state the upper church (Figs. 29, 30) is remarkable as showing us, more faithfully, perhaps, than any other existing example, what was the exterior and interior aspect of an early Christian basilica. In the first place, its atrium is complete, — the only perfect one in Rome.<sup>1</sup> It is about 48 feet wide and 60 feet long, and is surrounded by ranges of Ionic columns on three sides and on the fourth by square piers. These latter are on the entrance side of the court, and, as well as the columns of the opposite narthex, carry round arches, the ceilings being groined, while those of the longer sides carry a horizontal entablature with flat wood ceiling above. The atrium is entered through a square open porch with four antique columns carrying round arches and a groined roof.

From the narthex, the church is entered by a single doorway in the centre of the nave. It is a rectangle about 115 feet long and 71 feet wide. The nave is separated from the aisles — of which the left is much broader than the right, — by arcades of marble columns with Ionic capitals. Each arcade is divided into two groups of five<sup>2</sup> openings each by a broad square pier, faced with two pilasters. Above the arcade is a plain and low entablature, and over this rises the bare clerestory wall, now pierced by square windows. The roofs were exposed, but the latest restorer has hung beneath them in nave and aisles a panelled ceiling painted and gilded like a ballroom. There is no transept, but the nave and aisles are each terminated by an apse, that of the left aisle polygonal, the others semicircular. The floor of the central apse is raised by some steps above that of the nave, and its walls and hemispherical vault are covered with the fine mosaics of the twelfth or thirteenth century, while the mosaics on the wall above the arch of the tribune are presumed to date from the end of the eleventh century.<sup>3</sup> The bishop's chair stands in the centre of the curve of the apse, and is flanked by the bench for the presbyters.<sup>4</sup> The altar stands at the front of the presbytery, under a ciborium. Directly in front of it, occupying the centre of the nave for nearly one half its length, is the long rectangular choir, enclosed by a beautiful screen of marble about 5 1-2 feet high, with

<sup>1</sup> Several other basilicas, as S. Prassede, SS. Quattro Coronati, S. Martino ai Monti, have the remains of atriums, showing more or less of the original arrangement.

<sup>2</sup> S. Maria in Cosmedin has a similar arrangement. See plan in Hübsch, pl. 45, fig. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Or from Pascal II., beginning of the twelfth century. See Vitet, p. 299.

<sup>4</sup> Gutensohn & Knapp, Hübsch, Mothes, Le Tarouilly, Platner, Gregorovius, etc.

square panels decorated with emblematic devices in mosaic, and flanked on either side by an ambon or pulpit of marble.

S. Maria in Trastevere is said to have been built originally by St. Calixtus about 220. If so, it was rebuilt by Pope Julius I., about 345, as a full basilica with atrium and open portico, and in the interior a nave and aisles separated by eleven antique columns on each side, partly Ionic, partly Corinthian, carrying a horizontal entablature; the nave and aisles each opening by a

S. Maria  
in Trastevere.



Fig. 30. S. Clemente.

round arch into a transept which had no projection beyond the aisle walls, and from whose centre opened an apse as broad as the nave. It was repaired in 707, and its tribune then or later decorated with fine mosaics. The tribune was rebuilt about 850, after an attack on the city by the Saracens, and a few years later the nave was restored and its windows glazed. Under Innocent II., a substantial rebuilding took place in 1140, but the church still retains, in spite of its many restorations, most of its original features,<sup>1</sup> though its interior aspect, like that of others of the ancient basilicas, is now that of a

<sup>1</sup> Hübsch says, "Nothing is left of the church of the fourth century."

Renaissance church. The façade retains the mosaics of the twelfth century, and some of the frescoes on the walls of the entrance porch. The apse has mosaics of the same date, which are among the finest in Rome.<sup>1</sup>

The small church of SS. Cosmo e Damiano,<sup>2</sup> near the Forum, has an interesting history and an unusual disposition of parts. It is believed to have been built by Pope Felix IV. about 527. In front of it stood a more ancient circular domed temple,

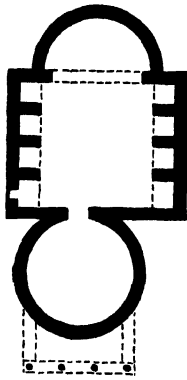


Fig. 31. SS. Cosmo e Damiano.

perhaps of Romulus and Remus, with a fine portico of four Corinthian columns, which either then or at some later date was joined to the newer church, of which it made an imposing porch. (Fig. 31.) The church had a short nave about fifty-eight feet wide, without aisles, but with three shallow rectangular recesses on each side, and terminating in a broad and lofty tribune, covered with admirable mosaics, which still remain, although somewhat changed by restorations, and which are therefore among the oldest in Rome.<sup>3</sup>

The church was restored in a general way by Hadrian I., but about 1632, the level of the exterior soil having greatly risen, the interior of both church and temple was divided by Urban VIII.

by a new floor some thirteen feet above the old one, supported on groined vaulting. The lower church thus formed retained its ancient altar, but the ciborium was necessarily removed on account of its height. The upper portion was largely rebuilt at the same time; the nave was narrowed to forty feet and covered with a barrel vault, and the space at the sides divided into square chapels. The present brick façade of the church shows above the dome of the rotunda a row of three simple round-headed windows, over which is a thin cornice and a low gable, which Hübsch believes to be a portion of the original work.<sup>4</sup>

Santa Maria in Cosmedin was originally a Roman temple, whether dedicated to Ceres, Fortuna, or Pudicitia, is not certain; but it was converted into a church by Bishop Damasus about 380, and rebuilt one hundred and fifty years later by Belisarius for a

<sup>1</sup> Vitet, p. 283; Gut. & Knapp, interior view, pl. 30.

<sup>2</sup> These were the names of two brothers, from Arabia, who became physicians in Rome, and suffered martyrdom under Diocletian.

<sup>3</sup> Good representation of these in Gut. & Knapp, pl. 42.

<sup>4</sup> For plan, see Le Tarouilly, pl. 249; Gut. & Knapp; Platner; Hübsch.



Greek congregation under the name of S. Maria in Scola Græca. It was again rebuilt by Hadrian I. between 772 and 795, when it took its present name. Its nave arcades of round arches on columns of various shapes and sizes, all too big for their capitals, some of which are surmounted by low stilt-blocks of extremely rude construction and design, are divided on each side by long piers, or rather stretches of wall, into three groups of four arches each. Several of the columns of the original temple are still to be seen, imbedded in the side and end walls of the church. The ancient exterior porch of five round arches is also preserved, and the ancient episcopal chair is still in place, but the flanking benches of the presbyters are new. The nave retains a part of its original pavement of opus reticulatum. The ancient presbytery or choir, with its two ambons, continues to occupy the centre of the nave, its floor slightly raised. Late repairs have uncovered a two-light arched window, with dividing columns in the middle apse, and another of similar character in one of the side apses, evidently opened during the restoration of Hadrian. Beneath the presbytery is an interesting crypt in the form of a small basilica, with a ceiling of marble slabs supported by six columns.<sup>1</sup>

San Pietro in Vincoli, known also as the Basilica Eudoxiana, from its founder, built during the pontificate of Leo I. about S. Pietro 450, restored in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, to in Vincoll. say nothing of later modernizations, retains some of its original features; *e. g.* the nave arcades, of ten antique fluted columns of Greek marble on each side, with Doric capitals, and the triumphal arch, springing from two fine granite Corinthian columns, and opening into a transept divided into three groined compartments by broad arches in the line of the nave arcades. The transept has three apses corresponding to the nave and aisles respectively, each covered by a semi-dome. The transept is covered by groined vaults over the three compartments, — the earliest instance on record, if they are contemporary with the church; the aisles are also groined, but the nave is now covered by a low elliptical barrel vault which has replaced the original wooden ceiling. The clerestory is pierced by square windows. The façade is quite concealed by a modern two-story porch. The atrium has disappeared, but traces of it are still visible.

Santa Sabina, one of three basilicas built on the ruins of ancient Roman temples, is in its origin one of the oldest churches of Rome.

<sup>1</sup> The noble tower of the church, twenty-seven feet square and two hundred and twenty feet high, one of the finest of the campaniles, dates from the eighth century.

Early in the fifth century, the Temple of Liberty on the Aventine  
 s. Sabina. was converted into a church, using the walls and the  
 twenty-four columns of the lower story, in their original  
 positions, the upper columns being probably used in the atrium. It  
 was restored under Hadrian I. late in the eighth century, and again  
 under Eugenius II. in 824.<sup>1</sup> Its plan is very simple. There is no  
 transept, the nave and right aisle terminate in apses, the left aisle  
 in a square recess. The three easternmost bays of nave and aisles

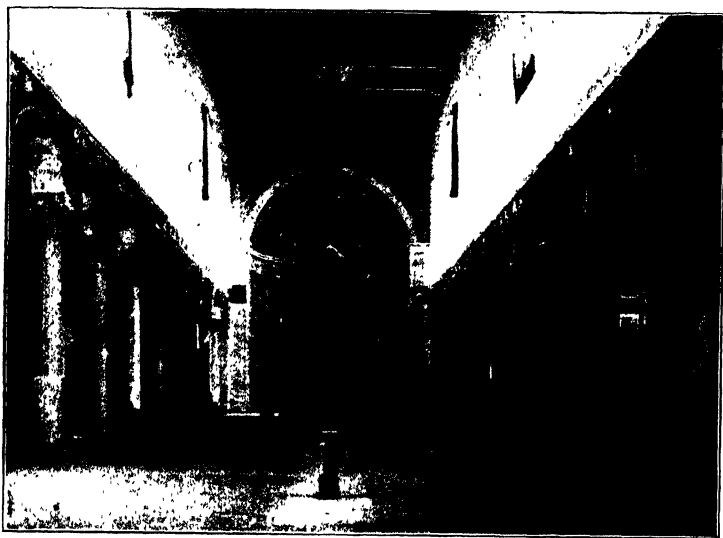


Fig. 32. S. Sabina.

are raised some steps above the nave, the steps running across the whole breadth of the church. The nave arcades are supported by twelve fine fluted antique columns on each side, of Greek marble with Corinthian capitals. The walls above are pierced by the large round-arched windows, three on each side, peculiar to the earliest basilicas. The decoration of the arcades, which dates probably from the restorations of Eugenius II., is unique. Directly over the arch-heads runs a frieze of marble inlay, with circles, lozenges, and squares

<sup>1</sup> Platner, vol. 3, i. p. 413, has a clear account of the successive restorations. "At the end of the sixteenth century, the three stages of its architectural history were shown side by side, viz. the floor and walls of the old church of the fifth century, the choir end of Eugenius II. of the ninth century, and the restorations of the thirteenth century and later."

of green, red, and pale yellow, on a white ground. Below this frieze the spandrels are filled with an imitation of brickwork in white marble with chocolate colored joints—the surface divided by a vertical rectangular panel over each capital, composed of a geometrical pattern of green marble on a ground of red porphyry, or vice versa. (Fig. 33.) The effect is admirably strong and harmonious.

The nave and aisles are covered by barn-like roofs. There is no mosaic in the apses, but a broad band of it stretches across the whole front wall of the nave above the doors, with a long inscription and a standing figure of a saint in a panel at either end. A cloister

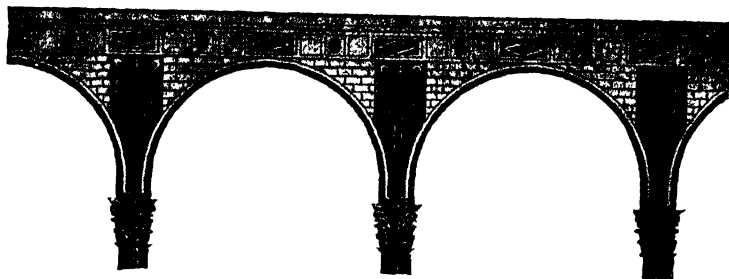


Fig. 33. S. Sabina. Decoration of Nave Arcade.

lies to the west of the church, of a design unusual in Rome, and suggesting the influence of Lombard examples.

Not far from the date of the origin of S. Sabina, that is to say, early in the fifth century,<sup>1</sup> the temple of Diana on the Cælian SS. Quattro Coronati. was converted into the church of SS. Quattro Coronati, so named in commemoration of four Christian soldiers who suffered death for their faith under Diocletian. The church was rebuilt about 630 by Honorius. The two arcades of thirteen columns each, carrying round arches, with the galleries above enclosed by smaller arcades with Ionic columns, the arches springing from stilt-blocks (perhaps a later addition), were preserved in the new church, as was also the apse, opening directly from the nave, without the intervention of a transept. Under Leo IV., about 850, the church was enlarged and embellished, but at the end of the eleventh century it was partially destroyed by the Norman Robert Guiscard and rebuilt by Paschal II. Whether at this time or another does not clearly appear, the church appears to have reversed the usual history and been diminished in size; for its present plan, a very unusual one,

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, p. 78. Anastasius ascribes its foundation to Honorius I.

is radically different from that of the original church. The church has two atriums, one behind the other, each of which has on the side nearest the church an arcaded porch with groined ceiling. From

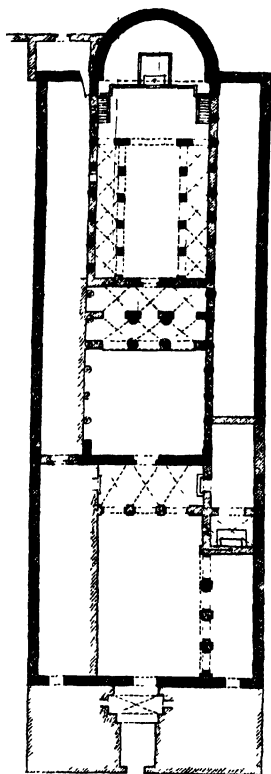


Fig. 34. SS. Quattro Coronati.

the inner of these porches the church is entered by a single doorway in the centre of the nave. It is the only instance remaining of a basilica with both aisle-galleries and atrium. The nave is now bounded by arcades of five arches, which stop against large square piers, and opens into a transept as broad as itself, from which opens a semicircular apse of the whole breadth of nave and aisles. In the right hand wall of the inner atrium and of the porch which precedes the entrance to the church are six engaged columns with arches joining them, apparently belonging to the original nave arcade. Whence it is presumed, first, that the nave of the original basilica had the width of the present nave and aisles, — about fifty feet, — and second, that the length of the original nave and aisles included the space now occupied by the inner atrium and its porch.<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 34.)

The outer atrium, a portion of that of the original church, is of modern aspect, but has at its front an ancient square tower, very broad and massive, pierced at the base by a pointed arched vault giving entrance to the court, the only

other feature being a range of four small round-arched openings at the top on each face divided by stumpy mid-wall columns; some of the openings are filled up.

San Martino ai Monti, built about 500 by Symmachus, restored by Sergius II. in the ninth century, and again in the thirteenth and seventeenth, has the aspect of a lesser S. M. Maggiore. Its fine nave colonnades, each of twelve antique Corinthian columns, mostly of white marble on high plinths, and substan-

<sup>1</sup> Platner, 3, i. p. 503. Small plan in Hübsch, pl. 3. Canina.

tially alike in size and design, support a horizontal entablature at half the height of the nave, above which is a high clerestory wall with flat pilasters and arched windows. All ceilings are flat except that of the apse. There is no transept, but a central apse of the usual form, of which the floor, with that of a portion of the nave, including two bays, is raised some feet above that of the rest of the nave, in order to give greater height to an ancient crypt,<sup>1</sup> divided into three groined bays, and entered by a descending stair from the centre of the nave under three arches, while side staircases ascend to the floor of the tribune, — an arrangement prefiguring that of San Zeno at Verona, San Miniato at Florence, and others.<sup>2</sup> The ancient atrium is reduced to a bare court before the church.

With the sixth century, the building of basilicas greatly declines; the early impulse has lost its force. The condition of Rome has become more and more deplorable. Amidst all the turbulent life of Italy she alone lies empty and dead, defenceless against her wild and barbarous enemies. The chief activity which we can discern lies in the building of monasteries, and the constant processions of monks and nuns and German pilgrims. The buildings of ancient Rome have mostly fallen into ruin, and the supply of classic columns for the basilicas is nearly exhausted. In the earlier basilicas the columns are fine, large, and similar in size and form. In the later, they are generally smaller and of heterogeneous design.<sup>3</sup>

The small but interesting basilica of S. Giorgio in Velabro, called the Sempronian basilica from its occupying the site of a <sup>S. Giorgio</sup> palace of the Sempronii, is an illustration of the decay of <sup>in Velabro.</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This crypt was restored in the seventeenth century by P. da Cortona in a somewhat pompous Roman style.

<sup>2</sup> Bunsen (vol. iii. p. 240) says this arrangement dates only from 1640, when the church was modernized, while Mothes (p. 89) speaks of the "*S44-erhöhten Altarplatz.*"

<sup>3</sup> When Gregory the Great was ordained in 590, the city was nearly deserted. It was still in the throes of a frightful pestilence which had killed his predecessor Pelagius, who had just rebuilt the basilica of S. Lorenzo. It is related that while the procession which celebrated the accession of Gregory was passing through the streets of Rome, eighty persons stricken with the plague dropped out of the procession and died on the spot. (Gregorovius, ii. 38.) During the first year of Gregory's reign, Rome was besieged by the Lombard king Agilulf, husband of Queen Theodolind, who was bought off by the Pope. The people flocked in crowds to the porticoes of the churches and to the cloisters of the monasteries, to receive food and clothing at the hands of the priests. (*Ibid.* p. 61.) In strong contrast to this miserable picture is a glimpse we get of the occasional luxury of private life in Rome in this same century. Boethius, Roman senator, thrown into prison at Pavia by Theodoric, who shortly after put him to death, "lamented chiefly his sumptuous library — its panels inlaid with ebony and various colored glass." Gregorovius, i. 327.

the art of building at this dismal period. It was towards the close of the sixth century that Pelagius II. is supposed to have built it. If so, it had come in a hundred years to such a condition as to require a complete reconstruction. This was done about 682 by Pope Leo II., who added the square campanile which rises out of the southwest corner, and which is thus one of the earliest in Rome. The design and construction of the church are very rude and irregular. Its plan is in one respect peculiar: the ground narrows towards the rear, and the nave and aisles all narrow in conformity towards the tribune, — the nave from twenty-eight feet to twenty-four. The aisles are also of unequal width, the north aisle being about fifteen feet wide at the entrance end, the south aisle some three feet wider. There is no transept, but the nave terminates in an apse with raised floor, which is continued through one bay of the nave, and beneath which is the confessio in which the body of St. George was deposited. The nave arcades are carried on granite and marble columns with capitals of various style and design, some surmounted by stilt-blocks. A porch of classic design is attached to the west front, with four Ionic columns between square angle piers, carrying a ponderous entablature, more than half as high as the columns.

The period immediately preceding and following the close of the eighth century was somewhat less dismal. One more of the many crises, which were so frequent in the history of Rome, had passed. The Lombards, after besieging the city, ravaging the Campagna, and plundering the catacombs, had been driven away; the strong party which they had raised up within the walls had been rendered powerless, and Hadrian I., one of the most illustrious of the long line of Popes, entered in 772 on a long, useful, and comparatively peaceful reign, during which his best efforts were given to the amelioration of the condition of the capital and the rehabilitation of its monuments. Hadrian found many of the basilicas in ruins, and others threatening ruin. These he took vigorously in hand, rebuilding some from the foundations and restoring others. In fact, there was scarcely one of the basilicas of the fourth and fifth centuries which he did not overhaul and to a greater or less extent repair. His most important works were the rebuilding of the very early basilica of S. Pudenziana, and of the later S. Maria in Cosmedin. Besides his great activity in building, Hadrian found time to strengthen greatly the walls of Rome, to repair the aqueducts, to reclaim important portions of the Campagna, to drain for the second time the pestiferous Pontine marshes. His

Hadrian's  
work  
on the  
basilicas.

reign of twenty-three years was perhaps more fruitful in works of real value and beneficence than any other in the history of the Papacy.

Leo III. continued the activity of his predecessor. At the Lateran he built or restored the triclinium, and renewed the decaying roofs of the basilica and the baptistery. At the Vatican he built new dwellings for the bishops, and restored the tower of the basilica and the baptistery of Damasus. He founded the Naumachian hospital near the Vatican, restored two at least of the neighboring monasteries, enlarged the basilicas of S. Anastasia and S. Pancrazio, and entirely rebuilt on higher ground the ancient church of SS. Nereus and Achilles on the Via Appia, which had been nearly destroyed by the repeated overflows of the Tiber. Not content with these and other important works at the capital, he also sent architects from Rome to restore Theodoric's basilica of S. Apollinare at Ravenna.

Then followed, after a year's interval, in 817, Paschal I., who, in the first year of his reign, rebuilt the old basilica of S. Prassede. S. Prassede, built originally in the fourth or fifth century, and one of the most interesting of the early churches. Its plan is in one respect unique among the early basilicas. (Fig. 35.) Its nave and aisles are separated by low colonnades with twelve openings on each side, whose columns carry a horizontal entablature; but these colonnades are divided each into four groups by rectangular piers, measuring three and four fifths by seven feet, placed transversely, of which each pair is connected by a transverse round arch thrown across the nave, which is thus divided into four rectangular bays. This arrangement, common in the Romanesque churches of Northern Italy, is quite without parallel in Rome, and it is difficult to believe that it was a part of the original disposition in Santa Prassede. The abutting of the entablature of the colonnade against the side faces of the piers, without any preparation for the support of their ends; the projection of the piers themselves into the aisles for a quarter of the breadth of the aisles; finally the sufficient constructive reason for the arches, as strengthening the whole rather shabby fabric, — the nave being forty-three feet wide, the columns supporting a nave wall twice their height, and the aisles being covered by a clumsy elliptical barrel vault, — all lead one to the conclusion that the piers and their transverse arches were a later addition to the original scheme, suggested by the arrangement of the Lombard churches. The nave opened by a triumphal arch covered with early

mosaics<sup>1</sup> into a transept about twenty feet wide, which projected slightly beyond the aisle walls, and from the centre of which opened a semicircular apse as broad as the nave, covered by a semi-dome. The later rebuildings have converted the transept ends into closed chapels with galleries over them, and the crossing has become a long rectangular transverse bay of the choir. The original church had an atrium, which from the lay of the land could hardly have differed much in extent or plan from the present court, which covers a square of about forty-five feet, and, lying considerably above the street level, is reached through a long passage some fifteen feet wide, with ascending stairs of twenty-one steps. The entrance from the street is covered by a projecting porch similar to that of S. Clemente, with an arch supported by two columns and covered by a low gable. The confessio under the high altar is approached by a narrow passage from the end of the nave.<sup>2</sup>

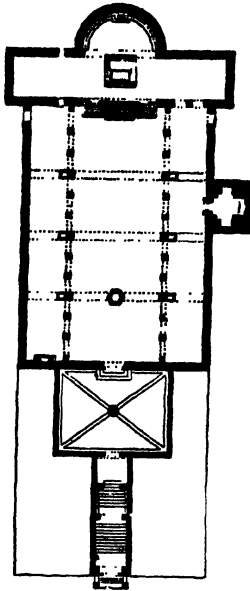


Fig. 35. S. Prassede.

Paschal also rebuilt the basilicas of S. Cecilia in Trastevere, and S. Maria in Domnica, commonly known as the Navicella. The former church was one of the few Roman basilicas which

were built with galleries over the aisles and on the end over the narthex, like those of S. Agnese. It had also an atrium and entrance porch, which have been retained through all the various destructive restorations to which the church has been subjected. The mosaics of the apse still remain in tolerable preservation.

Two basilicas very similar in plan and disposition of parts are those of S. M. Ara Cœli and San Vincenzo alle Fontane. The latter church is much the earlier in date, having been founded by Honorius early in the seventh century, and rebuilt from the foundation in 796. The church was lengthened in rebuilding, but kept otherwise its original foundations. Its general arrangement

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the mosaics and details, chapels, etc., of S. Prassede, see Plat, 3, ii. pp. 245-255.

<sup>2</sup> Le Tarouilly, p. 673, pl. 329; Hübsch, pl. 45; Mothes, p. 113.



was, however, radically changed. The early church had an interior narthex, and no transept, but an elliptical apse opening directly from the nave. In the rebuilding, an exterior porch with Ionic columns was substituted for the narthex, and the nave arches were carried as before on square piers of unusual size; but the nave and aisles were made to open into a well-developed transept projecting boldly beyond the aisles, but with the high nave walls carried across it on broad arches dividing it into three compartments, the centre one being as high as the nave, the sides not much higher than the aisles. From the centre compartment opened, instead of the usual semicircular tribune, a square chancel, also low, with three windows over its arch, and flanked on each side by two chapels opening from the transept ends. The church is flanked on the left by an interesting cloister, of which the age is not known.

The church of S. Maria in Ara Cœli, or S. Maria in Capitolio, is first mentioned near the end of the tenth century (founded 988 by Crescentius, says Mothes). Its most conspicuous external feature — the great staircase of one hundred and twenty-four steps by which its entrance is reached — was added about 1160. At various periods during the next century the church underwent more or less important restorations, and in 1250, coming into possession of the Franciscans, it received in many of its minor forms a distinctly Gothic character. The nave arches are carried on eleven antique columns on each side, mostly of granite, but of various sizes, and with capitals of different design. The nave and aisles open into a long transept projecting boldly beyond the aisle walls. From its centre opens a rectangular chancel which replaced, in 1560, the original apse. A range of lateral chapels has been added to the aisles, making the total breadth of the church equal to the length of the transept. The nave has a flat wooden ceiling, carved and gilded; the aisles are vaulted. The church is 190 feet long, exclusive of the apse, and 86 feet broad, the nave 46 feet wide. The façade retains its concave overhanging cornice.

S. Maria  
in Ara  
Cœli.

As might be expected, the basilican form, which had established itself at Rome during the first centuries after the Peace of the Church, was adopted for the churches which sprang up all over Italy. But as the provinces were much more exposed to attack from hostile forces than the capital, and as they also became the residence — more or less temporary, to be sure — of the various tribes of foreigners who successively overran the country, but who affected only in a very slight degree the population of the capital, it was inevitable

that the early style of building should be less rigidly adhered to than at Rome. Hence it is that as early as the sixth century we find both the design and construction of the provincial churches undergoing radical changes in various directions, while those of Rome remained for seven hundred years true to the early type. The basilican plan was, however, retained in the provinces, particularly those of the north, long after the methods of construction and the design of the Roman churches had been outgrown.

The most important of the provincial towns in the fifth and sixth centuries was Ravenna. It was the great naval station of the Empire; it was the seat of the imperial court under Honorius, who had fled from Rome in 402 at the approach of Alaric, leaving the capital to purchase an ignoble truce from the Gothic chief, which, however, did not save the city from sack eight years later. From 493 to 526 it was the capital of the great Theodoric, and these thirty-three years may be considered as the culmination of the city's greatness, though the impulse it then received was not altogether lost until the end of the sixth century. Ravenna is made interesting to the architect by two groups of buildings separated from each other, speaking largely, by an interval of a hundred years. The first group comprises the early cathedral of Bishop Ursus, dating from the end of the fourth century — originally a five-aisled basilica, which was in a tolerable state of preservation as late as the eighteenth century, when it was entirely rebuilt, with the exception of the round bell-tower, in the debased Renaissance style of that age; the Orthodox baptistery attached to the cathedral a quarter of a century later, and known as S. Giovanni in Fonte; the four basilican churches of Sant' Agatha, San Francesco, San Giovanni Battista, and San Giovanni Evangelista, all nearly contemporary and dating from the years between 425 and 440; and two smaller buildings, — the chapel of the archiepiscopal palace and the exquisite mausoleum of the Empress Galla Placidia. These are the Roman buildings.

The four basilicas are closely similar in design — all strictly Roman in plan, all showing the Byzantine influence in the character of the leafage of their capitals and in the use everywhere of the stilt-block. On the exterior the walls have blind arcades on pilaster strips,<sup>1</sup> in some of which the arches are concentric with those of the windows. Sometimes the pilaster strips terminate in stretches of

<sup>1</sup> The contemporary church of S. Lorenzo in Lucina, in Rome, shows this feature for the first time in the capital.

small arches forming a corbel table — a feature which appears here for the first time in Italy, but which was adopted later in the Lombard buildings of the north of Italy, where it became a characteristic of that style which we call the Lombard Romanesque.

The second group, much smaller in number, but of surpassing interest, includes the two great basilicas of San Apollinare, the octagonal church of San Vitale, and the Mausoleum of Theodoric. Of these four, only two, namely, San Apollinare Nuovo and the Mausoleum, were due directly to the great Goth, but the others were begun shortly after his death. The whole group covers the first third of the sixth century.

The reign of Theodoric was a breathing-time during which the arts flourished under a wise and intelligent patronage. Ravenna and Rome were for a generation comparatively Theodoric the Goth. free from the constant sieges and spoliations which had tormented them before his time, and which commenced again after his death. Theodoric is himself one of the most imposing and interesting figures in history. Scarcely any other character can be cited which unites in the same degree the instincts and capacities of a great civil ruler with those of a ferocious and pitiless barbarian. He had been educated from his eighth to his eighteenth year at Byzantium, where he had constantly before his eyes the spectacle of a splendid renaissance of Greek art, and the encouragement of the arts was one of the most noticeable features of his reign, as it was his chief relaxation from the cares of his great office. He made his first visit to Rome in the year 500, and during his stay of six months, he repaired the walls of the city, restored the roof-covering of St. Peter's, which had in two hundred years become decayed, and made extensive restorations in the Emperor's palace on the Palatine. In addition to his well-known works at Ravenna, his hand was felt in many of the important cities of the north, — in Milan, Pavia, Verona, — which he liberally adorned with palaces, churches, baths, arcades, and the like; in Spoleto, and even as far south as Naples and Capua. Remains of his palaces at Verona, Spoleto, and Terracina are still standing. His works in Rome are known by an inscription on the bricks of which they were built, — "*Reg. D. N: Theodorico. bono — Roma.*"

One of the earliest acts of Theodoric after his accession to the throne was the appointment of an architect to have charge of all the public buildings — including the aqueducts and the city walls — of Ravenna and Rome, putting at his disposal for this purpose, yearly, twelve hundred pounds of gold, two hundred and fifty thousand

bricks, and the income of the Lucrine Haven. A remarkable letter from Theodoric to this official on his appointment is preserved by Cassiodorus, who was the minister of the Emperor. "These excellent buildings," he says, "are my delight. They are the noble image of the power of the Empire, and bear witness to its grandeur and glory. The palace of the sovereign is shown to ambassadors as a monument worthy of their admiration, and seems to declare to them his greatness. It is then a great pleasure for an enlightened prince to inhabit a palace where all the perfections of art are united, and to find there relaxation from the burden of public affairs. . . . I give you notice that your intelligence and talents have determined me to confide to your hands the care of my palace. It is my wish that you preserve in its original splendor all which is ancient, and that whatever you add to it may be conformable to it in style. It is not a work of small importance which I place in your hands, since it will be your duty to fulfil by your art the lively desire which I feel to illustrate my reign by many new edifices; so that whether the matter in hand be the rebuilding of a city, the construction of new castles, or the building of a Pretorium, it will be for you to translate my projects into accomplished realities. And this is a service highly honorable and worthy of any man's ambition; — to leave to future ages the monuments which shall be the admiration of new generations of men. It will be your duty to direct the mason, the sculptor, the painter, the worker in stone, in bronze, in plaster, in mosaic. What they know not, you will teach them. The difficulties which they find in their work you will solve for them. But behold what various knowledge you must possess, thus to instruct artificers of so many sorts. But if you can direct their work to a good and satisfactory end, their success will be your eulogy, and will form the most abundant and flattering reward you could desire."<sup>1</sup>

Of the two churches dedicated to San Apollinare, the one standing within the town, although known by the name of San Apollinare Nuovo, is the older by some forty years. It was begun by Theodoric in the first year of his reign, as the cathedral of the Arian faith, which he had adopted. It had originally an atrium, which has disappeared, and an exterior narthex, which has been rebuilt. Its round bell-tower, similar to those of the cathedral of S. Giovanni Battista and of S. Apollinare in Classe, and dating probably from the end of the sixth century, still stands at the angle of the façade, but only the lower half of it belongs to

S. Apollinare Nuovo.

Quoted by Clerisseau in *Antiquités de la France*, pref. p. ix.

the primitive structure. Like all the early basilicas, the exterior is rude and without design; the walls of the clerestory are, however, broken by a simple arcade inclosing the windows. Its interior plan is a rectangle sixty-five feet broad and ninety-four feet long inside, with nave and aisles of the usual proportion, without transept, the nave terminating in a semicircular apse, polygonal without, preceded by a rectangular compartment. The apse has been rebuilt in the worst style of the debased Renaissance. The nave is bordered by



Fig. 36. S. Apollinare Nuovo.

twelve gray marble columns on each side, with Corinthian capitals and square stilt-blocks,<sup>1</sup> the latter quite plain but for a simple cross in low relief on the side towards the nave. These carry round arches, with moulded and decorated archivolts and panelled soffits, the mouldings in stucco. Above the arches runs a continuous and highly decorated classic cornice. The clerestory is high, and pierced by broad round-arched windows on a moulded string-course. The wall space between this string and the cornice of the arcade, about

<sup>1</sup> This feature, borrowed from the Byzantine architecture, may be accounted for, either as a survival, in a rude form, of the block of classic entablature, which in late Roman buildings was often interposed between the column and the arch which it carried, or as an original device for enabling the column to carry a larger piece of wall between the arches than the capital itself would be capable of.

ten feet in height, is occupied on both sides of the nave with a continuous belt of mosaics, which are among the most magnificent examples of this style of decoration in existence. (Fig. 36.) On the right is a representation of Theodoric's palace, the word "Palatium" inscribed on its frieze, and the openings of its lower arcade closed with drapery. From the palace issues a procession of saints and prophets, between palm-trees, and bearing crowns in their hands, which advances towards the Saviour seated on a throne, with two winged angels on either hand. On the left-hand wall is represented the port of Classis with vessels, whence advances a procession of virgins, preceded by the three Re Magi, towards the infant Christ seated on the lap of his mother, also surrounded by angels. The wall spaces between the windows are occupied by single figures of the Fathers of the Church, and above the windows is a band of mosaics composed of pictorial subjects from the Old and New Testaments.

The nave is covered by a richly panelled and decorated ceiling, which has doubtless replaced the ancient one of similar character, but so profuse in its gold ornament as to give its name to the church, which was known for three centuries as San Martino in Cielo d' Oro, until an attack of the Saracens on the neighboring port of Classis, about 856, endangered the church of San Apollinare, when the body of the saint there preserved was transferred for safety to the Church of San Martino, which has since been called San Apollinare Nuovo or Dentro (within the walls).<sup>1</sup>

San Apollinare in Classe was begun in 534, eight years after the death of Theodoric, and was finished in five years. It stood then in the midst of a populous seaport which was connected with the city by a closely built suburb. It stands at present in the midst of a lonely desert, and the way to it from the city gate lies through untenanted swamps. Yet it is one of the best preserved of all the early churches. It had originally an atrium which has quite disappeared; the narthex has been transformed into a shapeless mass, two stories in height, of flat plastered wall swung across the front, with a single arched opening in the centre. But the exterior walls are substantially unchanged. (Fig. 37.) The aisle and clerestory walls present a series of blind arcades in rude brickwork, of which each arch contained originally a broad window. Most of these have now been walled up. The round campanile stands detached at the side of the left hand aisle; it has been

S. Apollinare in Classe

<sup>1</sup> Hübsch, p. 56, pl. 21-25; Dartein; Mothes, p. 155.

presumed to be of the same age with the church, but this is doubtful. The interior is a rectangle ninety-eight feet broad and about one hundred and fifty feet long, without transepts, but with the nave terminating, as in all the churches of Ravenna, in an apse polygonal without, circular within. The nave and aisles are separated by arcades on either side, of twelve columns of veined marble somewhat more than two feet in diameter, resting on square plinth-blocks, with richly foliated capitals, in which, as in those of the earlier group of basilicas, we see the hand of the Byzantine artist. These are



Fig. 37. S. Apollinare in Classe.

surmounted by stilt-blocks of somewhat less rude design than those of S. Apollinare Nuovo, but like them bearing for all ornament a simple cross on the face towards the nave. From the stilt-blocks spring round arches of about nine feet span, with archivolts and panelled soffits of stucco.<sup>1</sup> A broad frieze about five and a half feet high inclosed between moulded belts surmounts the arcade, consisting of a series of circular medallions containing painted busts of the ancient bishops of Ravenna. These paintings are modern substitutes for the original mosaics, which, with the marble slabs formerly facing the walls of the aisles, were stolen in the fifteenth century by Count

<sup>1</sup> Nave arcades given in outline in Dehli, *Byz. Orn.*, vol. ii. pl. 50.

Malatesta to serve in the rebuilding of the cathedral of Rimini, a little further down the coast. The clerestory walls are absolutely bare. The church was unroofed and open to the weather during long periods of its history, and whatever decoration its walls may have once had has long since disappeared. The apse has fortunately escaped the dangers of exposure and spoliation and the equal, if not greater, dangers of restoration, and remains, with its mosaics of the sixth century, covering the vault, the window piers, and the triumphal arch, substantially unchanged. Its floor is raised some four feet above that of the nave, but the space beneath is not occu-

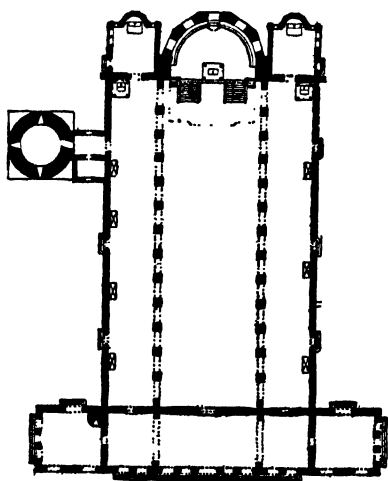


Fig. 38. S. Apollinare in Classe.

ped, as we should expect to find it, by a crypt. Only a small rectangular cell, under the high altar, approached by a narrow passage following the foundation wall of the apse, contains the sarcophagus, from which the body of the saint was hastily removed to its new resting-place. The apse is flanked on each side by a square chapel at the extremity of the aisle, each chapel having a small apse repeating on a smaller scale the form of the central tribune.

The small chapel of the archiepiscopal palace, dating from about 450, is remarkable chiefly for its early mosaics. It consists of a central square bounded by four semicircular arches and covered by a groined vault, from which opens on the east a tribune containing the altar, and on the other sides shallow recesses of no more depth than the arches just mentioned. The vault and the soffits of the arches are covered with fine contemporary mosaics, — those of the vault consisting of a circular medallion at the summit containing the monogram of Christ, and borne up by the figure of an angel in each compartment. The arch soffits are decorated each by seven medallions inclosing busts of the Saviour, the apostles, and the saints.

The mausoleum of the Empress Galla Placidia, known also as the church of San Nazario e Celso, though of small size, is of surpass-



ing interest. It is, perhaps, with the exception of certain chapels in the catacombs, the earliest existing example of a distinctly cruciform building; but its form is so exactly adapted to its use that we may safely dismiss the suggestion that its plan had any symbolic significance. (Fig. 39.) It was built by the

Mausoleum  
of G. Pla-  
cidia.

Empress herself between 430 and 450, as a burial chapel for herself, her husband, and her brother. Its plan is a Latin cross, of which the arms are about twelve feet wide internally, the entire length being thirty-nine feet, and the breadth across the transepts about thirty-three feet. The arms of the cross are covered by simple barrel vaults, the crossing by a low square tower pierced on each face with a single small window, and finished inside with a round dome, perhaps the first instance of a dome over the crossing.

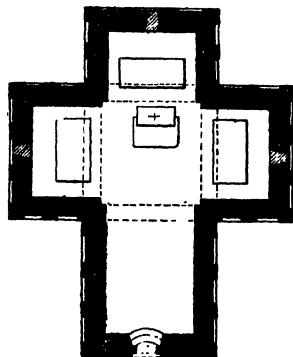


Fig. 39. Mausoleum of G. Placidia.

The three shorter arms of the cross form each a square recess twelve feet broad and about ten feet deep, just large enough to receive a sarcophagus. Of the three sarcophagi, all of which are still in their places, the central one contained the body of the Empress, that on the right the body of her brother Honorius, and that on the left of her husband, Constantius. But

the chief interest of this simple interior lies in the decorative treatment of its surfaces. The walls were faced, to the spring of the vaults, a height of about nine feet, with vertical slabs of veined marble, with a simple impost

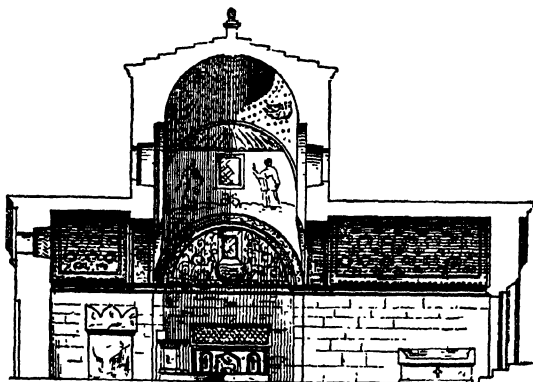


Fig. 40. Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. Section.

moulding and a thin decorated moulding some twenty inches below it, forming a frieze. The marble has now disappeared, but above

the impost all the surfaces are covered with the original mosaics of the fifth century; those on the walls of the central tower and the end walls of the arms bearing figures of apostles or saints, while those of the vaults are of geometrical patterns very graceful in design and soft and harmonious in color. The original mosaic pavement no longer exists. Its place is supplied with rude slabs of stone. (Fig. 41.)

The rudeness of the exterior of this building is in strong contrast to the delicate beauty of the interior. The plainness of the low walls

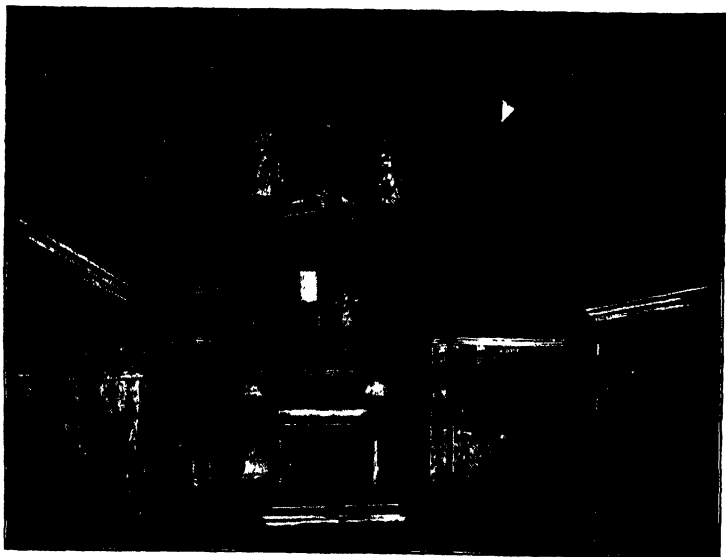


Fig. 41. Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.

(lower than of old, by reason of the considerable rise in the level of the ground) is relieved by a continuous blind arcade of round arches (a characteristic feature of the Ravenna churches, and showing already the beginning of the transition to the Romanesque of Northern Italy). The four end walls terminate in low clumsy pediments, with heavy raking brick cornices. The massive square tower rises from the crossing, pierced with a single small square window on each face, and finishing with a horizontal cornice and low tiled roof.

No other provincial city presents such a store of early churches as Ravenna. Yet examples are not wanting in other towns to prove how generally the type of basilican churches was adopted all over the peninsula. The variation among these is not greater than among

those of Rome alone. The oldest and perhaps the one which offered the most noticeable peculiarities of plan and construction is San Agostino del Crocefisso at Spoleto. The authorities differ by a century or so as to the date of its foundation, but it seems to be safely assignable to the end of the fourth century or the beginning of the fifth. It occupies the site of an ancient temple, and its original plan appears to have consisted of a simple rectangle divided into nave and aisles by a range of thirteen Doric columns bearing a Doric entablature. There was no transept, but the nave terminated in a semicircular apse. At some later date, of which no records exist, but which a comparison with other buildings seems to place near the beginning of the ninth century, the plan suffered an essential modification; two transverse arches being thrown across the nave, enclosing a square directly in front of the apse, over which was built an octagonal dome, similar to those of some of the baptisteries of that age in North Italy. The nave no longer exists, but the façade still stands, and the dressings of its three doorways, of nave, and aisles, consisting of moulded architraves and heavy, over-decorated, horizontal caps, and those of the three windows of the upper story in the end wall of the nave, where the openings are flanked with pilasters of debased form, which in the two side openings carry pedimented caps and in the central opening a moulded archivolt with whimsical decorations, seem to point, not to the period of the early basilicas, where the exterior received little thought, but either to an earlier period, when the traditions of Roman palaces still controlled the design, or more probably to a much later age, when the debased Renaissance had begun to disguise the earlier and simpler features of the basilicas.

S. Agostino.  
Spoleto.

Of the early provincial basilicas, few remain in anything like their original condition, but the records show that the building of them went on at intervals, through all the centuries up to the tenth. In Milan, which in the fourth and fifth centuries was reckoned the second city in Italy in population and wealth, the first Christian churches followed close on those of Rome; but it is curious that Milan furnishes no instance of a columnar basilica. It is, however, to be remembered that Milan suffered more than any other city from the ravages of war. Forty-six times was she besieged, and in 1162, on being taken by Frederic Barbarossa, the city was practically razed to the ground.<sup>1</sup>

The small Basilica Faustina (now called San Satiro), one of the churches of Ambrose, finished as early as 378, has now a single nave,

<sup>1</sup> On this occasion, however, we are told that the churches were spared.

with various rooms on each side. The latter were presumably the aisles of the original church, separated from the nave by piers. It has an apse eastward, and a small open arcaded porch, probably a part of the early basilica.

The great church of San Ambrogio, one of the most interesting in Italy, whose foundation goes back to the end of the fourth century, had and still retains the general disposition of ground-plan which is characteristic of the basilica; the fully developed atrium and narthex, the nave and aisles, the apse with two flanking chapels. But in its construction (as will be seen in a later chapter), San Ambrogio departs widely from the Roman type, while San Eustorgio, of about the same date, was from the first a cruciform church, and San Lorenzo, also contemporary, a square with an octagonal centre.

During the fifth and sixth centuries, basilicas still standing were built at Fiesole, Novara, Chiusi, Naples, Verona, Capua, and Lucca, presenting for the most part no very noticeable variations from the usual type. Those of Novara and Old Capua were five-aisled churches, and the former is interesting from the completeness of its plan. It is described in the second chapter.

In 452 Aquileia was taken by siege and burned by Attila, and most of her neighboring cities, Altinum, Patavium, Concordia, were similarly treated, — their inhabitants escaping to the lagoons at the mouths of the Brenta and the Piave. A similar exodus took place a century later, after the Lombard invasion, when Paulinus, Archbishop of Aquileia, fixed his residence and the metropolitan seat at Grado, where a cathedral was built in 571–586. It is a basilica about one hundred and forty feet long by sixty-five feet wide, divided by two rows of ten marble columns each, carrying round arches, above which rises a high plain clerestory wall carrying an open timber roof and pierced by round-arched windows, whose openings were probably closed by marble slabs pierced by tracery. A single example remains behind the church. There are no transepts, but the nave terminates in an apse, round within and polygonal without, — after the manner of the basilicas of Ravenna, — in front of which the choir is brought forward so as to occupy three bays of the nave and two of the aisles, its floor being raised three steps. The original pavement remains, and is one of the most beautiful in Italy, of white, black, red, and yellow marble in varied designs, mingled with inscriptions. The façade has an open arched porch extending across the front, but one of its five openings has been filled up by a later campanile, and only a single column remains.<sup>1</sup>

Cathedral  
of Grado.

<sup>1</sup> Cattaneo, p. 546.

As early as the middle of the fifth century, the islands of the Venetian lagunes began to receive the fugitives from the cities to the eastward along the north shore of the Adriatic. In 641 they built the cathedral of Torcello, which, restored in the

ninth century and again in the eleventh century, still shows us its original disposition of parts and much of its actual construction and decoration. It is a rectangular basilica, measuring within the walls seventy feet in breadth and one hundred and eighteen feet in length. (Fig. 42.) The nave and aisles, separated by arcades of ten high, stilted, perfectly plain, round arches on each side, supported on marble columns, whose capitals have the Corinthian form, with Byzantine leafage and

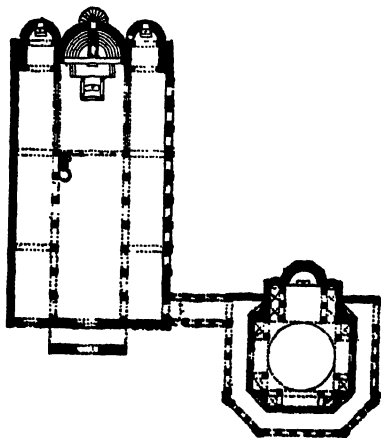


Fig. 42. Torcello. Cathedral and S. Fosca.

stilt-blocks, terminate each in a semicircular apse, of which the central one alone belongs to the original construction. This apse is the most striking and instructive feature of the church, since it shows us, as no other existing example does, what was probably the customary arrangement of the earliest basilican tribunes. Its plan is the usual semicircle, prolonged towards the nave by two piers or pieces of wall in the line of the nave arcades. From the centre of its chord a stone stair two and one half feet wide rises sharply to the rear wall, where at a height of some twelve feet above the floor of the apse is placed the chair or throne of the bishop, of which only the back remains, flanked on either side at a considerably lower level by six concentric benches for the presbyters, one above another, following the wall. (Fig. 43.) The vault and upper walls of the apse still retain the ancient mosaics, and the lower walls are still faced with vertical plates of marble. In front of the apse a portion of the nave about thirty feet in length is inclosed by a low screen, forming a chancel or choir, as in San Clemente at Rome. The panels of this screen are filled with sculpture in relief, of thoroughly Byzantine character and of great variety and beauty. The end wall of the nave is covered with five rows of figure subjects in gold mosaic.

The exterior shows in its blind arcades of rude brickwork, in the low gables, a distinct analogy with the basilican churches of Ravenna of a century before. The atrium has disappeared. The façade has a simple inclosed porch, as broad as the nave, with a single arch in the face and one in each of the ends. This, as well as the square bell-tower which rises at the extremity of the right hand aisle, at the side of the apse, is doubtless of later date.<sup>1</sup> The windows are closed by plates of alabaster as in some of the early Roman basilicas, but instead of being pierced with apertures to admit the light, they are



Fig. 43. Apse of Torcello.

provided with circular panels sunk so as to leave but a thin film of alabaster at the back, through which a certain amount of light is able to pass. The crypt under the apse forms a half-ring about six feet wide, with semicircular niche in the middle lighted by a round-arched window.

In the south of Italy the shifting character of the population and government prevents the churches from maintaining even as much consistency of plan as we have observed in the north. The south-eastern portion of the peninsula was to all intents and purposes a

<sup>1</sup> Canina, pl. 43, shows an octagonal baptistery in the atrium.

Greek province. But in the southwest we find still existing a number of basilicas — some of early date which may properly be classed with those of Rome. In Naples the old cathedral of S. Restituta, built about A. D. 362, and rebuilt in 526, is carefully preserved side by side with the new cathedral, from which it opens, but shows little of its original aspect.

When Salerno and Capua, in the middle of the ninth century, were made into a new duchy by the Lombard Sicconulf, a cathedral was built in each of the two cities, and in both the basilican form prevailed. Both churches have been ruthlessly modernized, but each has retained its fine atrium, with its arcades of round arches on Corinthian columns. The Eastern influence is shown in the slight stilting of the arches.

I have spoken of and illustrated the persistency of the basilican type. But parallel with the basilican churches, there went on, both in Rome and all over Italy, the building of religious edifices of other forms. Just as in the catacombs, the cubicula, though generally square, took occasionally circular or polygonal forms, so in the later Christian times the line of rectangular basilicas was varied here and there by square, octagonal, or circular churches, and especially by circular or polygonal baptisteries or tombs. For the Christian baptisteries the circular or octagonal plan seems to have been early prescribed. The form was doubtless derived directly from the circular baths of the earlier times.<sup>1</sup> The circular building was properly preceded by an enclosed porch, corresponding to the narthex of the basilicas, for the use and instruction of the catechumens; though the instances in which this feature appears are now exceptional. Of the smaller buildings Constantine probably furnished the original examples first in the baptistery which he caused to be built adjacent to the church and palace of the Lateran, and in the somewhat later tomb of his daughter Constantia.

The Lateran baptistery is an octagon sixty-two feet in diameter inside the walls, and is entered from a long porch with semicircular ends. A central octagon of about thirty feet diameter was formed by the porphyry basin, enclosed by eight porphyry columns,

<sup>1</sup> If more ancient precedents were wanted they were not hard to find. There seems to have been no period since building was practised among men when the circular form was not in favor. From the ancient tumuli, found in nearly equal abundance in Asia, Africa, Europe, and America, to the cromlechs of the Orcades and Stonehenge, and the nurhags of Sardinia, the subterranean chambers, like the treasury of Atreus at Mycenæ, the temples of Serapis at Pozzuoli and of Vesta at Tivoli and Rome, the circular halls of the great Imperial Baths, — the line is unbroken. The Pantheon is the most majestic example, the hall known as the Temple of Minerva Medica is the most elegant.

with capitals of very corrupt design, half Corinthian and half Ionic, which carried a marble entablature supporting a gilded dome, which was in existence as late as 800. The surrounding aisle, probably roofed originally with wood, was, in the middle of the twelfth century, under Hadrian IV., covered with a circular barrel vault, and the entablature was replaced by round arches. Arches and vault disappeared in their turn under later restorers, the outer walls were carried up, and a second order of columns was set over the original order, on which a new and loftier dome was raised. This, however, no longer exists. The building has thus lost its original character, and only its plan and

Baptistry  
of Constan-  
tine.

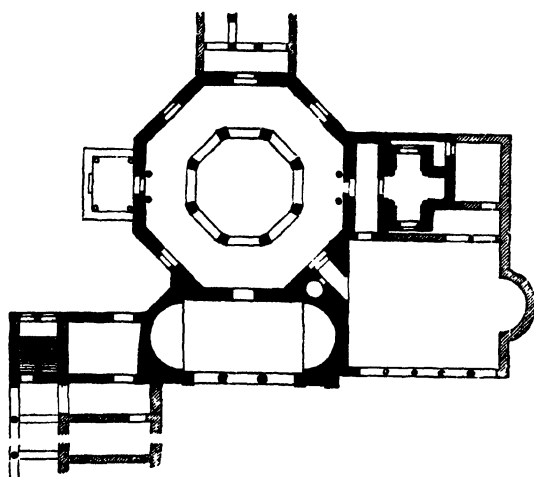


Fig. 44. The Lateran Baptistery.

the general disposition of its spaces remain to us of the building of Constantine. This earliest baptistery appears to have fixed the form of that interesting class of buildings for eight hundred years. Through all the changes of style the baptisteries are almost invariably round or octagonal.

Constantia, now known as S. Costanza, has been more fortunate.

S. Cos-  
tanza.

This is a circular building standing adjacent to the basilica of S. Agnese fuori, and measuring about seventy-two feet in inside diameter, with an inner ring of coupled granite columns, about thirty-seven feet in diameter, with composite capitals, carrying detached blocks of entablature, from which spring round arches, supporting a solid wall, of which the upper part is a clerestory pierced with twelve simple round-arched windows. This is, perhaps, the earliest instance of columns coupled in a direction opposite to the line of the colonnade. It is accounted for by the weight of the clerestory wall, which is about four feet thick. The central space is covered by a hemispherical dome sixty feet high from the floor,

The Tomb of



of which the construction follows that of the older Roman monuments. (Fig. 45.) It consists of twenty-four strong vertical ribs of brickwork joined by similar horizontal bands, the trapezoidal spaces between being filled with a strong plaster. The external form of the dome is that of a high circular wall, surmounted by a flat cone, in which, however, no wood is used, the space between the dome itself and the outer surfaces being filled in with concrete. The circular aisle, which surrounds the central space, is covered by a continuous barrel vault, protected by a low wooden lean-to roof. The mosaics of the central dome were removed in the seventeenth century when the dome was repaired, but those of the aisle vault still remain in perfect condition. Middleton considers these mosaics as probably the latest example of what may be called the classical style of mosaic as distinguished from the Byzantine style, which was first introduced in the fifth century. "This very interesting mosaic might, from its style and materials, have been executed in the first century, and is equal in beauty to any work of the kind in Italy. It shows no trace whatever of the Byzantine influence, which in the next century introduced into Italy a novel style of mosaic in materials of the most glittering splendor. These S.

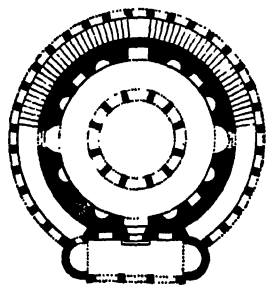


Fig. 45. Tomb of Constantia.

Costanza mosaics are almost unique in Italy as an application of the old classical marble mosaic to the decoration of a Christian church. On the main compartment of the vault the surface is covered by vine branches laden with grapes twining in graceful curves over the space. In the centre is a large medallion with life-sized male bust, and at the lower part are vintage scenes, — oxen carts bringing the grapes, and boys treading them in a vat. Other more geometrical designs, of circles framing busts and full-length figures, with graceful borders, cover other parts of the vault. Farther east, this classical style of mosaic appears to have lasted till the sixth century.”<sup>1</sup>

The building is entered from a long and shallow porch, now in ruins, similar in form to that of the Lateran baptistery. The outer wall is of great thickness and is lightened by a series of niches, mostly semicircular, the others rectangular. The niche opposite the entrance, much larger than the others, projects outside the wall,

<sup>1</sup> *Enc. Brit.*, art. "Mosaic," p. 852.

and contained the massive porphyry sarcophagus of Constantia which now forms one of the most conspicuous ornaments of the Sala a Croce Greca in the Vatican. The outer wall was surrounded by an arcaded and vaulted corridor, in which were stairs descending to chambers beneath the monument, of which the character cannot be determined. Scarcely any traces of this corridor remain.

Very similar in plan and dimensions to the Tomb of Constantia is the building now known as the Church of S. Maria Maggiore, at Nocera,<sup>1</sup> in South Italy, but which was unquestionably built as a baptistery. Its date is variously assigned to the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries.<sup>2</sup> Here again is the ring of coupled columns, carrying round arches and encompassed by the

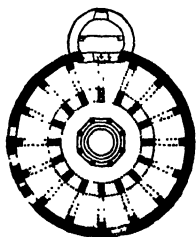


Fig. 46. Nocera Baptistery.

circular vaulted aisle. But the couples number sixteen instead of twelve, as in the Roman building; <sup>3</sup> the axis of the inner circle has at one extremity a couple of columns and at the other an arch, twice as broad as the rest, to which corresponds in the outer wall a still broader arch opening into a semicircular apse, covered by a spherical vault.<sup>4</sup> The arches spring directly from the abaci of the columns, and the dome springs from the same line without the intervention of a drum. The dome is of a singular form, its

curve being broken at mid-height, so that its section is that of a cusped arch. The upper portion is pierced by eight windows. The surrounding aisle is covered, as in the Tomb of Constantia, by a barrel vault; but the vault is divided into square bays by transverse round arches, which spring from the columns of the inner ring to boldly projecting piers on the outer wall. On these arches are built low walls of masonry, acting as buttresses to the central dome. Between these walls flat arches support the lean-to roof of the aisle, above which rises a low wall pierced with small windows which give light to the windows of the dome itself. On this wall rests a low conical wooden roof covering the dome. In the centre of the build-

<sup>1</sup> The ancient Nuceria, abandoned to the Saracens in the thirteenth century, whence called Nocera dei Pagani.

<sup>2</sup> Schnause and Kugler say the fourth; Lubke and Ramée the sixth; Mothes, judging from internal evidence, especially from a certain mediæval carelessness of design, puts it in the first half of the fifth century.

<sup>3</sup> Fifteen at present, one couple having been knocked out to make way for the apse of the church.

<sup>4</sup> Isabelle (*Ed. Circ.* p. 80) thinks the arch of the apse was probably originally the entrance, finding it hard otherwise to account for the position of the present entrance.

ing is the basin or font enclosed within a low circular wall about twenty-five feet in diameter, — the stylobate on which rested originally the eight columns of an *ædicula*, of which only five remain, the remainder, as well as the canopy which they upheld, having disappeared.

Much simpler in plan and much smaller in dimensions than the examples already cited, but not inferior in interest, is the baptistery attached to the cathedral at Ravenna, known as the Orthodox baptistery or the baptistery of Ursus, in distinction to the Arian baptistery of Theodoric, built a century later. The cathedral,

Orthodox  
Baptistery,  
Ravenna.

built by Bishop Ursus in the earliest years of the fifth century, immediately after the seat of government had been fixed at Ravenna, the oldest and probably the finest of the noble group of Christian basilicas, has disappeared beneath the tasteless rebuilding of the seventeenth century, its round bell-tower alone remaining. But the baptistery, which was contemporary with it, and which was destroyed within a few years of its completion and rebuilt under the Empress Galla Placidia, between the years 425–430, remains substantially unchanged. It is an octagonal building, whose diameter is



Fig. 47. Ravenna Baptistery.

nearly the same as that of the central ring of the tomb of Constantia or the church at Nocera, — about thirty-seven feet. The interior is undivided, but the flat spherical dome which covers it springs directly from the outer walls, at a height of about forty-two feet above the pavement. The walls are, on the interior, divided into two

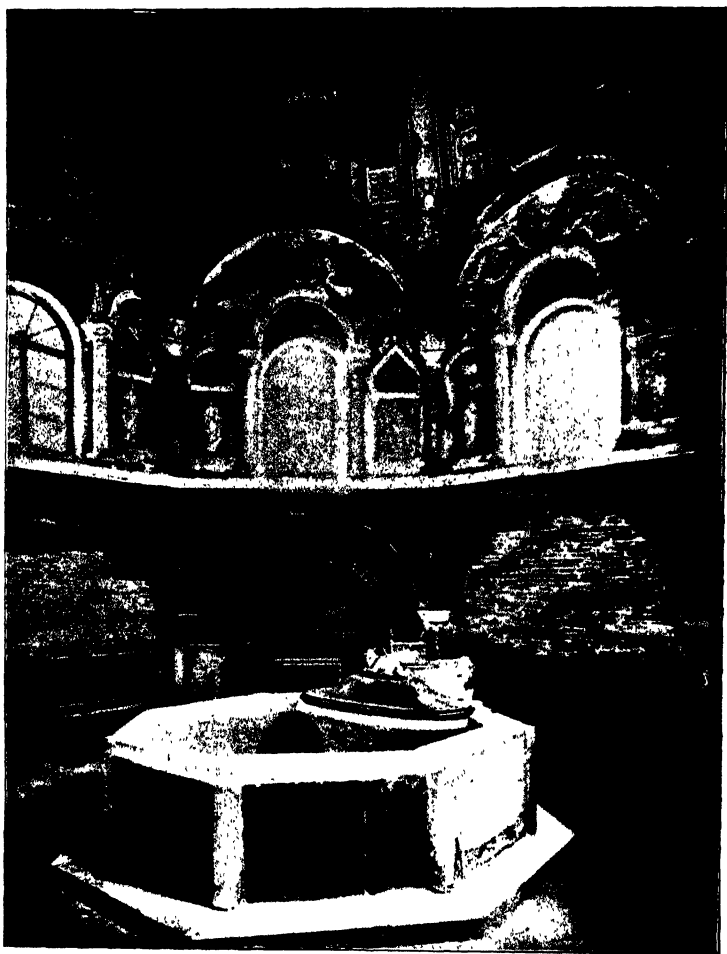


Fig. 48. Orthodox Baptistery, Ravenna.

stages, in the lower of which eight large and low detached columns in the angles, with stilt-blocks above the capitals, carry round arches attached to the walls, each arch covering the breadth of one side of the octagon. The second stage has a similar arcade, and here each arch is divided by two columns, similar to the angle column, into three smaller arches, of which the middle one, larger than the others, is pierced by a window. It is probably the earliest existing

example of grouped arches under a bearing-arch.<sup>1</sup> Above these bearing-arches springs the dome, spherical in form, but less than a hemisphere, and constructed entirely of small earthen pots or tubes, about eight inches long and three inches in diameter, joined in a continuous spiral from base to summit.<sup>2</sup> The dome is thus of extreme lightness, the thickness of the shell being not more than

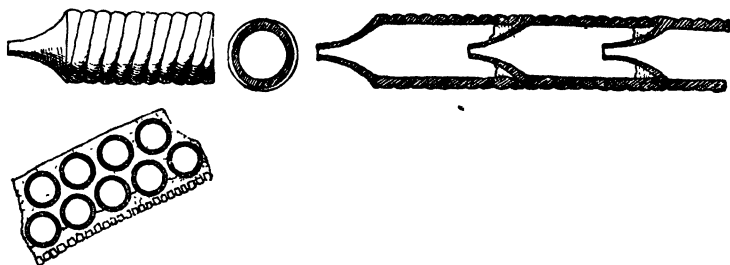


Fig. 49. Details of Dome, Ravenna Baptistery.

eight inches, with an inside diameter of about thirty-five feet. The outer walls are carried up considerably higher than the crown of the dome, which is covered by a low octagonal wooden roof. From four sides of the octagon project four semicircular apses, and in the centre of the building is the large octagonal baptismal basin, once covered by a canopy resting on columns, which has now disappeared. The marble wall enclosing the basin has on one side a reëntrant semicircle, in which the priest or bishop stood while administering the rite.

Theodoric in the early years of his reign, after rebuilding the church of S. Teodoro to serve as the Arian cathedral, provided near to that church, and separated from it only by an atrium, an octagonal baptistery with four apses, similar in plan to that of the Orthodox cathedral, but smaller. Its internal design also was not dissimilar, the walls being, as in the earlier building, divided into two stages, each with a blind arcade resting on columns set against the wall, above which was a low octagonal dome, decorated with mosaic.<sup>3</sup> The architectural features of the interior have now disappeared, but the mosaics of the dome remain. On the decline or suppression of the Arian faith thirty years later, the baptistery was consecrated

<sup>1</sup> Plan and elevation of one side of upper arcade in Dehli, *Byz. Orn.*, pl. 4, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> See Dartein, text, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> See Mothes, p. 173, for a description of the differences in the mosaic decoration of the two baptisteries arising out of the differences in faith between the two sects.

anew or catholicised by Bishop Agnellus, and converted into a church by the addition of a nave of equal breadth with the original building, and the abolition of three of the apses, that on the east side alone remaining. The church has since been known as S. Maria in Cosmedin.<sup>1</sup>

I break in upon the logical order of my subject to notice here the only existing example of the civil architecture of this period, which has been generally accepted as a fragment of the extensive palace which Theodoric is known to have built for himself at



Fig. 50. Palace of Theodoric, Ravenna.

Ravenna. It is but a single wall or façade adjacent to the church of S. Apollinare Nuovo, and measuring about sixty-five feet in length, behind which are broad gardens with many remains of towers, walls, mosaic pavements, and other portions of the royal palace. Charlemagne plundered the palace in 801, to obtain the materials for his church at Aachen. The façade is divided into three vertical compartments by a slightly projecting centre, which contains a round-arched doorway, the arch springing from a strongly moulded impost, and the

jamb consisting of square pilasters with acanthus-leaved capitals with no projection. In each of the side compartments is a pair of coupled round arches now walled up, with a circular opening in the spandril between. Under the right hand couple stands the sarcophagus supposed to be that of Theodoric and taken from his tomb. A broad space of plain wall intervenes between the arches of the lower story and those of the upper, of which the central opening is a large niche,

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, p. 172.

semicircular in plan, covered by a spherical vault, and with a coupled arched window in the back, the arches divided by a column. The great arch also springs from slender detached jamb shafts. The extremities of the façade are emphasized by plain pilaster strips having the same projection as the central division, and in the upper portion of the side divisions, the central wall and the pilaster strips are joined by four blind arches on either side, of which the two middle ones are carried by detached columns, with leafed capitals of various designs, surmounted by stilt-blocks. These columns rest on a thin projecting sill, which is supported by corbels under each column, an arrangement which suggests that the two middle arches may have been originally windows. In their present form these arcades look like the prototypes of the arched corbel table which became, three or four centuries later, one of the most characteristic features of the Lombard architecture, and also of the arcaded galleries with which the apses and less frequently the façades and the flanks of the later Romanesque churches were embellished. The masonry is of rude brickwork of the same character with that of most of the other buildings of Ravenna. It is probable, however, that the vault of the great central niche, and perhaps also the upper part of the wall of the façade were enriched with mosaics. Of the plan and design of this palace nothing is known beyond the fragment here noticed.<sup>1</sup>

The last of the buildings of Theodoric, the mausoleum which he built for himself outside of the walls of Ravenna, has come down to us in a tolerable state of preservation, but with the loss of certain features which are matter of various conjecture. It is, both as regards its design and its construction, one of the most interesting buildings in Italy. It appears to have had no prototype and no successor. The character of its masonry, no less than its design, distinguishes it from all the other buildings of Ravenna, and indeed of its time, the walls, both exterior and interior, being built of coursed stone, with close joints and well-tooled surfaces. Its plan is a decagon about forty-five feet in outside diameter, in two distinct stories. The very massive wall of the lower story is lightened by a deep rectangular recess on each face,

Mausoleum  
of  
Theodoric.

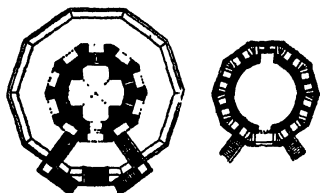


Fig. 51. Mausoleum of Theodoric.

<sup>1</sup> Excavations undertaken since this was written have uncovered the foundations of two round towers and a portico. [See *Roman Herald*, No. 27.]

covered by a round arch springing from a light impost moulding. The wall of the upper story recedes from the face of the lower wall, and was originally encircled by an open arcaded gallery with round arches supported on small columns. This gallery has quite disappeared, but the number and form of the arches are clearly indicated

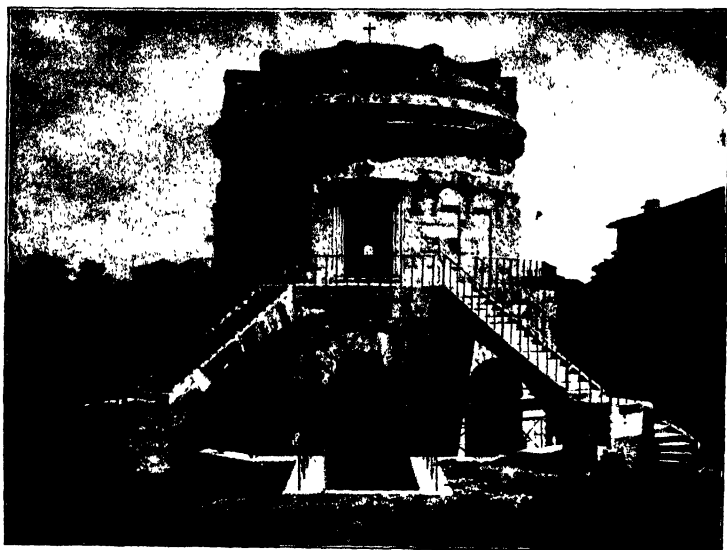


Fig. 52. Mausoleum of Theodoric.

on the face of the wall. The wall is continued three or four feet above the roof of the gallery, and is finished by a heavy cornice of peculiar design, and covered by a low saucer-shaped dome, which is perhaps the most striking example in existence of the mechanical resources of the ancient builders. The dome is cut from a single block of Istrian marble, is about thirty-five feet in exterior diameter, with a rise of about eight feet, and weighs some four hundred tons.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The impossibility of depending on the figures and statements of authorities concerning the monuments of antiquity is nowhere more forcibly illustrated than in the case of this well-known building. Nothing would seem to be easier than to secure accurate measurements of so simple a structure and to state with exactness the main facts of its construction and design. Yet there is scarcely a point in regard to this building concerning which the authorities are not at variance. The exterior diameter is given all the way from 25 feet to 45, the height of the dome from 8 to 14 feet, its weight from 400 to 1000 tons, the width of the gallery surrounding the upper story from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet, etc. The material is stated by Forster to be granite, by all others, limestone. When it comes to matters of conjecture, the variation is naturally not less marked, as, *e. g.*, in regard



The quarrying of such a block, its transportation across the Adriatic, and the placing it in position nearly fifty feet above the ground were exploits which would tax the skill of the present day, with all the help of the modern appliances of engineering, and which, without the example of the Ravenna mausoleum, we should pronounce impossible to the builders of the sixth century. Near the base of the dome is a ring of projecting spurs, ten in number, of peculiar character, of which the only explanation hitherto suggested is that they were used for the passage of a chain or rope for hoisting the stone. In their present form these projections would, as Mothes has pointed out, be quite insufficient to sustain the weight which would thus be brought upon them; but it is, as he further suggests, quite possible that they may have been left much stouter until the stone was in position and trimmed afterwards to their present shape. On the summit of the dome are indications of four columns, which are believed to have borne the sarcophagus of Theodoric, perhaps the same which now stands against the ruined wall of Theodoric's palace. (Fig. 52.)

The interior of this building is divided into two stories, with no connection between them, of which the lower is entered by a square-headed doorway in one of the arched recesses, and the upper by a similar doorway in the arcaded gallery. This gallery is approached by two stone staircases which have been the subject of much controversy, some authorities believing them to be entirely of modern construction, while others maintain that the modern work is in the nature of a restoration, the steps themselves perhaps being new, while the strings which support them are of the original construction. So much change has taken place in the ground about the building, the level having risen since the sixth century by something like ten feet, that we may feel tolerably certain that the lower portion of the staircases is not what it originally was, and indeed it seems probable enough that the whole of the lower runs, as we now see them, with the steps enclosed within solid walls, are modern, while the upper

to the original position of the sarcophagus which contained the body of the emperor; some authorities maintaining that it was supported by the four columns which surmounted the dome, others that it occupied the centre of the lower story, others, still, that it stood in the small arched niche of the upper story; while Mothes, the latest and perhaps the most careful of the writers who have edited the monument, reconciles the two most probable theories by uniting them, suggesting that the actual sarcophagus which contained the body rested in the centre of the cruciform chamber which forms the lower story, that an opening directly over it in the floor of the upper story, surrounded by a balustrade, permitted it to be seen from above, and that the columns which surmounted the dome bore a second sarcophagus, which was merely emblematic or ceremonial.

runs, of which the strings consist of bold flat arches whose voussoirs are joggled together like those of the round arches of the lower wall, are primitive. The interior of this monument is of extreme simplicity. The lower story is in plan a Greek cross covered by four intersecting circular barrel vaults, springing from a thin impost moulding and quite without other architectural features. The upper story is a circle, broken only by the square entrance doorway and by a low-arched niche directly opposite, which probably contained an altar. A high but flat cornice encircles the wall on a level with the exterior cornice, and a belt some three feet below; forming a broad

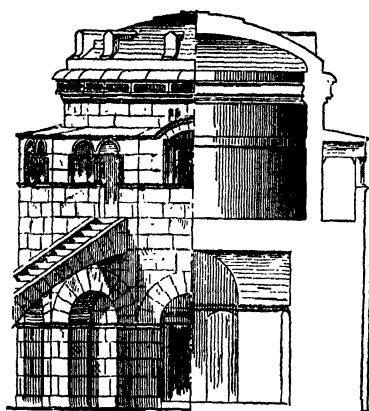


Fig. 53. Elevation and Section of Mausoleum of Theodorice.

frieze, in which are pierced a series of small windows of various shapes and irregularly disposed. They are probably in whole or in part later than the building. The surface of the dome is quite unbroken. Not the least remarkable of the peculiarities of the remarkable monument is the character of its details, which are such as cannot be found in any other building in Ravenna. Many of them have a strongly classic aspect, such as the profiles of the architrave and cornice of the lower doorway, and the impost moulding

of the lower arches. The egg and dart and the Greek dentil appear in the ornamented mouldings, but rudely and coarsely treated; while in other portions of the work are groups of mouldings which we might almost look to find in the Northern Gothic six centuries later.

The earliest example of a church in the circular form is perhaps Sti. Angeli, Perugia. Sti. Angeli at Perugia, which is a century later than the two buildings of Constantine which we have mentioned, and probably nearly contemporary with the Nocera building. The present plan of the church is somewhat changed from the original plan, which consisted as now of a central ring, forty-five feet in diameter, of sixteen antique columns, alternately larger and smaller, carrying round arches springing from stilt-blocks, but with two surrounding aisles, instead of the one which now remains, which is about seventeen

feet wide. The central arcade supports a clerestory wall pierced with sixteen plain round-arched windows and covered with a low conical timber-roof. The greater part of the outer aisle has disappeared, and the twenty-eight columns which separated it from the inner aisle have been joined by a sixteen-sided polygonal wall, from which transverse half arches in the form of flying buttresses spring to the wall of the clerestory, — doubtless a later addition for the purpose of strengthening that somewhat slender wall. At the north, south, and west sides of the polygon, three wings with radiating walls projected like the arms of a Greek cross, the fourth side being occupied by an apse of larger size, in the form of a semicircle with prolonged sides, the exterior being polygonal. By these projections the outer aisle was divided into four separated sections, of which everything beyond the general form is conjectural. It may, however, be presumed that the arrangement was similar to that of the contemporary church of S. Stefano Rotondo at Rome.

S. Stefano is the largest and in some respects the most interesting of the circular churches of Italy. Much controversy has been carried on over the origin of this church, some authorities maintaining it to have been originally a temple of Faunus, or of the Emperor Claudius, others, as Plattner, contending that the rudeness both of design and workmanship makes it impossible to believe it to be a work of the classic period, and that it was built, at least from the foundations, as a Christian church by Pope Simplicius, by whom it was consecrated in 468. It is of great size, its total diameter being originally not less than 208 feet, with a central ring 74 feet in diameter, of 22 antique Ionic columns, with a very thin entablature, supporting a high circular wall pierced by 20 plain round-arched windows, and a low wooden timber-roof, at the height of about 80 feet from the floor. A broad band of mosaics formerly encircled the wall above the windows. The space outside the central colonnade was divided into two circular aisles, of which the inner was continuous, while the outer was divided by radiating walls into eight unequal compartments, of which four make the arms of a cross, occupying the whole width of the outer aisle, and with a small semicircular apse projecting in each from the outer wall, — while the other four are each divided by a circular wall into a narrow aisle and a still narrower porch. The arrangement of the aisles has doubtless suffered some changes, but the division of the outer aisle into eight compartments is probably original, since the arcade which separates the outer and inner aisles, consisting of thirty-six columns, with stilt-

blocks and round arches, is divided into eight groups by square piers, the arches opening into the four compartments which make the cross being five in number, higher than the others, and supported by Corinthian columns of white marble, while those opening into the narrower aisles are six in number, lower, and carried on Ionic columns of granite. The four compartments were probably carried to a superior height, their roofs being at the level of the roof of the inner aisle, — thus expressing externally the disposition of the interior spaces.

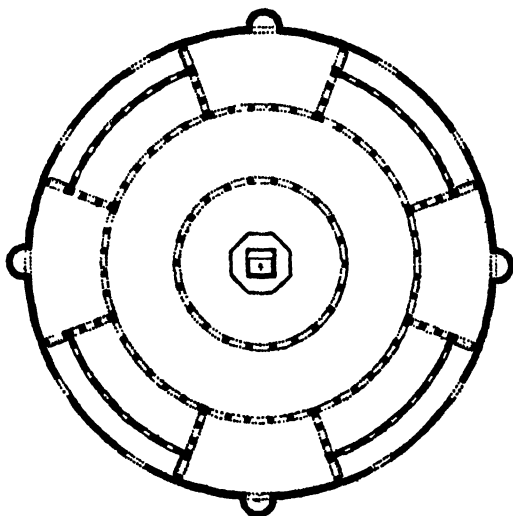


Fig. 54. S. Stefano Rotondo.

Only one of the four wings still remains, with portions of the outer aisle contiguous on either side. The present exterior wall is built in between the columns and piers of the outer ring. This church was built at a period when the resources of the popes were much reduced and were no longer reinforced by the treasury of the emperors; the materials and decoration indicate this. All the details

are of the simplest description.<sup>1</sup> The construction of the church illustrates the same fact. Not only in the East, where the science of building was now in a high degree cultivated, but also in Italy, the circular buildings of this date and earlier were almost invariably roofed with a central dome. In the present instance even the wooden roof of the central space proved too serious a problem for the builders, for at some date not now determinable a wall was carried across that space, supported by three arches, in order to give a central bearing to the roof timbers. The stilt-blocks which surmount the capitals of the outer ring are similar in profile to those of Sti.

<sup>1</sup> Yet a half century later, under Pope John I. and his successor Felix, the church was adorned with mosaics and rich marbles, and was said to have been one of the most splendid churches in Rome.

Angeli at Perugia, and their use indicates the presence of Byzantine builders.

The important church of San Vitale at Ravenna is nearly contemporary with the buildings of Theodoric; having been, according to some authorities, actually begun before his death, in 526. This seems improbable. There is, however, no doubt that the church was closely contemporary with the building of S. Sofia at Constantinople. According to Agnellus, Ecclesius, bishop of Ravenna, making a visit to the Eastern capital in 525, in company with Pope John I., was so impressed by the magnificence of the Eastern churches in process of building that he returned full of emulation, bringing with him Julianus Argentarius (Julian the goldsmith) to found in Ravenna a church which should rival them. San Vitale, then, was begun very near the year 530, and was finished and consecrated under Maximian, between 546-556. The church is commonly cited as one of the extremely rare instances of the adoption of the Byzantine style in Italy. But in such a view we need to discriminate. Neither in plan nor in construction can S. Vitale be regarded as a Byzantine church. The great distinguishing feature of Byzantine churches is the spherical dome without a drum, covering the central space, supported by four great piers carrying four great arches, forming a square, the transition from the square to the circle being made by bold spherical pendentives. In the typical examples, as S. Sofia, the central dome is buttressed in whole or in part by smaller and lower semi-domes, or by barrel vaults, covering the spaces adjacent to the central square. Also the plan of the Byzantine church is commonly a rectangle.

In none of these particulars does S. Vitale follow the Eastern type. Its plan is a regular octagon about one hundred and ten feet in diameter inside the walls, with a central space about fifty feet in diameter formed by eight strong piers of peculiar plan and surrounded by an aisle broken only by the projecting choir, which, opening into the aisle by three arches on each side, projects beyond it for a distance nearly equal to its breadth, and terminates in an apse, polygonal externally, but semicircular within. The piers of the central octagon are joined by high round arches, from which open on seven sides (the eighth arch being the opening of the choir) semicircular arcades or *exedræ* projecting into the surrounding aisle, and consisting each of three round arches below and three above, supported on columns. These *exedræ* form the only feature of the plan which seems to have been inspired by the Byzantine examples. They are nearly exact

counterparts of those which open from the two great apses on the east and west of the central square of S. Sofia, and also in SS. Sergius and Bacchus. They are not divided in height, as the two orders of arcades would lead us to expect, but are covered by spherical semi-domes just above the great arches of the central octagon. The aisle is divided at mid-height by a gallery, and is also divided into bays in each story by semicircular transverse arches springing from the

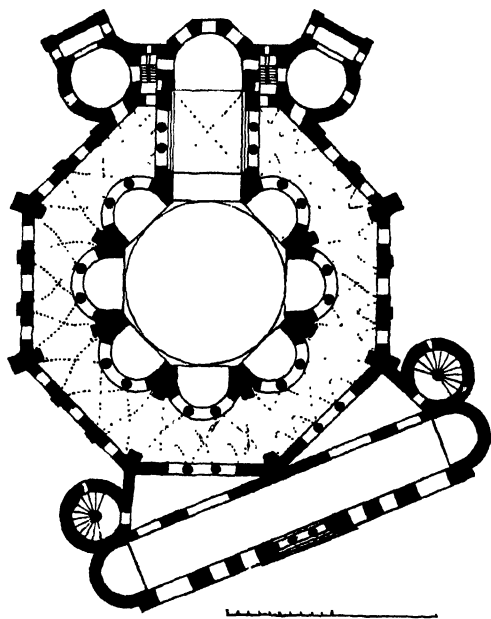


Fig. 55. S. Vitale, Ravenna.

great piers to the outer wall, which is strengthened at each angle by a strongly marked buttress. The bays are covered with groined vaulting, of which the form is complicated by the octagonal plan and the manner in which the bays are pierced by the semicircular arcades.

The central octagon is covered by a spherical dome, the transition from the octagon to the circle being easily effected by small spherical pendentives in much the same manner as in the baptistery of Ursus. The

construction of the dome is quite Oriental. It is a hemisphere, slightly stilted, with eight round-arched windows at the base. It is built, like that of the baptistery one hundred years earlier, and like many contemporary examples in the East, of small earthen pots of peculiar shape (see Fig. 49) laid in a thick bed of cement. The shell of the dome is composed of two layers of these pots, and has a thickness of less than twelve inches. The dome is thus, as in the case of the baptistery, of extraordinary lightness; and its weight and thrust are easily borne by the comparatively thin wall of the central octagon, reinforced by the vaulting of the aisle roofs, which abut against it, and also by horizontal flying buttresses of brick, very

flat, springing from the buttresses of the outer aisle wall to the base of the dome between the vaulting of the aisles and the wooden aisle roofs. The vaulting, both of dome and aisle, is covered by wooden roofs, — another particular in which the church follows the common Italian methods instead of those of the East, where the masonry is usually left exposed.

The plan of S. Vitale has a singular feature in its narthex, — a long and shallow porch swung across the building and touching it only at one of the angles of the octagon. The unusual relation of this porch to the church behind it — quite without any parallel in architectural history — has led some authorities to regard it as a comparatively modern alteration, and to restore the narthex to a more normal position on that face of the octagon opposite the choir. Mothes maintains that the oblique plan is the original one, and was made necessary by the position of the street on which the church faced and which is shown on a still existing ancient city map.

But if in plan and construction S. Vitale owes little to the Byzantine influence, in its interior design and in its whole scheme of decoration it is one of the most striking examples of Byzantine art. The church has within the last generation undergone a painfully thorough restoration, and the dome is now covered with modern frescoes of no merit; but enough of the old work remains to enable us to form a tolerably complete picture of what it was in the sixth century. The treatment of the smaller arcades, of the semicircular *exedrae*, and of the tribune is essentially Byzantine; the grouped arches, somewhat stilted, the superimposition of the arcades, the great bearing-arches covering those of the tribune, are all in strong contrast to the treatment of the basilicas. The walls and piers, as high as the spring of the arches, are faced with square slabs of veined marble, — a form of decoration which was in common use in the richer Roman basilicas. The spandrils and soffits of the arches and the friezes are also faced with marble, but in the form of parti-colored inlay with arabesque designs and wreaths and garlands of foliage, enclosed by mosaic borders, or by delicately profiled mouldings of marble. The great piers of the central octagon are very similar to those of S. Sofia in form and proportion, and their capitals are little more than impost mouldings of very slight projection.

The surfaces of the upper walls and vaults, including the great central dome, were doubtless originally covered with mosaics. These have now disappeared excepting in the tribune, which still retains its early decoration, not only on the vaults, but also in the tympanums

of the bearing-arches, the walls, the jambs, and soffit of the great arch opening from the central octagon. These mosaics are probably contemporary with the church. The subjects are extremely varied, comprising in the arch-jambs and soffits medallions enclosing heads of saints; in the smaller wall spaces, arabesques with flowers and fishes; in the spandrils of the greater arches, figures of saints and angels, single and grouped; on the walls of the apse, two great groups of standing figures, the Emperor Justinian being the centre of the one, the Empress Theodosia of the other; and in the semi-dome of the apse, the figure of Christ seated among angels and saints. In color as well as design, these mosaics are perhaps somewhat inferior to those of the earlier group of Ravenna buildings, notably of the baptistery and the mausoleum of Galla Placidia.

It is perhaps in the capitals of the columns that the hand of the Byzantine artist is seen most clearly in contrast to those of the churches of the Roman type. The great piers of the central octagon are crowned, as I have said, with simple mouldings without ornament, but the capitals of the columns which compose the semicircular exedrae, as well as those of the arcades of the tribune, are varied and beautiful examples of Byzantine sculpture.<sup>1</sup>

In the face of so consistent a Byzantine decorative treatment of this interior, it seems unreasonable to maintain, with Mothes, Hübsch, and other writers, that San Vitale is throughout a product of Italian art. Such a view, based on the presumption that the church antedated the great Byzantine churches of Constantinople, and that certain characteristic features, like the Byzantine capitals and stilt-blocks, were even used in the Ravenna churches of the earlier group a hundred years before, ignores the important fact that, although not only in the Ravenna churches but even in certain contemporary churches of Rome and other Italian towns, the trace of Byzantine influence is to be clearly observed, yet in none of these cases has that influence been sufficiently strong or persistent to affect the essential character of the architecture; while in S. Vitale as originally built and adorned there is no single decorative feature which is not in harmony with the Byzantine methods and spirit, so that the effect of this interior, in spite of the absence of most of the characteristic forms in its construction, is essentially that of a Byzantine church. There is no other important church in Italy, with the one great exception of St. Mark's, of which the same can be said.

The great church of S. Lorenzo Maggiore at Milan was doubtless

<sup>1</sup> They are described and illustrated in chap. iii., on the Byzantine style.



earlier than several of those we have already noticed. Its origin is uncertain and has been the subject of an animated controversy; some authorities, Hübsch most notably, maintaining it to have been originally built in the latter half of the fourth century as a Christian church; others, of whom Kugler is the most positive, contending that it was the great hall of an imperial palace or bath, of which the great portico of sixteen columns which stands in front of the atrium was also a portion. The truth cannot be known, but in any case, the church, which was consecrated about the year 385, was substantially a creation of the time of Ambrose, and executed under his direction. As, however, before the end of the first century of its existence, Milan was ravaged with more or less destructiveness by Alaric, Attila, Odoacer, and Theodoric, and in later centuries by the Byzantines, Lombards, and Germans, to say nothing of fire and bad construction, it cannot be supposed that much of the church of Ambrose remains to us, especially as in 1573 the central dome fell in from weakness of construction, carrying with it the whole of the upper portions of the structure. There is reason also to believe that the early church was simpler in plan than that which we see to-day. No example can be found of any fourth century church with a plan so complicated. The church is doubtless one of the most striking instances of the phenomenon so frequent in the architecture of Italy, of an early building partially rebuilt from time to time, either on account of weakness or damage by fire or war, until its architecture is a mixture of the styles and plans of half a dozen widely separated centuries.

The plan is at present in its main outline a square measuring about one hundred and fifty feet inside the walls. So much is doubtless original. (Fig. 56.) How much more is so is purely a matter of conjecture. From each face projects a circular wall, which we may suspect was added when, at some later date, the present interior disposition was determined. This consists of a central octagon with unequal sides formed by eight piers, or rather fragments of wall, at the angles, connected by semicircular arches. From each of the four cardinal faces of the octagon, which are considerably broader than the other four, projects an apsidal exedra rather less than a semicircle in plan, formed by two ranges of arcades one above the other, the lower of five arches supported on octagonal piers, — the upper with five openings carried on square piers and Ionic columns.

These exedrae are of the same character with those of S. Vitale at Ravenna, but unlike those, the aisle which encloses them follows their

outline. Opposite the smaller sides of the octagon the aisle is broken by the intervention of four piers, which form an inner square, and which are connected by round arches with the outer walls and with the piers of the central octagon, which is thus strengthened and buttressed. The aisle is in two stories, the lower covered by groined

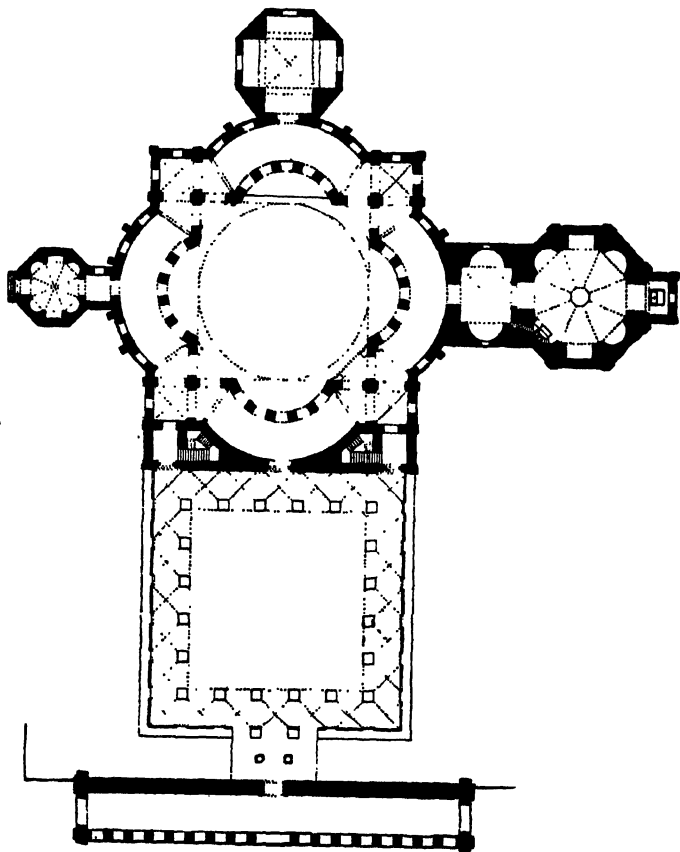


Fig. 56. S. Lorenzo, Milan.

vaulting of much the same character as in the aisle of S. Vitale, the upper by a continuous barrel vault. There is no interior feature to indicate which was the principal axis of the church, or in what position the altar was placed, whether in the centre of the octagon or in that one of the apsidal exedrae which is opposite the entrance doors.

The central octagon was, perhaps, originally covered by a wooden

roof, which was replaced after several burnings, and at some date now uncertain, by a dome. The sides of the octagon being unequal, the base of the dome was brought to a regular octagon by means of horizontal lintels on the four smaller sides projecting one beyond another over the small arch between the piers. The dome is of remarkably bold construction; with a diameter of nearly ninety feet, and its crown about one hundred and thirty feet above the floor, its supporting piers have a thickness of only six feet and a length of eleven. Perhaps no dome of equal size and height was ever raised on piers so attenuated. It is, however, buttressed by the semi-domes of the four exedræ which abut against its base, and also by two arches connecting each pier of the octagon, the one with the outer wall of the church, the other with the pier which forms the angle of the inner square. Over the small square compartments, of which the last-mentioned piers form the inner angle, were built, at some early period not now determinable, slender towers, from the inner angles of which flying buttresses were carried to the base of the dome. The original form of the dome and of its covering roof is not known.<sup>1</sup> The present dome, which is octagonal, was built directly after the fall of the old one in 1573, and shows on the exterior no indication of the interior form, the octagonal wall being carried up nearly to the height of the crown of the dome and covered by a low octagonal roof.

The interior is very plain, but the old chronicles speak of it as extremely rich in decoration,<sup>2</sup> with marble slabs on walls and piers, and mosaic on domes and vaults.

The church is flanked on the north and south by two octagonal chapels, while a third opens from the eastern aisle. All of these are believed to be nearly contemporary with the church. The last mentioned, San Ippolito, although octagonal externally, is in its interior plan a Greek cross, with its central square of twenty feet covered by a groined vault, and its four short arms by barrel vaults. San Aquilino, the largest of the chapels, was originally the baptistery of the church. It is entered from the south aisle through a square vestibule with a semicircular domed niche on either side. The chapel itself is an octagon, forty-two feet in diameter internally, covered by an octagonal dome. In its thick walls are eight niches alternately round and square, and eight similar niches above, each enclosing a window. The chapel of S. Sisto, on the other side of the church, is similar in plan but much smaller.

<sup>1</sup> Mothes (p. 142) believes it to have been round.

<sup>2</sup> Arnulphus, A. D. 1085. Also a Latin poem of the eighth century speaks of the precious marbles of the walls and of the golden dome, — *lapidibus auroque tecta*.

## CHAPTER II

### THE LOMBARD ROMANESQUE

UP to the time of Theodoric, and indeed for half a century after his death, the buildings of Italy were in the main the production of the Roman race of builders, and were in the direct line of succession from those of ancient Rome. No essential feature can be cited of the early basilican church, or of the square, circular, or polygonal churches of the first four centuries after Constantine, which had not its prototype in the temples or the civic buildings of the Empire. Scarcely any fact is more remarkable in the history of architecture than the steadfastness with which the Italian race has adhered to the classic traditions through all the changes of government and population through which it has passed, and the reluctance with which it has admitted any essential departure from them. The various styles, apart from the Roman, which have prevailed in Italy between the early Christian centuries and those of the Renaissance, have been the result of influences from without her borders, and have never commanded the loyal and hearty support of her people, as was the case with the native styles in Italy, France, and Germany. The Lombard raised his clumsy piles; the Byzantine turned his thin domes of pottery or bricks; the Cistercians introduced the Gothic of northern France; the Normans in the south surrounded here and there their apsidal choirs with ambulatories and radiating chapels, — but through all these local and temporary invasions of foreign taste the heart of the Italian, from north to south, held fast for a thousand years to the basilican plan and the classic detail of Rome.

The architecture which grew up and developed over the greater part of Italy during the next six centuries after the death of Theodoric is commonly known as the Romanesque. The term is an extremely indefinite one, denoting a style which had various phases in various parts of the peninsula, and of which the origin, duration, and characteristics are matters of heated controversy. As applied to architecture, the term is, as M. Quicherat points out, of comparatively recent date, having originated with M. de Gerville, who,

somewhere about 1820, proposed to the antiquaries of Normandy to apply it to the architecture which prevailed between the downfall of the Roman domination and the twelfth century. "This architecture," says M. Quicherat, "which every man had baptized according to his own fancy by the name of Lombard, or Saxon, or Byzantine, appeared to M. de Gerville to be entitled to be called by a name which was not that of any one people, since it had been practised all over western Europe without the special intervention of Lombards, or Saxons, or Greeks;" and following the analogy of the philologists, who applied the term "Romanesque" to the broken down Latin of Western Europe, with its mingling of other and more local languages, he made use of the same word to characterize what he regarded as the depraved Roman architecture, modified in the same way by local influences.<sup>1</sup>

The Romanesque, in character as well as in time, lies between the Roman and the Gothic, being in great measure an inheritance from the one, and carrying within itself, at least in most of its forms, the promise of the other. Yet Quicherat's definition as "an architecture which has ceased to be Roman, though it retains much that is Roman, and has not yet become Gothic, though it has already something of Gothic," is, as far as its application to the Romanesque of Italy is concerned, certainly faulty; since it implies that all Romanesque is on its way to become Gothic. To the Romanesque of France and Germany, and to a certain extent to that of northern Italy, where the wooden roofs have been superseded by vaulting, where the walls and piers have been made heavy and broad to support it, and where the whole disposition of parts has a more or less organic arrangement, the definition is clearly applicable; but it would as certainly exclude the Romanesque of central and southern Italy, in which the internal disposition is essentially that of the Roman basilicas, and in which the ornaments and the general exterior design are the features which distinguish the Romanesque church from its Roman prototype.

The lack of homogeneousness in the Romanesque of Italy, to which I have referred, makes it desirable to discriminate between its various geographical aspects. The most obvious division appears to be that which would give the name of Lombard Romanesque to the

<sup>1</sup> "The architecture of the ninth century contains something of Asiatic, something of Byzantine, a great deal of Roman; yet is neither Asiatic, nor Byzantine, nor Roman, but Romanesque; just as our language, which contains elements of Celtic, and of Teutonic, and a prodigious quantity of Latin, is itself neither Celtic, nor Teutonic, nor Latin, but French." Quicherat, *Mélanges*, p. 152.

style which developed in Milan, Pavia, and the Lombard cities of the north of Italy, and which was reproduced with slight modifications in the Rhenish provinces of Germany, — and that of Central Romanesque to the more classic forms which we find in Tuscany and the region between Tuscany and Rome ; while that mixed style which grew up contemporaneously over Apulia, Calabria, and the other provinces of southern Italy — a style in which the Lombard and the Norman had perhaps an equal share, and of which the abundant and fascinating ornament is largely due to the Greek sculptors by whom these provinces were overrun from the eighth to the eleventh centuries — is appropriately distinguished as the Southern Romanesque.

The Gothic kingdom was too short to produce any essential modification of taste or methods in art or any considerable intermingling of races. Moreover, during the most important period of that kingdom, the Gothic power was exercised by a monarch whose chief pride was to follow in the footsteps of the great people whom he had come to govern ; and the buildings of Theodoric were, except in certain details, scarcely less Roman than those of Constantine.

But the Goths had hardly disappeared from Italy when a new and much more formidable wave of invasion swept over the country. The Lombards, or Longobardi, were a rude and ferocious tribe, who, — first appearing in history during the reign of Tiberius, and in the pages of Tacitus, established on the banks of the Elbe, and a little later in the plains of central Germany, — had by the fifth century, through what wholesale migration is not known, transferred themselves to the banks of the Danube, and had there grown so strong as to be recognized by the Roman power as the most formidable among its threatening neighbors. They had embraced Christianity, but were, like the Goths, of the Arian faith, until their conversion to the Catholic Church in 670, and were thus hardly less odious to the Catholic Popes than to the Roman Emperors.<sup>1</sup> In 568, perhaps excited by the example of the Goths, and seeing in their expulsion their own opportunity, this restless and hardy people crossed the Alps under Alboin, and meeting with but a feeble resistance, spread themselves rapidly over the broad and rich plains of northern Italy. Within two years they had established permanent settlements as far south as Spoleto and Benevento. Pavia, after resisting them for

<sup>1</sup> The hostility of the Popes to the Lombards did not cease with the conversion of the latter to Catholicism, but was active and unceasing so long as they remained in control of Italy.

three years, became their capital city. At Ravenna the power of the Byzantines, and in central Italy the power of the Popes, was too strong for them to overcome,<sup>1</sup> while cities like Venice on the north and Naples on the south were able, in virtue of their control of the sea and the ease with which this control enabled them to bring in supplies, to defy the attacks of the Lombards. But of the greater part of Italy they remained masters for two hundred years. Their rule was, however, never accepted by the Italian people, who continued to the last to feel for them the same steady and cordial hatred which they felt twelve hundred years later for the Austrians.<sup>2</sup> Yet it seems evident that the brutal and savage manners of the Lombards underwent a change as their hold on the country became more secure, and their intelligence and energy carried them far on the road to a higher civilization. Within a generation after the invasion, Queen Theodolinda, the wife of the second successor and grandson of Alboin, who seems to have represented all that was best in the Lombard character, had built the first Lombard cathedral, at Monza, the church of Sta. Giulia at Bonate, and other churches at Lomella, Cremona, and Brescia. Living during the building of the cathedral at Monza in the palace raised by Theodoric, she built after its completion a more extensive palace, decorated with historical paintings. Her works were not confined to the neighborhood of her capital. As far south as Benevento, she founded in 620 the monastery of San Pietro del Olivola, to which fifty years later a basilica was added. By some writers the foundation of the baptistery of Florence is ascribed to her. The church of San Michele at Pavia followed not long after. Its exact date cannot be ascertained, but as Pavia was the capital city it is reasonable to presume that it was there that the earliest attempts would be made to rival the Orthodox churches which the Lombards found existing. The immediate successors of Theodolinda continued the work, not only at Pavia, but at Milan, Brescia, Verona, Monza, and Bergamo. It is, however, highly improbable that any one of the earliest Lombard churches remains.

<sup>1</sup> Ravenna, with its port of Classis, was indeed taken by Liutprand somewhere about 730, during the furious war between the Pope and the German Emperor; but the Lombards were promptly expelled from the territory of the Exarchate by the Venetians, whose fleet was before the city.

<sup>2</sup> A feeling which was fully reciprocated by the conquerors. Liutprand, their most enlightened king, speaking with the Emperor Phocas, used these words: "We Lombards, Saxons, Franks, Lothringians, Bavarians, Swabians, Burgundians, have such contempt for the Romans that we can think of no grosser insult to fling at our enemies than to call them Romans, — that name signifying to us the height of ignominy, cowardice, avarice, luxury, and in a word, of every vice." Quoted by Dartein, p. 67.

They were all doubtless extremely rude, both in construction and design, and gave way in no long time to buildings of a higher character. Attempts have been made by local antiquaries, notably in the case of San Michele of Pavia, to maintain the identity of the present building, at least in part, with that of the seventh century; but all the arguments, from the condition of the Lombards themselves at that period, as well as from architectural analogy, are in the opposite direction, and tend to support the conclusion of Cordero,<sup>1</sup> "that the Lombards, not yet emerged from a state of barbarism when they invaded Italy, had no architects and knew nothing of architecture; that when the ancient chroniclers tell us that such or such a church was erected during their occupation of the country, we are not to infer necessarily that the church which they built was the one we see to-day; and that from the middle of the sixth century to the middle of the seventh century, no other architectural style was in use than the Roman style of the fourth and fifth centuries, however perverted by the incompetency of the later builders."

It is evident, however, not only that no permanent works were built during the sixth and seventh centuries by the Lombards themselves, but that the Italians were not less unproductive. The steady degeneracy in the character of both people and government would of itself, perhaps, be sufficient to account for this; but another and equally sufficient reason may be found in the desolating series of calamities to which the unhappy country was subjected in quick succession during this period. The war which in the middle of the sixth century raged with varying fortunes between the later Goths under Totila and the imperial forces, during which the capital was repeatedly besieged and the whole of the southern portion of the peninsula constantly laid bare by the contending armies, had left behind it an exhaustion which seemed enough of itself for the people to bear; — but in 566 the whole of Italy was ravaged by a frightful pestilence, in the course of which whole towns were depopulated and the fields left without men to gather the crops. The pestilence was followed three years later (the year after the Lombard invasion) by an almost equally disastrous famine, and after a somewhat longer interval, by destructive floods over the whole northern portion of the country. These calamities were, in their turn, succeeded by a general drought, and in the following year by a return of the pestilence. It is not surprising that under so heavy a load of misfortune the arts should be for a time forgotten.

<sup>1</sup> *Del Italiana Architettura durante la dominazione longobardica.* Brescia, 1829.



The origin of the Lombard style is difficult and perhaps impossible to determine with any certainty. German, French, and Italian writers have struggled and fought over the question, and have left it as obscure as they found it. The curious reader is referred to Mothes, p. 232, for a summary of the views of the German writers on this subject, as Stieglitz, Kinkel, Lübke, Rosenthal, Springer, Förster, who advance views of the most contradictory character, some maintaining that the Lombards built all their buildings by the help of the Byzantine architects, — others that as the Lombard art was of a quite opposite character from that of the Byzantines, they must have brought it with them from beyond the Alps. With such a conflict of opinions, one thing alone seems clear, namely, the impossibility of any certain conclusion. Each student must judge for himself concerning the force of the arguments on one side or another, and the strength of the probabilities.

Origin of  
the Lom-  
bard style.

It does not, however, seem reasonable to suppose that a tribe so predatory and warlike and restless as the Lombards were at the time of their invasion of Italy should then have been in the possession of sufficient artistic knowledge, taste, or training to have built the churches which have been attributed to them. Nothing indicates that they were, before the invasion, in the practice of the arts. No buildings whatever exist, I believe, in the regions whence they came, which can be accepted as the prototypes of San Michele at Pavia or the cathedral at Mouza; none, indeed, of any kind which go back to the date of their abandonment of those regions. Yet the earliest of the important Lombard buildings which we see existing in Italy differ radically in style of architecture and interior plan and disposition from any Italian buildings which preceded them, and from any contemporary buildings in other parts of the peninsula. Whence came, then, the change in style? Certainly not from Germany, whose inhabitants were even less likely than the Lombards to originate a distinct and vigorous architectural style. Certainly not from Italy, whose traditions were all bound up with the classic periods of her history. Certainly not from the East, whose architecture (even at Ravenna) had little indeed in common with the solid and ponderous constructions of the Lombard builders. The change must have been, like all changes in architectural style, a gradual one, the result of many influences not now to be detected, and passing through many successive stages, of which we see only the later ones.

We can only presume that by the middle of the eighth century, perhaps under the reign of Liutprand (712-744), when the Lombards

had been masters of Italy for a hundred and fifty years and had consolidated their power, a great number of the earlier churches were either rebuilt or in process of rebuilding, and that a few of the notable monuments which stand to-day as the most worthy examples of the Lombard style may be traced back, in whole or in part (due allowance being made for the repairs and restorations of eleven centuries), to this period. During the remainder of the eighth century, and during the whole of the four following centuries, the Lombard style was not only the reigning style in which most of the buildings of northern Italy were built, but it had been carried northward across the Alps by Charlemagne and his followers, and had established itself with scarcely any essential changes on the banks of the Rhine and in the regions to the east and west of that river.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to attribute so great a result to any influence but that which had been the controlling influence in Italy in respect of government, laws, social customs, and even in art for two hundred years — the influence of the Lombards. The style of architecture which we find prevailing for the first time in these regions after their occupation of the country, and which differs so radically both as to construction and design from any which had preceded it, can with reason be credited only to them. And, indeed, it is a style which well accords with all that we know of their character, and with the gradual modification of it which must have resulted from their continued contact with the Italians. For the action of the Lombards on Italy and of Italy on the Lombards was reciprocal, in spite of the hatred and contempt which marked the relation of the two races to each other. The one race stood for barbarous energy, the other for exhausted and effete civilization. The triumph of rude and savage force was inevitable; but, in triumphing, the conquerors were themselves as inevitably changed. Their savageness was tamed, their rudeness was smoothed; they took from Italy as much as they gave her, and the style of architecture which began with them was continued by their descendants and successors, at first with similar rudeness, then with less, but always with a vigor and individuality which distinguished it

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to compare, for instance, the very early baptistery at Bonn on the Rhine, with the little round church of S. Tommaso in Limine at Almenno (see p. 160). The circular portions of the two buildings are nearly identical in design. Compare, also, the plan of the eleventh century church of S. M. im Kapitol at Cologne with that of S. Fedele at Como. The exterior of the German church shows the blind arcades, the arched corbel tables, the round-headed windows, and the caves gallery around the apse perfectly corresponding to the same features in the contemporary Italian buildings. See Boisseré, *Denkmäler der Baukunst am Nieder-Rhein*.

unmistakably from the styles which were developed simultaneously in the regions immediately adjacent to them.<sup>1</sup>

Although the materials for forming an adequate notion of the civil life of the Lombards during the four or five centuries which followed their establishment in Italy are extremely scanty, yet it is certain that side by side with their turbulent and aggressive career of conquest and rapine, there went on a civil life in which a wise and thoughtful intelligence was slowly creating a new and higher standard of laws and manners, and in which the relations between the native race and the invading foreigners were undergoing a steady amelioration. They established at a very early period various charitable institutions, hospitals, almshouses, orphan asylums, etc., perhaps following in this the example of the earlier Germans, of whom Amalasantha, daughter of Theodoric, founded an orphanage in Ravenna.<sup>2</sup> In 643, only three quarters of a century after the conquest, a complete code of laws was promulgated by Rotharis, embracing 390 articles, civil and military, in many of which the best principles of the old Roman law were embodied, and which showed already the result of the softening and restraining influence of Pope Gregory on the one hand, and Queen Theodolinda on the other.<sup>3</sup>

Liutprand and his successors, a century later, improved upon this code, and modified and softened it, particularly in those features

<sup>1</sup> Dartain, who has studied the Lombard architecture with conscientious devotion and ability, says nevertheless of the Lombards, "Leur influence s'est reduite a celle que la sauvagerie exerce sur les arts," etc. In Planat's *Cycl.* vol. v. p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> Hospitals were founded not only by kings but by private persons, sometimes by those of humble condition. A parchment still exists dated 8 May, 777, by which a citizen of Milan, named Todone, bequeathed his wealth and his house to the archbishop of Milan, for the founding of a hospital for the poor. (Romussi, p. 265.) The same writer remarks that in the time of Charlemagne's rule in Lombardy, the donation of money to the churches had become so frequent as to excite the suspicion of the king, inasmuch as a law of the Lombards permitted such donors to make a different disposition of the property during their own life, — and meanwhile the property being in the hands of the church was exempt from danger by war or violence. Charlemagne in 785 made such gifts to churches irrevocable.

<sup>3</sup> The ferocity with which the wars of the period were carried on is well illustrated by the complaint of Pope Gregory in 590, that he had seen Romans, during a siege of Rome by the Lombards, led to market with ropes around their necks to be sold as slaves. "Towns destroyed, castles in ruins, the fields laid waste, and the country reduced to a solitude, — Rome itself abandoned by her people, ravaged by her enemies, and given over to destruction. Where is the Senate? Where are the people? The buildings are falling, the walls are crumbling on every hand. . . . All the glory of earthly dignity has expired within the city. All her greatness has vanished." Gregorovius, vol. ii. p. 41; Dantier, p. 108.

which concerned the enfranchisement of the Italians who were subjected to the Lombard rule. The commercial class was recognized early in the eighth century, and its members ranked as freemen held to military service in case of need.<sup>1</sup>

The Church exercised, after the general conversion of the Lombards to the Catholic faith, a powerful influence towards the mitigation of the Lombard rule, and we get here and there a striking illustration of the extent to which the savage temper of these rude warriors was affected by the strong contrast which the Christian life presented to their own turbulent existence. Early in the eighth century, Ratchis, one of the Lombard kings, abdicated the throne, became a monk, and entered the monastery of Monte Cassino; and his wife and daughter founded in the neighborhood a convent for nuns. The widow of his successor followed their example, and other similar instances are recorded of the founding or restoring of monasteries and churches by the kings or their families. Many of the Lombard nobles occupied positions of greater or less eminence in the church. It may be concluded, however, that these were individual and exceptional instances of a spirit which did not greatly characterize the manners or the policy of the Lombards, who never went so far in accord with the church as to admit the bishops to any participation in the making of their laws.

Gibbon, who is naturally not much disposed to allow the salutary influence of the church, is emphatic in his general appreciation of the essential manliness and wholesomeness of the Lombard character. "Whatever merit may be discovered in the laws of the Lombards," he remarks, "they are the genuine fruit of the reason of the barbarians. The succession of their kings is marked with virtue and ability; the troubled series of their annals is adorned with fair intervals of peace, order, and domestic happiness, and the Italians enjoyed a milder and more equitable government than any of the other kingdoms which had been founded on the ruins of the Western Empire."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is to be remembered, in speaking of the gradual amelioration of the Lombard character, that this process was not limited to the comparatively short period during which they were the masters of Italy. The overthrow of their rule by Charlemagne was followed neither by their expulsion from the country nor by any general proscription. They lost neither their fortunes nor their dignities, and, except in the matter of government, they were as important an element in the life of Italy as before their overthrow. Charlemagne took for himself and for his successors the title of *Longobardorum Rex*.

There seem to be no materials for forming any clear notion of the extent to which the Lombards mixed with the older Italian population. Gregorovius speaks of "the Lombards of Tuscany" as forming one division of the army which besieged Rome in 756.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. 45.

Not the least interesting of the groups of laws which make up the code of Rotharis and that of Liutprand are those which establish and regulate the order of the Magistri Comacini, <sup>The</sup> Comacini, called also Magistri Casarii. Many and various accounts have been given of the origin and nature of this body, but concerning their importance and the general character of their functions there is substantial agreement. According to the popular legend, they sprang from the little island in the lake of Como, still known as the "Isola Comacina," where, according to Paulus Diaconus, at the period of the Lombard invasion, one Francione, a Roman warrior, formerly a general in the army of Narses, had maintained an independent colony which endured for twenty years after that event, and only yielded after a siege of six months. In recognition of the courage and tenacity of their resistance, the Comacini were admitted to the privileges of freemen in the Lombard state; and as the inhabitants of the region of which the lake was the centre had been long renowned for their skill in the building arts, the little company of Francione grew not unnaturally into a privileged body of builders, to whom subsequently, after they had been reinforced to some extent by Lombard additions, special concessions were granted by the Lombard kings, and whose members spread themselves abroad, not only in Italy, but also in Germany and France, in the capacity of master-builders, and perhaps in some cases of architects as well. The code of Rotharis contains provisions for the regulation of this body, and for determining their duties towards their employers on the one hand, and their workmen on the other, and their rights and responsibilities in cases of accident.<sup>1</sup>

The code of Liutprand, eighty years later, contained further provisions regulating the practice of the Comacini, which had now become much more numerous and important. Fixed rates of payment were established for their services, varying according to the kind of building on which they were engaged; definite prices being allowed for walls of various thicknesses, for arches and vaults, for chimneys, plastering and joiners' work. The difficulty which these

<sup>1</sup> Two rules are worth citing as curiously similar to certain legislation of our own day. First, "When a master-mason (Magister Comacino) shall have undertaken to build or restore the house of another person, and shall have stipulated his rate of pay, if it shall happen that any person is killed by a falling stone or other material, such death shall be at the cost, not of the owner of the house, but of the master-mason." Second, "When one or more Comacini shall be engaged in building a house under the charge of a leader, and any one of the Comacini shall fall ill and die, his death shall be at the cost of the leader."

early builders found in the construction of vaults is indicated by the allowance of a charge per superficial foot, from fifteen to eighteen times as great as in the case of a wall. The price of provisions and wine furnished to the workmen is also determined, and is counted as part of their pay.

It was doubtless owing to this body of trained builders that the Lombard architecture spread over Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries, and to their favor both with the Lombard kings and with the Popes, who, as early as the end of the eighth century, gave them recognition and authority to travel abroad and practise their art.<sup>1</sup> It has been too much the custom to accredit the monks with all the architecture of the dark ages, and to hold that the work of the lay architects began with the emancipation of the people from feudal tyranny, and was thus contemporaneous with the rise of Gothic architecture in France. To how great an extent the Lombard churches which remain to us both in Italy and Germany were the work of the Comacini we are, in the absence of authentic records, left to conjecture. But it is not unreasonable to presume that, as the Lombard region was the centre from which their companies went forth to their work in foreign parts, they would be the most natural, as well as the most competent, directors of the works undertaken in their own country.<sup>2</sup>

Let us now trace, as concisely as possible, the chief characteristics of this Lombard style, the earliest form of the Romanesque, and which carried within itself even the germ of the Gothic.

We can do this most intelligently, perhaps, first by studying the

<sup>1</sup> Lindsay, *Hist. of Chr. Art.*, vol. ii. p. 14. It was, however, no new thing for builders to be sent into foreign lands by the Popes. Gregory the Great, before the end of the sixth century, sent abbot Melitus into England, accompanied by the monk Augustine, with a certain number of workmen, who built in various towns of that country; and the same thing happened again in 660 under Pope Vitellianus. Mothes, p. 238.

The Popes also employed Lombard architects in Rome. A letter of Adrian to Charlemagne is preserved, asking him to send some "magistri" from the north of Italy to execute certain building works in Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Large claims are made for the extent and importance of the Comacini. Merzario, in his interesting history, goes so far as to assert that the wide-spreading guilds of Free Masons all over Europe were but their continuers, and that to them belongs the credit of practically all the church-building, not only in Italy, but in France, England, and Germany for five centuries at least (*I Maestri Comacini*, vol. i. p. 79). The claim has little but inference to rest on, as the origin and history of the Masonic Guilds is obscure, notwithstanding the frequent mention of them in the archives of the Middle Ages. Merzario himself has to admit, in speaking of the Comacini, "Their names are unknown, their individual works undetermined, but the breath of their spirit is felt through all these centuries," etc.

plan and design of two or three of its most typical buildings, and then by following it into its most conspicuous variations in churches less rigidly characteristic.

The Lombard region is, roughly speaking, limited geographically by the Alps on the north, the Apennines on the south, the Ticino on the west, and on the east by a line drawn north and south half way between Verona and Parma. The style overran these limits, but where it did so, it showed, as in Verona, in Modena, in Bologna, the influence of outside forces and modes of thought. In time, its duration may be said to cease in the thirteenth century, when it passed into the Gothic, even as on the north of the Alps the Romanesque of Germany and northern France had done a century earlier, — but in Italy, the Gothic still retained, as we shall see later, certain of the features of the Lombard style.

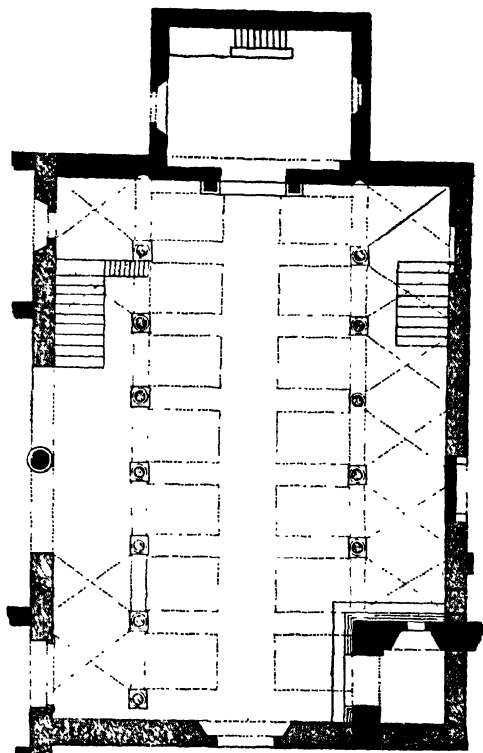


Fig. 57. S. Salvatore, Brescia.

The origin and date of the earliest of the Lombard churches which are still standing, are, as I have said, a matter of conjecture, and therefore of controversy, into which we will not enter. It is enough to say that they prove with sufficient clearness that in plan and construction the Lombards did but follow at first the fashion of the basilicas which they found existing all over Italy, the Roman type, which had been adopted wherever the Christian religion had penetrated. Of these churches, the most ancient is perhaps S. Salvatore at Brescia; two others, S. Vincenzo in Prato

Early  
Lombard  
Churches.



Fig. 58. Capitals. S. Salvatore, Brescia.

at Milan, and S. Maria delle Caccie at Pavia, are not very much later. All are simple basilicas, of modest dimensions, with nave and aisles separated by simple arcades, with columns whose capitals are largely taken from older buildings, the nave ending in a semicircular apse. All roofs were of wood, though in S. Salvatore a modern vaulting has replaced the ancient roofs. In S. Salvatore and S. Vincenzo a crypt extends under the apse and the two or three eastern bays of the nave; in the first named, the crypt has the whole breadth of nave and aisles. Yet in each of these little churches there are not wanting certain significant variations from the early Christian type. In S. Vincenzo, for instance, the exterior wall of the three apses is surrounded at the top by a thinly profiled arched corbel-table, joined with the base by square pilaster strips<sup>1</sup> which divide the wall vertically into compartments. In the central apse the effect of the corbel-table is immensely enhanced by a small, deep niche under each of its arches — the arches thus forming the archivolts of the niches, which are separated only by the breadth of a single brick.<sup>2</sup> In S. Salvatore, the variations are much more varied and interesting. They concern, for the most part, the interior decoration. The capitals are mostly modelled somewhat rudely on the Corinthian type; but some are convex block capitals wholly Byzantine in character, with flowing leafage, growing in some instances out of a vase, and covering the face of the block. The capitals of the small columns in the crypt, of which there are three transverse lines, are very interesting and characteristic. They vary widely in breadth, height, and design, but all are of a character hitherto unknown; the shafts also vary in size, and in many cases there is no correspondence of size

<sup>1</sup> Dartain, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Cattaneo, p. 230.



between capital and shaft.<sup>1</sup> That portion of the crypt which lies under the nave and aisles is vaulted in small square groined bays, — the portion under the apse is ceiled with flat slabs of marble, supported on marble lintels, and forming the pavement of the apse above. In many details of sculpture the Greek hand is manifest, and a triangular fragment of marble is preserved in the neighboring museum, which once formed probably a portion of the parapet or cheek of the small stair which gave access to the ambon, and which is one of the most pure and beautiful examples of Byzantine sculpture in existence.<sup>2</sup>

These variations are, however, but superficial, and do not point to any essential change in the type. There is nothing in these early churches which prefigures in any way the radical departure from the methods in use which marks the Lombard style in its later development. The basilican churches involved no serious problems of construction, and the whole conception, regarded from this point of view, was primitive. But some fragments which were brought to light in Milan in 1869–70, during the excavations for a new banking building, seem to show, if we can judge from an inscription on one of them, that as early as the first half of the eighth century, the change was already conceived, and to some extent realized. Among these fragments are certain capitals, not of columns, but of piers, of which the plan must have been a quatrefoil produced by four half columns covering the four sides of a square. The capitals are interesting in themselves for their form and their decoration, as perhaps the earliest examples of the true Lombard cubical capital, strongly influenced by the Byzantine decorative spirit.<sup>3</sup> But they are much more interesting and important as belonging to the earliest church, of which we have any knowledge, in which the nave column, or its substitute, the square pier, carrying the single line of nave arches, was superseded by the grouped pier, with four shafts, of which two supported the arches of the nave arcades, while the other two carried the transverse arches of the nave and aisles, which were thus divided into compartments or bays. It is not necessary to infer from this the existence of vaults covering these compartments; it is probable, indeed, that the use of vaulting came later, perhaps as a result of the fires by which the wooden roofs were so frequently destroyed; but the joining of the longitudinal walls by transverse arches was the first preparation for it, and was of itself a great advance in stable and

<sup>1</sup> Dartein, p. 22, pl. 16.

<sup>2</sup> See Fig. 180, chap iii.

<sup>3</sup> Dartein, text, p. 103.

scientific building, over the long, thin, disconnected walls of the Roman basilicas. These fragments of the little church of Auna may then be regarded as showing us the first step in the progressive development of an organic structure, which, passing through the intermediate steps of Lombard in the south, and Norman in the north, found in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries its culmination in the Gothic cathedrals of France.<sup>1</sup>

In the two important churches of San Ambrogio at Milan and San Michele at Pavia we have probably the oldest existing examples of the early Lombard church in its complete development. I shall not enter into the question concerning the age of these churches, which were presumed until lately to date, in portions, at least, from the time of the Lombard occupation, but to which later students are unwilling to assign an earlier date than the eleventh century. The truth lies probably somewhere between the two extremes, and we shall not perhaps be far wrong in assuming that the main construction of San Ambrogio, with the exception of the vaulting and the dome or lantern, is as old as the second half of the ninth century, and that that of San Michele belongs to the middle period of the tenth century, following the partial destruction of the church by the fire of 924.<sup>2</sup>

In their ground plan, these two churches differ widely. The general plan of San Ambrogio (Fig. 59) is a long rectangle about three hundred and ninety feet by ninety feet, of which length the fine atrium and narthex occupy about two fifths. The interior is divided into a nave and aisles, the former about thirty-eight feet wide, which extend without interruption from the front to the rear wall. There is no suggestion of a transept. The nave and

S. Ambrogio,  
Milan.

<sup>1</sup> These two things, says Reynaud, — the square piers carrying engaged shafts on their faces, and columns rising "de fond," — are fundamental in the history of art. They are of greater importance than the pointed arch. It is they which prepare the way for the vault. Of this invention, it is impossible to deny the credit to the Lombards. *Traité de l'Architecture*, pp. 214-218.

Romussi (*Milano nei suoi Monumenti*, p. 253) says that though the monastery of Auna, from whose church these capitals remain, was founded A. D. 740, yet the church was rebuilt toward the close of the eleventh century.

<sup>2</sup> Yet it is probable that certain portions of S. Michele (which was twice rebuilt and many times restored) may belong to the earlier church. In the bas-reliefs on the façade, the warriors in the battle and hunting scenes are clad in the Lombard costume. The same may be said of the capitals in S. Giulia di Bonate. Indeed, the Lombard sculpture furnishes the strongest argument for the theory now so strongly disputed that the Lombards themselves did build the churches called by their name. In the façade of S. Evasio at Casale-Monferrato are the figures of King Liutprand and his queen. Why should anybody but a Lombard care to immortalize these royal personages of an extinct dynasty?

aisles each terminate in a semicircular apse, with a vaulted crypt beneath the central one, which extends forward under a half of the last bay of the nave. The floor of the choir is raised some seven feet above the nave, and the upper portion of the crypt opens into the nave by five round arches. The arrangement, so far as the plan is concerned, is simply that of an early Christian basilica, without essential modification, except that which results of necessity from the adoption of a system of vaulting.

San Michele, on the other hand (Fig. 60) is a fully developed cruciform church

S. Michele,  
Pavia.

of much smaller dimensions than San Ambrogio, built originally with a nave of two square bays flanked by aisles and opening into a transept, which projects boldly beyond the aisle walls. The crossing is covered by an octagonal dome, and from it opens a choir of a single bay with a round apse, and a crypt beneath, the floor of the choir being raised fourteen steps up from the nave, as in San Ambrogio, so that the upper half of the crypt is above the floor of the nave, with which, however, it has not any direct connection. This plan is, as will be readily seen, a wide departure from the plans of the early churches.

But in spite of the difference in ground plan, in their general disposition of parts there is great similarity between these two churches. In each the nave is divided into square bays<sup>1</sup> by strong transverse

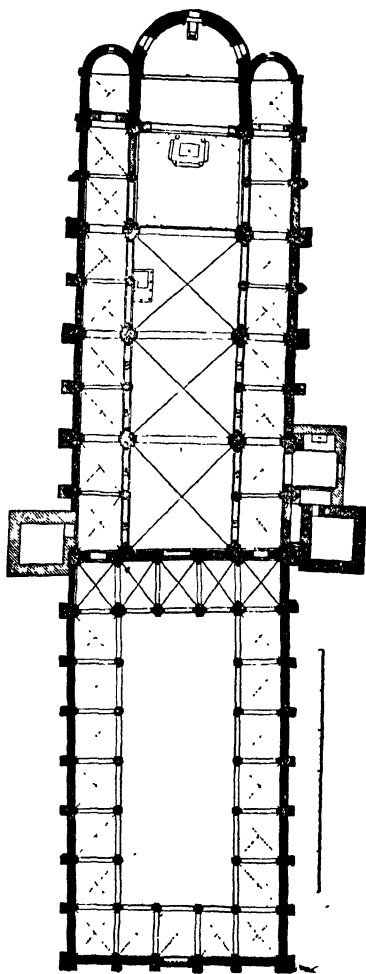


Fig. 59. S. Ambrogio, Milan.

<sup>1</sup> This description does not apply to San Michele in its present state, but is true of the original construction. The vaulting of the nave was taken down late in the fifteenth

round arches, springing from massive piers; the aisles, half as wide

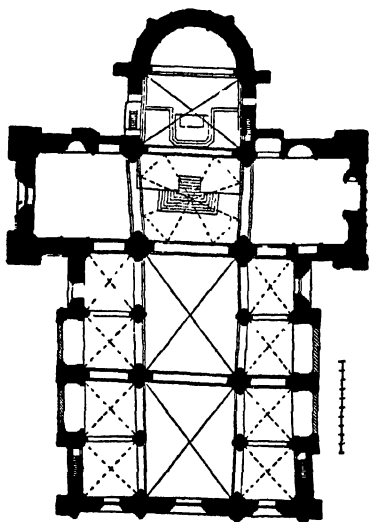


Fig. 60. S. Michele, Pavia.

as the nave, are also divided into square bays by similar arches, the bays being covered in each case by groined vaults, above which are galleries of precisely similar construction. The construction of the nave is sufficiently provided for by the great piers from which spring its transverse dividing arches. But the division of the aisles into square bays, of which two answer to each bay of the nave, requires, as will be readily understood, an intermediate pier of smaller size, opposite the centre of the nave bays. To support merely the vertical weight of such vaults (the breadth of the nave is about thirty-eight and thirty-two feet in San Ambrogio

and San Michele respectively) piers of large section were necessary,

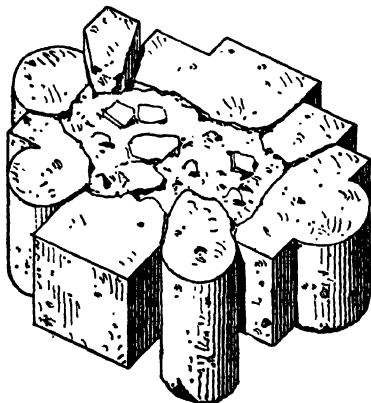


Fig. 61. S. Ambrogio; Nave Piers.

and the form of the pier was governed by the form and position of the vaulting members. (Fig. 61.) The transverse arches have a broad flat soffit, which answers to the pilaster-like faces of the pier, which are toward the nave and aisle. In San Michele these arches are of two orders, of which the outline is repeated in the section of the pier. A similar arch on either side of the pier in the direction of the axis of the church, really the lateral arch of the vault

century and rebuilt, with four oblong bays occupying the space of the two square ones. A similar change was made in S. Ambrogio in 1196, when the vault of the third bay fell in, and was replaced by two oblong vaults, but the single square bay was replaced when the interior was restored in 1866.

(though made a blind arch by the wall of the intermediate arcade), is answered by a similar face on the pier, which, however, is mostly covered by the engaged shafts which carry the intermediate arches in two stories, and by the solid wall above the arches, while the diagonal ribs of the nave vault, which have in S. Ambrogio a rectangular and in S. Michele a circular section, are prepared for by vaulting shafts, which, like all the other members of the pier, start from the pavement. This compound pier is crowned by a capital which follows its plan, with a strong abacus, from which spring all the arches of construction. In S. Ambrogio the capitals are but just above the gallery floor; in S. Michele they are on a level with the crown of the gallery arches. The arrangement of the intermediate piers and the arches which they carry is much the same in the two churches: in the one a flat pilaster face rising to the capitals of the first arches, above which a slender engaged shaft continues the vertical line to the gallery floor; in the other an engaged shaft rising from the pavement and passing through the pier capital to the level of the gallery floor. (Figs. 62-65.) Above the gallery floor in both churches, a stunted pier, with flat pilaster face and engaged shafts on each side, supports the two arches of the triforium. The main piers have thus to support three distinct systems of vaulting, those of the nave, the aisles, and the galleries. In S. Michele all the piers, arches, and ribs are of cut stone; in S. Ambrogio the arches and ribs,<sup>1</sup> with the exception of the great transverse arches, are of brick, with occasional voussiors of stone. The vaults themselves are of brick throughout both churches, and of great massiveness, the nave vaults of S. Ambrogio having an average thickness of about sixteen inches, and those of the aisles of about twelve inches. The vaulting of the aisles and their galleries is effected without diagonal ribs, the groins showing simply a sharp angle at the intersections of the surfaces. An interesting illustration of the extent to which the scientific knowledge of vaulting had progressed at this early age was afforded by the nave vaults of S. Ambrogio at the time of the rebuilding of those vaults. It was found that the arched ribs had been built by themselves, and the masonry of the cells filled in upon them afterwards, without any connection between the one and the other, so that the distortion of the masonry of the cells by settling and cracking had left the ribs quite uninjured, and in some cases the two distinct masses of masonry had

The  
Lombard  
Vaulting.

<sup>1</sup> Pontalis says "In S. Abbondio, Como, we find doubtless the first instance of ribs in vaulting." *L'architecture religieuse dans l'ancien diocèse de Soissons.* E. L. Pontalis.



Fig. 62. Interior of S. Ambrogio.

been drawn apart so as to leave openings between them of the breadth of a finger. It was thus found possible, without in any way disturbing the ribs, to take down, one by one, the cells of the vaults and replace them by new brickwork.<sup>1</sup>

The form of the vaults is a distinct variation from the earlier forms of groined vaulting. The Romans, in building their groined vaults, used no ribs, and their vault was formed by the intersection of two semicircular barrel vaults of equal diameter, whence it followed that the crowns of all the four sections were horizontal and were all on the same level. The form of the diagonal arches described by the groins was that of a segmental arch, and the thrust in the direction of the diagonal was such as to call for piers of great size and strength. The Lombards built their larger vaults, as we have seen, with diagonal ribs, and they made these ribs in the form of two full-centred diagonal arches, or even, as in S. Ambrogio, slightly pointed. The result was that the crowns of all the constituent parts of the vault inclined upward towards the centre of the bay, and the vault was thus given a more or less domical form. In fact, the Lombard groined vault is a sort of compromise between the Roman groined vault and the flat Byzantine dome, approaching so nearly the form of the latter that the elevation of the crown of the

<sup>1</sup> Dartain, p. 134.

vault above the crown of the transverse and longitudinal arches is in S. Michele equal to one third, and in S. Ambrogio, to one half, roughly speaking, of the height of those arches. Such a form brings a considerable thrust upon the side walls of the bay, which, although in these instances low and of great solidity (about forty inches thick), require to be reinforced. This is effected by the same means by which the lateral thrust of the foot of the vault above the pier is met. Over each of the transverse arches of the aisles a solid wall of brickwork is built up, in S. Ambrogio to the roof boarding, in S. Michele a foot or two above the roof, abutting against the nave wall. These walls constitute in effect a series of concealed flying buttresses of clumsy and rudimentary construction, which transmit the thrusts of the nave vaulting to the heavy outer walls of the aisles, which are themselves strengthened by vigorous buttresses opposite each of the



Fig. 68. Interior of S. Michele.

greater nave piers, and in S. Ambrogio by smaller ones opposite the intermediate piers.

In the disposition of the bay which is covered by the dome, the two churches are strikingly dissimilar. In the case of San Ambrogio there is no apparent preparation for the dome,<sup>1</sup> the treatment of the

<sup>1</sup> It is indeed nearly certain that there was no dome in the original church, and that it was only in the rebuilding of the upper portions which followed the disaster of 1196 that

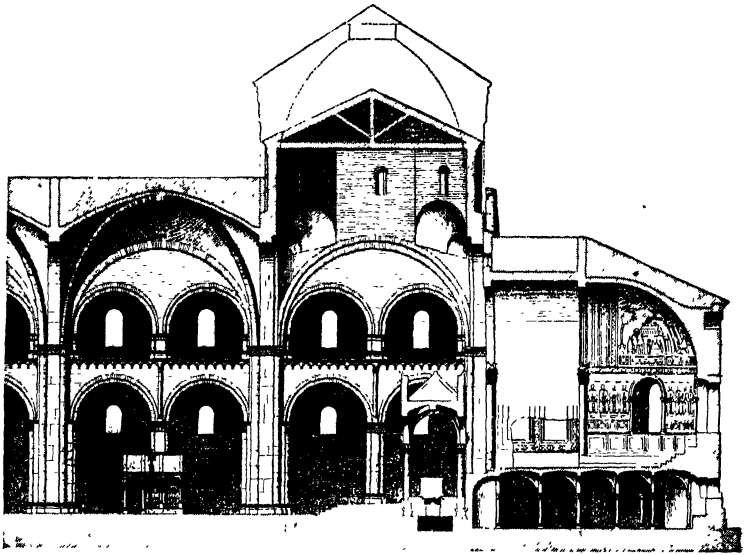


Fig. 64. Section of eastern portion of S. Ambrogio.

bay beneath it varying in no respect from that of the other bays, except that the lateral arches are of two orders. At the level of their crown, double squinches are turned in the four angles, effecting the transposition to the octagonal plan, upon which the wall of the dome is carried up. In S. Michele, on the contrary, the dome occupying its inevitable position at the crossing of nave and transepts, the four arches on which it rests are all open and unencumbered from the pavement upward, and the piers which support it are larger than the nave piers, though of substantially the same section; and it is noticeable that the shaft which in the piers of the nave receives the diagonal rib of the groined vault is retained in all the piers which carry the dome, though on the angle towards the dome it has no logical reason for being there, and its portion of the pier capital is not covered. Its presence suggests the possibility that the crossing may have been originally covered by a groined vault instead of a

the dome was added. Clericetti (*Recherche sull' Arch. rel. in Lomb. dal secolo v. all' xi.*) says the builders, fearing to build the dome without additional supports, walled up the nave and gallery arches of the bay under the dome and carried a transverse wall in front of the apse, which was made into a sacristy. This state of things lasted till 1507, when these precautionary walls were removed, and a vigorous arch substituted for that one which had shut off the apse.



dome. The construction of the dome in S. Michele follows closely that of S. Ambrogio, though the former is of somewhat smaller dimensions. The transept arms are covered by barrel vaults, of which the axis is that of the transept itself, and these vaults, although at a considerably lower level than the spring of the dome, act nevertheless as effective buttresses to it.<sup>1</sup> This is the characteristic Lombard disposition, and it is to be remarked that San Ambrogio offers in this respect an almost unique variation from the rule, an exception made possible by the lowness of the dome, which makes the vaulting of the aisles a sufficient buttress.

It should be said here that the cruciform plan of S. Michele is exceptional among the early Lombard churches, the more common plan being that of which most of the Pavian churches, as S. Giovanni in Borgo, S. Pietro in Cielo d' Oro, S. Teodoro, are examples,



Fig. 65. Longitudinal Section of S. Michele.

and in which the transept is marked not by projection, but by the superior height of its bays and the contrasted form of their vaults.

The timidity of the early Lombard builders is shown in S. Ambrogio by the small elevation of the nave above the aisles. There is no clerestory, and the roof is carried over nave and aisles in a single slope on either side. The windows of the aisles and their galleries are small and low, and the nave, therefore, depends for its light chiefly on the windows of the

Timidity  
and ruden-  
ness of  
Lombard  
builders.

<sup>1</sup> The rarity of barrel vaults in the Lombard architecture is difficult to explain. Their use is almost entirely confined to the transepts, where they are made to act, after the

west wall. In S. Michele a distinct advance is seen; a low clerestory is carried above the aisle roofs, and pierced with eight small round-arched windows. Yet it must be said that the Lombard style never wholly outgrew the rudeness and lack of science which marked its early buildings. There is, indeed, nothing in the architecture of Italy, in the eleven centuries which followed the abandonment of Rome by the imperial court, which answers to the superb and massive strength of the great monuments of ancient Rome,<sup>1</sup> or to the daring balance of the fragile cathedrals of northern France, or the soaring majesty of the great Renaissance domes. And yet even in what the mediæval builders attempted, they were only too apt to fail. The history of Lombard and Gothic building in Italy for centuries is a history of crumbling walls and falling vaults, and hundreds of the most important structures of that period are deformed by awkward buttresses of later date, and hundreds more are kept from falling into instant ruin only by the iron rods which tie them together in all directions. The great square nave vaults of the Lombard churches were particularly liable to disaster, as we have noticed above both in San Ambrogio and San Michele. In many cases the builders shrank from the dangerous task, and the naves retained the wooden roof of the basilica, while the narrower and lower aisles were groined, as in S. Fedele at Como, and S. Pietro in Cielo d' Oro at Pavia.

The plan of San Michele is full of irregularities which it is difficult to account for. The lines of the nave arcades are not at right angles with the façade, and not parallel with each other; in consequence of which the breadth of the nave varies nearly or quite three feet from one end to the other.<sup>2</sup> The bays of the nave are, strictly speaking, not square,<sup>3</sup> as in S. Ambrogio, but oblong, the larger dimension (about forty-one feet) being in the direction of the axis of the church, against a breadth of about thirty-three feet. The dome bay is not square, and its angles are not right angles, and the

Byzantine fashion, as buttresses to the central dome. Only in a few small churches, mostly of the thirteenth century, at Caragnolo, Montiglio, Monferrato, etc., is the barrel vault found covering the nave. Dartein, p. 448.

<sup>1</sup> The basilica of Maxentius near the Roman Forum, known as the Temple of Peace, and also as the Basilica of Constantine, because finished by that Emperor, is the last building in which the scale and construction exhibit the confident strength and skill of the builders of the Empire.

<sup>2</sup> Dartein says, 10.61 met. at front wall; 11.57 met. at crossing.

<sup>3</sup> I am still speaking of the original construction, in which the nave had two bays instead of four, as at present.

dome becomes in consequence an irregular octagon, with scarce any two sides of equal breadth.

The small but interesting fragment of S. Celso at Milan — a church probably nearly contemporary with S. Ambrogio, of which Dehio rather fancifully calls it a reduced copy — S. Celso, Milan. is an exasperating reminder of the modern indifference to the monuments of antiquity which is but recently giving way before the growing intelligence of European communities. The greater part of the church was demolished in 1818 in order to display more worthily the flank of an ambitious Renaissance church adjacent to it. Only a single bay of the nave and the apse which terminates it are left. (Fig. 66.) The nave bay is now covered by a barrel vault, but the form of the main piers — a square with flat pilasters on the faces towards the nave, and vaulting shafts in the angles — seems to indicate that the nave was formerly divided by transverse arches into square bays with the intention at least of covering it by groined vaulting. The aisles were actually built in this way, with two bays in the aisles answering to each nave bay, and an intermediate pier, as in S. Ambrogio. Whether the nave vaulting was ever executed is doubtful.

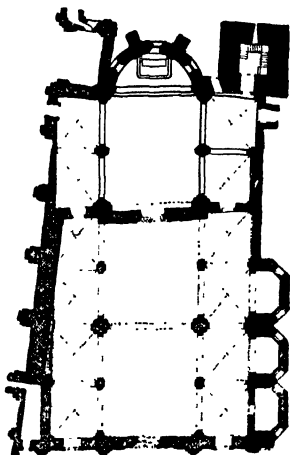


Fig. 66. S. Celso, Milan.

The relation of the bays of nave and aisles which I have described, though typical of the Lombard churches, was by no means constant in them. Two of the churches of Pavia, S. Pietro and S. Teodoro, offer examples in which the bays are of the same number in the nave as in the aisles, and in which, therefore, the piers are all of one size. In these cases the transverse arches are carried across the nave and aisles from each couple of piers, the bays being in the first-named church oblong in the nave and square in the aisles, while in San Teodoro the relation is reversed. There are no aisle galleries, but the clerestory wall rises far enough above the aisle roofs to admit a series of small round-arched windows. The piers are of perfectly logical form, with pilasters or engaged shafts (for they vary in plan) on the four faces, and in S. Pietro four large vaulting shafts fourteen inches in dia-

meter between them at the angles, which take the large diagonal vaulting ribs, which are here of a triangular section. In San Teodoro, the vaulting is without ribs. The pilaster or shaft towards the nave rises to the spring of the nave vaults; all the other members stop at the spring of the arches of the nave arcades. The transverse arches of the nave are slightly pointed, and as, in San Pietro, the bays of the nave are considerably broader than they are long, it follows that the longitudinal arches of the vaults, in order to avoid an excessive upward inclination of the crowns of the lateral cells, are made high-pointed arches.

A curious variation in the vaulting is seen in the first bay of San Pietro, which is covered by a barrel vault considerably higher than the nave vaults, under which a high arch on each side opens into a square bay nearly twice as high as those of the aisles, also covered by a barrel vault, of which the axis is perpendicular to that of the nave bay, and above the vault by a lean-to roof behind the screen wall of the façade. The nave and aisles open eastward into a transept as broad as the nave, but not projecting beyond the aisle walls. The central bay is covered by an octagonal dome, and from it opens a semicircular apse. The side bays are covered by barrel vaults.

In both these churches the crypt forms one of the most interesting features. In San Pietro it occupies the space under the apse and the crossing, and is divided by four lines of arcades into five aisles, with square groined bays. In San Teodoro it occupies the whole breadth of the church, including the three apses of the east end.

A church which is unquestionably of later date than the San Ambrogio we see to-day, and probably than San Michele, is interesting as showing an arrangement of the vaulting members, which has the appearance of being an earlier and tentative effort towards the completeness which was realized in the two churches we have described. SS. Pietro e Paolo at Bologna is one of that remarkable congeries of churches and cloisters, known as San Stefano, or the Monastery of Jerusalem. (Figs. 67 6, 68.) The nave and aisles are divided much as in San Ambrogio, two bays of the aisle answering to one bay of the nave; except that the length of the nave bay is a little greater than its breadth. The principal piers (*g g*) of brick are heavy and rude, and without bases; their plan is a square, with four engaged shafts on the faces, no provision being made for the diagonal ribs of the vault. All these four engaged shafts have their capitals on the same level, at the spring of the nave arches, the intermediate pier being a single column with an

SS. Pietro  
e Paolo.  
Bologna.

antique capital, either Ionic or Corinthian. From the capital of the shaft which faces the nave a flat pilaster strip is carried up to the spring of the nave vault, where it terminates in a thin impost moulding, from which spring the transverse arch of the nave and the diagonal ribs of its vaults. There are no longitudinal or wall arches, and no galleries over the aisles.

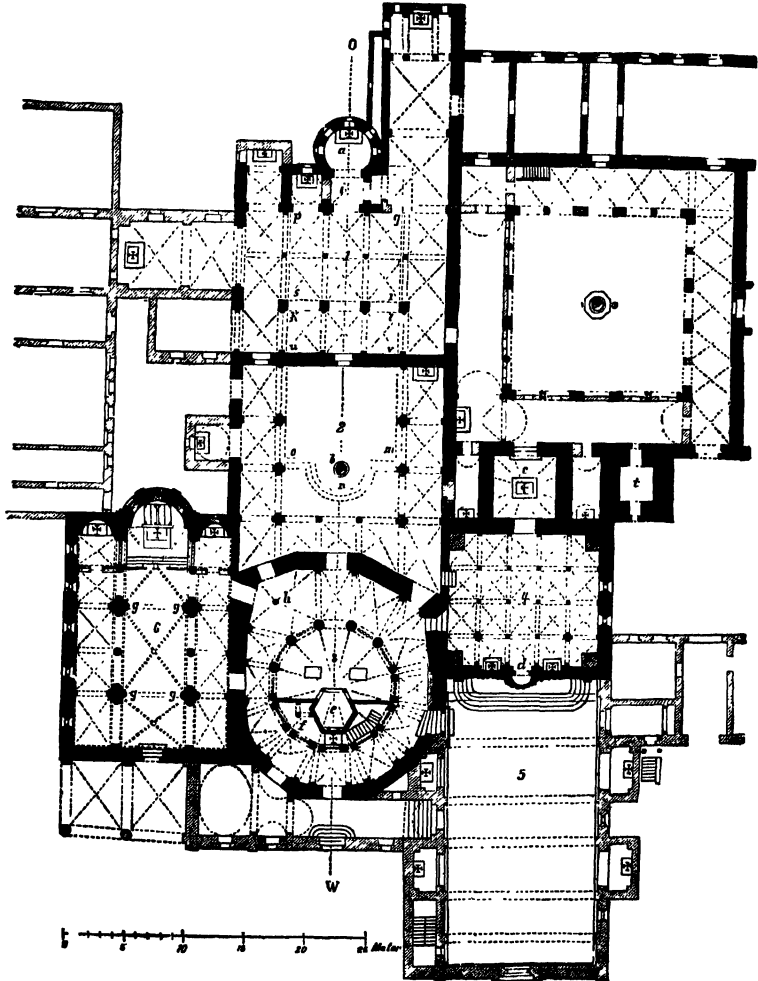


Fig. 67. Plan of S. Stefano, Bologna.



Fig. 68. SS. Pietro and Paolo, Bologna.

In the little church of S. Giulia at Bonate, near Bergamo, of  
 S. Giulia nearly the same date as the last, but of which the greater  
 di Bonate. part has disappeared of late years through repeated spolia-  
 tions by the inhabitants of the town, the disposition is radically dif-  
 ferent from that which I have been describing. Here the bays were  
 of the same number in the nave and aisles; in the former square, in  
 the latter oblong; and there were, of course, no intermediate piers.  
 The ruin of the church is so complete that it is even doubtful whether  
 it was ever vaulted. But the preparation for vaulting, as shown by  
 the plan of the piers, was perfect, — a flat pilaster towards the nave  
 for the transverse arch, three engaged shafts on the other faces, for  
 the longitudinal arches and the transverse arch of the aisle, and  
 four small angle shafts for the diagonal ribs. The compound capital  
 follows the plan of the pier, all the arches springing from one level.  
 There were no galleries, and the roof was very low, in two unbroken  
 slopes over nave and aisles.

In the cathedral of Novara, originally a five-aisled basilica of the  
 Novara Roman type, of which the foundation goes back to the later  
 Cathedral. years of the fourth century, we have an interesting example  
 of the grafting of the Lombard methods upon those of the early  
 Christian builders. At some period, not now to be determined, but

probably before the end of the tenth century, the church, which had been possessed alternately by the Arians and the Catholics, was subjected to extensive changes; its orientation was reversed, a transept and choir were built at the east end, and a new atrium at the west, connecting the church with the baptistery. At the same time the whole interior construction was remodelled on a radically different plan. The nave and aisles had been covered by wooden roofs, and separated by four continuous arcades, in which the arches, numbering eight in each line, were carried on Corinthian columns. The inner aisles were covered by galleries with arcades similar to those below. In the rebuilding the wooden roofs were replaced throughout by groined vaults, for the support of which the original walls and columns were quite inadequate. To prepare for such vaulting, the nave was divided into three bays, and as the arcades of eight arches did not permit an equal division, two of the bays were made square, each embracing three of the original nave bays, and the third or middle bay oblong, embracing the remaining two. The division was marked by two strong transverse arches springing from compound piers which took the place of the third and fifth columns on each side. The plan is given in Figure 69.

In the arcades which separated the inner and outer aisles the columns were all replaced by similar but smaller piers, from which transverse arches were carried across both aisles, dividing them into groined bays, while

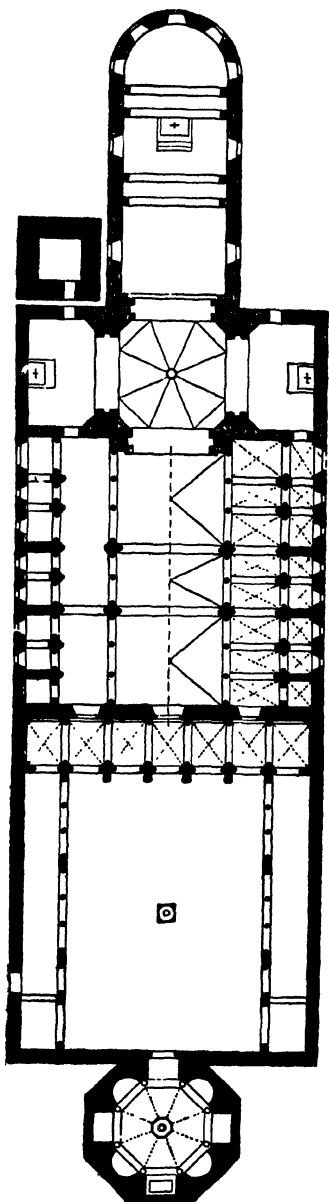


Fig. 69. Novara Cathedral.

from the third and fifth of these piers, solid walls were carried across the outer aisle, in a line with the transverse arches of the nave. The whole arrangement was perfectly logical, but within the last few years this fine interior has been completely rebuilt, and no trace of the arrangement here described remains.

The church of S. Nazzero Grande at Milan is a remarkable example of a plan which is rarely met with, — a fully developed Latin cross, with nave, transepts, and choir, but without aisles. (Fig. 70.) The church was founded in 382 by Ambrose, but rebuilt probably about 1075, and presumably with little departure from the original plan. The present church is divided

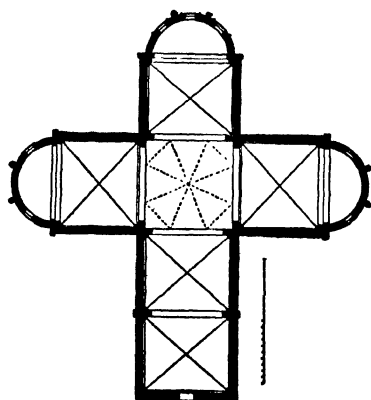


Fig. 70. S. Nazzero Grande, Milan.

into square bays, of which two are given to the nave, one to each arm of the transept, one to the crossing, and one to the choir. The interior is very low. The choir and transepts end in semi-circular apses, and the crossing is covered by an octagonal dome, without drum, the change from the square to the octagon being effected by means of pendentives. All the other bays are covered by groined vaults, with transverse, longitudinal, and diagonal arches springing from low piers attached to the walls. The small shafts,

which formed part of these piers, and which took the spring of the diagonal ribs of the vaults, were removed in 1828, when the interior was modernized. The apses are covered by spherical vaults.

S. Lanfranco at Pavia, a conventual church dating from the last years of the eleventh century, is very similar in general plan to S. Nazzero, but without the apsidal terminations to transept and choir. It also is without side aisles, its nave being divided by transverse arches into four nearly square bays, covered by groined vaults; its transept into three, of which that in the centre is covered by an octagonal dome, and the others, which are entirely outside the walls of the nave, by barrel vaults. The choir, composed of a single long rectangular bay, covered by a barrel vault, and ending in a small polygonal apse, is of much later construction.

A still more unusual variation from the common plan and disposi-



tion is seen in the church of S. Antonino at Piacenza. The church, of which the original date is unknown, was partially destroyed by the fortune of war about 924, and was rebuilt at the beginning of the next century, with a radical change of plan. It had been a small cruciform church with a westward apse opening from the square choir. In the rebuilding, its orientation was reversed, the apse was removed, and a new entrance made here; the nave and aisles were doubled in length, and made to terminate in three apses. As thus remodelled, the interior presents several singular features. The nave is divided by transverse arches into four oblong bays, each of which embraces on either side two of the pointed arches of the nave arcade. From the intermediate column of each bay springs an arched rib which divides the lateral cells of the vault, making the vaulting sexpartite, — perhaps the earliest example in Italy of a form which in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was in frequent use in the cathedrals of northern Europe. The aisles are vaulted in square bays, of which two answer to each bay of the nave. The transepts project beyond the aisle walls with a single square groined bay at each end, and an oblong bay corresponding to the breadth of the aisle.<sup>1</sup> The square bay at the crossing is enclosed by an arcade of three arches on each side, and is covered by a square, high-pointed groined vault, over which rises a tall octagonal tower with three stories of coupled windows. (Fig. 72.)

In the cathedral of Piacenza, which is probably a century later than its neighboring church of S. Antonino, we have another example of sexpartite vaulting. This, also, is a cruciform church, but the transept and choir arms are here nearly as broad as the longer arm of the cross. The entire length of nave, transept, and choir is divided into five square bays by thin transverse arches springing from simple round piers, to which is attached a small

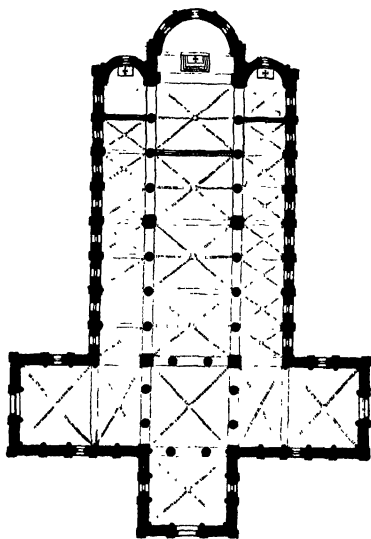


Fig. 71. S. Antonino, Piacenza.

<sup>1</sup> The vaulting must have been rebuilt in the twelfth century.

vaulting shaft, and the lateral cells of each vault are divided by a rib which rises from an intermediate column, which, however, differs from the principal column only in the absence of the vaulting shaft. In the fourth of these bays the vaulting is omitted, and a high octagonal dome of the usual Lombard form takes its place. The dome occupies only two thirds of the depth of the transept from east to west, and is not centred upon the axis of the transept, — perhaps the only instance of such an arrangement. The aisles are groined in square bays, not much below the nave vault, and a low clerestory intervenes. As in

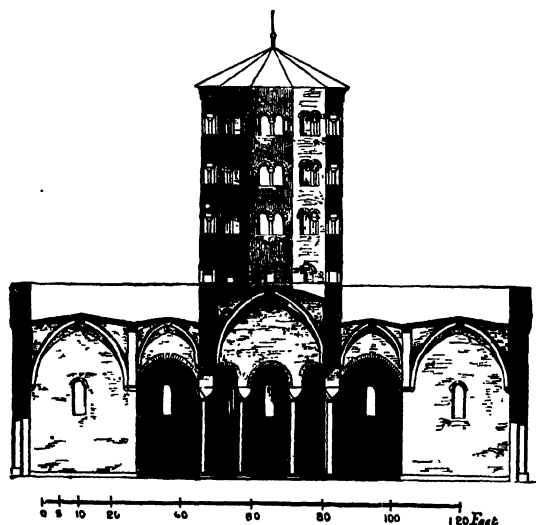


Fig. 72. Section, S. Antonino.

in the last-mentioned example, there are no galleries, and the continuous lines of high and narrow arches by which the nave is enclosed are in strong contrast to the broad and low arcades of San Ambrogio and of San Michele. The succession of aisle bays is not interrupted by the transept, but is continued through the whole length

of the church, and the same division into square bays is repeated in the arms which project beyond the aisle walls. A small apse projects from the middle bay of each of the transept ends.<sup>1</sup>

The cathedral of Parma, the largest of all the purely Lombard churches, is supposed to have been founded as early as the end of the sixth century, being thus nearly contemporary with the cathedral of Piacenza, but it was nearly destroyed by the

<sup>1</sup> This is perhaps the earliest of the Lombard churches in which the principal doorways are covered by projecting porches. These porches become later one of the most striking and characteristic features of the style. At Piacenza they cover the three portals of the façade, and their projection is slight; — but in later examples their projection was often as great as their width, and the porch was often repeated in a second story.

earthquake of 1117, and was rebuilt during the latter half of that century. It is a cruciform church, with an octagonal pointed dome covering the crossing, and with the choir and transepts consisting each of a single square groined bay with a small circular apse. An additional apse opens from the east wall of each transept. The floor of this part of the church is raised far above the nave on account of the crypt below, and is approached by a flight of steps covering the whole breadth of the nave and aisles. The nave and aisles are each divided by round arches into seven bays, square in the aisles, and oblong in the nave. Nave and aisles are separated by round arches,

of which the piers are alternately larger and smaller, though the difference in size is inconsiderable. The treatment of their members is, however, interesting. In the larger piers the three members towards the nave — the pilaster and two vaulting shafts — are carried from the pavement to the spring of the nave vaults, passing through the capitals of the nave arcade; while in the intermediate piers the capitals are complete at the spring of the nave arches, and a single small shaft is carried up from them to the spring of the vaults. The capital of this shaft is just broad enough to take the transverse arch of the nave, but the abacus is extended laterally so as to take also the diagonal vault-ribs. The impression given is that the piers were arranged in preparation for a system of sexpartite vaulting

in square compartments, such as prevails in the two churches of Piacenza described above, and that the plan was changed after the walls had reached the height of the upper capitals. In this church the aisles are covered by galleries, but these open to the nave, not by the broad arches of S. Ambrogio and S. Michele, but by a small triforium arcade of groups of four arches in each bay, over which is

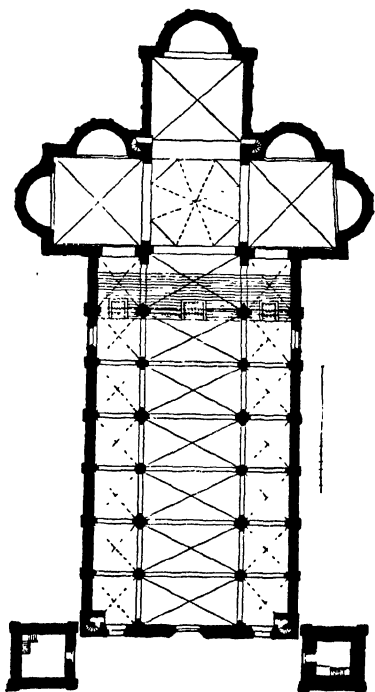


Fig. 73. Parma Cathedral.

a single small clerestory window, under the sharply pointed arch of the vault. The church has one of the most remarkable crypts in Italy, of unusual height, and extending under the whole of the transept and choir, and one bay of the nave and aisles.

Modena lies considerably beyond the limits of the region where the Lombard architecture was most firmly established.

**Modena Cathedral.** Yet its cathedral is a very characteristic and important Lombard monument. It is nearly contemporary with the cathedrals of Piacenza and Parma, its construction having been begun very

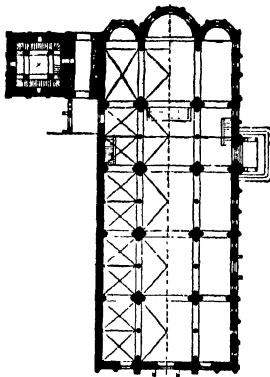


Fig. 74. Modena Cathedral.

early in the twelfth century, and only finished near the end of it. The records concerning its origin are unusually explicit. The old cathedral fell or threatened to fall at the end of the eleventh century, and the building of a new one having been at once determined, the work was given into the hands of one Master Lanfranco. "By the grace of God, one was at length found to design so great a work, — a certain Lanfrancus, a wonderful builder," says the old chronicler. The crypt was ready in 1106 to receive the body of S. Geminianus, after which the work seems to have languished, and the church was consecrated as late as 1184. Its plan is a rectangle measuring internally about seventy by one hundred and ninety feet. In its general disposition of parts it follows the earlier churches of S. Ambrogio and S. Michele, rather than those of its own time. Its nave is divided into five nearly square groined bays by transverse pointed arches springing from large engaged columns which make one member of the compound piers of the nave, but are prolonged far above the nave arcade. The nave arcades are of round arches, two to each bay, corresponding to the division of the aisles into square bays by transverse round arches springing alternately from the piers above mentioned and from single intermediate columns.

The triforium gallery, the floor of which has been removed, opens into the nave by groups of three round arches divided by mid-wall columns, and covered by a bearing arch. An arched corbel-table divides the wall at the level of the pier capitals, over which the clerestory wall is pierced by two simple windows in each bay. Two wall arches in each bay, springing in the middle from a corbel, seem to

indicate a preparation for a sexpartite vaulting system, but the nave vaults, as well as those of the aisles, are quadripartite.

The arrangement of the eastern portion of the church is peculiar. The two eastern bays of each aisle are thrown into one, as long as the nave bay, into which it opens by a high pointed arch, thus making a transept. The usual dome is, however, wanting, and the crossing is unmarked by any variation from the nave vaulting.

The crypt which occupies the space beneath the three apses, the transept, and half the next bay of nave and aisles, is mostly above the floor of the nave, and opens into the nave by arches springing from brackets attached to the sides of columns, which rest on crouching beasts. This arrangement, however, is not the original one, according to which the centre of the nave was occupied by a broad stair ascending to the choir, as at Parma, while the crypt was reached from the side aisles. The crypt is unusually fine, with four lines of columns running east and west, and dividing it into square groined bays. The capitals are extremely varied and interesting, with Byzantine and Lombard sculpture.

I will cite one more example of an unusual arrangement in the cathedral of San Evasio at Casale-Monferrato, founded by Liutprand in 741, but apparently much changed at the beginning of the twelfth century. The plan (Fig. 75) is a broad rectangle measuring about one hundred and four by one hundred and seventy feet, including the remarkable porch which occupies more than a quarter of the length. The church is divided by arcades of round arches into five aisles of nearly equal width, the nave being only slightly broader than the side aisles. These are again divided by similar transverse arcades into square bays covered by groined vaults. The fourth bay of the nave is covered by an

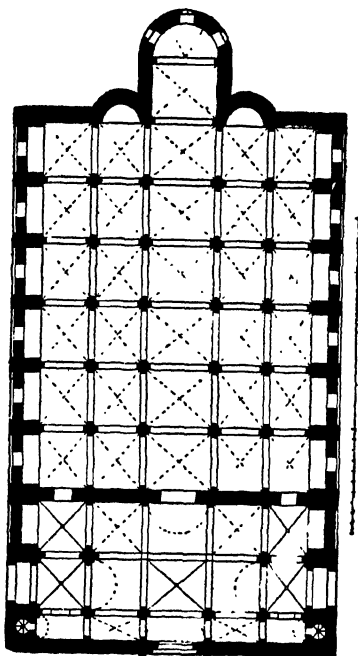


Fig. 75. S. Evasio.

S. Evasio.

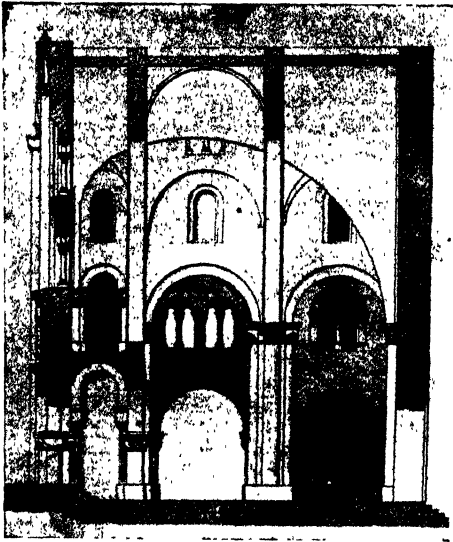


Fig. 76. S. Evasio: Section of Porch.

octagonal dome, not properly shown in the figure, and the aisle bays on either side take the form of a narrow transept. The nave is prolonged by an additional bay, and terminates in a semicircular apse, as do also the two inner aisles. The walls of the outer aisles have buttresses opposite the piers, with slight projection on the exterior, but projecting boldly within, and forming a series of shallow recesses opening from the aisle bays. But the most remarkable feature of this singular church is its

porch or narthex, which is shut off from the interior by a solid wall, but in which the five lines of bays are continued, each line embracing in the porch two bays and a supplementary recess equal to nearly the half of a bay. The two central piers of the porch are omitted, and six bays are thus thrown together, but their separate vaulting is not disturbed, the bays being covered alternately by groined and barrel vaults, which are supported against four great arches, two longitudinal and two transverse, which intersect each other. The transverse arches are full-centred, with a span of about fifty feet; the longitudinal arches describe scarcely more than a quarter circle, ending on the outer wall in a short curve, with its spring nearly twice as high above the pavement as on the inner. The object of such an arrangement is not easily explained.

At Ancona on the shore of the Adriatic, the church of S. Ciriaco presents an interesting variation from the Lombard type, while yet preserving some of its most characteristic features. Its plan is one of the few examples in the early Italian architecture of a Greek cross,<sup>1</sup> with aisles on all four of its arms and a dome at

<sup>1</sup> The original plan has been disturbed by the later addition to the eastern arm of a square choir.

the centre; the naves and the central portions of the transepts and choir have flat wooden ceilings; the aisles are groined. The floors of both transepts are raised and the spaces below are occupied by two crypts, quite disconnected from each other. The exterior is in its design altogether Lombard, showing the pilaster strips and arched corbel-tables of the Northern churches, and a western porch of much magnificence. The dome is of unusual form, an octagonal drum resting on a square base, the dome itself octagonal in plan and pointed.

Meanwhile, the old Roman traditions were by no means forgotten. We have seen how in Rome the number of basilican churches continued to increase, though slowly, up to the end of the tenth century. But even in the territory where the Lombard influence was naturally strongest, there was here and there an instance of a return to the older plan. The most conspicuous and interesting example is the church of San Abbondio at Como, of which the original date goes back as far as the fourth century, but which was rebuilt in the first half of the eighth and subjected to repeated restorations and partial rebuildings in succeeding centuries, through all of which, however, it is believed that the interior disposition of the church of the eighth century has been in all essential respects preserved. Its plan (Fig. 77) is a rectangle measuring externally about eighty-four by one hundred and ten feet, with a long choir and apse projecting from the east end. The interior is divided into five aisles by four lines of arcades, over which the walls are carried up to the wooden roofs, with simple round-arched clerestory windows. The columns of the nave arcades are massive, having a diameter of nearly or quite three feet, with plain and rude block capitals; those of the outer arcades are scarcely a third as large, but of the same character. The plan has some interesting peculiarities which show how the Lombard influence has modified the basilican treatment. The first bay of the nave is covered at mid-height by a groined vault supporting a gallery which is also vaulted in the same manner, and the

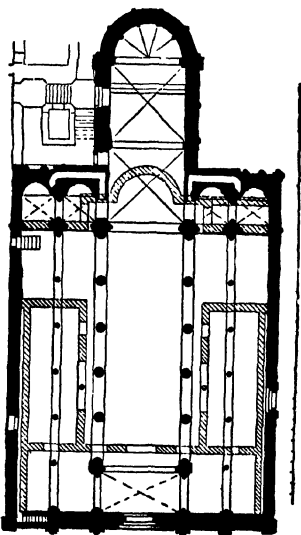


Fig. 77. S. Abbondio, Como.

first columns of the nave arcades are replaced by compound piers with engaged columns, from which a transverse arch is thrown across the nave. At the other end of the church all the arcades terminate in compound piers of more complicated section, between which transverse arches are carried across the nave and aisles. Beyond these arches the four side aisles terminate each in a small square bay covered by a groined vault, and with a small apse in the thickness of the wall, while the nave opens into a long choir consisting of two square bays covered with groined vaults, with a semicircular apse covered by a semi-dome, the wall divided by slender engaged shafts with wide block capitals, above which the surface of the vault is divided in the same manner by ribs with a flat rectangular section.<sup>1</sup> The church had before its west front a remarkable covered atrium or porch in two stories, measuring some fifty-eight feet broad and sixty-eight feet deep, divided by arcades like those of the nave into three aisles, corresponding to the three central divisions of the church, — but all this was removed in 1580. The engaged columns from which the arcades started still remain attached to the front wall of the church. This porch appears to have been quite without parallel in Italy, though in France some few examples of a similar construction are to be met with, notably at Paray le Monial, at Dijon, at Autun, at S. Benoît-sur-Loire, at Pontigny, and at Vézelay.<sup>2</sup> In Italy the nearest existing approach to it is the porch of the church of S. Donato near Sesto-Calende, in the neighborhood of Lago Maggiore. The church, which was attached to a monastery founded in 868, is of the basilican form, with an interior breadth of about fifty feet. The porch covers the whole breadth of the façade, and has a depth of about thirty feet. The interior is divided by round arches into six groined bays. There is only one story, and the porch is enclosed by a solid wall. A second story was projected, but never built.

At Trani the church of Ognissante has a porch extremely similar to that of S. Donato, and at Pavia porches were attached to S. Pietro in Cielo d' Oro and S. Giovanni in Borgo. In the former instance the three wall arches of the porch may still be seen in the

<sup>1</sup> During the restoration of 1863 the foundations and pavement of the earlier church were discovered; the pavement lying some three feet below that of the present church, with portions of the exterior walls to the height of two and one half feet, and fragments of sculpture and painting. The old church was much smaller than the present one, and was cruciform in plan. Its walls are shown on Fig. 77 by the lighter hatching.

<sup>2</sup> For descriptions and illustrations of these porches, see V. le Duc, *Dict. art.* "Porche;" also, Dehio and Von Bezold, vol. iii. pl. 284.



brickwork of the façade springing from flat pilasters, over which the starts of the end and dividing arches are still in place. The feature was, I believe, peculiar to the conventual churches.

In the matter of design the Lombard churches show a departure from the methods of the earlier monuments, both of the early Christian and the Byzantine type, which is not less <sup>Lombard</sup> <sup>design.</sup> marked than we have observed in respect of construction and disposition of parts. The rudeness, both of design and execution, is much the same in all, but in the exterior walls stone is now beginning to supersede brick, and, as we shall presently see, the tendency towards exterior sculpture is greatly stimulated. The prescriptions of classic architecture are now quite obsolete; the column is freed from all the classic rules, and may be of any height with any capital and any base, and without taper. It is made to do duty in various capacities, not only for support but for the subdivision of wall surfaces, and as a decorative feature in the jambs of doors and windows. In the interior the column appears chiefly as the member of a compound pier, or as an intermediate support, alternating with the main piers of the arcade, or as a vaulting shaft, attached to the walls of the nave. The use of the arch becomes as free as that of the column — grouped arches, bearing arches, blind arches are in common use. Architectural features begin to appear on the exterior, and it is to be noted that these are chiefly the features with which we are familiar in the Ravenna churches of the fifth and sixth centuries — the arched corbel-tables and pilaster strips of the Orthodox baptistery and the blind arcades of S. Apollinare in Classe become equally characteristic of the Romanesque both north and south of the Alps. Yet the exterior has acquired a physiognomy altogether novel and characteristic. The façade, or west front, is generally of the simplest outline, — a high-shouldered unbroken wall, terminating in a single broad gable covering the whole breadth of nave and aisles. Even when the roof itself is broken by a clerestory, the façade commonly takes no note of it, and that portion of the walls which closes the aisles rises far above their roofs. But the division of the interior is indicated on the façade, which is generally divided vertically into three compartments either by engaged shafts or by flat pilaster strips, or by a combination of both, rising from the ground to the eaves cornice. In most examples an arched doorway occupies the lower portion of each compartment, with two or three ranges of windows above, sometimes in the form of broad arched openings; oftener small and coupled, with dividing mullions in the form of columns

with base and capital. In San Ambrogio (Fig. 78) this type of front is widely varied from, because the front is covered in its whole

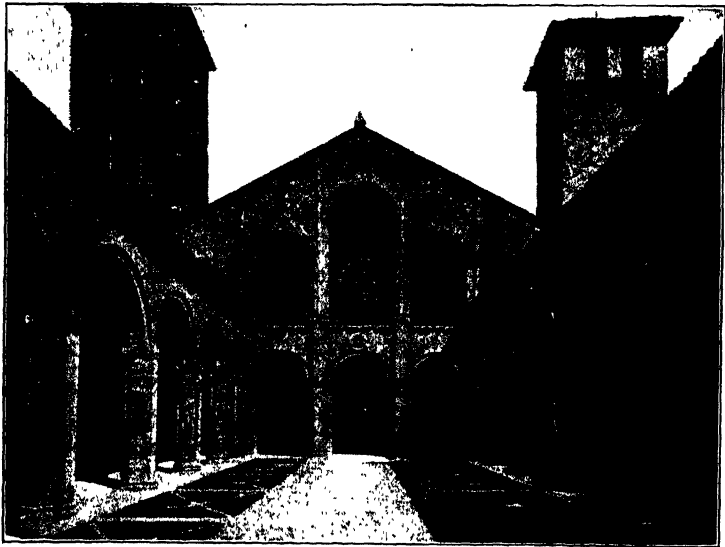


Fig. 78. S. Ambrogio, Atrium and Façade.

breadth and height by a narthex with two stories of broad open arches, of which the lower story makes the fourth side of a noble atrium, — the only remaining example of that feature among the early Lombard churches. But even in S. Ambrogio we have the simple unbroken outline, the five compartments marked by pilaster strips in the lower story and slender engaged shafts above, and the arched corbel-table following the rake of the cornice.

In S. Michele (Fig. 79), we have a perfect example of the early Lombard façade, before the feeling for grace and composition had begun sensibly to ameliorate its rudeness and formlessness. The three vertical divisions are strongly defined by four compound piers, which rise from semicircular plinths at the ground level and terminate abruptly at the eaves. Of these piers the two nearest the centre are composed of three round shafts alternating with four square members; the other two are simpler, consisting of a single engaged shaft on the face of a square pilaster. In each compartment is a round-arched doorway, the central one larger than the others, but all substantially of the same design, with deep

jambes having four orders of decorated members, continued around the arch, of which the head is filled with a stone slab, bearing a figure in relief. Above the central doorway are three ranges of small windows, the first having three coupled windows with columns dividing them; the second having three single openings; and the third two round windows with a plain cross between them. In the side compartments the only features are a single coupled window like

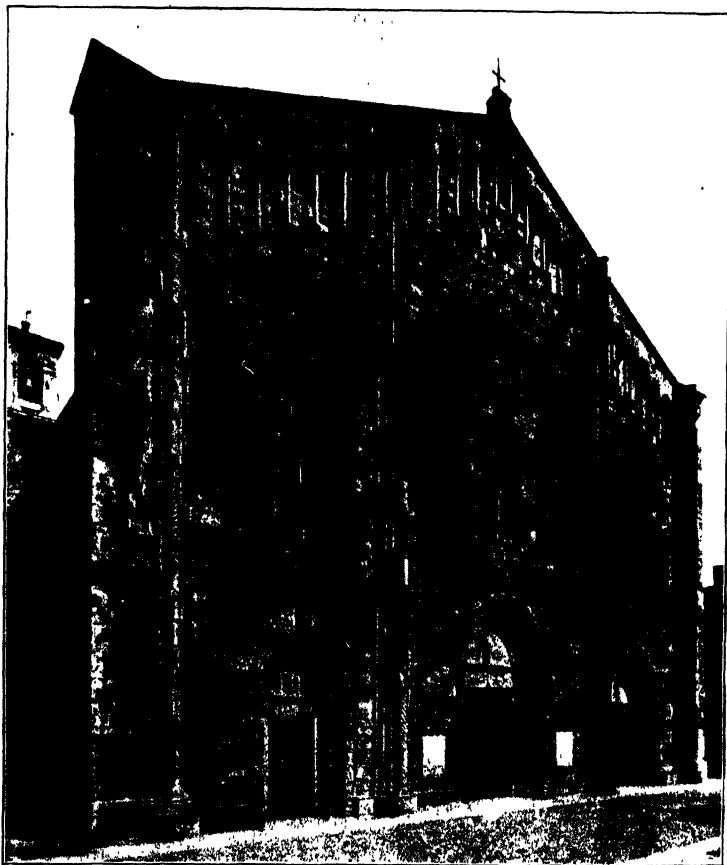


Fig. 79. S. Michele, Pavia.

those of the first range in the centre. The most remarkable feature of the front is, however, the eaves gallery, which follows the rake of the cornice. It is, perhaps, the earliest instance of this most

characteristic feature, and it is singular to find it here perfectly developed. The gallery has a depth of about two or three feet; its floor is a series of steps, on each of which is set a small shaft with base and capital. Each capital is joined to the wall by a lintel, and the lintels are joined by round arches of the full depth of the gallery. There are nine arches in the central compartment, and six in each of the sides. Few architectural features are more effective than this, or more happily calculated to relieve the heavy monotony of these otherwise unbroken façades. There is no wonder, then, that it became so general in the Lombard churches, and was continued long after the clumsy weight and awkwardness of the early Lombard monuments had given way before the superior taste and refinement of the later Romanesque builders.<sup>1</sup> The eaves gallery became a favorite decoration of the apse, whether circular or octagonal. In S. Michele the exterior wall of the apse is divided vertically by compound piers much like those of the west front, and the gallery arches are in couples between the piers. The composition is picturesque, but the gallery itself suffers from the interruption of the continuity which is essential to the best effect of such an arcade. Rome offers but a single example, but a beautiful one, of the use of this interesting feature, in the apse of SS. Giovanni and Paolo, one of the oldest of the basilicas. The apse dates presumably from the twelfth century.<sup>2</sup> (See Frontispiece.) In rare instances the eaves gallery takes the form of a classic colonnade, as in S. Frediano at Lucca (Fig. 204, Chap. iv.), where a range of close-set Corinthian columns carries an entablature instead of arches. A similar arrangement is seen in the apse of S. Maria delle Pieve at Arezzo.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. Giovanni in Borgo (eleventh century, now destroyed) and S. Pietro in Cielo d'Oro (1132) at Pavia are good examples of the early Lombard façade. In S. Sofia, Padua, the outline of front followed the section.

<sup>2</sup> An interesting illustration of the intercourse which must have gone on during the tenth and eleventh centuries between Italy and the south of France is to be seen in the Romanesque church of St. Guillem in Desert at Hérault, where the apse has a true Lombard eaves gallery above the strong projecting buttresses of the north. See Revoil, *Arch. Romane du Midi de la France*.

<sup>3</sup> In the apse of S. Ambrogio, at Milan, probably the oldest portion of the existing church, and antedating by perhaps two centuries that of S. Michele at Pavia, we may see what is perhaps the first step towards the use of the eaves gallery in such a position. (See Dart. pl. 31, and Cattaneo, p. 220.) It was expedient to lighten the mass of masonry between the outer wall and the inner surface of the vault of the apse, and this was done by constructing a series of deep niches, square in plan and covered each by a round arch. These niches are in groups of three, separated by the long pilaster strips which rise from ground to cornice, and divide the surface of the apse into five compartments, in three of which are large simple round-arched windows. A similar arrangement is seen in the central apse of the little church of S. Babila at Milan, where the arches are in groups of



Fig. 80. S. Ambrogio, Milan; Lantern and Towers.

The octagonal lantern which marks the dome is also embellished both in San Michele and in San Ambrogio by arcaded galleries of similar construction to those of the eaves. In the latter church there are two stories of galleries, the lower smaller, and divided on

four, quite disconnected, and the wall slopes backward from the foot of the arch to its head. Here also the groups are separated by strong square buttresses rising from the ground to the cornice of the apse; also in S. Celso, where the arches are in groups of three.

This division of the apse into vertical compartments by means of pilaster strips or engaged shafts is as characteristic of the Lombard work as the similar division of the west front, and survived far into the later days when the Lombard style had undergone very essential modifications.

each face of the octagon into two groups of arches, — the upper with a continuous arcade of five arches on the larger faces and three on the smaller. (Fig. 80.)

San Babile at Milan has a similar treatment in its octagonal lantern, which has on each face a group of three arches on slender columns. There is here, however, no gallery, the wall sloping backward from the bases of the columns, as in the apse of the same church.<sup>1</sup>

It is only natural that in Pavia, so long the Lombard capital, the Lombard architecture should, even after the Lombard domination

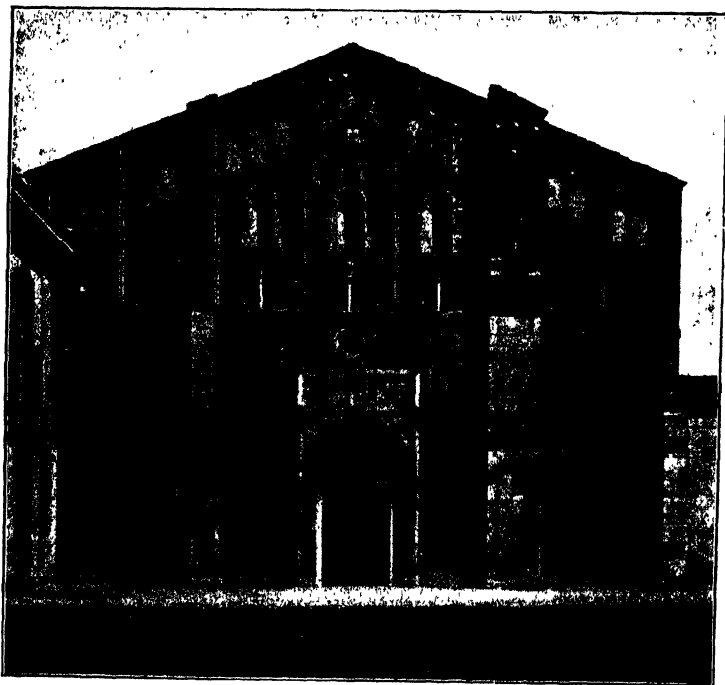


Fig. 81. S. Pietro in Cielo d' Oro, Pavia.

had ceased, have clung more faithfully to the type than elsewhere.

S. Pietro  
in Cielo  
d' Oro.

Several of the churches which still remain in that city are singularly close in design to San Michele.

S. Pietro in Cielo d' Oro is perhaps the most notable of these. I have already described its interior disposition. Comparing its façade

<sup>1</sup> Romussi, p. 344.

(Fig. 81) with that of San Michele, we find the same simplicity of outline, without regard to the section of the church behind it; the same vertical division into three compartments; the same eaves gallery; the same arrangement of small windows in the central division. Differences of detail there are, as in the addition of the interlacing arches of the eaves cornice, the form of the dividing pilasters, of which one is made broad and salient to give room for a spiral stair within, the subdivision of the three compartments by slender grouped shafts, the horizontal division of the side compartments at mid-height by an arched corbel-table; and most notable of all, the projecting porch of which I have spoken above.

In the narrow front of  
 San Lan- S Lan-  
 franco, franco,  
 franco at Pavia.  
 Pavia (Fig. 82)  
 the same general  
 features are seen.  
 The church is with-  
 out aisles, and its  
 breadth is hardly  
 more than thirty-  
 eight feet. Yet,  
 even here, we have

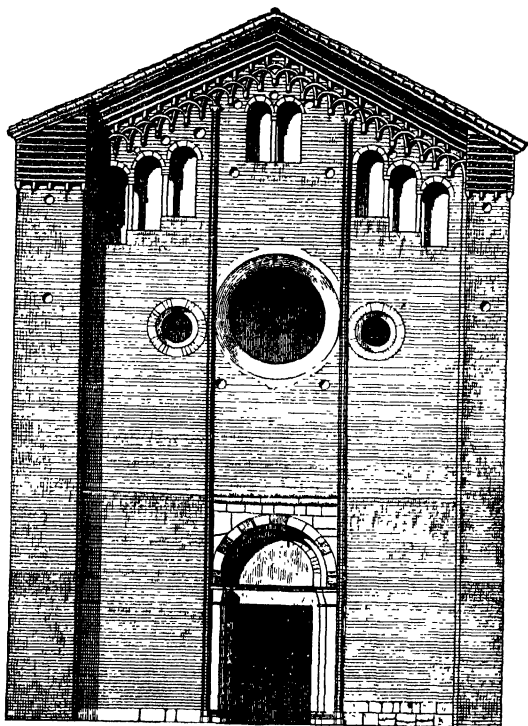


Fig. 82. S. Lanfranco, Pavia.

the vertical division into three compartments by slender shafts rising from the ground to the cornice, which is more richly designed than any we have previously mentioned, with a thin line of interlacing arches, above which are three lines of brick dentils separated by thin brick bands. We have, also, the eaves gallery, with three arches in each of the side compartments and two in the centre. A single arched doorway occupies the foot of the central compartment, and

the only other openings are a large circular window above the door and a small one on each side of it.

The awkwardness of the single gable covering the whole front is greatly lessened in a narrow façade like that just mentioned. A more striking example of this fact is to be seen in the little church of San Lazzaro, which stands a short mile outside the walls of Pavia. It was built about the middle of the twelfth century, and is of the simplest plan, a rectangle of about twenty-four feet by sixty-two, without aisles, terminating in a semicircular apse. The façade is singularly like that of S. Lanfranco, with the same broad angle piers ornamented at the top by the same reticulated pattern in bricks, which is, as in S. Lanfranco, carried up the rake of the cornice. There is no corbel-table, but the stepped arcade answering to the eaves gallery (though in this instance the depth is not sufficient to allow of a gallery) is divided into three groups, following the usual division of the façade. A simple arched doorway occupies the centre of the front, and over it is a triple arched window divided by columns, and covered not by a single but by a double bearing arch. The flanks and the apse are uncommonly consistent with the

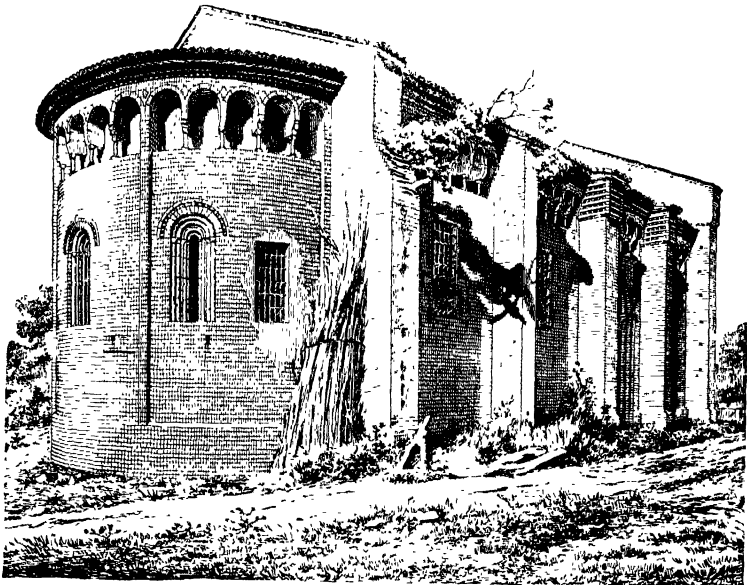


Fig. 83. S. Lazzaro, near Pavia; East End and Flank.



façade (Fig. 83), — the former being divided by vigorous buttresses from ground to eaves into bays, with the eaves arcade crowning the wall and a single window below, while the apse is divided by thin pilaster strips into three compartments, each of which has a fine narrow-arched window with four orders of jamb-shafts, and the arcade above. The design of the arcade is varied, however, on the apse and flanks, the columns being very small and short, and a corbel intervening between the column and the arch which it supports. The whole exterior of this little church shows a simple elegance which is very rare in the early Lombard work.

In the cathedrals of Piacenza and Parma, which are nearly contemporary with each other, and two centuries later than the early Pavian churches, we remark a persistence in the general type, together with an amelioration of the details. The two façades are much alike: the proportion of height to breadth is nearly the same in both; in both the eaves gallery is continuous and is repeated by a similar horizontal arcade at mid-height in the side compartments; at Parma there are two horizontal arcades. In both façades there are three round-arched doorways, with columnar jambs, heavy lintels, carved archivolt, and an arched and gabled niche over the central doorway, which at Piacenza is repeated over the side doorways. The upper portion of the central compartment is filled at Parma by a single broad round-arched window; at Piacenza by a wheel window, with interlacing arches and carved mouldings of so delicate a character that it cannot be supposed to be contemporary with the rest of the composition. In these churches we have, perhaps, the earliest examples of a feature which became one of the most characteristic and original of Lombard details, the projecting porch, with its columns resting on the backs of lions, griffins, or other beasts. In these instances, the projection is slight, but the idea is fully developed, particularly at Piacenza, where the device is adopted not only in the three doorways, but also in the niche or upper porch over the central doors, and where in the side doorways the beasts are bestridden by a human figure who upholds the column with his head and his raised arms. (See Fig. 135.)

The apse of Piacenza is one of the finest in Italy. It is of the full height of the nave, and its outer surface is divided into three bays by very slender shafts rising from the base, and terminating in a small enriched corbel-table, above which is a continuous eaves gallery of great elegance, the arches springing from the backs of crouching beasts, which rest on the capitals of the columns. The wall below

the arcade is banded with alternate courses of stone and marble, and is quite unbroken except by a single broad-arched window in the centre, with jamb-shafts, of which one couple rest on the backs of beasts, and carry a roll-moulding broken by heads, while the opening is flanked by two statues on each side, superposed.<sup>1</sup>

In the Parma church there is an unusual completeness and consistency exhibited in the way in which the architecture is carried around the church. On the flanks the monotony of the flat wall is relieved by buttresses of slight projection which divide the wall into bays. Each bay is again subdivided into three vertical divisions by flat pilaster strips joined near the top of the wall by an arched corbel-table, above which the remaining space was divided by similar strips into three square panels, corresponding to the divisions below, the wall finishing with some sort of continuous ornament, which has now disappeared, but probably a line of small interlacing arches. The transepts and apses are treated in a similar manner, but with varied detail, and with an eaves gallery below the cornice ornament. The octagonal lantern which encloses the dome, and which is surrounded by the usual arcade, has a domical roof instead of the usual low-pitched roof.

The cathedral of S. Evasio at Casale-Monferrato, of which the interior and the remarkable porch were described above, has a stone façade of corresponding interest. Its date is probably that of the rebuilding of the church, which began in 1127. It is divided by simple engaged shafts with block capitals into three compartments, of which the two side ones are almost entirely concealed by houses which have been built against the façade, partly, as it would appear, with the object of securing the broad wall against the dangerous thrust of the great arches within. The columns support nothing, but directly above them two upright reliefs are inserted in the wall representing King Liutprand and his queen. There is no eaves gallery, but the side divisions terminate in a very large arched corbel-table. The central division is in four stages; first, a broad and low round-arched doorway, with columns at the jambs having rude block capitals; next, a rich blind arcade, with close-set columns carrying interlacing arches, surmounted by a dentilled cornice, above which are two stories of triple windows, the openings divided by columns and covered by a bearing arch, both stories being enclosed in a great round-headed panel. The details, both of the façade and of the interior, are varied and interesting.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Osten, pl. xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Osten, pl. 1.

The first important step in the emancipation of the Lombard style from the rigidity and awkwardness which characterized to a greater or less degree all the early Lombard buildings was the adaptation of the outline of the façade to that of the interior. No ingenuity of detail, no richness of adornment, could wholly redeem the ugliness of a front whose breadth was as great as its height, which terminated in a single low unbroken gable, and whose design was quite independent of any connection with the church behind it. The cathedral at Modena<sup>1</sup> was perhaps the earliest in which this fault is recognized, and in some measure corrected. It is not <sup>Modena</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>Cathedral.</sup> much, if any, later than the cathedrals of Parma and Piacenza, in which the old form is retained; but Modena, lying somewhat to the southward of the strictly Lombard region, was perhaps less under the sway of the Lombard influence. At all events, in the façade of the cathedral, several important modifications are to be seen of the type we have been considering. First, and most important, the outline is made to conform to the transverse section of the church, the central compartment representing the nave, and the side compartments the aisles and triforium galleries, the triforium arcade being carried across the whole breadth of the front, of which, indeed, it is the governing feature, its bearing arches forming bays, which are continued to the ground. There is no eaves gallery, but a fine wheel window, much like that of Piacenza, occupies nearly the whole breadth of the middle compartment. Three round-arched doorways, with jamb-shafts and decorated mouldings, open into the nave and aisles, the central doorway being covered by a porch of slight projection, of somewhat later date than the façade, but of the usual Lombard type, with a single round arch carried on columns which rest on the backs of standing lions. Over the porch is a shallow loggia, the one incongruous and ugly feature of the front, whose thin columns support a

<sup>1</sup> I do not forget that S. Abbondio at Como, and its neighbor, S. Carpofero, of which the façades follow in their outline the section of the church, and which are, as Dartein observes, the only churches strictly within the Lombard region of which this is true, are probably a century or so older than the cathedral of Modena. But these churches were both founded in the ninth century, and were basilican churches, and it is not unlikely that in their rebuilding the form of the façade, which is in no respect characteristic of the Lombard style (unless in the corbel-tables of the eaves and the engaged shafts which divide the central compartment of S. Abbondio), was made to conform substantially to that of the original church. On the other hand, the influence of the Lombard traditions on the later architecture of the Lombard cities may be seen in S. Andrea at Vercelli and S. M. delle Grazie in Milan, the one of the thirteenth, the other of the fifteenth century, in both of which the façades have the low gable covering the whole breadth of the front.



Fig. 84. Cathedral, Modena ; East End and South Flank.

flat segmental arch covered by a flat gable, the great rose window not permitting a more elevated termination.<sup>1</sup>

The architecture of the rest of the exterior is consistent with that of the façade. (Fig. 84.) The arrangement of arched bays — the arches carried on tall engaged shafts with sculptured capitals, and the arch-heads enclosing the grouped arches of the gallery corresponding to the triforium — is continued on the flanks and around the three apses of the east end. The clerestory is a plain wall pierced with simple round-arched windows. On the south side of the church is a remarkable porch in two stages, begun in 1209, and not completed at the end of the century. The doorway is deeply recessed, with splayed jambs decorated with four orders of shafts on each side, and with corresponding arch mouldings. The porch, which is of greater projection than we have hitherto seen, is of the usual form, with a single great round arch supported on two single columns which stand on crouching lions. The construction, which is characteristic of all the mediæval architecture of Italy, Gothic as well as Romanesque, is wholly indefensible, and its viciousness needs no other proof than the tie rods of iron or bronze which, in a thousand buildings all over Italy, alone preserve the arches from falling. The loggia, which forms the second stage of this porch, has three round arches on column, covered by a single low gable. There is, as I have before remarked, no dome or other central feature; and this omission is another point in which this church illustrates the fact that Modena lies beyond the stricter limits of the Lombard type.

That the modification of the outline of the façade of which I have spoken was sometimes accompanied by other very material departures from the general type, is shown in S. Sofia, Padua. the front of S. Sofia, Padua, a very ancient church, going back to the sixth century, it is believed, but in great part rebuilt about 1123. The front is in three divisions corresponding in outline as well as in breadth to the nave and aisles, but the design is otherwise wholly unlike that of any other Lombard church. The side divisions have no doors, but the wall surface is broken by a blind arcade of three narrow round-headed arches on pilaster strips reaching from the ground to the eaves, the succession of arches following the rake of the cornice. The central division is in two stages, of which the lower

<sup>1</sup> Dartain presumes that the loggia had originally a full-centred arch like that of the porch below, and that the great window is of later date, and compelled the lowering of the arch and its gable. Text, p. 428.

contains a central arch enclosing a door flanked by two tall circular niches on each side, in which are to be traced the remains of old frescoes of uncertain date. The second story is divided by slender engaged columns without bases, but with block capitals, into three bays; their head is finished with a bold horizontal arched corbel-table. Over this is a horizontal cornice, so that the gable has the form of a classic pediment. Three small round windows in the upper part of the bays and a single larger round window below, which has replaced an earlier one of different form, are the only openings other than the central door.

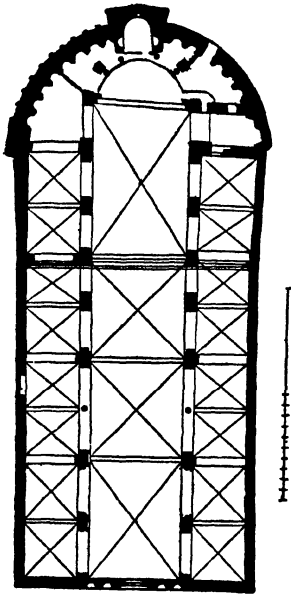


Fig. 85. S. Sofia, Padua.

The eastern end of this church is even more unusual than the façade. It consists of a great semicircular apse covering the whole breadth of the nave and aisles, and having thus the unexampled diameter of nearly or quite sixty feet. (Fig. 85.) This is enough to prove that it must originally have formed part of a very different building from the present church. But beyond this presumption there is no knowledge as to its origin. M. Dartein, not without reason, believes it to have formed the half of the outer wall of a circular building, and to be of about the same age with the old cathedral of Brescia,<sup>1</sup> or about the beginning of the ninth century. The exterior is in three distinct stages, of which the

lowest is a blind arcade of narrow, tall, round arches on flat pilasters, with small engaged shafts on the faces; the second being pierced irregularly by simple round-headed windows and by larger round-arched niches with a square plan, and the uppermost consisting of a continuous open arcaded gallery with large arches on square piers. There is little or no analogy with any other apse now existing. The interior of the wall has at the centre a large semicircular niche which penetrates the outer line of the wall, giving rise to a bold projection which interrupts the arcades of all the three stages. The central niche is flanked by a series of smaller niches, eight on each

<sup>1</sup> *L'Architecture Lombard*, p. 59.

side, extending quite around the semicircle. The connection of the later church with this great apse is curiously characteristic of the rudeness or carelessness which went hand in hand with so much occasional refinement.

One would naturally suppose that when a nave and aisles were joined to this semicircle, and the nave was made to terminate in a new interior apse, the two apses would have been made concentric, and the space between them have been made into an aisle or ambulatory according to the fashion of later churches. Not only is this not the case, but the axis of the nave and that of the old apse do not coincide, and the space between the two apses is encumbered by

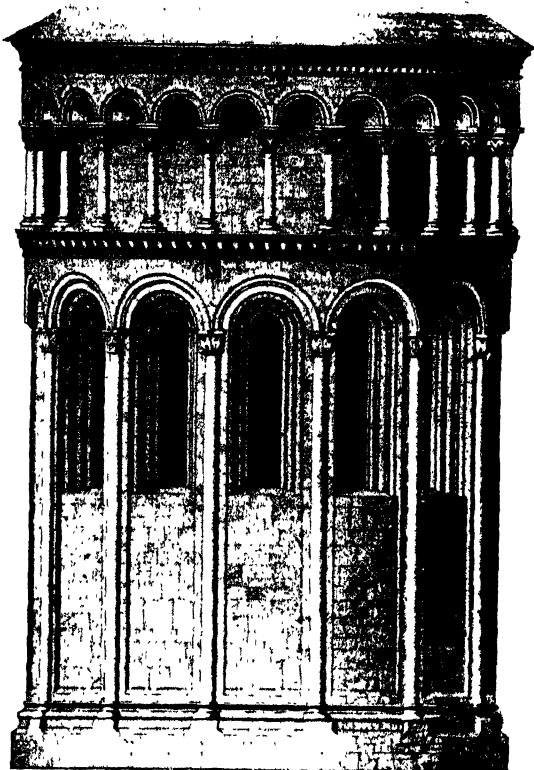


Fig. 86. S. M. Maggiore, Bergamo; Central Apse.

partitions and piers so as to make it evident that no account was taken of it in the planning of the new church.

The most noteworthy feature of the cathedral of Modena — the blind arcade which enriches the outer walls — is repeated almost literally in the fine apse of the church of S. Maria Maggiore at Bergamo. (Fig. 86.) Modena lies, as we have said, considerably to the southward of the strictly Lombard region, while Bergamo is on its northern edge; but the two churches are nearly or quite contemporary, the Bergamo church having been, according to an inscription on the principal doorway, founded in

S. M. Mag-  
giore, Ber-  
gamo.

1137.<sup>1</sup> The church is a Greek cross, with an octagonal dome at the crossing and three apses, of which the central apse is one of the noblest in Italy. The arcade just mentioned consists of a series of

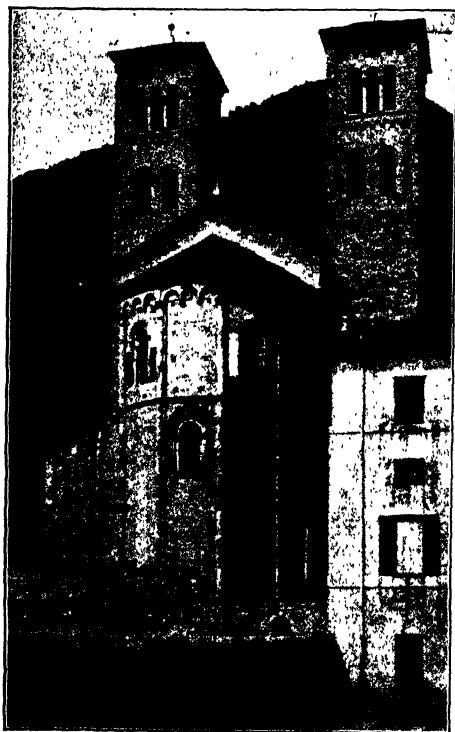


Fig. 87. S. Abbondio, Como ; East End.

round arches encircling the apse, springing from tall engaged shafts which rise from a strongly moulded plinth-course, and occupy two thirds of the height of the wall. The resemblance of this arcade to that of Modena is not only general, but extends to details of ornament, the capitals of the columns, for instance, presenting in each case the very unusual motive of two birds back to back. Each arch encloses a deeply splayed panel, in the upper portion of which is a long round-arched window with splayed jambs and heavy roll mouldings. Over the arcade is a rich belt on which is a fine eaves gallery of the usual form, but of greater than the

usual size. The wall is finished with a very richly decorated cornice. The whole work is of stone.

The choir of San Abbondio at Como, which has in exterior design little relation to the remainder of the church, is interesting in several respects. Issuing from between the two tall towers which terminate the inner aisles, its plan consists, as will be remembered, of two square groined bays and a semicircular apse of nearly equal height. A thin decorated string-course divides the wall at mid-height into two stages, and slender engaged shafts, with base

<sup>1</sup> The date is doubtless that of the rebuilding of the church, whose original foundation goes back to the ninth century. See Mothes, p. 321.

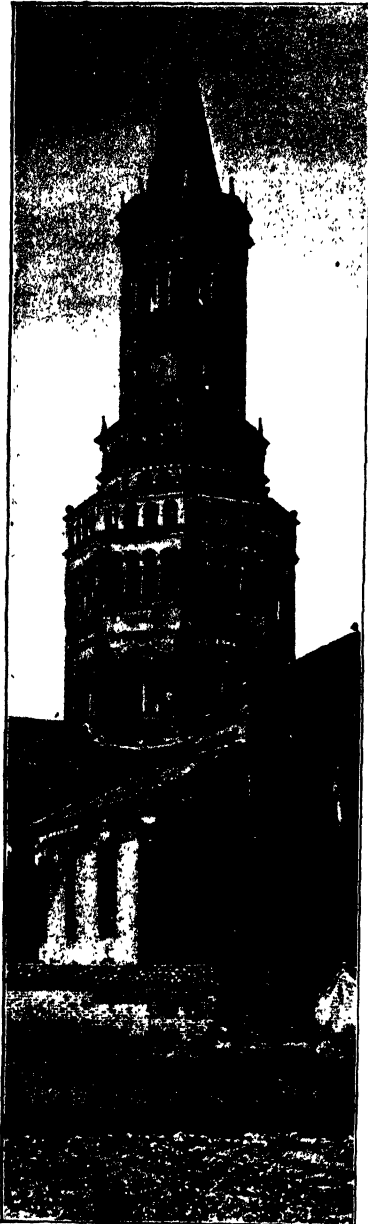


and capital rising from a plinth-course to the arched corbel-table at the eaves, divide it vertically into bays, three on each flank of the choir and five on the apse. In each bay of the flanks, except that nearest the tower, and in each story, there is a narrow round-arched window of the usual Lombard form, but with very unusual decoration. In the bays of the apse, the windows are alternately in the lower and upper stories. The windows vary in detail, that in the central bay of the apse being the richest. The narrow opening is splayed and surrounded by a twisted roll-moulding, and the whole is enclosed in an arched recess, of which the edge is a twisted shaft with base and capital, the latter having the same motive with those of Modena and Bergamo above mentioned, — two birds standing back to back with extended wings, — and which is surrounded by a border of sculpture in relief, as broad as the window opening, and strongly Byzantine in character, — a meandering vine, with leafage and fruit, and birds pecking at the clusters. (See Fig. 178, Chap. iii.) A curious instance of similarity in detail in widely separated buildings is to be observed in a little thirteenth-century church at Ronzano, in the Abruzzi, where a window of much the same proportions is enclosed in a band of sculpture of precisely similar character and motive to that of S. Abbondio.<sup>1</sup> Similar windows are also to be found in the apses of several of the Apulian churches, as Trani, Bari, etc. (See Chap. iii.)

The most prominent and characteristic feature of the early Lombard church was, as I have intimated above, its dome, which was not necessarily, as in later styles, the outcome of the cruciform plan, though its natural and logical function was to emphasize the intersection of nave and transepts, where the latter existed, but which otherwise covered, as a rule, that bay of the nave which was next the tribune or choir.

We have seen how constant in the Pavian churches and their congeners was the general construction and form of this dome, — the square foundation, the octagonal drum, the transition effected by means of squinches instead of the pendentives of the Byzantines, the masking of the interior dome, whose vertical section was either round, as in S. Michele, or pointed, as in S. Ambrogio, by the vertical external wall crowned with the low wooden roof, the round-arched windows in the faces of the octagon, and the arcaded eaves gallery above. It is interesting to see how, as the first impulse of the new style weakened, individual variations of the type appear. One of the earliest

<sup>1</sup> See Bindi, *Monumenti degli Abruzzi*, pl. 47.



instances is seen in San Antonino at Piacenza (Fig. 72, *supra*), where the central feature of the crossing is not a dome at all, but a square four-part groined vault like those of the nave, but higher, over which an octagonal tower is carried up to the height of four similar stories, with a coupled window in each face of each story, and a simple low-pitched roof.

What this feature was capable of developing into is to be seen in the Cistercian church of Chiaravalle near Milan, which, with its adjacent monastery, was founded by Bernard of Clairvaux about the year 1134 at the request of the inhabitants of Milan, but which was rebuilt in whole or in part at the beginning of the next century. It is a cruciform church, of which the nave and aisles are vaulted in square bays, separated by round transverse arches, those of the aisles having half the breadth of the nave bays. The crossing is covered by a remarkable octagonal tower, of which the first two stages form the drum of a high octagonal dome within, the wall being pierced on each face by a double window with bearing arch on the first story and by a group of four windows on the second. A pierced parapet of small arches finishes this portion of the tower, which is all that has any connection with the interior dome. Above

Chiaravalle,  
Central  
Tower.

this, the walls are set in, and an intermediate stage of two low arcades finishes with a cornice and eight small finials at the angles, perhaps the earliest examples of that feature in Italy. The wall is again set in, and the third stage follows, — the tallest of all, consisting of two stories with window openings similarly disposed to those of the lower stage. The wall finishes again with a pierced parapet with finials at the angles, and a low conical spire surmounts the whole.

In this astonishing tower, so boldly interjected into the quiet and rude architecture of this early time, where, with the exception of the detached bell-towers, all was low and broad and simple, and where the whole construction spoke of timidity and reserve, how shall we account for such a daring flight of construction and for such invention and grace of design? Every detail, with the exception of the finials, is strictly Lombard, the coupled windows divided by columns and covered by the round bearing arch, the grouped openings of the arcades, the arched corbel-tables which crown the stages, the pilaster strips which mark the angles, are all to be found in the most characteristic monuments of the style, but for any second example of such a combination of them in a single composition, we shall look in vain on either side the Alps; neither in Germany nor in France shall we find anything which answers fully to this admirable tower. S. Sernin at Toulouse is perhaps the nearest approach to it; but in S. Sernin the great central tower, though loftier than that of Chiaravalle, lacks the boldness of construction and the variety and vivacity of design which give charm to the Italian church.

An interesting example of the octagonal lantern covering the whole of a square interior is seen in the small chapel of the ancient monastery of S. Salvatore at Brescia. The monastery was, according to tradition, which in this instance seems trustworthy, founded by Desiderius, the Lombard king, about 753, and the chapel dates originally from this period, but was certainly rebuilt at a much later period, probably in the eleventh or twelfth century. The building, which covers a square of about thirty feet, is in two stories — the first with a pier in the centre, composed of a Roman pedestal, from which four low round arches spring to the four walls, dividing the space into four square bays covered by groined vaults. The second story is undivided, and is covered by an octagonal dome with squinches in the angles below, and masked on the exterior in the usual Lombard fashion by an octagonal lantern, of unequal sides, with arcades of six arches on the longer sides and of four on the

shorter, and crowned with a low octagonal roof. The exterior wall on the street is interesting and characteristic. The masonry is of cut stone throughout.<sup>1</sup>

Far up the valley of the Adige, now well within the Austrian lines, lies Trent, the most northerly of Italian cities, and so far removed from contact with the Lombard communities that even during the Lombard domination its intercourse was closer with the foreign rulers of the Tyrol and Germany. The cathedral of S. Vigilius, which perpetuates the memory of the early founder of the church at the end of the fourth century, was built by Bishop Udalrich early in the eleventh century, substantially on the same plan which we see in the present church, which was mainly a rebuilding of a hundred years later, beginning in 1124. It is a cruciform church, two hundred and ten feet long and seventy broad, the nave thirty-one feet wide, and presenting fewer modifications of the prevailing Lombard style than we should expect from its nearness to the German territory. Both in its somewhat rambling plan and in its architecture, it shows evidence of repeated alterations and partial rebuildings, but the eastern portion is very interesting from the excellence of its Lombard detail. The apse is divided vertically into three bays by slender grouped shafts rising from base to eaves; the height is in three well-marked stages above a high basement, with windows which light the crypt. The lowest and uppermost stages each consist of arcades on slender coupled columns, the two arcades being quite similar, except that the lower is a blind arcade while the upper is the usual open eaves gallery, which in this case is continued around the transepts and on the flanks of the church. The middle story is pierced by three fine single arched windows, with several orders of jamb-shafts, the outer columns in the middle window standing on griffins and joined by knotted serpents. The transepts have each a small apse projecting from the east wall,<sup>2</sup> and beside it a projecting porch of the usual Lombard form; that of the south transept has its arch supported on one side by a single octagonal column resting on a crouching lion, and on the other by coupled columns joined in the middle by knotted serpents. The high octagonal drum, which formerly carried the dome above the crossing, has recently given way to an octagonal lantern of somewhat whimsical design.

Verona had from the first her own fashion of using the Lombard style, and her churches showed a marked freedom from the traditions

<sup>1</sup> Odorici, *Antichità Cristiane di Brescia*.

<sup>2</sup> As in the cathedral of Parma.

which bound the churches of Pavia and Milan. The city is still able to show what is doubtless one of the most ancient of Lombard buildings, though its origin goes back beyond the Lombard invasion. This is the little church of San Stefano, built as a Christian basilica in the fifth century, destroyed in 524 by Theodoric, as it is said, in a fit of anger at some preaching he had heard there, but rebuilt before his death, and at some time, not now to be ascertained, changed in conformity to the prevailing Lombard style, with a chapel on each side of the choir, bringing it into a cruciform shape, and with a low octagonal tower covering the crossing.

Verona,  
S. Stefano.

Its ancient crypt extending beneath the choir and transept, and with an apse answering to that above, was probably not disturbed. The nave is but seventeen feet in width, with four piers on each side nearly three feet square, supporting plain round arches, with no clerestory and a flat wooden ceiling. The most remarkable feature of the church is the circular aisle which surrounds the apse, from

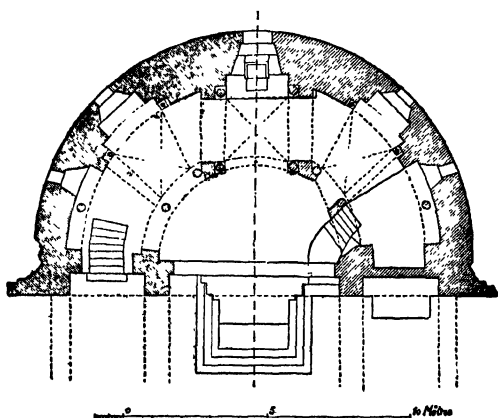


Fig. 80. Apse of S. Stefano, Verona.

which it is separated by an arcade of five round arches supported on piers with engaged columns. The aisle is nine steps above the apse, the apse fifteen steps above the nave. The aisle is divided into five trapezoidal bays covered by very elementary vaults, with small triangular bays between. The arrangement is precisely similar to that of the surrounding aisle in many of the circular or octagonal baptisteries of the period; but this church is one of the very rare instances in Italy of an aisle enclosing the apse of the choir, before the introduction of the Gothic style. At the centre of the aisle a recess, flanked by projecting piers with small angle shafts of red marble, still retains the ancient stone chair of the bishop, a strong indication that the aisle was not a later addition. Similar recesses in the wall on either side contain each a small window.

S. Lorenzo, a very interesting church, going back nearly as far as

S. Stefano, is now (1898) undergoing a very thorough restoration. Yet many of its original features are still to be seen. R. de Verona, S. Lorenzo. Fleury believes it to be as old as the middle of the sixth century, but to have been much altered in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is a purely Lombard building, with a length of about one hundred and twenty feet and a breadth of fifty, with three apses terminating nave and aisles, and transepts which have the air of a later addition. There are indications that a dome was either built or prepared for over the crossing. The nave, some twenty-four feet wide, is covered by a barrel vault, and divided by round arches

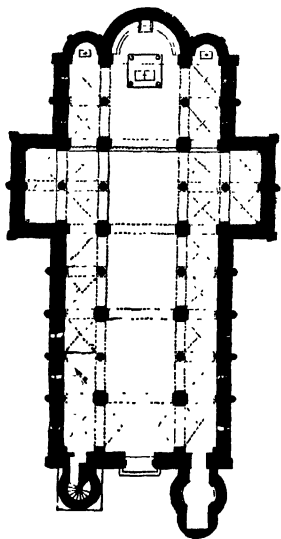


Fig. 90. S. Lorenzo, Verona.

springing from compound piers into square bays. The nave arcades have two coupled round arches in each bay, separated by a column; and this arrangement is repeated in an ample triforium gallery. Aisles and gallery are divided by transverse arches into square bays, which are groined. The interior walls and arches are of brick, the columns of dark marble. Piers and columns are banded with thin courses of red terra-cotta. The exterior of the church is even more interesting. The walls are laid up with alternate courses of squared stone and a coarse rubble, separated by single layers of red brick. The interior bays are indicated on the flanks by small triangular buttresses similar to those of San Zeno. On the west front are two plain round towers, of masonry like that of the walls, — that on the south angle slightly

the larger, about fourteen feet in diameter.

San Zeno, the noblest of the Verona churches, is said to have been founded in the ninth century by Charlemagne or his son Pepin. It was destroyed by the Hungarian hordes in 924, and two centuries later was enlarged and substantially rebuilt, the work beginning in 1138. The church in its later form is thus nearly or quite contemporary with the cathedrals of Piacenza, Parma, and Modena on the south, and with that of Trent on the north; but it differs widely in many respects from all these churches, showing in its interior disposition not less than in its exterior design the result of independent and local modes of thought and expression. The

plan is a rectangle measuring internally about eighty by two hundred and fifteen feet, with a projecting choir of the fourteenth century, ending in a polygonal apse. The nave and aisles are separated by arcades, divided somewhat irregularly into groups generally of two round arches<sup>1</sup> by strong and rather low compound piers, with capitals entirely without carving but with elaborately moulded abaci, and the arches of each group are separated by single slender columns, with a convex capital covered with varied sculpture of remarkable character in high relief, mostly renewed. These arcades are carried from one end of the church to the other. There are no transepts, but the nave opens directly into the choir by a high pointed arch. There is no triforium, but the arcades support a high clerestory wall, pierced in each bay of the nave by a single narrow arched window. There is no dome or lantern, and no vaulting except in the apse and the square bay in front of it; but the nave roof is concealed by a wooden ceiling, whose section is cusped. This would seem, however, to have been a departure from the original intention of the builders, for the engaged shaft of the great nave pier which is towards the nave, with the square member on either side of it, is repeated above the capital of the pier, and continued through the whole height of the

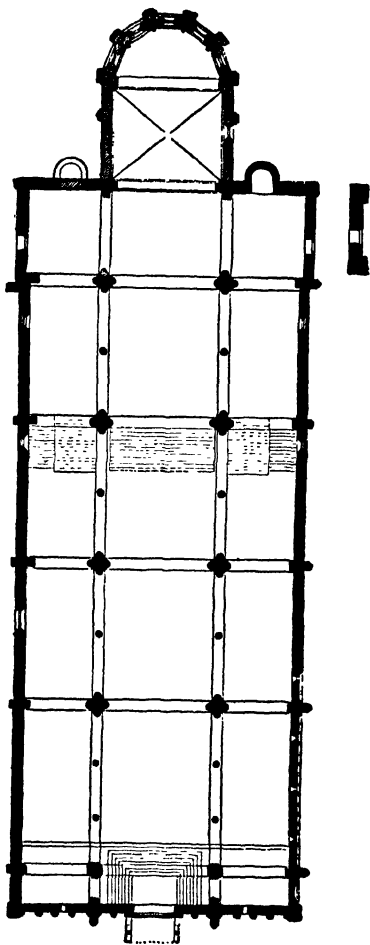


Fig. 91. Verona, S. Zeno.

<sup>1</sup> The first or westernmost bay is the longest, and has three arches. The easternmost bay is the smallest, having but a single arch, while between the west wall and the first pier is a narrow space which we have not counted as a bay, and the reason of which is not apparent.

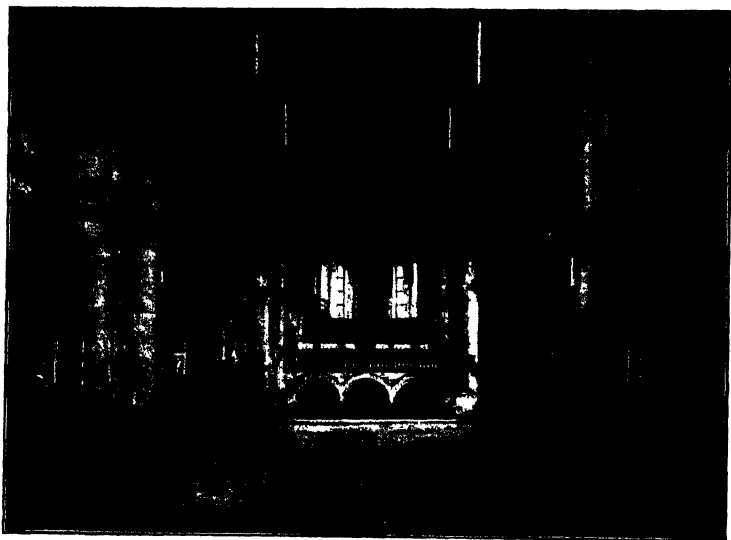


Fig. 92. Verona. Interior of S. Zeno.

clerestory, disappearing within the boarded ceiling.<sup>1</sup> The arrangement has no relation whatever to the actual ceiling, but is exactly what we should have expected to find if the nave had been covered by groined vaulting, and the vaults had been separated by transverse arches thrown across the nave. Furthermore, the shaft is interrupted at mid-height by a capital in preparation for the arch. The aisles are divided by transverse round arches opposite the great piers. The interior walls are of red brick with frequent courses of stone, and were, as well as the piers, extensively painted with figure subjects, of which traces yet remain, particularly in the apse and eastern portion of the choir, where the decoration was naturally most elaborate and has been most carefully preserved and renewed. The choir is brought forward so as to occupy the two eastern bays of the nave, its floor being raised some seven or eight feet above the nave floor over a noble crypt, which opens directly from the nave by three great round arches carried on coupled marble columns, between which broad steps descend into the crypt. In each aisle are two

<sup>1</sup> In Dehio and V. Bezold, vol. iii. pl. 235, this interior is shown with a transverse arch thrown across the nave between each pair of piers. Street (*Brick and Marble in the Middle Ages*) also speaks of these arches as partially obstructing the view of the wooden ceiling. Only two such arches exist, enclosing the two westernmost bays of the nave.



similar arches, while a staircase on each aisle wall, one third the breadth of the aisle, ascends to the choir. The crypt is divided into seven aisles by rows of red marble columns of various shapes, with varied capitals, Corinthian, Byzantine, Lombard, carrying groined vaulting, and in the centre is the shrine of the saint surrounded by a fence of wrought iron.

The exterior is of remarkable interest. The materials of which it is built have doubtless to some extent determined its character. The façade is of marble and a fine sandstone; the remainder is of red brick, with horizontal courses of stone, the two materials being about equally divided. The details of the façade are of a delicacy and lightness quite unknown in any previous example of the Lombard style. (Fig. 93.) The front is in three compartments corresponding accurately to the outline of the cross-section of the church, the vertical division being marked by two slender square piers, set diagonally upon the wall and rising from the ground to the cornice of the central compartment, where they finish with a finely sculptured capital of Corinthian type. The eaves gallery of the typical Lombard churches is wanting, but an arched corbel-table follows the rake of the roof in the three compartments, in the middle one of which the same feature is repeated horizontally above and below the wheel window, which occupies the centre of the wall. The whole surface of the front is divided by thin, narrow, flat pilaster strips, with base and capital, which rise from a low base course to the corbel-tables of the cornice. In the centre of the front is a beautiful porch, of slight projection, in which two slender columns of red marble resting on the backs of lions support a round arch covered by a low gable. On the angle at either side of the arch is a standing figure in relief, and the capitals of the columns and the impostes above them, from which the arch springs and which are continued across the opening of the door, are sculptured, the lintel bearing figures under round arches, of strongly Byzantine character.

On a level with the springing of the arch of the porch, a small and delicate arcade of coupled arches divided by coupled columns, each pair of arches filling the breadth of one of the vertical panels, is carried across the whole front. A single pair of arches on each side are pierced for windows, the remainder forming a blind arcade. Below this on each side of the porch the panels of the central division are filled with bas-reliefs of the twelfth century, one above another, of various subjects, representations of the months, scenes from the life of San Zeno, a hunting scene called the "Chase of Theodoric," etc.

carried up to a greater height. The older portions are all of marble; the newer are of brick, alternating with courses of marble. The three divisions, corresponding to nave and aisles, are separated by thin piers like those in the same position in San Zeno, and, like them, set cornerwise on the wall, with capitals near the cornice line. The great feature of the façade is the central porch, in two stages, each with a broad round arch springing from columns. In the first story, which is very like that of the porch of San Zeno, and which covers a deeply splayed doorway with a multitude of small decorated shafts and pilasters, the two front columns are covered with a spiral fluting, and rest on the backs of griffins. The soffit of the arch is decorated with bands of sculpture, partly in high relief.

A narrow band of archaic sculpture, with a strongly projecting decorated cornice over it, is carried across the front some ten feet above the ground, with grotesque figures of men and beasts in conflict, of much the same character with those of San Michele at Pavia, and is doubtless a part of the decoration of the early ninth century church. The doorway on the south flank of the church has also its porch in two stages, but of a quite different and singular form. (Fig. 94.) Two single detached columns, with high capitals charged with fantastic sculpture, support each the end of a lintel, connecting it with the wall, — one lintel carved with grotesque reliefs on front and sides, while the other is in the form of a crouching monster. On each lintel stands a short column, with a capital of the same character with those below, from which springs a heavy plain round arch covered by a low gable, with enriched cornice of much later date. Nothing can be more characteristic than the form and sculpture of these porches, and nothing akin to them was ever produced by any other race of builders than the Lombards and their descendants.

The apse of the choir is absolutely unique in its exterior design. It has no opening, but the wall is decorated with a close set range of very thin and attenuated pilasters, with bases and Corinthian capitals, rising from a low base course through the full height of the apse, and crowned by a highly enriched entablature,<sup>1</sup> an outbreak of the classic spirit which we shall see prevailing contemporaneously in the architecture of central Italy, but of which scarcely a trace is found in the Lombard regions. In the changes which the church underwent in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, semicircular chapels were projected from the aisle walls on either side, in which the design of the eastern apse was imitated. (Fig. 94.)

<sup>1</sup> Mothes presumes the body of the apse to belong to the early church, but the entablature to the rebuilding of 1122.

The church of Santa Maria della Pieve at Arezzo is one of those which it is not easy to assign to any definite class or style. The town lies far to the south of the Lombard region, Arezzo, S. M. della Pieve. half way between Florence and Perugia, yet the church has more the character of a Lombard monument than many of its period which lie nearer the centre of Lombard influence. It is a cruciform church, dating from the last years of the tenth century, but without a dome or other feature to mark the crossing, with high columns in the nave carrying pointed arches and groined vaults. This portion of the work is probably of a later date: but the choir, with its triforium gallery and its fine apse, is undoubtedly of the original building, and is characteristically Lombard in character. The exterior of the apse is in three stages, first a blind arcade with flat pilasters, over which is a light and graceful open arcaded gallery, and above this a second gallery, with dwarf columns supporting a horizontal entablature.

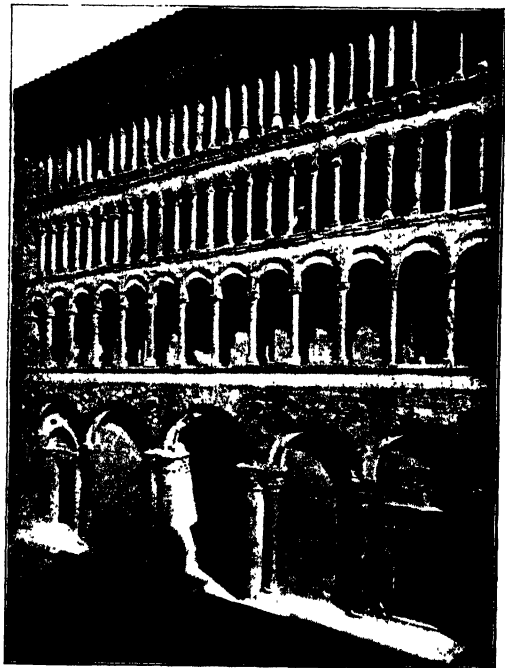


Fig. 95. Arezzo S. M. della Pieve.

The west front, which dates from 1216, is one of the most remarkable in Italy. (Fig. 95.) It is a mere screen with no relation whatever to the church behind it, and consists of four stories, the lowest a blind arcade of rude, unequal round arches on columns, — three of the five arches enclosing doorways, and the other three open galleries, the first two of arcades and the upper of columns supporting a horizontal cornice. The openings are apparently quite without any systematic arrangement, numbering in the second story twelve, in the

third story twenty-five, and in the fourth, thirty; and the columns are of every variety of size, shape, and material,— plain, fluted, twisted, knotted,— in the upper colonnade a statue filling the place of a column,— the capitals of all styles, evidently a frank gathering together of ancient fragments from miscellaneous sources, to be used without thought or skill. It is a piece of work which, in the absence of authentic record, we should assign to a much earlier period than the beginning of the thirteenth century, when cities like Florence on one side, and Siena on another, and Perugia on a third, all lying within forty miles of Arezzo, were showing Italy of what combined strength and grace the Central Romanesque was capable.

S. Antonio at Padua is another and a more important instance of a church which it is hard to classify, and whose disposition and design appear alike to be due to the individual predilection of its architect. Its design has been attributed to Nicolo Pisano. But this seems to be an impossible guess, in view of the

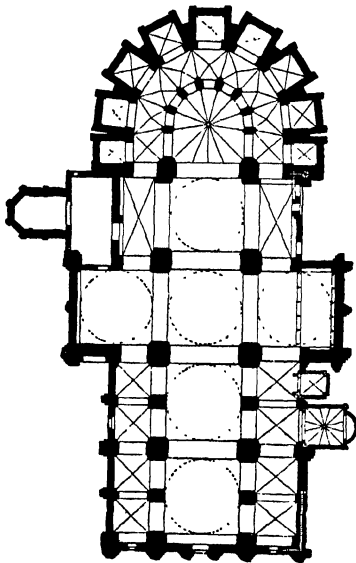


Fig. 96. Padua. S. Antonio.

extraordinary ugliness of the exterior, which in most views exhibits a confused mass of domes, towers, gables, and pinnacles, apparently without order or method. (Fig. 97.) Yet the view of the church from the east is certainly picturesque and effective, and there is much beauty in the arrangement of the eastern apse and the flanking towers. In the greater part of the exterior the arches are pointed. Yet the effect is far from that of a Gothic church. The west front is a flat wall, with the low gable covering the whole breadth, and with a horizontal arcaded gallery running across it, answering to the Lombard eaves gallery. And the treatment of walls, with the pilaster strips and arched corbeltables on apses and gables, and the

drums of domes, is thoroughly Lombard. The two graceful, slender octagonal towers which flank the choir have the proportions of Eastern minarets and the detail of a Lombard campanile.

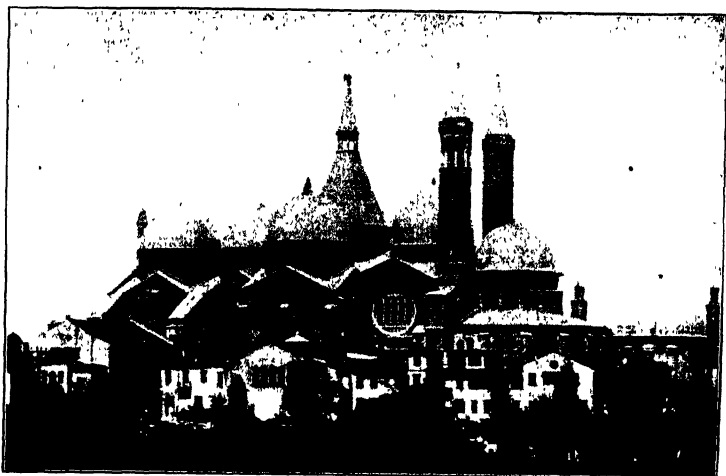


Fig. 97. Padua. S. Antonio.

The interior is as individual and as difficult to classify as the exterior. The influence of St. Mark's at Venice is plainly visible, yet there is no similarity in the effect of the two churches. Four tall, round arches on either side the nave, springing from perfectly plain square piers without bases or capitals beyond a thin impost moulding, separate the nave and choir from the aisles and transepts. Similar arches divide the nave, the crossing, the choir into six square bays, each covered with a hemispherical dome. The domes are of equal size and height, except that over the crossing, which is of superior height internally, and covered on the exterior by a high polygonal lantern crowned by a still higher pointed roof. The most interesting feature of the interior is the admirable lofty vaulted aisle, with square radiating chapels, which surrounds the nine-sided apse, — the apse itself being covered by a lower dome.

Not less characteristic and interesting than the churches we have hitherto been considering are the circular and polygonal buildings which arose with them all over the Lombard region. They are, for the most part, baptisteries, the circular form having been with the Lombards, not less than with the early Christians, the accepted form for that purpose. Now and then, however, a circular church was built, though even in these cases modern research has generally either discovered or presumed that its original purpose has been changed.

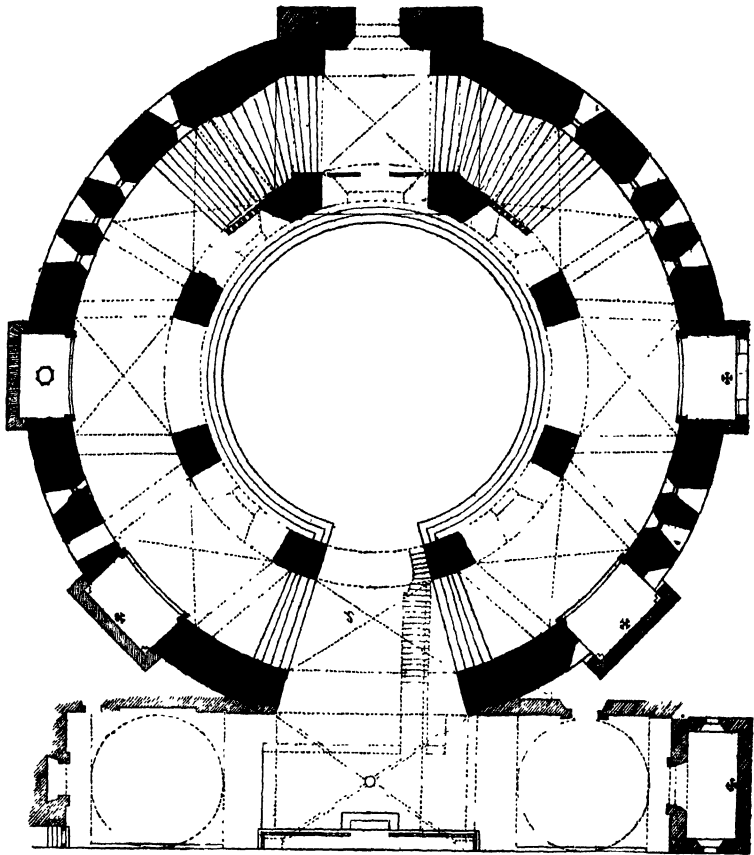


Fig. 98. Brescia. Duomo Vecchio.

Brescia,  
 Duomo  
 Vecchio.

The oldest of the Lombard circular churches, as it is also probably the oldest of all the authentic Lombard monuments which remain to us in anything like completeness, is that known as the old cathedral at Brescia, the Duomo Vecchio. It is a most important and interesting building, with a history which is greatly obscured by the mists of the early centuries. Whether it is in whole or in part the building which Queen Theodolind erected, and which was consecrated by her bishop in 617, or whether it must be attributed to Charlemagne at the end of the eighth century, will probably never be certainly known. Nor is it important, except as

indicating the capacity and attitude of the Lombard conquerors in the matter of architecture at the beginning or at the end of their career in Italy. What appears certain is that to the eastward of the present rotonda stood a much older building which was the cathedral church, and to the westward, across the street from the present church, another still older building which was the baptistery. The latter has long since disappeared. The former was in later days connected with the rotonda; and it still forms the choir of the church of *Sta. Maria della Rotonda*, of which the rotonda itself forms the nave and aisles. The plan (Fig. 98) is very similar to that of the early Christian baptisteries, — a central ring about sixty-five feet in diameter, of rude stout piers supporting round arches, eight in number, on which a circular wall is carried up which supports a hemispherical dome, of which the crown is about eighty-three feet above the pavement; and outside the arcade

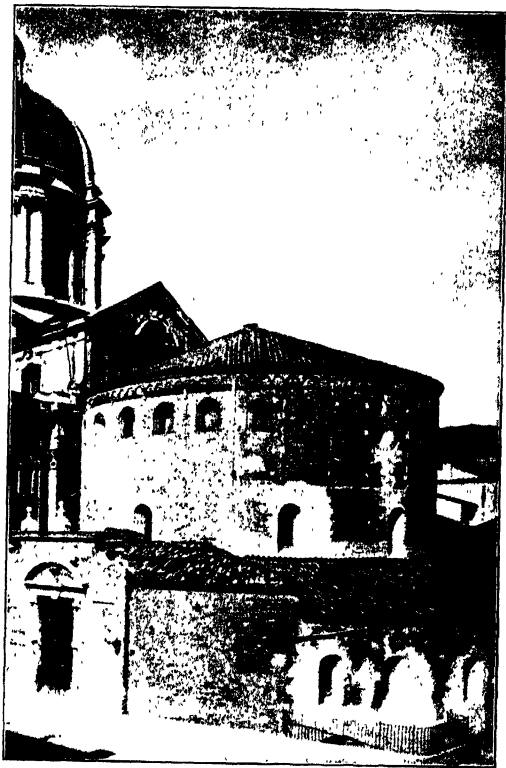


Fig. 99. Brescia. Duomo Vecchio.

a surrounding aisle about eighteen feet wide, divided into bays alternately square and triangular, by transverse arches, of which two spring from each pier of the arcade to the outside wall, the square bays being covered by groined vaults. The exterior wall of the aisle is pierced by small round-arched windows. The whole interior is absolutely without ornament of any description. The piers are without bases or caps, the windows are without mouldings, the dome springs

from the walls of the drum without a cornice. On the exterior the same plainness prevails, so far as the aisle wall is concerned. But the central wall, which rises nearly to the height of the dome, and is crowned by a low-pitched conical roof, is divided into twenty-four bays by thin pilaster strips which terminate in an arched corbel-table. Each bay encloses a single round-arched recess, with the exception of three, in which the openings are circular, and are pierced through the masonry of the dome, serving as windows to light the interior. (Fig. 99.)

The walls and piers both outside and inside are of rubble-stone, which, on the inside, is covered by a coat of plaster; but the corbel-table of the exterior wall, with several courses of herring-bone ornament below it and a decorated cornice above, is of brick. The pavement of the church is now some ten feet below the ground outside, and is reached from without by the large staircases which flank the main entrance. The aisles are raised by ten steps above the pavement of the nave.<sup>1</sup> The crypt of San Filasterio, which underlies the choir and transept of the older portion of the structure, is probably one of the earliest crypts in existence, though the date cannot be determined with any show of certainty. Its disposition is not essentially different from that common in the crypts of the early churches, not only of the Lombard style, but equally in the churches of succeeding styles up to the fourteenth century.

In the remarkable group of churches and courts at Bologna, known under the general name of San Stefano, and which Bologna, S. Sepolcro. I have already mentioned (p. 113), is a circular church now called San Sepolcro (see Fig. 67 3), but which is believed to have been originally the baptistery belonging to the church of S. Trinità (Fig. 67 1), from which it is separated by the atrium now known as the Corte di Pilato<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 67 2). If this presumption is sound, we must admit a remarkable proportion, as to size, between the church and the baptistery, the two being about equal in area. San Sepolcro is extremely irregular in plan and construction. It consists of an

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written systematic excavations have revealed, at a depth of some feet below the floor of the rotunda, a Roman mosaic pavement, and, embedded in the wall of the adjacent church, a splendid sarcophagus of red Verona marble with admirable figure sculpture. These remains seem to make it more than probable that the rotunda was a Roman building, presumably the hall of a bath.

The interior masonry is nearly all new; the piers and wall facing are of cut stone. The dome was found to be badly cracked and threatening ruin.

<sup>2</sup> Dartin believes it to have been attached not to S. Trinità, but to SS. Pietro e Paolo, which adjoins it on the left.



inner circular arcade about thirty-four feet in diameter, surrounded by an aisle whose plan is an irregular polygon. The arcade has twelve arches, of which half are supported on single columns built up of bricks, the other half on coupled columns; one column of each pair being of red marble, the other of brick, evidently added later, the wall above being carried up as a polygon of twelve sides and crowned by a polygonal dome, formerly decorated with paintings in the Byzantine manner. The sides of the polygon are each pierced by a double arch, divided by a mid-wall shaft with spreading cap and a Byzantine stilt-block, and opening into a triforium gallery over the surrounding aisle. In each angle is an engaged shaft standing on a corbel and with a foliated capital, over which at the springing of the dome is an arched corbel-table with intersecting arches. The disposition of the aisle is of the most eccentric character. Its plan has little relation to that of the central ring. On two sides it is coincident with the walls of the adjacent churches. A portion of it is divided into bays by transverse arches. Its ceiling is groined, but the vaults are necessarily of peculiar and varying forms. The gallery over the aisle is covered by a rude lean-to roof without either vaults or ceiling, and its exterior wall is pierced with double arched windows exactly like the triforium openings over the central arcade.



Fig. 100. S. Sepolero, Bologna.

Much of the irregularity of this singular interior is due, no doubt, to repeated changes and partial restorations, of which the records are but fragmentary. It is believed to be of later date than the adjacent church of SS. Pietro e Paolo, which can hardly be older than the ninth century. The exterior presents no feature of special interest, with one notable exception. The walls are decorated, especially on the face towards the court, by a mosaic composed of bricks and various sorts of stone, arranged in a great variety of geometrical patterns, sometimes in bands, enclosed between courses of brick zigzags, and sometimes in isolated circles or lozenges. This method of decoration is extremely rare in Italy, and it is probable that in this instance it is the result of foreign influence, whether from France, where in the churches of Auvergne similar motives are very frequent, or from the East, which is perhaps the common source from which the idea was communicated both to France and Italy. In any case the decoration of San Sepolcro is unquestionably some centuries later than the church itself.

The little church of San Tommaso in Limine, at Almenno near Bergamo, is one of the oldest, and by no means one of the Almenno, S. Tommaso in Limine. least interesting, of Lombard monuments. In regard to its age the authorities are even more than usually at variance, for, while D'Agincourt holds it to be the work of the Lombards themselves, Sacchi carries it back to the century before their invasion, while Osten assigns it to a period two centuries after their fall. We may perhaps accept as not unreasonable the theory of Mothes, who considers the church to be a work of the middle of the ninth century, with important portions which are at least two centuries later.

The church (Fig. 101) is a small circular building, with an inner ring two stages in height, each of eight columns, of which the plan is not accurately circular but oval, the diameter east and west being about seventeen feet, and in the opposite direction sixteen, while the outer wall is an exact circle, with an internal diameter of thirty-two feet. The columns of the inner ring are short and stout, with very high bases and large block capitals, of which some are carved and others plain, and are joined by stilted round arches. The surrounding aisle is in two stories, both of which are divided by transverse arches into bays covered by groined vaults. The vaults of the upper aisle have a peculiar inclination, owing to the fact that the dividing transverse arches spring on the wall side from columns, of which the capitals are much lower than those of the inner ring. The wall over the lower arcade is carried up to a level some two and a half feet

above the floor of the upper aisle, to which it thus forms a parapet, on which rest the columns of the upper arcade. Here the columns are much lighter, and their foliated capitals carry plain Byzantine stilt-blocks, from which spring round arches less stilted than those below. On these the circular wall is carried up to a plain light-moulded cornice, above which is a hemispherical dome pierced with four small windows in the form of a cross, over the steep roof of the aisle. This roof, as well as the conical roof of the dome, is entirely of stone, no wood appearing anywhere in the church. There are doorways on the west and south, and on the east is a large choir of later date than the church, consisting of a single square groined bay and a semicircular apse. A smaller apse, hollowed in the thickness of the wall, opens from the eastern bay of the upper aisle.

The exterior is simple and elegant. The walls are of stone, and are divided into bays both in the lower and the upper portions. The high aisle wall has a series of slender engaged shafts, with bases on a low plinth course and block capitals of various design at the cornice, joined by an arched corbel-table. The treatment of the upper wall is similar, except that thin pilasters are substituted for the columns. The doorways are round arches with jamb-shafts and arch mouldings, the capitals bearing stunted human figures and rudely conventionalized foliage, the arch head filled with a stone slab bearing an inscription. The choir is, as we have said, doubtless of later date than the circular portion, but there is no

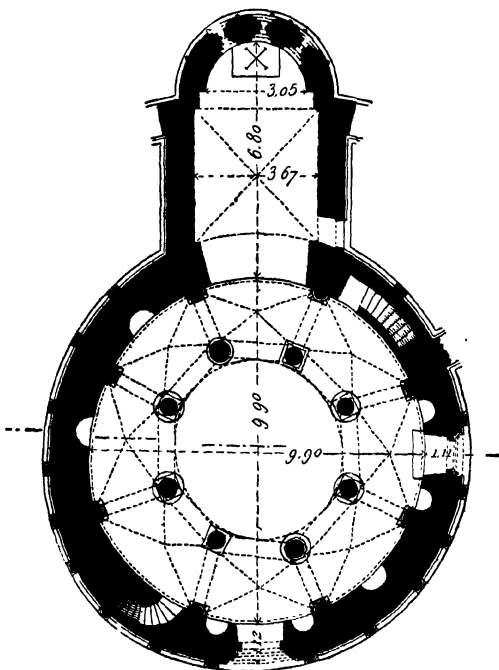


Fig. 101. S. Tommaso in Limine, Almenno.

incongruity in design between the two. In the choir, as in the main

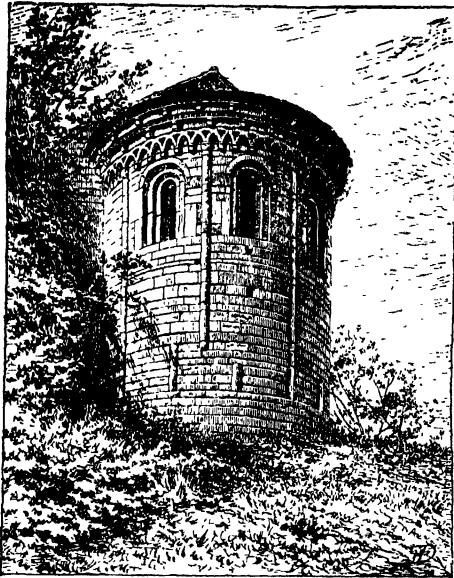


Fig. 102. Apse of S. Tommaso in Limine.

building, the wall is divided on the exterior into bays by small attached shafts which rise from a base course, and terminate in the arched corbel-table which decorates the cornice. (Fig. 102.) The latter feature is formed in the choir of intersecting arches, and the cornice above it is of two ranges of projections carried on small corbels, and separated by a dog-tooth ornament. In each of the three bays of the apse is a round-arched window set close under the cornice, its jambs recessed with three setbacks. An odd indication of change of purpose is seen in the beginnings of three wall-shafts which start from the base course, and terminate abruptly two or three feet above it, as if the original intention included five bays in place of the three.

The group of Lombard baptisteries, while following in essentials the plan of those of the earlier Christian centuries, are yet marked by certain peculiar features of design and construction by which they are related as clearly to each other as they are distinguished from the baptisteries both of earlier and of later date. They are substantially similar in plan and design to the smaller circular churches of which S. Tommaso just described is a characteristic example; and in fact most of these churches are known or suspected to have been originally baptisteries, and to have been adapted by the addition of a choir to the services of the church. They differ, however, very widely among themselves in general disposition. As a rule their plan is octagonal, where in the earlier centuries it had been circular; but this rule was in neither age inflexible. The baptistery attached to the cathedral of Novara (see Fig. 69,

Lombard  
Baptis-  
teries.

p. 115), which is undoubtedly, at least in its lower portion, as old as 417, furnished the model which was followed all but exactly three or four centuries later in the baptistery of Albenga (Fig. 103), a little town on the coast, half way between Nice and Genoa, except that the dome, instead of following in its plan the octagon below, becomes a true hemisphere, small corbels in the angles of the wall supplying the place of pendentives. At Arsago, some thirty miles northwest of Milan, the baptistery, dating from about 864, <sup>Arsago.</sup> or very nearly contemporary with the last named, has a plan very similar to it, — an octagon twenty-three feet in diameter, with deep recesses opening from the sides, very irregular in form, of which all are rectangular in plan except one, which is semicircular, and is used as an apse. In this case, however, the arcade is repeated in a second stage, and the space occupied by the recesses below is covered by a narrow aisle, divided by transverse arches into eight groined bays. Above the upper arcade the plan changes from an octagon to a polygon of sixteen sides, the additional sides being supported on small squinches between the arches. The latter plan is continued in the dome. Both dome and aisle are, as is general in these buildings, without wooden roofs, but they retain the outward form of such roofs, the masonry being filled in above the dome until it assumes the outline of a cone, and above the vault of the aisle an inclined plane of masonry being formed, corresponding to a lean-to roof. This method of construction could not, of course, be followed except in buildings of small size; at Arsago the clear breadth of the aisle is no more than five feet.

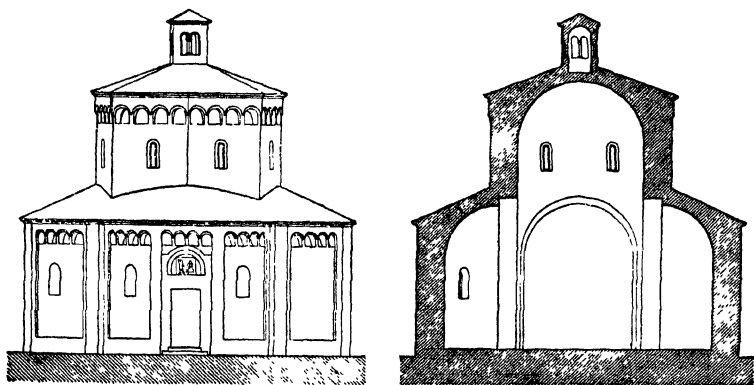


Fig. 103. Albenga. Baptistery.

The exterior is simple, the only decorative feature being the small

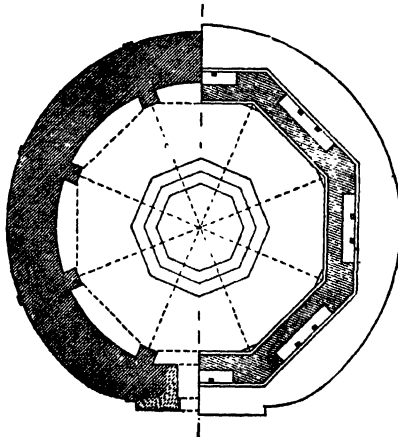
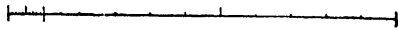
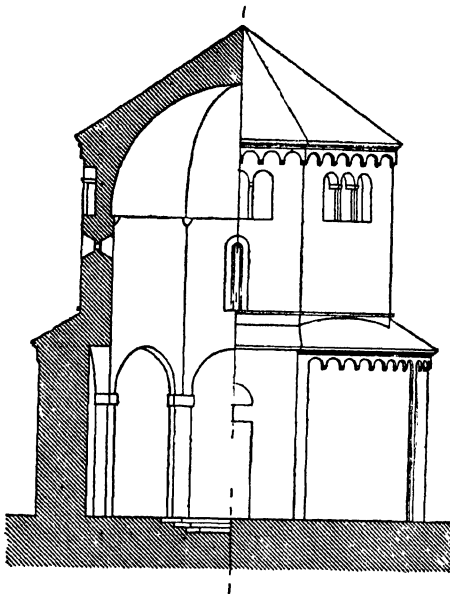


Fig. 104. Agrate-Conturbia. Baptistery.

arched corbel-table of red and white bricks (the walls, exterior and interior, are of stone) which finishes the upper and the lower wall. Each of the sixteen sides of the upper wall has a blind arch, which reduces the thickness of the wall by nearly one half, and under these arches the wall is pierced with small windows of various forms, round-arched, circular, and cruciform, which light the upper portion of the interior.

At Agrate-Conturbia, near Novara, is a small baptistery (Fig. 104) which combines the two forms of circle and octagon. It consists of a circular wall, with an inside diameter of about twenty-six feet, which is, on the inside surface, divided into eight blind arches springing from square piers. Above this arcade the wall becomes an octagon, and is greatly reduced in thickness, with a bold offset connecting it with the wall below. It finishes with a full-centred

octagonal dome. On the exterior the lower wall is divided by thin

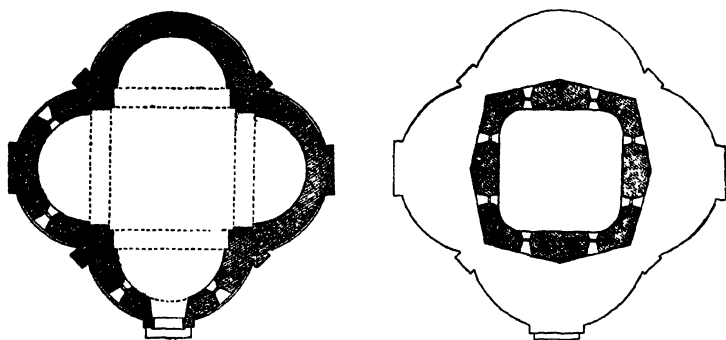


Fig. 105. Biella. Baptistery.

pilaster strips into bays corresponding with the interior arches, and without windows. The upper wall has in each face a small triple window, divided by mid-wall shafts. Both portions of the wall terminate in a small arched corbel-table and a light moulded cornice.

Two small baptisteries, at Biella, a little to the west of Novara, and Galliano, a little to the southeast of Como, recall by their plan some of the later sepulchral chapels of the cata- Biella.combs of Rome. The two are very similar in ground plan, each consisting of a central square of about sixteen feet, bounded by four round arches, from which open four semicircular apses covered by hemispherical vaults. At Biella the wall is carried up still on a square plan, but with the angles slightly rounded, as if the builders had wished to prepare for a hemispherical or octagonal dome, but were without the knowledge of pendentives or squinches. The dome, therefore, remains nearly a square in plan at the base, with a gradual approach to a hemispheric form towards the crown. It is surmounted by a small lantern. The treatment of the wall which encloses the dome is not less singular than the dome itself. Square within, it assumes on the exterior, by the thickening of each side towards the centre, the form of an octagon with equal sides, but very unequal angles. Each side is pierced by a small round-headed window, and the wall is finished with a series of deep round-arched recesses suggestive of a rudimentary eaves gallery. The lower wall has flat buttresses of slight projection at the meeting points of the four apses, between which the circular wall surfaces are divided by pilaster strips ending in a series of arched recesses similar to those above, but smaller.

The Biella baptistery (Fig. 105) dates from about 850. That of Galliano (Fig. 106) is presumably of about the same age. But along with a general resemblance in ground plan the two present in the matter of construction very striking differences.

At Galliano the four arches which bound the square rest on slender, isolated, octagonal piers, and carry a square wall, pierced on each side with plain, round-arched openings into a narrow aisle of quite irregular plan, over the apses of the first story. Above the vault of this aisle the square is changed to an octagon by the intervention of conical squinches at the angles, and the whole finishes with an octagonal dome, with four round-arched windows just below the spring. The exterior outline is as in the above-mentioned examples, the whole roof being of masonry. The entire plan and construction are of the rudest and most formless character, yet give evidence of more matured knowledge of building than the more regular and finished baptistery of Biella. From two opposite sides of the aisle of the second story open small apses, of which one contains the remains of an altar, while the other affords access to the two narrow staircases which connect the two stories. The ancient baptismal font, hewn from a single block of granite, still stands in the centre of the floor.

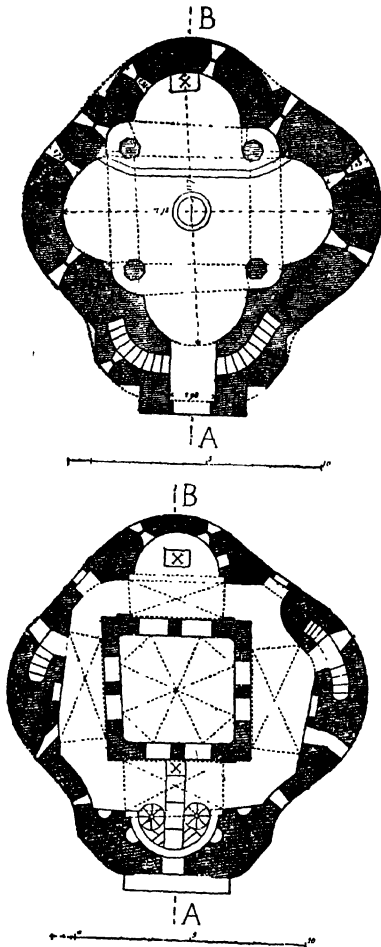


Fig. 106. Galliano. Baptistery.

Perhaps the most complete example of the Lombard baptisteries is that of Asti, which is by some authorities, including Mothes,



assigned to the middle of the eighth century, but which seems too perfect a building both in plan and construction for that rude age. It consists (Fig. 107) of a central octagon, with <sup>Asti.</sup> an inside diameter of about sixteen feet, surrounded by a polygonal aisle, forty-five feet in diameter, with three sides answering to each side of the central building, and with eight projecting buttresses corresponding to the angles of the central octagon. The unusual proportion between the two parts of the building has led Mothes to suspect that the central portion was originally only an edicula covering the baptismal font. If this suspicion be well founded, the change from the original building must have been indeed a radical one, for the eight columns of the centre and their arches carry an octagonal wall, which rises like a tower, without openings, to the height of thirty-seven feet above the pavement, and is covered by a hemispherical dome, with a wooden roof above it. The broad aisle is divided by transverse arches into eight trapezoidal groined bays, each lighted by a small and narrow window. There is no gallery, and the vaulting is covered by a broad lean-to wooden roof. The columns are short and stout, with alternate courses of stone and brick, resting on high bases and heavy block capitals. The exterior walls are of brick, and are absolutely plain, except at the top of the upper wall, which has an arched corbel-table and a dog-tooth ornament in the cornice.

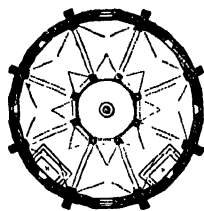


Fig. 107. Asti. Baptistery.

The baptistery of Parma is one of the most remarkable of the group, but so much later than its neighbors (begun 1196, <sup>Parma.</sup> more than thirty years after the cathedral was finished), and so different in style and plan, that it belongs with the later or Central Romanesque. (See Chap. iv.)

It was rare that the baptistery varied from the circular or octagonal plan; yet this sometimes happened. One of the few instances of such departure is the very beautiful baptistery <sup>Gravedona.</sup> at Gravedona, towards the northern end of the Lake of Como, which is built in the similitude of a church, and is known as Sta. Maria del Tiglio. Its plan is a square of about forty feet, quite undivided, with circular apses on three sides; that on the east flanked by niches,

and on the west (for the building is oriented like a church) a fine tower attached to the middle of the façade, and forming an entrance porch, — a most unusual arrangement in Italy. In the interior, above a triple-arched blind arcade on the north and south sides, runs a graceful arcaded gallery. The roof is of wood, and open. The walls are covered with frescoes, much ruined, but still beautiful. The singular elegance of this little building is enhanced by the materials of which it is built. The exterior walls are of alternate courses of black and white marble. The baptistery is the successor of one said to have been built by Queen Theodolind at the beginning of the seventh century.

After the thirteenth century baptism by immersion ceased, and baptisteries were no longer built, but fonts were put in the churches, generally in or near the vestibule.

There is probably no single feature of the Lombard churches which has more impressed itself on the architecture of Italy, regardless of the limits of the Lombard style, than the campanile, or bell-tower. The few towers which the Lombards found in Italy were almost strictly limited to the churches of Ravenna. These were round towers of the type still existing attached to the two churches of San Apollinare, S. Giovanni Battista, and the cathedral.<sup>1</sup> (See Figs. 37 and 47, in Chap. i.). The Lombards never adopted this type, but built from the beginning towers which were, like the Ravenna towers, detached from the church, but which were square in plan, and at first absolutely plain up to the belfry stage, as in the cathedral of Novara, and the south tower of San Ambrogio at Milan (see Fig. 78), but enriched in later examples by pilaster strips and small engaged shafts dividing the wall into vertical bays, and by cornice mouldings and arched corbel-tables marking the various stages. The openings were small arched windows, generally single and plain in the lower stages, and increasing in number towards the top, those of the upper stages being generally in groups of two or three, divided by mid-wall shafts, with large capitals or stilt-blocks projecting in front and rear to take the thickness of the wall. Sometimes, but rarely, the shafts were coupled in the thickness of the wall, — a more reasonable construction. The contrast between the earlier and later treatment of the wall surface is well illustrated by the two towers which flank the west front of

<sup>1</sup> The towers of S. Francesco and S. Giovanni Evangelista, the only square towers in Ravenna, were added to the churches at a later date.

S. Ambrogio; the south tower dating presumably from the ninth century or earlier, the northern much later, — probably 1129; the former having a perfectly plain wall without cornices or pilaster strips, and with no windows except the belfry openings, a pair of coupled round arches on each face, separated by a column; the latter divided horizontally by arched corbel-tables into stages, and vertically by slender engaged shafts into three bays in each stage, the middle bay with a plain narrow window. The belfry stage, which consisted of three large open arches on each face, was removed in the sixteenth century by order of the Spanish governor of Milan, on the pretence that so lofty a tower threatened the safety of his palace hard by. But the belfry, with the stage below it, has been rebuilt during the last twenty years. (See Fig. 80.) With many variations of detail this type of tower, which, with rare exceptions, stood near the church, but was not attached to it, is singularly persistent in Italy for at least five hundred years :

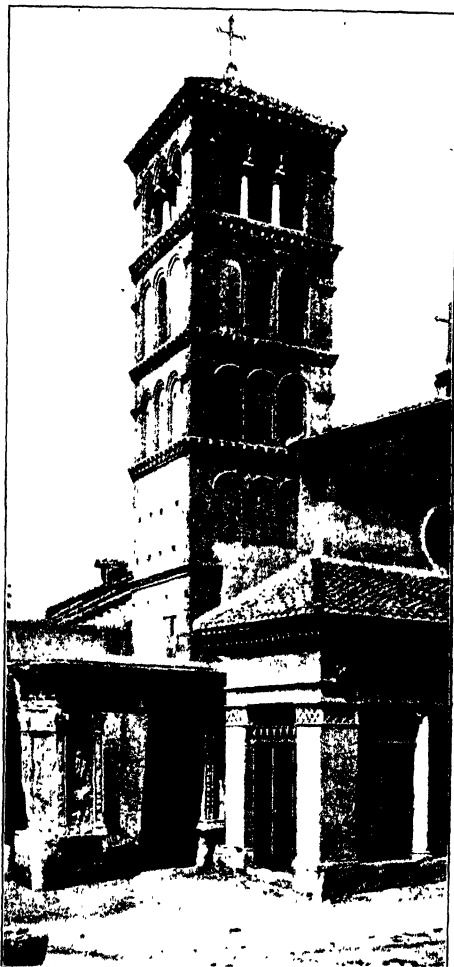


Fig. 108. S. Giorgio in Velabro.

and it was carried by Lombard builders far beyond the borders of Italy into Germany and southern France.

It is singular that the oldest square towers now in existence are those of Rome. The one concession made by the conservatism of

Rome to the encroaching influence of the invaders was in the adoption, though in a modified form, of the Lombard type of towers. As early as the first quarter of the seventh century the earlier basilicas, even those of the time of Constantine, began to receive the addition of campaniles. The tower of SS. Giovanni e Paolo<sup>1</sup> is mentioned in contemporary records as early as 626. The towers of S. Lorenzo in Lucina and S. Agnese fuori le Mura are of about the same date, and that of S. Giorgio in Velabro is a half century later. (Fig. 108.) The tower of S. Lorenzo fuori was added

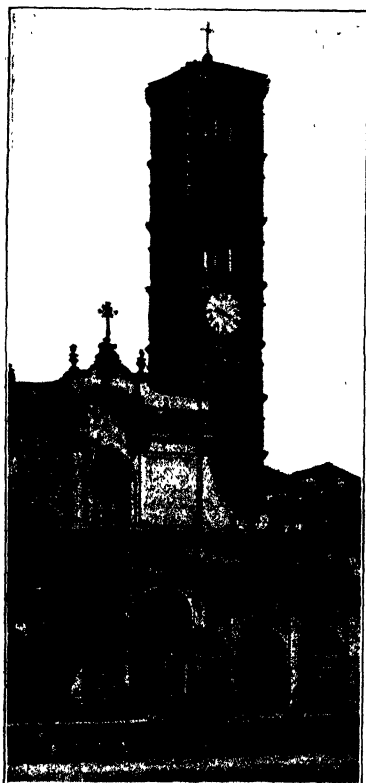


Fig. 109. S. Maria in Cosmedin.

about 720 and that of S. Giovanni Laterano, St. Peter's, S. Giovanni in Porta Latina, S. Croce in Gerusalemme, and S. Maria in Cosmedin (Fig. 109) before the end of the century. In many of these instances, however, the towers were either left unfinished or were afterwards raised in height, so that the upper stories are of later date than the lower. This is the case with the many-storied tower of S. Maria in Cosmedin, one of the highest in Rome, of which only the high basement and the two following stages, each with two round-arched windows separated by a pier, belong to the first construction, the remaining five stories, with the openings in groups of three, having been added a century later.

The tall campanile of Sta. Pudenziana is of uncertain date, but its strong resemblance to that of S. Maria in Cosmedin seems to indicate that the two are nearly contemporary. The tower is quite detached from the church. The lower portion consists of a high plain base, with a single large window in each face, now walled up.

<sup>1</sup> This has been already mentioned as the only Roman church in which the Lombard influence appeared conspicuously, in the graceful arcaded eaves gallery of the apse.

Above are five stages of grouped arches, the first stage having two single blind arches, the second three, and the remaining stages three openings each, separated by shafts with block capitals, thoroughly Lombard in character. In this case, as in that of S. Maria in Cosmedin, the upper stages, including those with grouped windows, were probably of later date than the portions below.<sup>1</sup>

In the few basilicas built or rebuilt after the eighth century the campanile may be taken to be contemporary with the church, as in Sta. Prassede, Sta. Francesca Romana (late ninth century), and S. Bartolommeo in Isola. The last mentioned was one of the latest of the basilicas, being built in 982.

The towns in the immediate vicinity of Rome followed naturally the Roman methods. Thus we see at Frascati, in the little church of Sta. Rocca, dating from about 1000, a campanile attached to the church, with an absolutely plain wall as high as the roof of the church, and above, three similar stages divided by enriched string courses, each stage having in each face a group of three arched windows divided by mid-wall shafts. And at Civita Castellana is a campanile of similar character though simpler in design, attached to the north flank of the cathedral. The cathedral of Terracina, rebuilt in the middle of the twelfth century, has a remarkable campanile, of unusual size, and with four stages surrounded by blind arcades of pointed arches. (Fig. 110.)

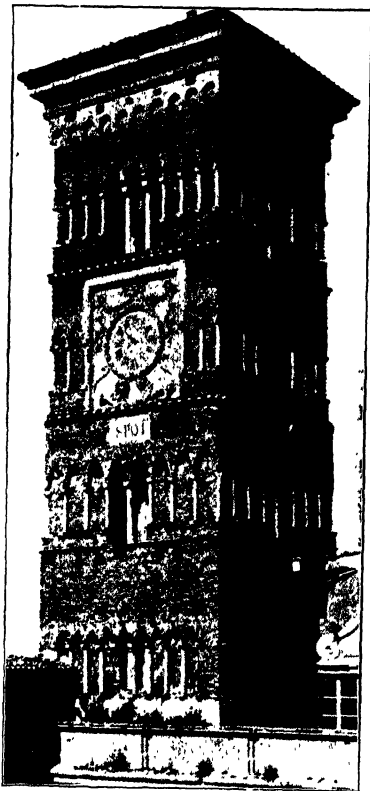


Fig. 110. Campanile, Terracina.

<sup>1</sup> Hübsch believes this campanile to be the oldest in Rome; but this is scarcely credible. On the other hand, Gregorovius, on the authority of Frodoard, — *De Stefano II.* — believes the campanile of St. Peter's, added to the basilica by that pontiff in 755, to be the first of its kind in Rome. It was erected and overlaid with silver and gold, in gratitude for the success of his efforts to induce the Frankish Pipin to influence the Lombard king to assist him against the Byzantines.

I have spoken of the Roman campaniles as belonging to the Lombard type of towers. It is quite possible that the oldest of them



Fig. 111. Tower of S. Satiro.

were begun, or were even finished to a certain height, independent of Lombard influence, and as a consequence of the recent introduction of church bells. But I believe it will be found in every such instance that the tower was completed as we see it to-day, under the influence of the examples in the Lombard cities. The general form of the tower, its division into stages, the disposition of the openings, the use of the mid-wall shaft, — all are characteristic of the Lombard builders. There is, however, a marked distinction between the Roman towers and those of the Lombard cities. In the latter the vertical divisions are prominent; the angles are almost invariably emphasized by pilaster strips, which are, in most cases, repeated once or twice on each face of the tower, and which are connected at every stage by arched corbel-tables. In the Roman towers neither pilaster strips nor corbel-tables are to be found, but the horizontal divisions

are prominently marked by moulded string courses or cornices.

In the Lombard regions the campanile, with a good deal of individual variation in matters of detail, shows, as I have said, during five hundred years a steady adhesion to the original type. The two towers of the cathedral of Novara, probably nearly as old as any now existing, going back perhaps as far as 730, rising apparently out of the roof of the narthex, but really from the end of the outer aisles, have an unbroken wall to the corbel-table of the cornice, pierced with a simple coupled window on each face of the belfry, divided by a shaft, and with single small openings irregularly disposed below.

In the tower of Cremona cathedral, of which the lower half is but little older than those of Novara, dating from 754, the stages are divided by corbel-tables, and the angles are emphasized by pilaster strips, which in the older portion are repeated twice on each face, dividing the wall into three vertical panels. Where the tower is narrow the corbel-table is sometimes replaced by two or three blind arches on each face, connecting the pilaster strips, as at Murano (A. D. 960).

As early as the end of the ninth century the type was complete. The oldest and perhaps the most perfect example of the typical campanile is San Satiro at Milan (Fig. 111), dating from 879, which seems to have been built without interruption and to have suffered no essential modification in later ages. It is in four stages separated by arched corbel-tables joining the pilaster strips which mark the angles. The lowest stage is a high basement, with no opening but a narrow slit on each face. The other stages are nearly equal in height, the first having a single round-arched window, the next stage two windows coupled with a square pier between, the belfry two larger arches divided by a mid-wall shaft. The regular increase in number and size of the openings towards the top is one of the most constant features of the Lombard tower. The rule has, however, its exceptions, as at Asti, San Zeno at Verona, etc., where the upper stages are substantially alike. The tower of S. Pietro at Bologna (Fig. 112) is an instance of another principle, the superior

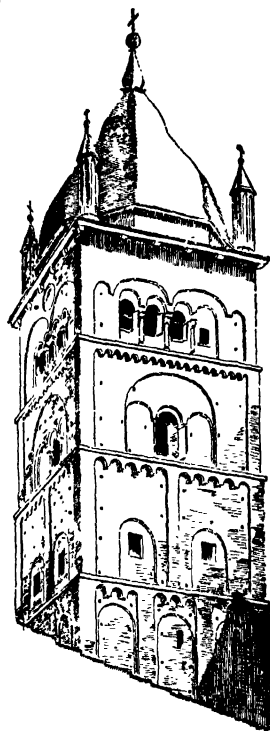


Fig. 112. Tower of S. Pietro, Bologna.

breadth of treatment as we approach the summit; the division of the wall by pilaster strips resulting in three vertical panels in the lowest story, two in the next, and one in the third, while in the belfry stage the wall is flat from angle to angle, and each face has a pair of blind arches with a column between, each arch enclosing two coupled arched openings. The singular tower of the cathedral of Mantua exhibits the same principle. The main portion of the tower of S. Pietro dates from about 1000, the upper portion, including the belfry and the

domical termination of a somewhat fantastic character, is presumably some two hundred and fifty years later. It is interesting to trace the adhesion to the type in certain towers which exhibit a strongly individual character. In S. Frediano at Lucca (see Fig. 204), the tower, which stands detached at the side of the choir, has but two horizontal divisions, of which the first comprises four stages of windows, the lowest of a single opening, the next with two, the others with three each, all these stages being enclosed in a single bay which terminates in an arched corbel-table. Mothes assigns the lower portion of this bay to the later years of the seventh century, and the upper portion to the first years of the twelfth, though there is no apparent break in the continuity of the design, which was completed in still later times by the addition of two more stages, each with a group of four openings, the two stages enclosed, like the four below, in a single bay



Fig. 113. Tower of Cathedral, Mantua.

with the corbel-table, and the whole terminating in the forked battlements of the Tuscan military architecture.

At Pomposa, on an island in the Po, near Ferrara, are the remains of a monastery founded, according to Ricci, before 874, with a church dating from about 1115, on whose flank stands a lofty campanile, little known, which is, nevertheless, one of the most notable towers in Italy. It has nine stories; the faces of the wall are divided by pilaster strips into broad and narrow panels, terminating in

corbel-tables at every stage, and the windows increase regularly in number from one to four; the belfry having, however, a single large





are very slender, and rise to the height of nearly one hundred and sixty feet. They are in seven well-marked stages, of which the first four are divided by pilaster strips, and are without openings, the three upper stages having respectively one, two, and three windows, the last two groups covered by bearing arches, and the tower finishing with small angle pinnacles and a sharp octagonal roof.<sup>1</sup>

In rare instances the Lombard tower, while retaining all its characteristic Lombard detail, takes an octagonal form. An example has been already cited in the two slender towers which flank the choir of S. Antonio at Padua. (See Fig. 97.) Another instance is the beautiful campanile, which, with a portion of the octagonal choir, is all that remains of the ancient church of S. Gottardo at Milan. (Fig. 116.) The church is, if the inscription on the wall is to be trusted, a remarkable example of the survival of the Lombard style far into the

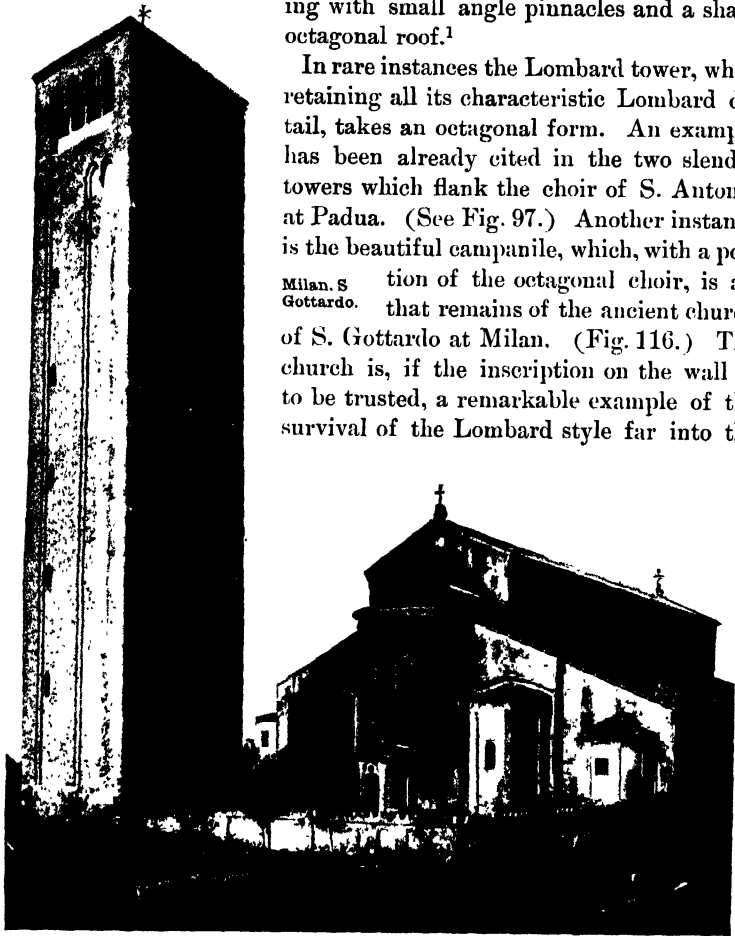


Fig. 115. Campanile and East End of Cathedral, Torcello.

Gothic period, being a century later than S. Andrea and S. Antonio, yet both choir and tower are thoroughly Lombard in character. The

<sup>1</sup> Osten. pl. ix.

inscription reads as follows — “On the site of the old Broletto, seat of the Podestà until the year 1128, Azzone Visconti, Lord of Milan, erected this church and tower, in the year 1336.” But as the church is mentioned by earlier chroniclers, it is probable that the Lord of Milan, after the fashion of the time, claimed more than his due, and that his work was either in the nature of a restoration or confined to the addition of a nave and aisles to the octagon which formed the original church, and of which six sides are still visible, half buried in the modern Palazzo Reale.

The tower is beautiful not only as an architectural composition, but also from its coloring. The angles are defined by slender shafts of white marble, and these are relieved against a wall of very rich red brick, with ornaments of terra-cotta, divided into stages by delicate arched corbel-tables. The head of the tower is encircled by a double arcaded gallery, the arches of which are carried on small columns; and the columns of the upper arcade rest on corbels which project from the capitals of those below. The effect is one of singular elegance. Two stages of smaller diameter surmount the main portion of the tower, and the whole finishes with a sharp conical spire.



Fig. 116. Tower of S. Gottardo.

In these notices of the Lombard churches and baptisteries, I have thus far omitted all consideration of one of their most important and characteristic features, — their sculpture; preferring to consider the Lombard sculpture by itself, as perhaps on the whole a more complete and conclusive indication and expression of the remarkable character of the masters of Italy, during one of the most critical periods of its history, than even the architec-

ture of which it was the ornament. The Byzantine sculpture was, in its way, a not less emphatic expression of the Greek character and spirit, but it was not the principal thing in the Byzantine monuments. The whole idea of the typical Byzantine church, in construction, design, and decoration, was vastly more original and characteristic than that of the Lombard church. The Lombard began by adopting the plan and construction of the earlier basilicas which he found in Italy, but his vigorous and uncultivated mind scorned the mosaic and painting by which their simple walls were made glorious. Among all the churches and baptisteries of the Lombard style the apse of San Ambrogio at Milan is the sole instance of the use of mosaic decoration on walls or vaults. But in San Ambrogio the mosaic, though it has been claimed to be a work of the ninth century, cannot be proved by any authentic record to be so early, and we are justified, in view of its being the solitary example, not only of mosaic but of color in the four centuries during which the style prevailed, and of its absolute incongruity with the whole character and temper of the Lombards and with their work in other fields of decorative art, notably in that of sculpture, in believing it to have been the addition of a later generation.

It was, of course, not always that the Lombard had his way in the decoration of his own churches. In the earlier period of the prevalence of his style in Italy (perhaps it would not be too much to say even until the end of it) the workmen of his own race who were capable even of the rude art which met his requirements must have been somewhat limited in number; while in all the greater towns there were doubtless to be found either Italian or Greek workmen whose hand and eye had been trained to more or less of artistic perception and execution.<sup>1</sup> Often, no doubt, the Lombard builder was fain to avail himself of the knowledge and capacity of the Byzantine craftsman. But of his own motion we may be sure no truly Byzantine ornament found its way into his churches. The Lombard found no delight in the contemplation of saints and angels, of prophets and martyrs. Not for him were the gentle emblems of peace and love, of piety and good will, — the dove, the lamb, the cross, the olive, the vine. His thoughts were quite apart from such things; his imagery

<sup>1</sup> When Leo the Isaurian, early in the eighth century, broke up the worship of images in the East, he drove out from Constantinople and the smaller cities the whole tribe of artists, who therefore spread over Italy in great numbers; and their hand is seen in manifold details of sculpture, mosaic, and painting in the basilicas of Rome and the provinces.

was of a fiercer sort, savage beasts and birds of prey, fighting and destroying, — tearing each other with teeth and claws; warriors, scarcely less savage, in conflict on foot or horseback; men and beasts struggling with each other, — all sorts of mythical and impossible creatures, — centaurs, griffins, dragons, chimeras, and the like, either in action or not, — the wild product of an excited, irregular, ungoverned imagination. Between all this and the work of the Byzantine sculptor, the contrast is so marked and decisive that wherever in any early Lombard building we see the gentler and quieter subjects prevailing in the sculpture of capitals, or panels, or arches, we may be certain either that the sculpture is later than the building, or that, if contemporary, it had, in the absence of Lombard workmen competent to the task, been given into the hands of native or of Greek artists. Sometimes, indeed, we find the two schools brought together in a single building, as in the spandrils and archivolts of the baptistery of Calixtus at Cividale, or in those of the south doorway of San Michele at Pavia, perhaps the most thoroughly Lombard building in existence, where the sculpture is throughout strongly Byzantine in character, — the jamb and arch mouldings and the great band which encircles the whole being covered with the characteristic meandering vine, wreathing itself into a series of circles or ovals, enclosing birds, animals, and flowers, while the tympanum of the arch bears the standing figure of a winged angel, and the broad lintel has the figure of Christ in a circle, borne up on either side by St. Peter and St. John, and above it a cornice of the same character as the archivolts.<sup>1</sup> But this is a rare concession, and in most such instances the Lombards' interpretation of the Christian symbols is of a character which removes them from all possibility of comparison with the work of the Byzantine sculptor. In the panels of the baptistery of Calixtus, for example, nobody could conceive these fishes and birds to have proceeded from the imagination of a Byzantine artist; and the same may be said of the beasts in the panels which separate the three apses of S. Pietro di Civate.<sup>2</sup>

Yet the Lombard and the Byzantine churches were raised for the worship and service of the same religion, and one would suppose, in view of the training to which the clergy were subjected, that their controlling influence would have subdued in the Lombard workmen

<sup>1</sup> See Dartein, pl. 61.

<sup>2</sup> Dartein, pls. 10, 20. Or of those of a parapet in the courtyard of the University of Ferrara, taken originally from some early Lombard church of the eighth century (Cattaneo presumes of Voghenza). Cattaneo, p. 120.

the fierce energy of their race. Dartein has remarked acutely: "It seems as if the clergy had not exercised in the south the same control and direction in the building of churches, as in the north, but had left everything to the artisans; hence the inferiority in the moral character of the Lombard sculpture. Even when it shows itself facile, ingenious, and to a certain extent educated, the conceptions which it expresses are neither lofty nor intellectual."<sup>1</sup>

The remarkable outburst of indignation and disgust in which St. Bernard expresses his feeling towards the Lombard sculpture seems to corroborate Dartein's view. "Then in the cloisters, right under the eyes of the brothers as they read and meditate — what business there have these ridiculous monstrosities, this indecent magnificence, and this magnificent indecency? What business there have these foul apes, these savage lions, these monstrous centaurs, these tigers, these fighting men, these hunters blowing horns? Under one head are seen several bodies, and again on a single body several heads. Here is a quadruped ending in a snake, and there a fish with the head and breast of a beast suckling its young. . . . So various and marvellous are the things here set forth that many think it pleasanter to read the marble than the written book, and will rather spend the whole day over this than in studying the law of the Lord. For God's sake, if you have no shame over this foolery, have at least some care for the cost of it!"

There is not in the sculpture of the earliest Lombard buildings which remain any such steady progression or development of character as we should expect to find. But the rudest and simplest forms of block capitals, like those of SS. Pietro e Paolo at Bologna, or S. Tommaso in Limine at Almenno, or the brick capitals of S. Antonino at Piacenza, are contemporary with the most intricate and decorative forms. Among the latter, however, it may be said in general that in the earlier capitals the use of foliage was proportionally greater than in the later, where it was almost entirely replaced by animal forms. The rudeness and lack of trained intelligence of the workmen is everywhere evident. Where, for instance, the form of the classic Corinthian capital is retained, the leaves and volutes are often merely blocked out, as in this example from San Salvatore at Brescia (Fig. 117), and in one almost identical in design from the old cathedral at Verona, both of the eighth century; and the abacus, retaining its

<sup>1</sup> The northern Gothic sculpture, however, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was scarcely less grotesque than the earlier Lombard.

S. Bernard  
on  
Lombard  
Sculpture.

inward curve, but having to take the square block which makes the start of two arches, and is manifestly too large for the capital, provides for the overhang in the centre by a projecting block in the middle of each face. In the nave of San Salvatore, we find this capital alongside of various other forms, some equally rude and

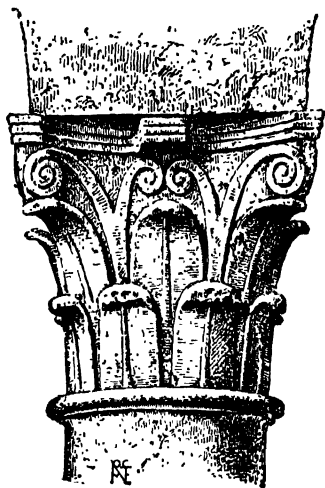


Fig. 117. Capital, S. Salvatore, Brescia.

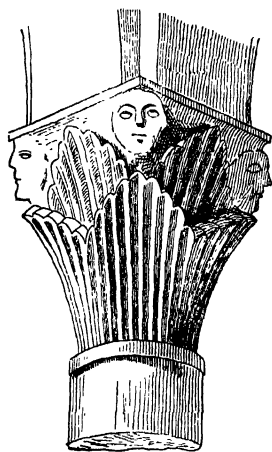
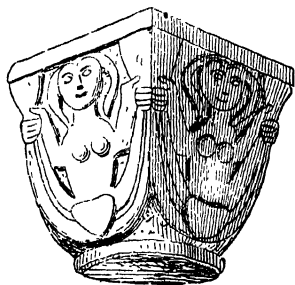


Fig. 118. Capitals from S. Teodoro, Padua.

others much more advanced; among the latter is a purely Byzantine capital which we have mentioned elsewhere. (See Fig. 174.) The variety of character among these capitals makes it tolerably certain that some at least, probably the most finished, were taken from older buildings; but their use in a single building is a strong illustration of the infancy of architectural taste and knowledge at that period.

Still greater rudeness is shown in the few sculptures of San Teodoro at Pavia, where in the small columns of the crypt the capitals, although much varied in form, are equally primitive in design and execution. One is a high, slender concave capital, the bell surrounded by two ranges of large ribbed and serrated leaves, with rudimentary heads or masks at the angles of the abacus (Fig. 118);



Fig. 110. S. Ambrogio, Milan.  
Capital in Nave.

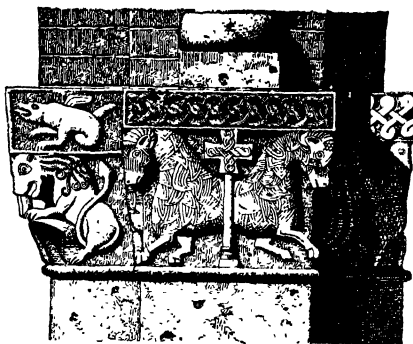


Fig. 120. S. Ambrogio, Milan. Capital in  
Nave.

another a block capital with a female figure of the rudest and grossest description on each face, absolutely without modelling. Still another is a portion of the impost of the doorway with a pilaster capital bearing a winged sphinx, and a column capital with a sitting figure in a rude niche.

By the time the Lombards had fairly determined their own style and their own construction, the classic, even in the degraded form in which they had used it, had well-nigh disappeared. The massiveness of construction, in which columns were replaced by piers, suggested quite other forms. In the compound capitals of the church of Auroa at Milan, spoken of above (p. 101), the cubical form is already fully developed, and perfectly expresses the function of the capital as a bearer of a heavy load. The low square block is surmounted by a solid abacus as high as itself, in which the moulding is a straight line, the profile being nearly that of the Greek Doric capital. The sculpture is Byzantine, and covers every part of the capital.



Fig. 121. S. Ambrogio, Milan.  
Capital in Narthex.

In the fully developed Lombard work, the tendency is to replace or supplement the leafage of the cap-



ital by animal forms, of which the heads are commonly made to serve in place of volutes, as in San Ambrogio at Milan. (Figs. 119, 120, 121.) Human figures, beasts, birds, and combinations of these are availed of, and the variety both of subject and treatment is well-nigh infinite; but the figures are without exception ill-formed and grotesque, — the human figures especially so. In the capitals of the lower arcade of San Ambrogio, the figures are generally double, with the motive repeated on each side of a vertical centre-line. The beasts are of an unknown type, created out of the imagination of the workman, and their tails have a curious fondness for terminating

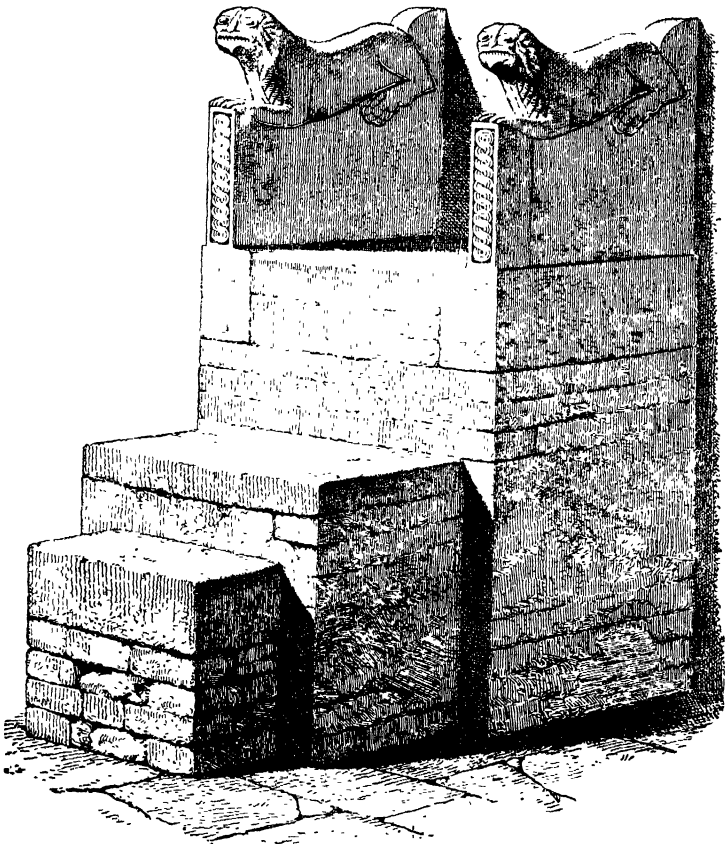


Fig. 122. S. Ambrogio, Milan. Bishop's Chair.

in a spear-head or a serpent's head. In the rare instances, where the beasts are absent, the foliage is in general carefully and intelligently

studied, and has often much grace and spirit, betraying the hand of the Byzantine workman.

The decoration of the ancient chair or throne of the bishop, which still retains its place in the apse of San Ambrogio, is perhaps one of the oldest examples of Lombard sculpture remaining. (Fig. 122.) The throne is a rude structure built of coursed stonework, and raised above the pavement by two high steps. The seat is enclosed on the sides by two upright slabs of marble, of

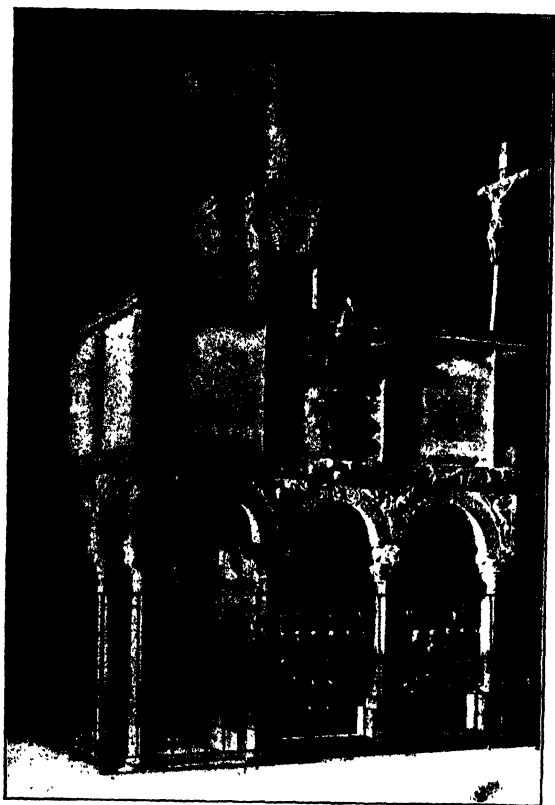


Fig. 123. S. Ambrogio. Pulpit.

which the front faces are ornamented with a guilloche, and which bear each a couchant lion of the conventional Lombard type. The throne was originally flanked, according to the custom of the early basilicas, by a lower range of seats for the clergy, running around the curve of the apse; but these were replaced, probably between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, by the present range of canopied wooden stalls.

San Ambrogio is fortunate in retaining, besides the bishop's throne, the ancient ciborium over the high altar, and the marble pulpit which stands against one of the columns of the nave. The ciborium

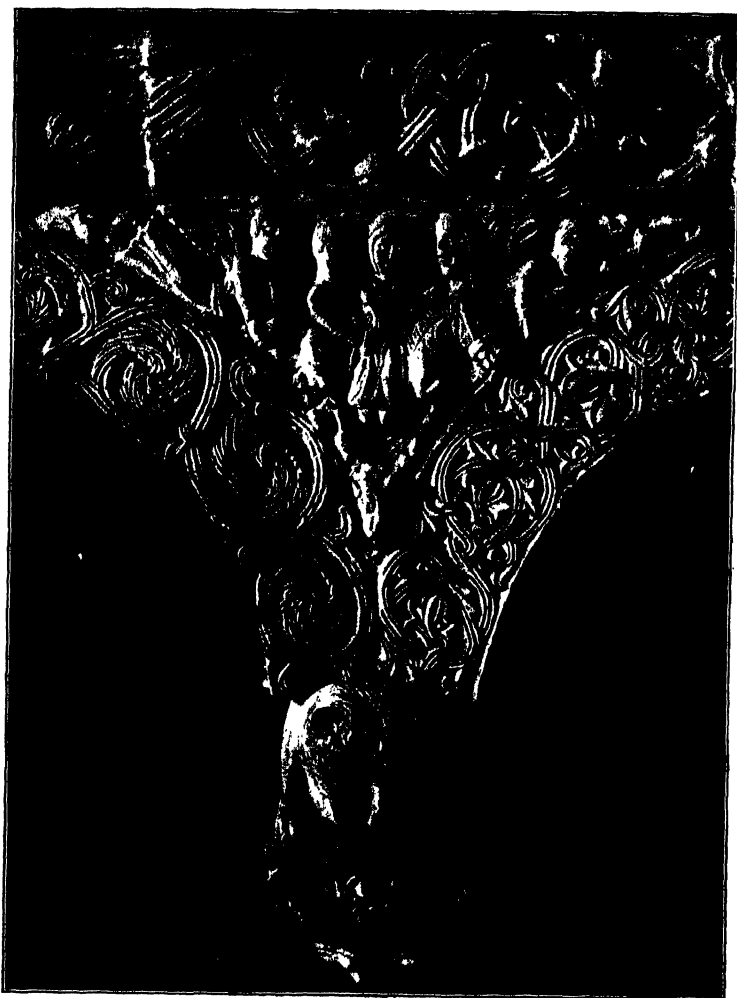


Fig. 124. S. Ambrogio. Detail of Pulpit.

is supported on four antique columns of porphyry with marble capitals, which support gabled round arches, over which are bas-reliefs in stucco; but the whole decoration is unmis-  
 takably Byzantine in character. (See Fig. 181, Chap. iii.)  
 The pulpit, on the contrary, is one of the most characteristic examples of thoroughly Lombard decoration, of all periods. (Fig. 123.) It is

Sculpture  
of San  
Ambrogio.

about twelve feet long and seven and a half feet broad, and is built over and partly supported by a noble early Christian sarcophagus. It is supported further by three arches on the side towards the nave and two on the west end; and the archivolts of these arches, the frieze which covers them, and certain portions of the pulpit itself are ornamented with carving of birds and animals of various sorts pursuing each other, and biting in true Lombard fashion, in the midst of continuous coils of stems and leafage. The spandrels have similar subjects, but with more violent action; one, for instance, a man and a beast running opposite ways, the beast having the man's foot in his mouth. One arch springs not from a capital, but from the back of a grotesque beast which crouches on two adjacent abaci. On the most prominent angle is a bird with extended wings, its claw crushing a small animal, while another is biting its wing. A chapter might be given to the sculptures of this extraordinary pulpit. (A detail is given in Fig. 124.) In five of the arches, the tympanum is filled by slabs bearing reliefs. In one is a calf playing a lute; in the others are scriptural subjects. The tails of all the animals finish, as in much of the Lombard sculpture, in serpents or arrow-heads. On the face towards the nave the arches are all open, and the wall of the pulpit above is without sculpture, with the exception of two bronze figures in the centre, evidently Roman, — a great eagle, whose head, rising above the cornice, probably supported the reading-desk, and below it the sitting figure of a man holding a book in one hand, the other hand raised in the attitude of blessing. The face towards the aisle is divided into two horizontal panels, of which the upper has a relief of a character quite different from that of the other sculptures, and evidently of a much earlier date, representing an agape or Christian love-feast with eleven persons seated at a table strewn with dishes, amphoræ, cups, loaves of bread, etc.

The sculpture of San Michele at Pavia is, generally speaking, more advanced in character than that of San Ambrogio. The foliage is much less frequent, and the animals are much more general. The form of the capitals is a more or less cubical or cylindrical block loaded with crowded sculpture, and surmounted by a heavy abacus whose sides are sometimes vertical, but oftener inclined, and of which the sculptural treatment is very apt to be Byzantine in character, with birds and beasts in the midst of coils and meanders of vine-stems and foliage. (Fig. 125.) In some of the capitals of the nave this character of the abacus is very marked, and the design has a flowing grace in strong contrast to the

Sculpture  
of San  
Michele.

figure sculpture of the capital below, of which the figures still retain, as indeed they do to the end of the Lombard period, their distorted and deformed character.

San Michele is to the Lombard sculpture what St. Mark's is to the Byzantine, — a great storehouse or museum where the work of various periods and various styles has been brought together. In the great doorways, both of the west front and of the transepts, much of the profuse carving of the mouldings and archivolt has the Byzantine stamp of which we have spoken above, — the mingling of

birds and the smaller animals with coiling or meandering foliage.

But even here, in many instances, the animals, though of a gentler type than the Lombard loved, show the same insatiable appetite for biting and fighting which we have remarked in the truly Lombard work. If the animal is alone he is nipping his own tail or wings or back, or the stem of a vine; if he is in company he is either biting or being bitten, or pursuing or



Fig. 125. S. Michele, Pavia. Nave Capital.

flying. While in the capitals, as a rule the Lombard character is more rigidly preserved: the griffin holds down a smaller beast, and bites or threatens him; the eagle grasps a lesser animal in his talons; a man standing on a human head holds off a ramping, snarling beast; or a man sits astride a dragon with a head at each end, each head threatening him with distended jaws.

In the southerly or right hand side door of the façade, we may remark on the left jamb a capital, or, more properly speaking, a division of the impost, of which the ornament consists of four rows of heads, while on the right the outer division of the impost has the figures of two beasts, one above another, the upper holding the lower between his paws and threatening him, the space left by the two



Fig. 126. S. Michele, Pavia. Detail of Doorway.

animals in the upper right hand corner being filled by a detached head, like those on the other side of the arch. (Fig. 126.) It is a very singular circumstance that in the doorway of the west front of SS. Pietro e Paolo at Bologna (one of the group of churches known under the name of San Stefano), presumably of nearly the same age as San Michele, these two capitals are brought together and repeated with scarce any variation on the right hand impost of the arch. Whether the two doorways were designed by the same artist, or whether the artist of one had seen the other, and been inspired, as sometimes happens in our own day, to reproduce this bit of picturesque detail, we have no means of determining.

But the sculpture of the great doorways and capitals of San Michele, profuse as it is, makes but a portion of the wealth of sculptural ornament of this remarkable church.

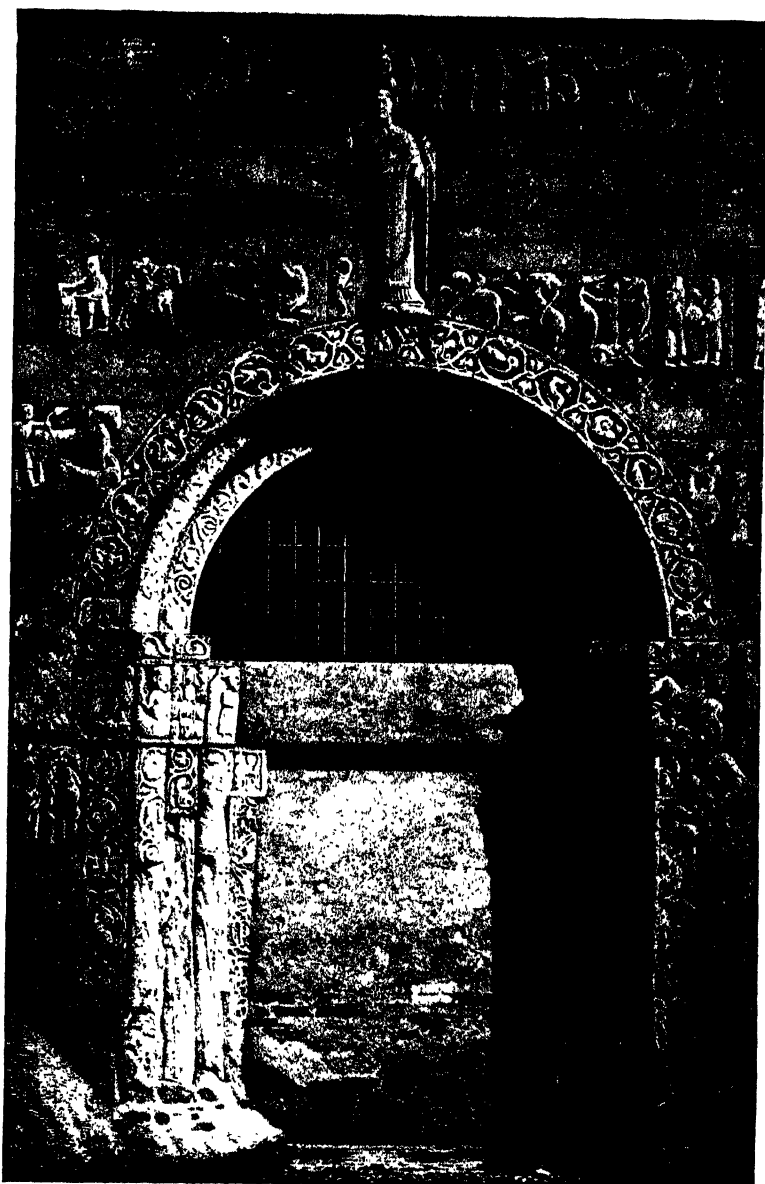


Fig. 127. S. Michele, Pavia. Right-hand Doorway of Façade.

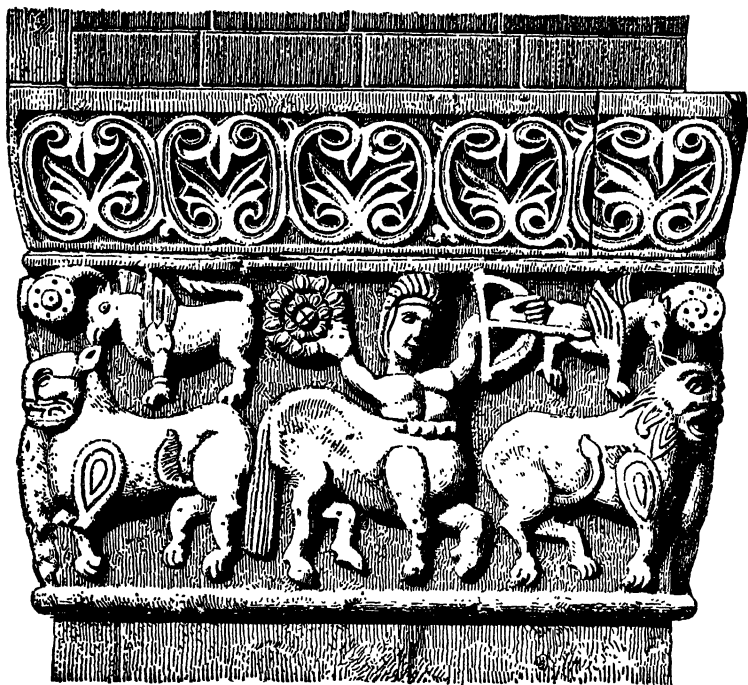


Fig. 128. S. Pietro in Cielo d' Oro.

The west front is crossed in its lower half by bands of reliefs, in which the subjects and the treatment are alike of the most pronounced Lombard type. All sorts of monstrous beasts, reptiles, and fishes are represented, sometimes carrying human figures on their backs, sometimes devouring them; hunting scenes, in which men are carrying a deer slung over their shoulders, or two men bear between them a pole, from which hang four fishes as tall as themselves; battle scenes, with horsemen clad in helmets and coats of mail, and carrying lances and shields; a man beating an iron on an anvil; a man who struggles between two dragons; a horseman in conflict with a monstrous dragon, — such are the subjects, dear to the Lombard sculptor, which make up these remarkable decorations. Portions of this sculpture are shown in Figs. 126 and 127. The execution is of the rudest description, — the men and beasts are of disproportionate size, the men are stunted and deformed; but the vivacity and force of imagination, the Northern energy and wildness, of which





Fig. 129. S. Giovanni in Borgo, Pavia. Capital of Nave.

these sculptures are the evidence, are in the highest degree interesting. These men were above all original; there was no copying of classic subjects or styles — they carved what was in their minds, and the spirit of their work is curiously akin to that of much of the grotesque sculpture of the northern Gothic of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>1</sup>

In S. Pietro in Cielo d' Oro, at Pavia, the carving of the capitals, while not less vivacious and imaginative than in San Michele, is less ordered and less architectural, — Fig. 128, for example, where a clumsy centaur in the middle, holding aloft a bow and arrow in one hand and a wreath or great rosette in the other, is flanked by grotesque beasts over whose backs other smaller beasts are nipping the ears of the lower ones.

In these capitals the abacus is inclined and carved with Byzantine foliage and meanders, birds, etc., of excellent character and design, very delicately executed, and quite out of keeping with the sculpture below.<sup>2</sup> This church is now undergoing a very thorough restoration.

<sup>1</sup> I venture to repeat here the often quoted characterization of the Lombard sculpture by Mr. Ruskin. "The Lombard of early times seems to have been exactly what a tiger would be if you could give him love of a joke, vigorous imagination, strong sense of justice, fear of hell, knowledge of Northern mythology, a stone den, and a mallet and chisel. Fancy him pacing up and down in the said den to digest his dinner, and striking on the wall with a new fancy in his head at every turn, and you have the Lombard sculptor." *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. p. 360, app.

<sup>2</sup> Many of these capitals are well illustrated in Dartein, pl. 67.



Fig. 130. S. Giovanni in Borgo Pavia. Capital of Nave.

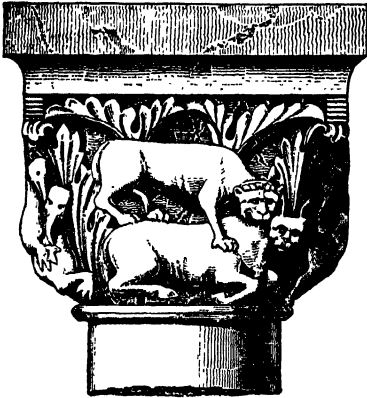


Fig. 131. Parma. Baptistery.

a capital, with flowing hair, and more natural modelling than we often find in these sculptures, is giving suck to two serpents.

The character of the sculpture of the capitals is singularly consistent through successive centuries. In the cathedral of Modena, begun in 1099, and in that of Parma, a hundred years later, there is no essential variation from what we have seen in the churches of Milan and Pavia belonging to the ninth and tenth centuries. At Modena, for instance, some of the capitals of the triforium gallery are very grotesque, one of them being a human figure with a monster's head, astride a non-descript beast, under an arch of leafage, with another monster in front. And at Parma, a capital in the baptistery shows on one face two beasts one above

In S. Giovanni in Borgo, at Pavia, nearly contemporary with S. Michele and S. Pietro, the sculpture shows, both in design and execution, a decided advance. The church is destroyed, but some of the nave capitals are preserved. Fig. 129 shows a troop of Lombard horsemen, with spears and shields, clad in helmets and coats of mail, advancing to meet each other, — a valuable historical record. In Fig. 130, perhaps the most remarkable fragment of all, a female figure at the angle of

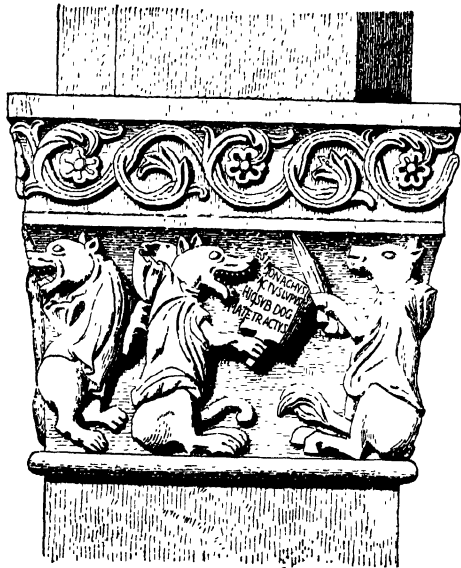


Fig. 132. Parma Cathedral. Capital of Nave.

another, the upper one biting and clawing the under (Fig. 131); on another face two birds similarly engaged, and on a third two ramping animals, etc., — the same fierce humor governing the whole design which we remarked in S. Ambrogio and S. Michele, two hundred and three hundred years earlier. There is here, however, a marked improvement in the execution, — the beasts are less monstrous and uncouth in form, and the action is much more like that of nature. Now and then there is a more subtle humor, as in a capital of the triforium gallery at Parma (Fig. 132), where two wolves are being taught by an animal which may be either an ass or a sheep. All three of the animals are clad in the gown and cowl of a monk. The teacher threatens the others with a rod. One of the wolves turns his head away in disgust; the other, more docile, holds an open book on which is the legend, “*Est monachus factus lupus, hic sub dogmate tractus.*”

The Lombard spirit was carried through all the accessories of the



Fig. 133. Font, Parma Baptistery.



Fig. 134. Parma Cathedral. Capital of Nave.

interior architecture, and it is curious to see it often in close connection with clearly Byzantine work. The font, which occupies the centre of the baptistery at Parma, is a circular basin of marble, about four feet in diameter, covered with delicate arabesques in low relief with foliage and small birds. But it rests on the back of a crouching monster with snarling jaws, in the hollow of whose back, under the basin, is perched a small bird, while the head of a nondescript beast, flattened beneath the weight of his body, appears between his forepaws. (Fig. 133.)

A thoroughly characteristic composition is to be seen in the cathedral of Modena, at the base of two of the small columns which carry the balcony over the entrance from the nave into the crypt. The column rests on the shoulders of a crouching man between the base and the shaft; and the base rests on the back of a couchant beast,



Fig. 135. Piacenza. From the Façade of Cathedral.

under which is the crushed and prostrate figure of a helmeted knight with shield and lance. (See Fig. 136.)

Occasionally the grotesqueness disappears, and is replaced by a serious realism, as in another capital in the nave of Parma, in which two helmeted horsemen meet with raised swords. (Fig. 134.)

The columns of the great porches, which are so conspicuous in the Lombard churches of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and which were in many cases later additions, are in general made to rest on



Fig. 136. Modena Cathedral. Entrance to Crypt.

the backs of lions or other beasts, often of monstrous and grotesque character, generally standing, but sometimes sitting or crouching. Piacenza, Parma, Modena, Verona, Mantua, Ferrara, Bergamo, offer

in their great churches familiar examples of this most characteristic feature. It is even to be met with in churches quite outside the Lombard style, as in S. Ciriaco at Ancona. At Modena the cathedral has no less than five such porches on the west front and the

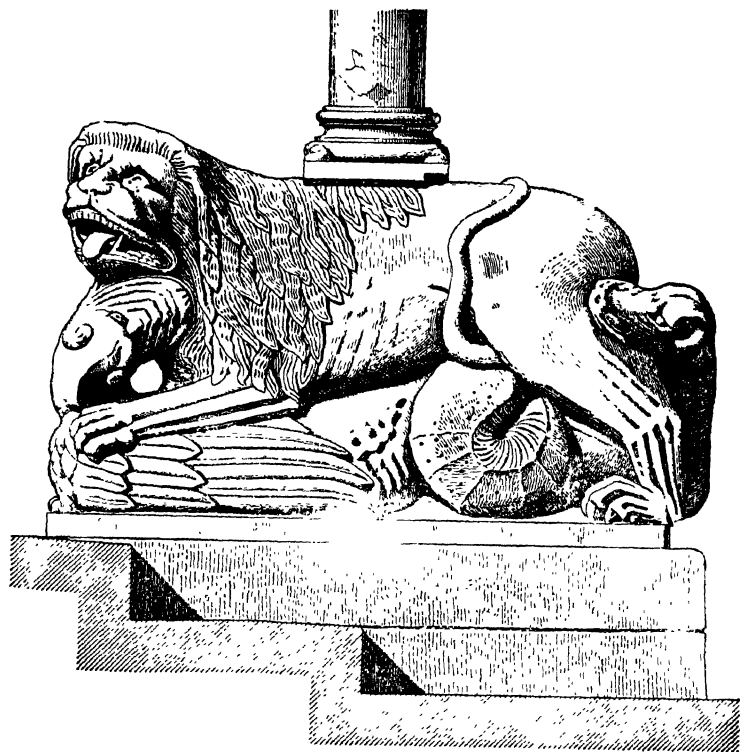


Fig. 137. Modena Cathedral. Lion under Pulpit.

flanks, of which that over the great south doorway is the most important. It has an open arched loggia over it, as has also the great porch on the façade of the Verona cathedral. In the latter example the outer columns of the upper arch, as well as of the lower, rest on crouching griffins. The singular porch on the south flank of the same church has been already described (p. 137). At Piacenza and Parma the three doorways of the façade are each covered by porches,—in the former, one of the earliest instances of the projecting porch, the projection is very slight. The two side porches here have lions, each bestridden by a gigantic human figure

who holds up the column by his two hands raised above his head.<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 135.)

The columns of certain interior features of the church, as pulpits, fonts, etc., are also sometimes made to rest on lions or other beasts. At Modena the ancient ambon has disappeared, but the lions which supported it are still preserved at the entrance of the crypt. In Fig. 137, one of them is shown, holding down a monstrous griffin with a bird's beak, and "ending foul in many a scaly fold," with a head which turns and bites the lion in the haunch.

Even the bases of columns are not deprived of their share of all this wealth of sculpture. The angle of the plinth bears frequently, as in the Gothic of Venice and of Northern Europe, a spur which joins it with the roll of the base; but in these the spur takes almost invariably the form of a single leaf of more or less simple modelling.

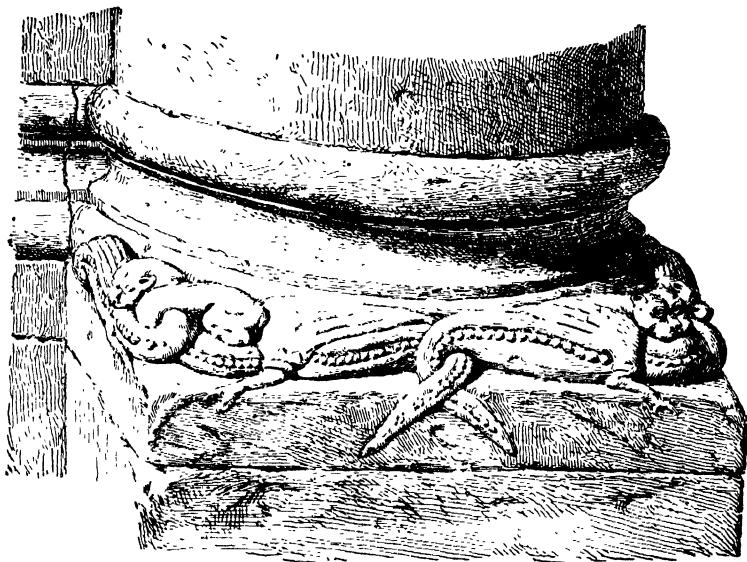


Fig. 138. Pavia. Base from S. Michele.

In the Lombard churches, it was in its simplest forms an undeveloped beak or claw, which later became more definite and naturalistic, or

<sup>1</sup> And at Ferrara in the great doorway of the cathedral, deeply splayed and richly ornamented, the outer columns rest on the bowed head and shoulders of a human figure, seated on a sort of chair, which in its turn rests on the back of a crouching lion. Mothes, p. 418.

gave place to the head of some nameless beast, while in occasional instances the sculpture was not confined to the angle of the plinth, but spread over its whole breadth, as in Fig. 138, from San Michele at Pavia, where two nondescript reptiles lie along the plinth with their heads at the angles and their thin tails intertwining in the middle.

The Lombard sculpture was carried north of the Alps, and is to be met with in many of the doorways of churches in Southern France. In Toulouse (pier cap in Museum) and Moissac (cloister cap), at Angoulême and Le Puy we find the familiar Lombard beasts and birds pursuing and biting each other. The spear-headed tails, etc., are also at Poitiers (Notre Dame la Grande), at Souillac, and elsewhere.



## CHAPTER III

### THE BYZANTINE INFLUENCE

AMONG the various external influences to which the architecture of Italy was successively subjected, none was so strong, so general, and so lasting as the Byzantine, and this in spite of the singular fact that scarcely any example of a fully Byzantine building is to be found in all Italy. The strength and permanence of this influence is not surprising, when we consider, on the one hand, the closeness of the connection, both political and commercial, which was maintained for many centuries between Italy and Constantinople, and on the other the singular vigor and individuality of the style which had, within two hundred years after the transference of the Imperial power from Rome to Constantinople, grown up in the latter city, and throughout the regions of which it was the centre. In considering the phenomenal rise and development of the Byzantine style in the East it is to be remembered that the new seat of empire was established under conditions radically different from those which prevailed at Rome. The population of the eastern portion of the Empire was only to a very small extent Roman; it was made up of an immense variety of races, among which the Greeks were conspicuous more by their high civilization than by their numbers, and into which the Oriental element entered in a proportion continually increasing. The restless energy of ancient Greece had transferred itself in great measure across the *Ægean*, and the shores of Asia Minor were sown with a multitude of prosperous Greek cities, each one a little centre of commerce, of manufactures, and to some extent of letters and the arts. By virtue of their intelligence and their native aptitude for affairs, the Greeks had in the time of Justinian so impressed themselves upon the government of the Empire that all the important offices of state were in their hands, and the Greek language had to a great extent superseded the Latin.<sup>1</sup> It was inevitable,

The  
Eastern  
Empire.

<sup>1</sup> This statement needs to be modified. "The later Latin writers, like Ammianus and Claudian, mark in truth a Latin reaction against Greek influences. In the Greek East, Greek lived on and flourished; Latin was simply set up by its side for certain purposes.

then, that the Greek instinct for form should exert a commanding influence upon the architecture of the time, and that the prodigious activity which the Emperors carried into the building up and adornment of the new capital should stimulate the invention and skill of the Greek architects to new methods of construction and new forms of decoration. The steps are difficult to trace, but not difficult to imagine, of the rapid and steady departure, in matters of art as in matters of religion, literature, commerce, and social life in the Eastern Empire, from the traditions of Rome and the West. In architecture this departure was greatly aided by an influence which in Italy was scarcely felt — the influence of Asia. Asia was at the doors of the Eastern Empire, and through the agency alternately of commerce and of war the contact of her civilization with that of the Greeks had greatly modified the conditions of its intellectual and artistic life. Thus the severity of the Greek taste, which tended always to maintain the purity and simplicity of architectural form, was softened by the fondness of the Oriental for flowing lines, for intricate ornament, for richness and variety of color. We can scarcely believe that the Greek, if left to himself, would ever have conceived of the dome as the characteristic covering for his temples. Yet it was the Greek architects who in Constantinople and its dependent cities made the dome the one feature around which the whole composition grouped itself, and on which the whole plan and the whole design depended. How close was the historical relation of the Byzantine domes to those of Central Asia is perhaps not now to be determined; but domes of very similar construction, resting on a solid square of wall, and with pendentives (the latter rather taking the form of squinches), may be seen to-day in the palaces of Serbistan and Ferouzabad in Persia, dating presumably from the middle of the third century.<sup>1</sup>

We have little knowledge of the earliest Christian churches of Constantinople or the smaller cities of the lower Empire, except those built in Palestine by Constantine and the Empress Helena, but it is to be presumed that these may be taken as a fair example of the class, and that in general the

The  
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the East.

The Roman Empire, of course, whether in the East or the West, knew no tongue but Latin. Latin remained, therefore, for ages the tongue of government and warfare in the Roman East; while Greek was the language of ordinary speech, of literature, and of religion.' Freeman, *Chief Periods of European History*, p. 115.

<sup>1</sup> See Fergusson, vol. i. p. 372. Dieulafoy, a French engineer, maintains these buildings to be contemporary with those of Persepolis.

basilican plan and construction were closely followed.<sup>1</sup> In the two hundred years between Constantine and Justinian, the Byzantine style had grown to perfection in the capital, and had become the reigning style in all the Eastern cities. Its characteristic and governing feature was, as I have said, the dome; but the general disposition of the accessory parts was not less characteristic, and it is, perhaps, more clearly illustrated by the multitude of smaller churches than by a single transcendent monument like S. Sofia. S. Irene, SS. Sergius and Bacchus, and the Theotocos at Constantinople, S. Bardias and S. Sofia at Thessalonica, the churches at Myra, Casaba, Ancyra, and the like are examples varying greatly in plan, but alike in character, the dome showing its constructive outline on the exterior and generally lighter than in the larger examples. Often the domes are multiplied and sometimes disposed in the form of a cross. The smaller churches have generally a greater proportion of solids to voids than the larger.

The Eastern dome is distinguished from the domes hitherto in use in Italy by several important differences. The Roman dome was a hemisphere supported by a circular wall. Its greatest example was the Pantheon, but equally characteristic though smaller examples are plentiful, as the Temple of Minerva Medica, the Tomb of Constantia, etc. It was commonly built with a series of strong vertical brick ribs joined by horizontal bands, forming a skeleton of masonry of which the inter-spaces were filled in with plaster or concrete. Such a construction involved the use of a strong centering of timber, and when finished was to all intents and purposes a monolith, and exercised no thrust on its supporting walls, while its great weight involved no difficulty of construction and no danger to the building.

The Byzantine dome, in its perfect fulfillment, was supported on four massive piers, set at the angles of a square, the piers being connected by four round arches forming a square <sup>The</sup> <sup>Byzantine</sup> <sup>Dome.</sup> foundation for the dome. The transition from the square of the supporting wall to the circle of the dome was made by means of pendentives, or triangular sections of a sphere, spreading upward from a point at the intersection of the walls of the square to a quarter circle at the base of the dome. The construction of the dome itself was of

<sup>1</sup> The Agios Johannes, at Constantinople, A. D. 463, is a simple basilica with columns carrying entablatures, and galleries above the aisles, with arcades on columns, wooden roofs, apse with semi-dome, round-arched windows in each story, porch with columns carrying entablatures, and lean-to roof, with five round-arched windows over it. Plan in Texier and Pullan.

a much lighter character; the skeleton of the Roman dome was abandoned, and the masonry was homogeneous throughout. The lower portion was commonly reinforced by a vertical wall rising from a third to a half the whole height of the dome, which loaded the haunches and resisted the thrust, and through which were opened the circle of low windows so characteristic of the Eastern dome. The upper portion of the shell was often of extreme thinness, and its outer curve was in most instances joined by a reversed curve to the summit of the enclosing wall. The masonry being unprotected by wooden roofs, the external form of the Eastern dome thus follows accurately its construction.

In the smaller details of construction the Byzantine dome presents

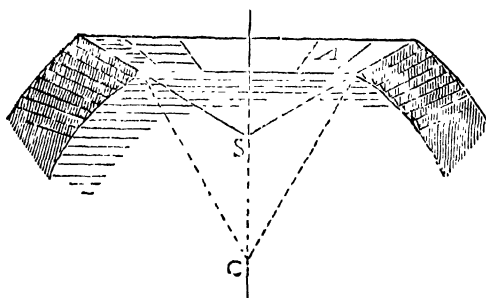


Fig. 139. Construction of Byzantine Arch or Vault.

several peculiarities, of which I will only mention one. The joints of the masonry, instead of tending towards a point at the centre of the hemisphere as in the domes of the West, are more nearly horizontal, the height of the dome being di-

vided into sections or zones, each with a centre of its own, the centres rising as the masonry approaches the crown. (Fig. 139.) This peculiarity is not confined to domes, but is common to all forms of vaults, and its practical effect was to enable their builders to dispense, except perhaps in the domes of the largest size, with the use of centering.<sup>1</sup>

The one great example of the Byzantine dome in its fullest development is that of S. Sofia at Constantinople, 532-538, and it is a singular fact that this crowning example is also almost the earliest in existence. But it is extremely improbable, as

<sup>1</sup> Choisy, *L'Art de bâtir chez les Byzantins*.

"Le problème de voûter sans cintres, les architectes Grecs se le posent franchement; et grâce à d'ingénieuses agencements de matériaux, ils parviennent à le résoudre; le plupart de leurs voûtes, ils les élèvent en maçonnerie dans l'espace, sans support, sans appui d'aucun genre. Leur méthode n'est point une variante de l'occident, c'est un système bien distinct, et qui ne dérive même pas d'une source romaine. Ce système est Asiatique" (p. 5).

Choisy even maintains, against the authority of the Middle Age writers, that the dome of S. Sofia was probably built without centering (p. 66).

M. V. le Duc has pointed out,<sup>1</sup> that such a dome could have been ventured on without the teaching of earlier and less important efforts. At S. Sofia the stability of the central dome, which rests on four piers, is assured by the support of two semi-domes of equal diameter with itself which abut against its base on opposite sides in the line of the longitudinal axis of the church, while an equal lateral buttressing is effected by coupled transverse arches springing from each of the four great piers across the aisles, and carrying solid walls rising to near the base of the dome, and by other parallel arches midway between the piers on each side. (Figs. 140, 141.) In S. Sofia, then, we have the typical Byzantine dome, and it would be difficult to cite another example which presents at once so many of the distinctive features of the

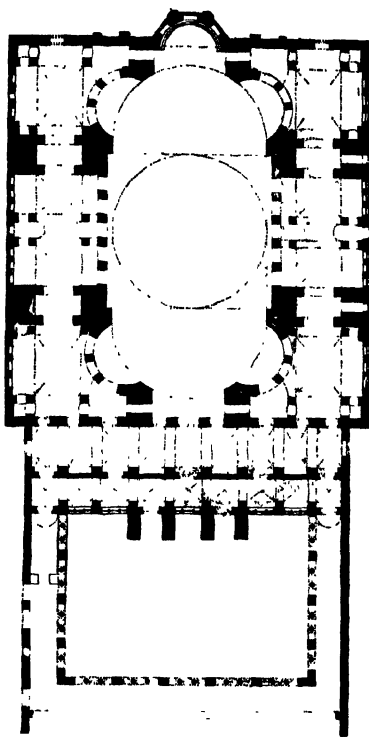


Fig. 140. S. Sofia, Constantinople.

type. In SS. Sergius and Bacchus at Constantinople, — which is almost exactly contemporary with S. Sofia, having been finished in 532, — although the plan of the church is a square, the central space enclosed by the piers of the dome is octagonal, the number of the piers and of the arches is eight instead of four, and the dome, therefore, varying in plan so little from its supporting wall, requires no pendentives, or only such elementary ones as to present no difficulties of construction.<sup>2</sup> In other cases, as in the little church at Daphne, near Athens, the central space is square, but the angle piers are so large as to allow diagonal arches to be thrown across the angles, supplying the place of pendentives and forming an octagonal support for the dome. (Fig. 142.)

<sup>1</sup> *Dict. Raisonné*, vol. iv. p. 347.

<sup>2</sup> In fact, the base of the dome itself is octagonal, the angles being gradually lost as the dome ascends.

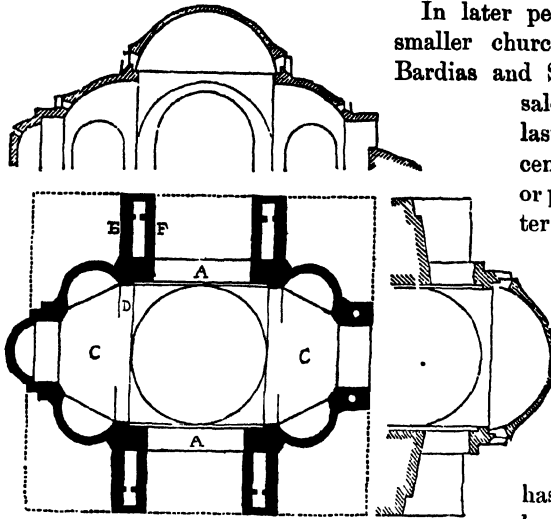


Fig. 141. Plan and Sections, S. Sofia.

In later periods and in the smaller churches, as *e. g.* S. Bardias and S. Elias at Thessalonica, both of the last years of the tenth century, a cylindrical or polygonal drum intervenes between the supporting arches and the dome, and the dome itself is polygonal, with its sides curving outward.

From what has been said, it will be seen that the dome determined in

every Byzantine church the central portion of the plan. The remaining portions follow no fixed rule, but agree in most instances in being included within a rectangle, the spaces between the dome piers and the outer walls being divided in various ways, or not divided at all, as in S. Sofia, Thessalonica. The system of buttressing by semi-domes, as seen in S. Sofia, Constantinople, is curiously varied in an ancient church in the same city now known as Khodja Mustapha Pacha, where the central dome is buttressed by semi-domes on the sides of the church instead of longitudinally, as in S. Sofia, — the simple but massive transverse arches ensuring stability on the other two sides.

In St. Irene, Constantinople (Fig. 143), still another variation is seen — the plan (one of the most characteristically Byzantine which can be cited) presenting a nave

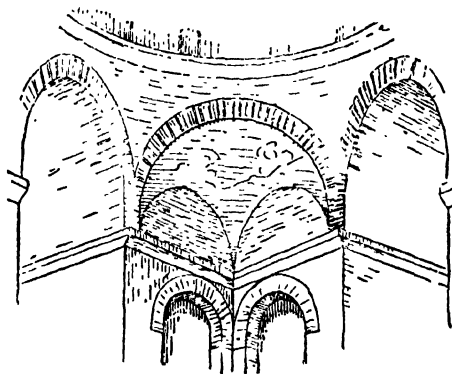


Fig. 142. Preparation for Dome at Daphne.

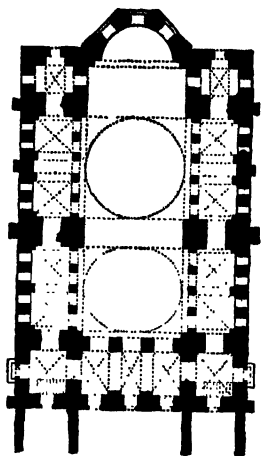


Fig. 143. S. Irene, Constantinople.

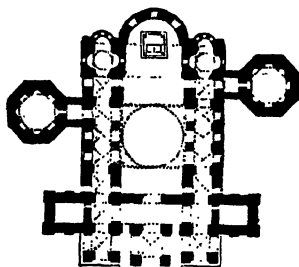


Fig. 144. Cassaba in Lycia

divided by a broad transverse arch into two square bays, each covered by a dome on pendentives. The domes are equal in diameter but unequal in height, one being raised on a drum pierced with windows, the other rising directly from the supporting arches. Moreover, while one dome is hemispherical, the other is flattened on the east and west sides. Both bays are flanked by aisles, with galleries above covered by broad barrel vaults, whose axes are in a line with the centre of the domes respectively; and these vaults, together with the transverse arches which border the domes to the east and west, serve as efficient buttresses, in the one case to support the thrust of the dome, in the other to steady and re-

inforce its supports. The church of Cassaba in Lycia has a disposition exactly similar to St. Irene, except that it has a single dome instead of two. (Fig. 144.)

The variation in plan among the Byzantine churches is well illustrated by the four principal churches of Thessalonica: St.

Various plans of Byzantine churches.

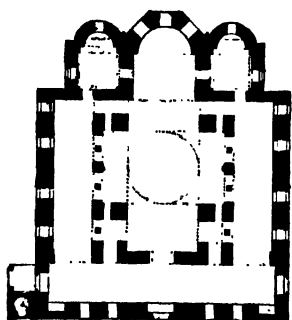


Fig. 145. S. Soda, Thessalonica.

Demetrius, a five-aisled basilica, dating from the beginning of the fifth century; St. George, a circle with massive walls lightened by square niches, and with a long projecting apsidal bema probably of later date; S. Sofia, probably contemporary with S. Sofia at Constantinople, a square with small central dome, and three small apses projecting from one side; and St. Elias, A. D. 1012, a square

with extremely massive piers carrying a dome, apses on three sides, and a square narthex on the fourth. The multiplication of domes was a characteristic feature of the later Byzantine churches. A good example of it is seen in S. Bardias, Thessalonica, A. D. 987, a small church of brick with central square of four Corinthian columns, with stilts, carrying an octagonal dome about twelve feet in diameter on pendentives, and a high octagonal drum, with a tall round-arched window in each face. The corner bays are covered by small octagonal domes, scarcely more than five feet in diameter. The church has three apses at one end and a large narthex at the other, with a gallery over it.

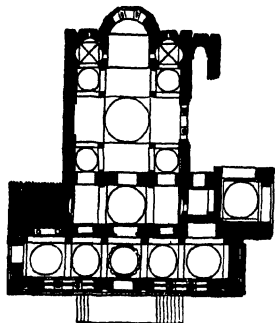


Fig. 146. Theotocos, Constantinople.

The narthex attains a great development in the Byzantine churches, bearing as a rule a much larger proportion in size and importance to the rest of the church than in Italy. In S. Sofia it is less prominent than in many smaller buildings, but in the *Agia Theotocos* at Constantinople (Fig. 146), where it is divided into five square compartments, each covered by a dome, in the churches of Thessalonica, in St. Nicholas at Myra (Fig. 147), St. Sofia at Trebizonde, St. Elias at Broussa, and many others, the emphasis given to this feature is very marked. In some examples, as S. Nicholas at Myra, S. Sofia at Constantinople, and the Mosque of Omar Hissar at Trebizonde, a second or exonarthex is added outside the front wall.

If now we look for the instances among the churches of Italy in which the typical plan and construction prevail, we shall look in vain. San Vitale shows, as we have already seen, nothing in its plan, — if we except the semi-circular arcades which open from the central octagon, — which is not to be found in scores of Italian buildings; and the same may be said of its whole scheme of construction, including the support of its dome.

In St. Mark's church at Venice we can see the Byzantine spirit more active and pervasive, covering in some respects not only the disposition of parts, but the construction as well. Yet even here there are important points, such as the

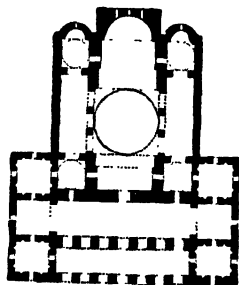


Fig. 147. S. Nicholas, Myra.

Lack of  
Byzantine  
churches  
in Italy.



cruciform plan and the wooden roofs over the domes, in which the Byzantine tendency has manifestly been overruled.

But, characteristic as the Byzantine construction and plan may be, it is by no means in these respects alone that the Byzantine spirit declared itself at home, or exerted its most powerful influence abroad. Were this the case I should not be able to defend the statement with which I commenced this chapter concerning the strength and persistency of this influence upon the architecture of Italy. As in the classic times of Greek art, the native genius found its highest expression in what Ruskin calls associative sculpture, so in the days of this Greek revival the same native genius, though no longer rising to such heights as in the older time, found its most characteristic and adequate expression in the sculptural decoration of such parts of the churches and other monuments as lent themselves most naturally to such treatment. And to this there was now added, largely, no doubt, as the result of the Oriental influence of which I have spoken, and which induced a passion for richness and splendor of color, a wholly new system of mosaic decoration applied to the surfaces of domes, vaults, and walls.

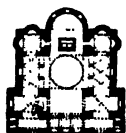


Fig. 148.  
S. Clemens,  
Ancyra.

The mosaic, which had been in extensive use in Rome up to the time of Constantine, but of which few satisfactory examples exist at the present day,<sup>1</sup> composed for the most part of small pieces of variously colored marbles, with a mixture now and then of bright glass and precious stones, was a legacy from the Greeks of the classic age, among whom it was in use generally for pavements as early as the fourth century B. C. The Romans brought this branch of the art to a surprising perfection, using opaque glass as well as marble, and not shrinking even from pictorial subjects, as may be seen at Pompeii in the famous mosaic of the House of the Faun, and another in the House of the Tragic Poet, etc., etc. The Byzantine mosaicists created a revolution in the art by substituting for the natural stones and the opaque glass of the Romans an enamel

<sup>1</sup> "No mosaics of earlier date than the fourth century are to be found at Rome, and there are but three edifices in Italy which contain mosaics of the fourth century, and these are so damaged that very little of the original remains. Those of the baptistery built at Rome by Constantine in the fourth century, and now called St. Costanza, leave little doubt as to the time when they were executed. Here the more essential pagan peculiarities of the early centuries were curiously marked. . . . The baptistery of Naples also, of the time of Constantius, an irregular octagonal building surmounted by a cupola, contains mosaics whose style may be traced amidst the repairs of restorers." Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. pp. 11, 12.

of glass made opaque by a mixture of oxide of tin, of which the variety of tints was practically endless, and of which the effect was immensely heightened and intensified by the use of gold, which was introduced liberally in the designs themselves, and which formed the background to every composition.<sup>1</sup>

The use of this splendid decoration speedily became well-nigh universal in all the basilican churches built after the fifth century, whether in the East or in Italy; and in those churches which had been built before that period — in the basilicas of Constantine and his immediate successors, for example — it was added almost without exception, though at periods varying from the fifth to the thirteenth centuries. Constantinople remained through the whole of the interval the centre from which these mosaics were derived, and from which were brought the artists who designed them. The manufacture was doubtless carried on to a great extent in Italy, but during a period of nearly or quite three centuries from the middle of the ninth century, not only the manufacture but the use of mosaic was practically abandoned in that country, and at no moment was it possible to dispute the supremacy of the Greek artists. The earliest and latest periods of its history appear to have been the brightest, and the mosaics of San Apollinare Nuovo, the baptistery and the mausoleum of Galla Placidia at Ravenna, and those of Santa Pudenziana at Rome, which belong to the fifth and sixth centuries, are scarcely inferior to those of Sta. Maria in Trastevere, which date from the middle of the twelfth century, or those of the apse of Sta. Maria and San Clemente a century later.

The mosaic decoration was confined in the great majority of cases to the vault of the apse, of which, however, the walls often received a similar enrichment. In the basilicas, the spandrels of the triumphal arch and the wall above it were also in many cases covered with mosaics. In a few instances, as in S. M. Maggiore at Rome, and San Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna, the decoration extended to the nave walls above the arcade; and in some of the early basilicas, notably in St. Peter's<sup>2</sup> and St. Paul's, it was applied to the façade, where it atoned in great measure for the lack of architectural features.

<sup>1</sup> The method of preparing the gold tesserae was as follows: "The metal leaf was spread over one of the glass slabs, the color of which did not matter, as it was hidden by the gold; over this metal-coated slab a skin of colorless glass was fused, so as to protect the metal leaf from injury or tarnish, and then the slab was broken up into cubes, the ψήφοι χρύσειοι of Byzantine writers." J. H. Middleton, in *Encyc. Brit.*

<sup>2</sup> See Ciampini, vol. iii. p. 37, for a description of the mosaic on the façade of St. Peter's, with engraving, and also for that of the vault of the tribune (p. 42).

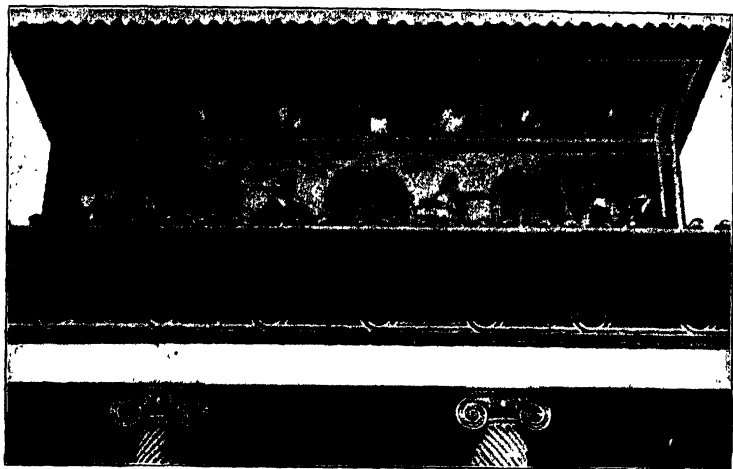


Fig. 149. S. Lorenzo. Mosaics of Façade.

The use of mosaic on the exterior walls was soon discontinued, but was revived after some centuries, and with greater splendor, in the façades of St. Mark's, the cathedrals of Orvieto and Spoleto, and other churches. In S. Maria in Trastevere we have the best remaining example of the way in which this exterior decoration was applied to the basilicas, a broad frieze of mosaic of highly monumental character about nine feet high covering the whole concave cornice of the façade, and representing the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins. Two rectangular panels which flank the great rose window below bear standing figures of St. Peter and St. Paul on a gold ground. A similar decoration is still to be seen on the façades of S. Lorenzo fuori le Mura (Fig. 149), S. Crisogono, and S. Maria in Ara Cœli. The dome was also a favorite field for the mosaicist, and many large domes were thus decorated over their entire surface. The earliest conspicuous example still existing is perhaps the Orthodox baptistery at Ravenna in the fifth century (see Fig. 47), though this was preceded by the tomb of Constantia at Rome. This was followed a century later in the Arian baptistery of Theodoric, and again in the dome of San Vitale, of which, however, the mosaics have now quite disappeared. The great dome of St. Mark's at Venice, in the twelfth century, and that of the baptistery at Florence,<sup>1</sup> in the

<sup>1</sup> The history of the decoration of this dome is an interesting illustration of the civic spirit to which Florence owed so much of its architectural splendor. The dome being

thirteenth, are the largest of the Italian domes before the Renaissance which display a mosaic decoration.

Along with the change in the material of the mosaic went an equally marked change in the character of the subjects represented. The mosaics of the third and fourth centuries probably partook, if we may judge from the few examples of that age which remain to us, largely of the character of the mosaics of pagan Rome. Those on the vaults of the circular aisle of Sta. Costanza, for example (Fig. 150), represent the culture of the vine, ploughing with oxen, treading the wine-press, festoons of

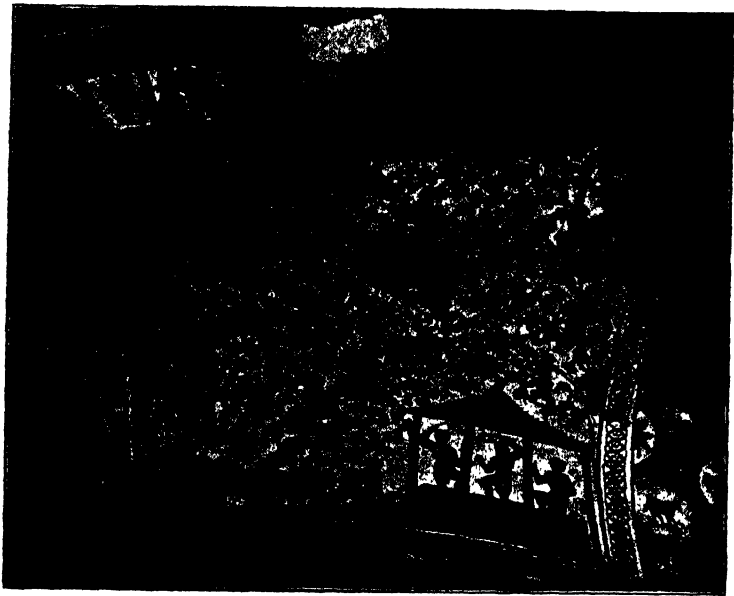


Fig. 150. Sta. Costanza. Mosaics of Aisle Vaults.

grapes and flowers, figures of birds and animals, of so classic a character as to have led the older archæologists to believe the building

ready to finish (about 1225) "the consuls of the wool trade, determining to incrust the cupola with mosaics, but finding no one competent to the task, sent Andrea Tafi, the most accomplished painter that Florence could then boast, to Venice, to crave assistance from the Greek artists employed in the Cathedral of St. Mark's. He returned successful, accompanied by one Maestro Apollonio, who initiated him into the secrets of the craft, and executed in company with him the greater part of the mosaics still existing on the cupola." Lindsay's *Christian Art*, ii. 56.

to have been a temple of Bacchus, and the decorations those of a period anterior to Constantine. With the introduction of the Byzantine mosaics, the subjects became either symbolical, as in the mausoleum of Galla Placidia, where they include the figure of the Good Shepherd feeding the sheep, the figure of Christ with a brazier of burning coals by his side, "the cross in a heaven of stars, and the emblematic animals of the Evangelists watching around it," etc. ; or, as in the tribune of San Apollinare in Classe, representing the Transfiguration, with the cross standing for Christ, in the midst of a landscape, surrounded by symbols, while three sheep stand below gazing up at it ; or historical, representing scenes from the Old and New Testaments, as in the nave and triumphal arch of S. Maria Maggiore ; or personal, including figures of Christ, the Virgin, the apostles and saints, single or in groups, angels and devils, as in numberless examples all over Italy. The treatment, the feeling, the scheme of color, vary of course with the skill of the artist, with the prevailing temper of the age, with a hundred varying conditions which govern both the subject and the rendering. In one mosaic, as in S. Pudenziana (Fig. 151), the composition and the drawing have a quality, a distinction, which recall the masterpieces of classic art ;

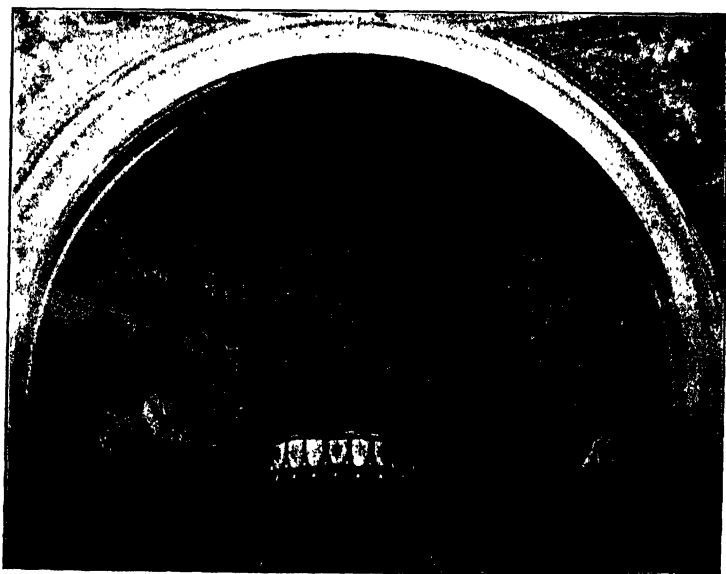


Fig. 151. S. Pudenziana. Mosaics of Apse.

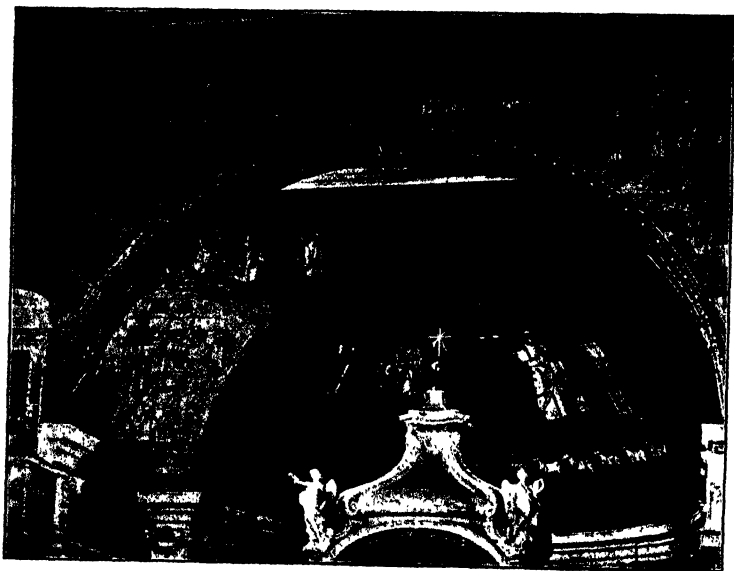


Fig. 152. S. Prassede. Mosaics of Triumphal Arch and Apse.

in another, as in S. Agnese, they have a rigidity and hardness which one associates only with the infancy of art; in a third, as in S. Clemente, we see neither the severity of the classic nor the rudeness of the decadence, but the spirit and tone of the early revival;<sup>1</sup> but the characteristic effect is the same in all, — an effect at once of richness and solemnity, which in the great examples rises to the highest point of impressiveness ever attained in the decoration of interior architecture. The supreme instances are St. Mark's at Venice and the cathedral of Monreale near Palermo; in these the effect is overwhelming.

Not less characteristic than the Byzantine mosaic, and not less far-reaching in its influence on the architecture of Italy, is the Byzantine sculpture. In the basilicas there is no stone carving beyond the capitals of the columns, and these were in the great majority of cases of another age, or where new were copied from ancient examples. The sarcophagi — and a little later,

<sup>1</sup> At S. Clemente you are in the Middle Ages, with no hint of classic antiquity, — costumes, ornaments, expression, all speak of the age when the work was executed. The apse of S. Clemente is a magnified example of an illumination of a thirteenth-century MS. Vitet, *Études*, vol. i. p. 299.

the furniture of the church, as the altars and pulpits and the throne of the bishop — were ornamented with bas-reliefs, generally of the rudest character, both in design and execution. But of architectural sculpture, properly so called, there was none, until the hand of the Byzantine workman began to be felt.<sup>1</sup> In the East, the Greek

<sup>1</sup> The Ravenna tombs furnish the earliest examples of Byzantine sculpture in Italy, especially the sarcophagi of the mausoleum of Galla Placidia and of S. Apollinare in Classe. They are perhaps ruder in design and execution than the Christian sarcophagi, of which so many are to be seen in the Lateran Museum, but they offer a strong contrast to these in other respects. In the Ravenna work "everything is symbolical. A cross with two birds perched upon it, or supporting the monogram of Christ between two lighted candles, or two sheep, — birds or stags drinking at a fountain, which springs up below the monogram enclosed in a wreath, or a lamb carrying the cross and standing on a mount of Paradise, — are the most frequent subjects. Occasionally but very rarely the beardless figure of Our Saviour appears, seated on a throne. Of historical subjects, properly so called, none are to be met with in the whole series." (Lindsay, *Christian Art*, vol. i. p. 102.)

Whereas in the early Christian work of Rome the symbolism is almost entirely absent, and the sculpture consists for the most part of figure subjects. The centre of the face of the sarcophagus is generally occupied by a round panel containing the effigy of the person there entombed, — often of two persons, the man and his wife, or two brothers, — flanked by close set ranges of standing figures. Frequently there are two lines of subjects, representing scenes from the Old and New Testaments; sometimes a rude arcade with standing figures in the arches.



Fig. 153. Column of Marcian, Constantinople.

sculptor, cut loose from the classic traditions, had created a new and perfectly characteristic school of decorative sculpture. Perhaps the earliest example which remains to us is the capital of the column of Marcian, which stands now in the garden of a private house near the centre of Constantinople, and which dates between 450 and 456. (Fig. 153.) It is a column of white marble about thirty-five feet high, including the pedestal. The capital in its outline and general proportions follows the Corinthian pretty closely, but with a freer treatment of the abacus and volutes and a vastly freer and more artistic treatment of the leafage. The capital is surmounted by a stilt-block of unusual size, with great eagles at the four angles with outspread wings, which nearly meet in the centre of the face. The stilt-block is, however, not in this instance to be regarded as the prototype of those which came a little later into frequent use as imposts for arches, but rather as a transition from the abacus to the larger pedestal on which stood the statue of the Emperor.<sup>1</sup>

In the Agios Johannes, in Constantinople, a basilica dating from 463, only ten years later than the Marcian column, much the same character is to be observed in the decoration of the exterior colonnade in front of the church. The capitals are still of a free Corinthian type, with only two

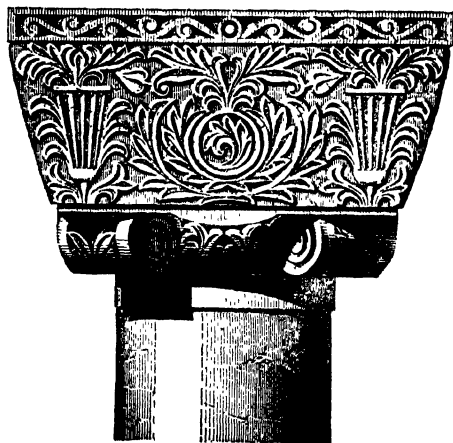


Fig. 154. Constantinople. Capital from the Agios Sergius.

orders of leafage very minutely subdivided. The entablature is of great richness, every member being covered with carving. The narrow frieze is filled with meandering leafage, with birds at intervals. The soffit of the upper projecting member of the cornice (it can hardly be called a corona) is decorated with graceful designs of foliage, birds, and fruit in square panels. In the interior of

the church, now entirely dismantled, and abandoned to ruin, the adherence to the classic forms was much less marked.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Salzenberg, p. 35, pl. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 5, figs. 12, 13.



In the churches of Justinian at Constantinople the prevalence of the Byzantine spirit in the decoration has become nearly absolute. In the Agios Sergius (the church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus), the lower columns have a convex block capital very like those of S. Sofia.<sup>1</sup> The upper columns have an Ionic capital crushed under the weight of a trapezoidal stilt-block elaborately and gracefully carved (Fig. 154), while the entablature



Fig. 155. S. Sofia. Capital and Spandril of Upper Arcade.

of the lower order is covered with decoration, much as in the portico of the Agios Johannes, mentioned above.

It is, as we should expect, in Santa Sofia that the richness of sculptural decoration reaches its height; but even here the acanthus still forms the motive of the ornament, and it is only by its freer treatment and the character of the forms to which it is applied that the style of decoration departs from the classic. Very few instances are seen of the basket capital which is so common in the buildings of Italy, where the hand of the Byzantine sculptor is felt, and only here and there a stilt-block is employed. The decoration is extremely abundant and rich, but much less varied in design than is the case in later buildings, the classic principle of continuity still apparently governing the architects. Thus the lower and upper capitals are all similar throughout, a convex block, round at the bottom, square at the top, very simple in outline, with well-developed volutes at the sides only partially disengaged from the mass of the capital, which is covered with a flowing acanthus leafage deeply undercut, enclosing in the centre of the face a circle with monogram. There is no stilt-block, but a strong abacus, quite covered in both directions by the foot of the arch masonry, every inch of which,

<sup>1</sup> Given in Salzenberg, pl. 18, figs. 12, 13.

including the soffit, is covered with marble bas-reliefs. The flatly moulded archivolt is broad, and the spandril encloses in the centre a disc of colored marble with a carved border. The strongly projecting cornice is also richly decorated. In the upper arcade the spandrils are covered by a parti-colored marble inlay in place of the bas-reliefs, the patterns being of conventionalized leafage, strictly symmetrical, with occasional figures of birds. (Fig. 155.) The smaller capitals in the accessory parts of the building—the vestibules, atrium, porches, door and window arches, etc.—show interesting

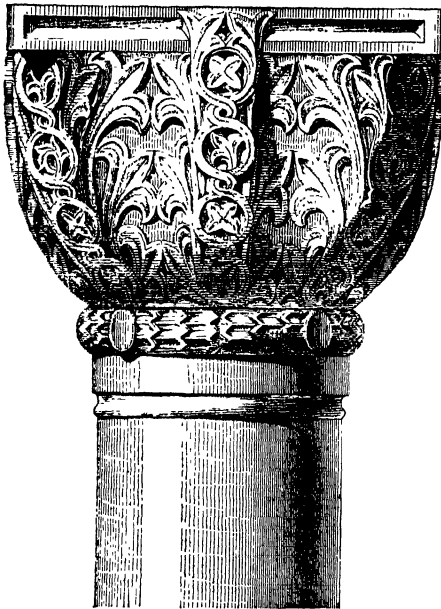


Fig. 156. S. Sofia. Capital

variations from those of the great arcades. The great arch of communication between the church and the baptistery is divided by columns, of which the capitals have the form shown in Fig. 156, where the outline of the abacus is followed down through the block of the capital, the central ridge being emphasized by a vertical band with interlacing circles, while the remaining surface is covered by the usual flowing leafage. This capital, as has been noticed, is very like the capitals of the lower order of the Agios Sergius at Constantinople, of nearly the

same date. It is also repeated with slight variation in the narthex of the Theotocos, and in the church of S. Vitale at Ravenna.

An equally close resemblance between the upper capitals of S. Sergius and some capitals in the gynæceum of S. Sofia would seem to suggest that the same architect may have controlled both buildings. The two capitals are almost identical in form (those of S. Sofia being, however, one third the larger), and differ only in the decoration of the stilt-block. Perhaps the most important variation to be noticed in S. Sofia is a capital in the southeast porch of the church. The

shaft is about fourteen inches in diameter; the capital is divided horizontally into two distinct parts, of which the lower is covered with perforated basket-work standing nearly or quite free from the bell, while the upper part has in the centre a cross enclosed in a passion flower, and four doves at the angles, covered by a strongly projecting abacus. The walls of the bema are adorned with plates of variously colored marbles, of which a part are enclosed within borders about eleven inches broad, forming rectangular panels. The borders are of white marble, and are covered with the motive which is perhaps the most characteristic to be met with in Byzantine decoration, and of which innumerable examples are to be found all over Italy, — a series of interlacing circles enclosing foliage.

It is a singular circumstance that for the various development of Byzantine stone carving in the early centuries we find our most profitable field of study, not at the centre or in the cities nearest the centre, but among the ruined churches and monasteries of Syria. Here for the first three centuries after the recognition of Christianity a Christian population of a high degree of civilization lived in comparative tranquillity, and built churches, monasteries, and tombs of a character greatly superior to the contemporary buildings in Italy, and which endured until the country was overrun and gradually depopulated by the barbarians from the interior of Asia. In the earliest of these buildings of which the

Byzantine  
sculpture  
in Syria.



Fig. 157. El Barah. Cornice and Capital.

remains are still existing, the sculpture adheres pretty closely to the ancient forms, but it very soon shows the tendency to greater freedom; and in those which M. de Vogüé assigns to the fifth and sixth centuries, the Byzantine character is strongly predominant. The cross and Christian monogram are everywhere seen, on the lintels of doors and windows, on sarcophagi, and in general ornamentation. At El Barah are the ruins of an extensive religious establishment, including three churches of the basilican form, with houses, cloisters, tombs, etc., of a date believed by M. de Vogüé to be as early as the fourth or fifth century. The work is, therefore, nearly contemporary with the *Agios Johannes* of Constantinople. The stone carving is admirable in design, and of marked Byzantine character, while retaining in a high degree the refinement of line and proportion which distinguishes the best classic work. A great pyramidal tomb offers, perhaps, the best example of its character. Two strongly profiled convex cornice mouldings are carried across the front, charged with acanthus leafage in which vigor and grace are equally mingled. A door lintel in the same pyramid is equally characteristic. (Fig. 157.)<sup>1</sup> This feature appears to have been the most frequent object for sculptural decoration throughout this region. It was usually set above the moulded architrave which surrounded the opening, was commonly of great height, and often projected forward in a fine severe curve with a strong vertical band at the top. It thus furnished an excellent field for sculptured ornament, of which it often presented two lines, one above another, as in a fine example at Dana, dating from the sixth century, where the lower division is decorated with a series of detached curls of leafage, with a cross in the centre of the range, while the upper has a vine with leaves and fruit, and birds interspersed, with the centre showing two fine peacocks facing each other, with a vase between. (Fig. 158.)

At Safa are the remains of a castle in which is a doorway lintel with three orders of carving, of which the principal is a broad band or panel filled with a series of circles enclosing the figures of birds and animals. A lintel at Roueiba of the sixth century has a series of large circles formed by the stem of an acanthus, the leaves filling the circle, the composition quite masterly; the centre is occupied as usual by a cross in a circle.<sup>2</sup> Another at Behio has two lines of interlacing circles, with pearls, crosses, flowers, rosettes, etc.

The capitals in these Syrian buildings are generally less characteristic; but there are some interesting examples which show the same

<sup>1</sup> De Vogüé, *La Syrie Centrale*, pl. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 68.



Fig. 158. Dana. Door-head.

freedom from classic traditions which we observe in the cornices and lintels. An elongated capital from a sixth century church at Deir Seta shows the acanthus treated in much the same manner as in the earlier churches of Constantinople.

Such was the character of the Byzantine architecture in the East, where it grew up and developed. It was to be expected that, following the decay and debasement which overtook the Roman architecture all over Italy after the removal of the seat of empire, the strong and steady stream of influence which flowed from the new centre of civilization, where in the words of Gibbon "the power of the Romans was combined with the art and science of the Greeks," would have ensured the introduction of the new methods of building and decoration in the place of those which had been allowed to sink into decay. The course of letters and the arts in Constantinople was steadily upward during the nine centuries after Constantine, while in Rome their course was steadily downward. The Greek architects had inherited the energy which had died out in Italy, and had added to it a new impulse and a new spirit, which ought, according to all experience, to have enabled them, especially with the help of the boundless wealth and the world-wide commerce of the Eastern Empire, to transplant the seeds of the new architecture in the old soil. But nothing of the sort happened. With the exception of two or three small churches in the southern provinces, there is not in Italy a single example of a church with a characteristically Byzantine plan. There are but two which show in any considerable degree the Byzantine method of construction, and in only one of these is the support of the dome and its growth upward from the piers really Byzantine; while even in St. Mark's, the plan

Absence of  
Byzantine  
churches  
in Italy.

is an Italian plan, only slightly modified by the example of the Eastern churches.

But if the conservatism of the Italians resisted successfully the influence of the East on the disposition and construction of their churches, the case was quite otherwise with the decoration. The general use of mosaic in the basilicas has been already sufficiently dwelt upon; it remains to give some account of the extent to which the Byzantine sculpture entered into the decoration of the Italian churches.

The first influence was felt, naturally enough, at Ravenna, and at a very early period. The commercial, religious, and political relations of that city with Constantinople were closer during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries than those of any other Italian city.

The earliest of the older group of Ravenna buildings was the cathedral, — a basilica built by Bishop Ursus in the first year of the fifth century, of which, as I have said above, nothing remains but the tower and the semicircular crypt. Concerning the capitals of the church we have little knowledge, but in the museum at Ravenna are preserved several capitals which are said to have belonged to the cathedral and which are very Byzantine in character,<sup>1</sup> and in the crypt are six rude columns separating the nave from the surrounding aisle, whose capitals, partly of a rough Corinthian type and partly Ionic, are all surmounted by a high stilt-block similar in character, says Mothes, to those in use in later times in Constantinople and Venice. And in the octagonal baptistery, presumed to be nearly contemporary with the cathedral, the capitals of the engaged columns which carry the arches both in the lower and upper ranges are surmounted by stilt-blocks, of which the lower are rather flat, and in the nature of a high abacus, the profile being a well designed cyma with leaf carving in relief, — while the upper are proportionally higher and spreading upward in a broad quarter hollow. Of the four churches dating from the first half of the fifth century — S. Giovanni Evangelista, S. Francesco, S. Agata, and S. Giovanni Battista — all show above their nave columns this characteristic Byzantine feature, in varying forms. In the first named church, built between 425 and 440, it takes the form of a rigid cyma, rising from a flat plate at the base, and projecting more in a line across the church than in the line of the arcades, the irregularity being masked by a leaf at the angle. The face towards the nave bears a cross in relief between the leaves.

<sup>1</sup> See Dehli, *Byzantine Orn.*, vol. ii. pl. 26.

It is to be noted that in these early examples the capitals themselves still keep to the classic type, most of them indeed having been taken from older buildings. In S. Agata, however, is a single capital with volutes rolled upwards, evidently made for the building, and which marks the beginning of the change, which, in the reign of Theodoric a hundred years later, is so striking.

In the church which Theodoric built and dedicated to S. Martino, now known as San Apollinare Nuovo, the capitals carry large stilt-blocks very simple in form, and without other decoration than a plain cross on the

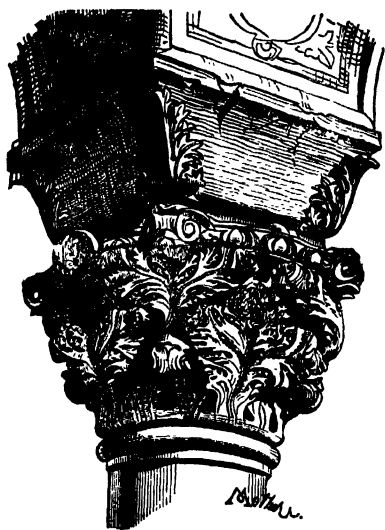


Fig. 159. Ravenna. Capital from the Basilica of Hercules.

face towards the nave; but the capitals themselves do not as a rule depart very widely in outline and general design from the classic Corinthian type.<sup>1</sup> In the few columns which remain, however, of the basilica of Hercules, which Theodoric rebuilt on the great square of the city,<sup>2</sup> the capitals are of a character until then wholly unknown in Italy. (Fig. 159.) The leafage is still that of the acanthus, but in the treatment of it the rigid symmetry of the classic capital has been frankly abandoned, and the crisp curling foliage has a freedom and life which betray clearly the hand of the Greek sculptor; the abacus has disappeared; the volutes have shrunk to an insignificant line, and the stilt-block rises directly from the moulding which joins them, having the profile of a cyma recta, with an acanthus leaf at each angle and a cross on the face towards the nave.

In San Apollinare in Classe, built shortly after Theodoric's death, the capitals of the nave columns are very similar to those of the basilica of Hercules; the proportions and outline are nearly the same; but the volutes, and the egg and dart moulding which joins them, are much more pronounced, and there is a rudimentary abacus.

<sup>1</sup> See, however, example of capital in Dehli, *Byzantine Ornament*, pl. 12, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> D'Agincourt says the basilica was preceded by a great portico of eight grand columns.



Fig. 160. Nave Capitals of S. Apollinare in Classe.

(Fig. 160.) The stilt-blocks are much smaller than in San Apollinare Nuovo, and their quarter round outline is convex. Of the church of San Michele in Africisco, destroyed about the beginning of the nineteenth century, two of the nave capitals are preserved in the museum of Ravenna.

We have no means of knowing or even of conjecturing the form of the capitals of the colonnade which originally surrounded the upper stage of the mausoleum of Theodoric, — a colonnade which has entirely disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

It is in San Vitale that we find the richest and most varied examples of the fully developed early Byzantine capital. The capitals of the lower arcades of the semicircular exedra opening from the central octagon are of one design, — a block of white marble round at the bottom where it joins the shaft, square at the top, without abacus, its profile a delicate reversed curve, slightly concave from the shaft upwards, its surface covered with basket work, with a trapezoidal panel on each face containing a large fleur-de-lis in relief. The capital is surmounted by a plain stilt-block spreading broadly toward the top, and of which the depth is much greater than the breadth, — an arrangement which allows it to carry an arch whose soffit is considerably broader than the capital. (Fig. 161.)

In the two lateral arcades opening from the tribune into the aisle, the capitals are of the same general form with those just described, but their decoration is different. Here the faces of the capital form each a great trapezoid enclosed by a border of serpentine leafage,

<sup>1</sup> Hübsch says, however, that fragments have been found from which he ventures to reconstruct the columns. Pl. 24, fig. 13.



and filled by an intricate mass of crisp leafage strongly undercut, and containing four circles disposed in the form of a cross. The stilt-blocks surmounting these capitals are covered with elaborate sculpture, mostly of similar character to that of the capitals, but varied on the faces towards the tribune by designs of a different character, — in one design two peacocks are drinking from a vase, in



Fig. 161. S. Vitale. Lower Order of Arches.

another two horses are facing each other on opposite sides of a cross, etc., etc.

The capitals of the upper arcades are of quite different character from those of the lower, and approach more nearly to the Corinthian form, except in the tribune, where the leafage is of the same

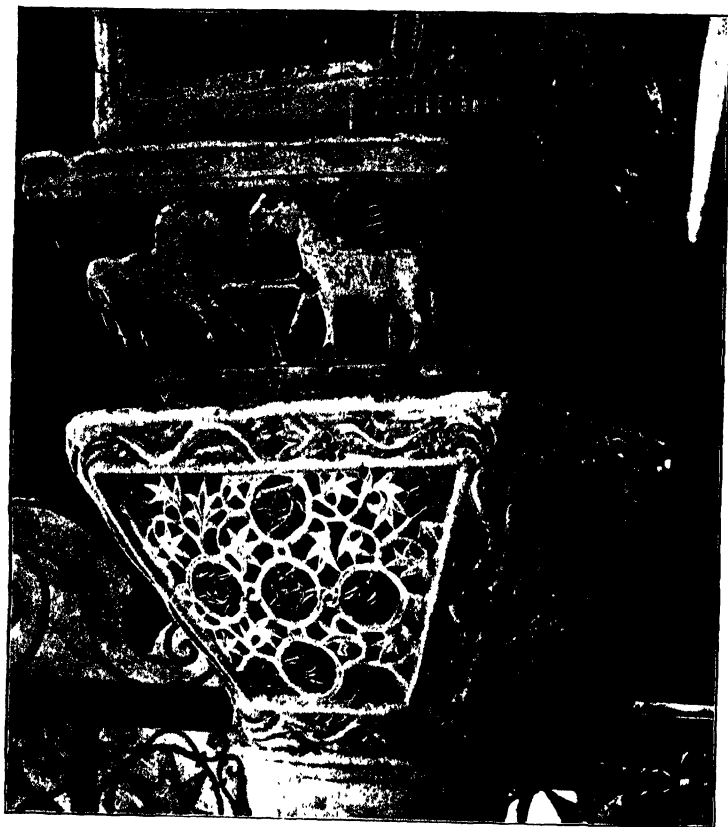


Fig. 162. S. Vitale. Capital, from Lower Arcade of Tribune.

character with that below, but bolder and more strongly undercut, and where the angles are quite lost, and the capital has an imperfectly developed abacus receding on each face as in the Corinthian capital, but with a swelling outward curve in the centre, the foliage below following the plan of the abacus.

The upper walls of the tribune are extremely interesting. On



Fig. 163. S. Vitale. Upper Wall of Tribune.

either side is a triple-arched opening divided by columns whose capitals are similar in character to those below. The head of the great enclosing arch is filled with a fan-like decoration, and the walls are covered with the original sixth-century mosaics, very varied in subject and thoroughly Byzantine in feeling.

At Rome the Byzantine influence had to meet the resistance of the strong conservatism of which I have spoken above, and it is only in a few comparatively inconspicuous instances At Rome. that it can be traced. In San Stefano Rotondo, of which the date is probably anterior to that of the second group of Ravenna churches, the outer range of columns, now embedded in the enclosing wall, but originally forming the division between the two surrounding aisles, have their rude capitals surmounted by stilt-blocks of simple character. The capitals are Ionic and Corinthian, varying according to the groups of columns to which they belong; in the one case the stilt-blocks are plain; in the other they are ornamented with a simple cross on the face towards the centre of the church.

The stilt-block appears in the galleries of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura, presumed to have been added to the church by Pelagius about 580. It takes here the form of a low quarter-round projecting equally on all four sides of the capital. The capital itself, although

of the Corinthian form, shows, in the absence of an astragal and in the arrangement and character of the leafage, a freedom which is more Byzantine than Roman.<sup>1</sup> The basilicas of S. Giorgio in Velabro, the Quattro Coronati, and S. Agnese, all built or restored between the fifth and eighth centuries, have stilt-blocks.

With the exception of these few examples there is, I believe, no instance in Rome of Byzantine forms entering into the architecture of the church. But examples are more frequent in which the Eastern influence is seen in the accessories.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 164. S. Clemente. Capital of Ancient Ciborium.

When the excavations of 1858 at San Clemente brought to light the lower and more ancient church, a fragment of an architrave was discovered bearing an inscription which seemed to connect it with two ancient columns forming part of a monument in the upper church, and to prove that they were two of the columns of the original ciborium of the early basilica. The shafts of these columns are covered with arabesques in low relief of a more or less Roman character, but their capitals are as purely Byzantine as any in San Vitale. (Fig. 164.) They

<sup>1</sup> Cattaneo maintains that the existence of galleries in a Roman church is an evidence of Byzantine influence, since they were in general use in the Eastern churches from the fourth century (p. 45). Singular, then, that the Ravenna churches are without them, excepting only S. Vitale.

<sup>2</sup> By the edict of Leo the Isaurian, in 726, all pictures and statues were forbidden in all churches throughout the Empire. Pope Gregory resisted, and was threatened with deposition, but all Italy supported him. The fight was continued by Gregory III., and may be said to have saved art in Italy from annihilation. An immense influx of priests and artists followed this edict from the towns and monasteries of the East into Italy, where they were sure of subsistence. Also many pictures were brought from the East to adorn the churches of Rome. Greg., p. 273, vol. ii.

"According to the data of the Greek writers and the Italian chroniclers we may put at 50,000 the number of priests, monks, and laymen of the Orthodox faith, who fled from Greece into Calabria and the region to the south of it to escape from the persecution of Leo the Isaurian, and of his son, Constantine Copronymus. This colonization was in great part monastic. In Calabria alone the names are known of no less than ninety-seven monasteries of the order of S. Basilus, which were founded at this time." Lenormant, *La Grande Grèce*, ii. p. 387.

are very unlike in design; the one has a high bell with straight profile covered with open basket-work and an abacus Corinthian in plan, its angles supported by doves, with a free running vine filling the space between. In the other the bell is covered with Byzantine leafage very much undercut, and a broad circular band above bearing an inscription; the space between the band and the abacus being filled with a close curling acanthus leafage, a cross enclosed in a wreath occupying the centre of the face.

The marble fence which shuts off the tribune of San Clemente, and which runs across the whole breadth of nave and aisles, is another interesting example of the Byzantine decoration. It is about five feet high, and divided into compartments of various lengths by square pilasters whose faces are decorated with a running vine in a vertical panel. The compartments are also panelled, each panel being filled with pierced basket-work enclosed with an egg and dart moulding and a guilloche ornament. (Fig. 165.) Fragments equally decisive as to the presence of Greek artists in Rome are to be found in Santa Prassede, Santa Maria in Cosmedin, Santa Saba, Santa Sabina, and perhaps in other basilicas. In the last-named church, the carved walnut doors which close the principal entrance have a strongly marked Byzantine character.

The cathedral of Parenzo in Istria is one of the most conspicuous and perfect examples of early Byzantine decoration in its various forms. The columns of the atrium and those of <sup>In Istria.</sup> the nave arcades are especially characteristic. The form of the capitals is the same throughout in the atrium, — a block rising from a circle at the bottom to a square at the top, with the outline of a reversed cyma, without an abacus, and covered with leafage of somewhat ungraceful character, strongly undercut. The nave capitals are very various in design; those which are perhaps the most characteristic are in general form much like those of the atrium, each face being treated by itself with a panel formed by a border with a running vine, and filled by a vertical twisted

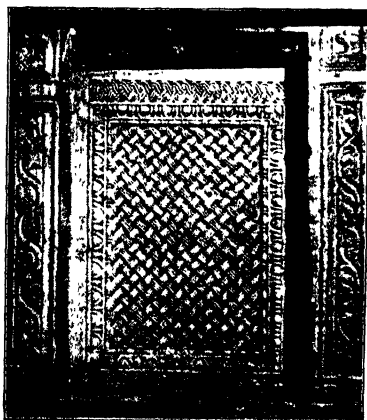


Fig. 165. Fence of S. Clemente.

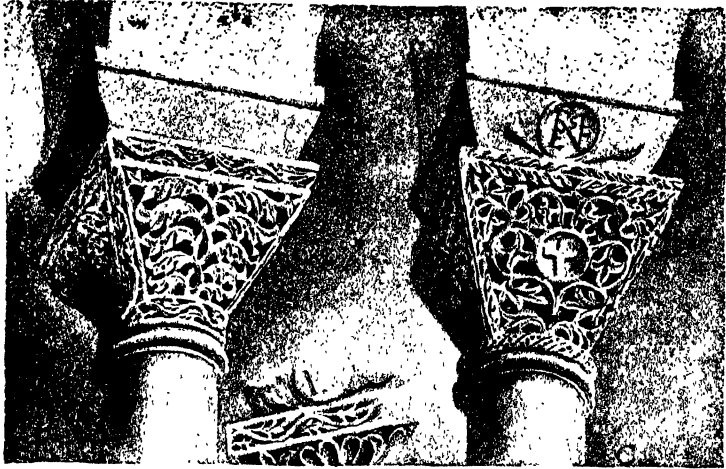


Fig. 166. Parenzo. Capitals from Cathedral.

stem in the centre with five horizontal leaves on either hand.<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 166.)

All have stilt-blocks, generally quite simple in form, rising from the capital with a fine convex curve, and bearing on the face towards the nave a monogram enclosed in a circle with a rude leaf stem extending on either hand. The fine ciborium which stands in the apse, and which is of much later date than the church,<sup>2</sup> has four arches springing from capitals which differ entirely from all others in the church, but which have much the character of some in Constantinople. Here there are no stilt-blocks.<sup>3</sup> The height of the

<sup>1</sup> "There are seven varieties of capital in the nave, which are arranged pretty regularly in piers opposite one another: —

- a. A lotus leaf capital like a well-known one at S. Vitale, Ravenna.
- b. A Byzantine version of the composite capital.
- c. A basket-shaped capital covered with fretwork.
- d. Is surrounded by a scroll, and has animals at the corners instead of volutes.
- e. Is surrounded by a scroll, and has birds at the corners instead of volutes.
- f. Is a basket like some at S. Sofia, Constantinople.
- g. Is a variety of b." Jackson, *Dalmatia*, vol. iii. pp. 318, 319, pl. 61.

The early Byzantine bas-reliefs are very rude, *e. g.*, sarcophagus in S. Apollinare in Classe; but the symbolism and feeling are the same as in the better class of work. Cattaneo, pp. 26-30.

<sup>2</sup> Jackson (p. 325) gives its date, as determined from an inscription on one of its faces, as 1277.

<sup>3</sup> The stilt-block was, as I have said, an early and rude device for enlarging the space available for the foot of an arch to rest on. Its essential ugliness and needlessness caused its discontinuance in the later architecture. An example of the way in which it

capital is divided nearly equally by a decorated moulding; the lower portion is circular, and covered with two rows of leafage; the upper portion has four fine doves bearing up the four angles of a spreading and moulded abacus, the wings of the birds meeting in the centre of each face. The soffits of the nave arches are decorated with square panels enclosing various delicate designs in relief, moulded in stucco, mostly geometrical, but including also peacocks, swans, eagles, and other symbolic birds.

The apse of this church offers a splendid example of the most characteristic wall decoration of the Byzantines. The bishop's throne in the centre of

the semicircle, and the marble bench of the presbyters following the wall on either side of it, are still preserved, "the bench finishing at each end with a standard, also of marble, shaped into a dolphin. Above the seats the walls are lined with a gorgeous dado



Fig. 167. Arch Head, Cattaro.

of marbles and porphyries, which has no parallel at Ravenna, but slightly resembles some mural decoration existing at S. Sabina at Rome. The materials are porphyry, serpentine, opaque glass, white onyx like that from Algiers, burnt clay of various colors, and mother

was modified in its approach to the more developed abacus is seen in S. Giacomo dal' Orio at Venice, founded late in the sixth century, but substantially rebuilt in the twelfth. In this instance the stilt-block, which surmounts a capital varying but little from the Corinthian type, has shrunk to a form scarcely more pronounced than a strong abacus. In the cloisters of Monreale we see groups of capitals taking arches of which the foot is much too large for the abacus. At an earlier day the stilt-block would have been employed. Yet in S. Dominico at Palermo, a Norman church of the twelfth century, the capitals in the cloisters have stilt-blocks, though different in character from those of the North.

of pearl, which is used not only in mosaic, but in discs made of whole shells, which reflect a brilliant opalescent light. There are eight varieties of pattern in the panels, and these are arranged symmetrically in pairs on the opposite sides of the apse, while the central panel over the bishop's seat is inlaid with a gold cross on a ground of serpentine and mother of pearl, surmounting a hill or dome between two lighted candlesticks. The cypher of Euphrasius occurring twice in the inlay proves it to be a work of the time of Justinian, and coeval with the basilica. The whole dado is finished with a cornice of acanthus leaves moulded in stucco, which runs round the apse, and is also of the original date."<sup>1</sup>

Parenzo is not the only example on the eastern shore of the

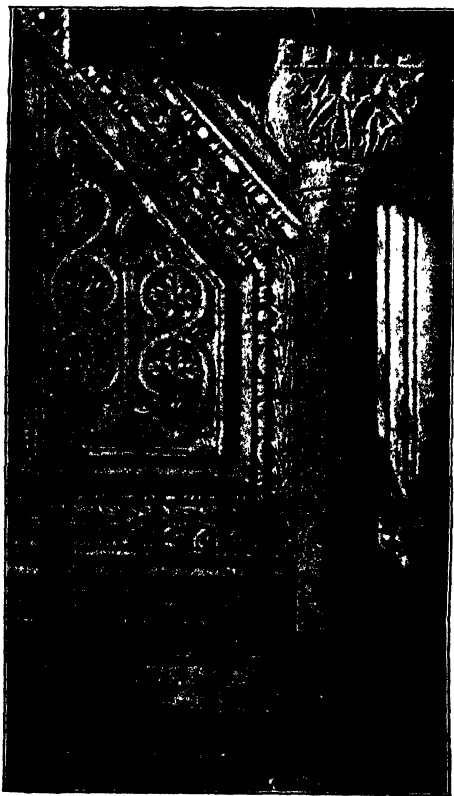


Fig. 168. Column and Panel, Torcello.

Adriatic, though it is the earliest and the most complete and valuable, of the extent to which the Byzantine spirit took possession of the architecture of those countries, which remained for five centuries under Byzantine rule. All up and down the coast — at Ragusa, Zaro, Sebenico, Cattaro (see Fig. 167), Nona, and other obscure towns — churches are to be found as late as the twelfth, thirteenth, and even fourteenth centuries, which contain not only capitals, but also lintels, archivolts, pilasters, balustrades, and other architectural features, in which the Greek hand is plainly seen. It is surprising that the influence of so strongly marked a style of ornament should have been

<sup>1</sup> Jackson's *Dalmatia*, vol. iii. p. 310, pl. 62.



so impeded and limited by the narrow strip of sea which divides the east and west shores.

In the cathedral of Torcello, dating originally from the seventh century, but probably restored if not quite rebuilt at the beginning of the eleventh, are preserved some extremely interesting capitals in which the general Corinthian form is retained, At Torcello.

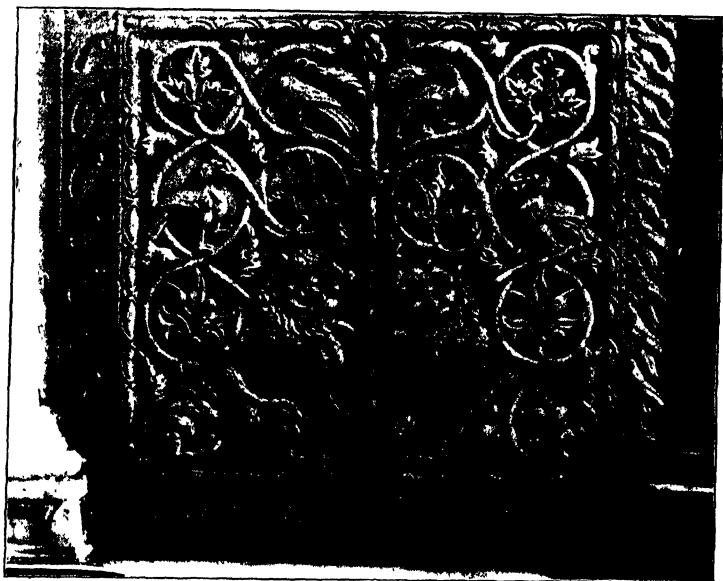


Fig. 169. Torcello. Panel of Choir Fence.

while the character of the acanthus leafage and its disposition has a strongly Byzantine aspect. But the stronger block capital, of which an example is given in Fig. 168, is the more usual form. The Greek artist is, however, here more clearly revealed in the marble balustrade or fence which encloses the choir, composed of square panels extremely rich, vigorous, and graceful in design, and perfectly characteristic of the Byzantine manner at its best. Though varying widely, they agree in character and treatment, each panel being enclosed within a strong border, and each having a vertical feature in the centre; in one an octagonal column, from the capital of which two fine peacocks are feeding, in another a stem bearing a pineapple, springing from a sheaf of acanthus, and with branches on each side forming circles enclosing grape-leaves and fruit, at which small birds

are pecking. The Lombard spirit appears in one panel, where the central stem is flanked by two grotesque beasts, while other and smaller animals fill the lower intervals of the branching vine, in contrast to the birds above. (Fig. 169.) Fig. 170, from San Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna, shows the same feeling and the same treatment of the detail of foliage and bird forms without the grotesqueness. The holy water basin in the same cathedral is an interesting and peculiar example of Byzantine carving.<sup>1</sup> Still more characteristic of the Byzantine, because of the mixture of

At Murano.

color with stone carving, is that portion of the east end of S. Donato at Murano above the lower arcade. Two ranges of high

triangles are carried through the whole extent of the wall, including the apse. They are sunk slightly below the surface of the wall, and are separated by three courses of bricks, of which the middle one is a zigzag course. The upper range of triangles are of yellow bricks; the lower range of parti-colored marbles and terracotta, with Byzantine bas-reliefs, often with borders of a contrasting color. Furthermore, the columns of the arcades are of marbles of various colors; the niches under the upper arcade red, those of the lower red and



Fig. 170. Pierced Panel from S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna.

yellow, and the small balusters between the columns of white marble.

It will have been observed how the Byzantine ornament was modified when the Byzantine artist was at work under the Lombard yoke in the eighth and ninth centuries. Throughout the Lombard period the whole character of architectural decoration was strongly opposed to that which I have endeavored to trace. The fondness for surface decoration and color disappears;

Contrast  
with the  
Lombard  
sculpture.

<sup>1</sup> Dehli, pl. 25.



Fig. 171. S. Celso. Pier Capital.

mosaic, so universal in Byzantine churches and in those where the Byzantine influence has been felt, falls at once out of use; it would seem as if the refinement and luxury of such adornment repelled the rude and strenuous nature of the Lombard race. The same distaste for delicacy and grace is visible in their sculpture. No contrast can be more marked than that between the tranquil and gentle spirit of the Byzantine sculpture and symbolism and that of the Lombards. Yet even here we may trace in many of the most characteristically Lombard monuments, from the ninth to the twelfth centuries, an occasional feature which betrays either the hand of the Greek artist himself or his influence working in the mind of the Italian. I can permit myself only a few instances. In San Michele at Pavia, one of the most ancient of the Lombard buildings which remain to us, and that in which the wild and savage spirit of the Lombard sculptor finds its most emphatic and characteristic expression, there is in the great arch of the south doorway, mentioned already in chapter second, a succession of bands, seven in number, of which three are carved with a meandering vine, with doves in the spaces, alternating with single leaves,

Mingling  
of Byzantine  
and  
Lombard  
sculpture.

which might well have been the work of a Byzantine sculptor.<sup>1</sup> In the church of S. Celso at Milan (probably of the tenth century) the same contrast is to be observed in the contiguous capitals of a compound pier, the capital of the central shaft being distinctly Byzantine, but flanked by Lombard beasts, which could never by any chance have been conceived or tolerated by the Greek mind. (Fig. 171.) Another capital in the same arcade shows fine birds at the angles of a pier capital quite in the Byzantine manner.

In San Ambrogio at Milan the Byzantine feeling is to be traced in several capitals of the nave arcades,<sup>2</sup> but constantly contrasted and overruled by the more vigorous and rude spirit of the Lombard work. The same may be said of S. Pietro in Cielo d'Oro at Pavia,<sup>3</sup> of the Duomo Vecchio at Brescia<sup>4</sup> (Fig. 173), and of San Salvatore

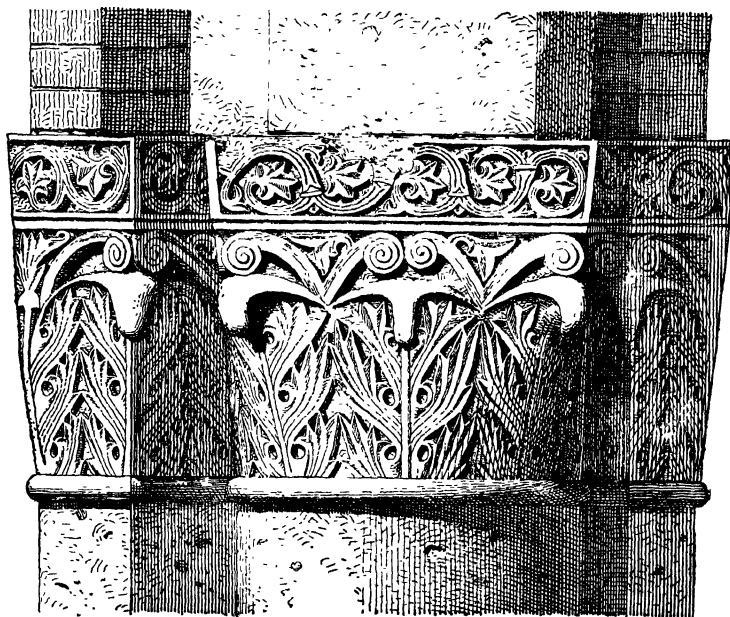


Fig. 172. S. Ambrogio. Capital of Pier in Nave Arcade.

in the same city, dating from the eighth century, in which, among the Lombard capitals of the nave, are two of quite Byzantine charac-

<sup>1</sup> Dartain, pl. 61.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 41, Fig. 12; pl. 38, Fig. 14.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 23.

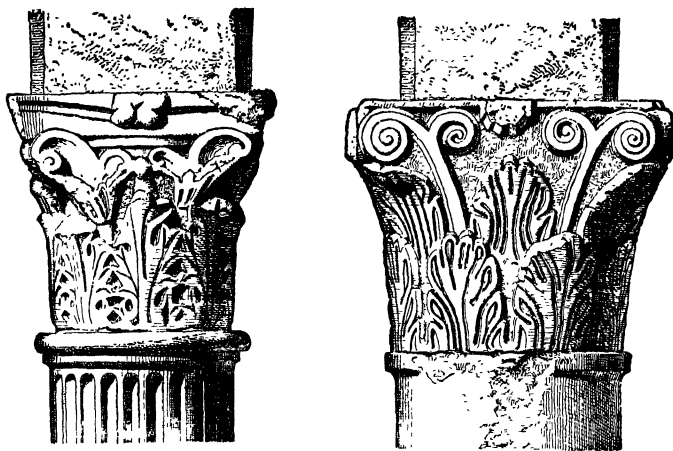


Fig. 173. Capitals, Duomo Vecchio, Brescia.

ter, block capitals with a convex outline, the faces decorated with a vase in the centre, from which issues on either side a stem bearing leafage in low relief, which covers the surface. The abacus has a meandering vine following the flat moulding.<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 174.)

In the very interesting church of Sta. Sofia at Padua, a Lombard church of the end of the sixth century, but practically rebuilt at the beginning of the twelfth, is a beautiful Byzantine capital of the cubical form, its four faces carved with graceful flowing foliage in slight relief, the abacus having a band of rigid upright leafage and an upper member carried on delicate dentils.<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 175.)

I have said that the use of stilt-blocks was not continued to any considerable extent after the early centuries of Christian architecture. It is extremely rare in Lombard work. Yet occasional instances are to be met with, as in St. Thomas in Limine near Bergamo, where in the high gallery the emphatically Lombard capitals are surmounted by stilt-blocks of simple form.<sup>3</sup> (Fig. 176.) And in San Ambrogio is a curious example of the stilt-block practically transformed into an abacus.<sup>4</sup> (Fig. 177.) In San Abbondio at Como, an eighth century church, one of the long narrow windows of the apse is enclosed by a broad band of sculpture, with a meandering vine, in the spaces of which are birds feeding at bunches of grapes.<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 178.)

<sup>1</sup> Dart., pl. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 93, Fig. 4-9; also, Hübsch, pl. 54, Fig. 10, 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 38, Fig. 16.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 80.

At Cividale in Friuli, in the little church of *Sta. Maria in Valle* (dating from the middle of the eighth century), the arch over the main doorway has a very broad archivolt moulded in stucco over a plain tympanum, with the same favorite motive of a meandering vine with leaves and fruit, enclosed between two narrow bands containing a close set series of rosettes.<sup>1</sup> Above the arch is a line of standing figures of queens in high relief on either side of a decorated niche containing the sitting figure of a bishop, — the whole group extending quite across the front wall, modelled with great spirit and delicacy, and forming one of the most remarkable groups of figure sculpture of its age in Italy. (Fig. 179.)



Fig. 174. Capital, S. Salvatore, Brescia.

In the same little town the cathedral contains a remarkable baptistery believed to date from the year 737. The basin is covered by an octagonal structure, nine feet in diameter, consisting of a fence or wall about three feet high, of which two sides are open, the others being covered with reliefs. Upon this wall are set eight columns, with capitals which follow pretty closely the Corinthian type, and from which spring eight round arches, whose archivolts and spandrils are covered with highly characteristic sculpture, which, though by no means of the best type, is interesting from its variety and freedom, and the mixture which it presents of Byzantine and Lombard feeling. The archivolts, with their meandering figures enclosing grapes, olives, palm-branches, and other natural objects, are distinctly Byzantine. So also are some of the spandrils, in which peacocks and stags appear drinking, etc. But in others the savage beasts so dear to the Lombard imagination — the lions, the griffins, the monstrous and hideous fishes — take the place of the gentler Byzantine creatures. The same is true of the several faces of the wall below the columns, where the symbols of the Evangelists appear in the midst of palm-trees, candelabra, griffins, and doves, and a great variety of other symbolic and imaginative devices. The execution is coarse and rude, and the feeling which pervades the whole is more characteristic of the savage North than of the delicate and luxurious East.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dartain, pl. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. 9.

The small basilica of San Salvatore at Brescia, of which I have before spoken, contains many decorative features in which the influence of the Byzantines is more or less marked. The most interesting of these is a triangular slab forming either the half of a low gable, perhaps of a ciborium, or, as Cattaneo presumes, the cheek of a small staircase leading to an ambon. With the exception of a border of an interlacing pattern at the base, the whole surface is covered by a flowing vine, of the form so common in the Byzantine work, but more conventionalized than is usual in the purer examples, enclosing a peacock of majestic proportions and aspect. It is, perhaps, the finest example of decorative sculpture to be found in Italy belonging to the early centuries, showing neither in its design nor its execution the naïveté and rudeness which are nearly inseparable from the work of these ages.<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 180.)

The ciborium offered, in the four arches which formed its faces and the spandrils above them, a favorite field for the sculptor, and numerous examples may be found all over Italy, in many of which much of the Byzantine manner is to be noted. The most important of these is, perhaps, the ancient ciborium of San Ambrogio at Milan, dating probably from the middle of the ninth century. (Fig. 181.) It rests on four columns of red porphyry carrying four round arches, each covered by a gable, the space between arch and gable being filled on each face by a group of figures in relief, modelled in stucco

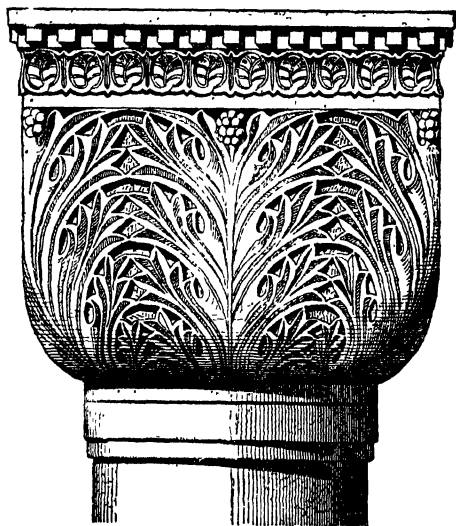


Fig. 175. Cubic Capital, S. Sofia, Padua.

and originally painted in colors on a gold ground. The archivolts and cornice and also a vertical band at each angle are covered with delicate Byzantine sculpture.

In San Giorgio, Valpolicella, at Bagnicavallo, at Bologna on the

<sup>1</sup> This fragment is now preserved in the Museum of Brescia.

Piazza San Dominica, are examples belonging to the eighth century. In San Apollinare in Classe, at Ravenna, the well-known ciborium of St. Eleucadius belongs to the first years of the ninth century. Its four columns, reeded for a third of their height and covered with a spiral moulding for the remainder, are without bases, but rest on square plinths, which rest in their turn on a square platform raised by a single step above the floor. The capitals are rudely convex in form, and vary in design. The arches which join them are segments of a circle, and are surrounded both on the outside and the inside face by a broad archivolt of an interlacing pattern. The masonry terminates just above the archivolt, with only space enough for a narrow band bearing the dedicatory inscription. (Fig. 182.) The low spandrels are filled with various designs, all of marked Byzantine character.



Fig. 176. Capital and Stalt. S. Tommaso in Limine.

In the southern provinces of Italy, some of which were occupied by the Lombards very shortly after their invasion of the north, very many of the churches which were built either during the two centuries of their domination, or in those immediately following it, although rebuilt in the eleventh century, show here and there traces of the original buildings. Among these there are not wanting a certain proportion which show that the Byzantine artists, following naturally in the track of the commerce which was maintained between Constantinople and the cities of South Italy and Sicily, found not infrequent employment in the Lombard churches. Their work was for the most part limited to the decoration, but in some of the smaller churches the plan and disposition of the buildings show that the Greek artist had the direction of the whole work. This will be seen in a later chapter.

Examples of the Byzantine detail are to be found in many countries of northern Europe. Even in England, Barfreston Church,

Byzantine  
artists in  
the south.



Canterbury, has a doorway, with two orders of columns carrying roll mouldings around the arch, the inner roll decorated with leafage, the outer with figures of men and animals in circles. Outside these is a broad archivolt band, quite in the Byzantine manner, with a series of elongated circular panels enclosing figures, which, however, are far from having the Byzantine grace or feeling, though very vivid and striking. The whole doorway is most interesting.

Hitherto, in respect of the Byzantine influence upon the architecture of Italy, as indeed in respect of that architecture itself, our consideration has been of necessity limited to what remains of the religious architecture. Up to the eleventh century almost every vestige of domestic or civil building has disappeared. There is no probability that it was ever of much importance in an artistic point of view, however much of ephemeral magnificence may have been expended upon it. The earliest examples of domestic building which remain are a few of the houses of the merchants of Venice, built during the early period of the growing commercial prosperity of the city in the eleventh century. These remains are for the most part extremely slight, and where not ruinous are disguised by tasteless restoration; but they are of surpassing interest as examples of the Byzantine style applied to domestic work, and also as indicating that the architecture of Venice was at that period in the hands of the Byzantines to an extent which did not obtain in any other Italian city at any age. There are but three of the houses of which

Domestic  
architect-  
ture.



Fig. 177. Pier Capital, S. Ambrogio.

enough remains to give any complete idea of their general design, but these show a substantial uniformity in the plan and disposition of the façade. The Fondaco dei Turchi may be taken as a type of the class. Nothing is known of its origin or its earlier history. It

was purchased in 1621 of the Dukes of Ferrara, who had held it long, and was then devoted to the purposes of an exchange or warehouse<sup>1</sup> for the Turkish merchants, whose business brought them in great numbers to Venice.



Fig. 178. S. Abbondio, Como. Window in Apse.

The building was of slight construction, and long neglect had by the middle of the nineteenth century brought it into such a state of decay that it was only saved from complete destruction by a restoration which was practically a rebuilding. Fig. 183 is taken from a photograph of the façade before the rebuilding. The front on the Grand Canal (the only portion remaining of the original palace, which was very extensive) is about one hundred and sixty feet long, of brick, faced with thin slabs of marble,

and is divided into a central portion in two stories of long open arcades, flanked by square pavilions of greater height, but not projecting from the line of the central portion. The lower arcade, of which the floor is raised very little above the water of the canal, has ten round stilted arches resting on marble columns with large foliated capitals. The arches are surmounted by a flat band of colored marble, enclosed by a delicate dog-tooth ornament, and with small roundels in the spandrels filled with bas-reliefs of animals or birds. The upper arcade has eighteen arches similar to those below in form and treatment, and with similar panels in the spandrels. A balustrade of delicate colonnettes with arches joining them fills the intervals between the

<sup>1</sup> *Fondak* is still the Arabic for shop or warehouse.

columns. The cornice is small and simple, and above it is a series of nine gables like dormer faces, connected by small open arches, and

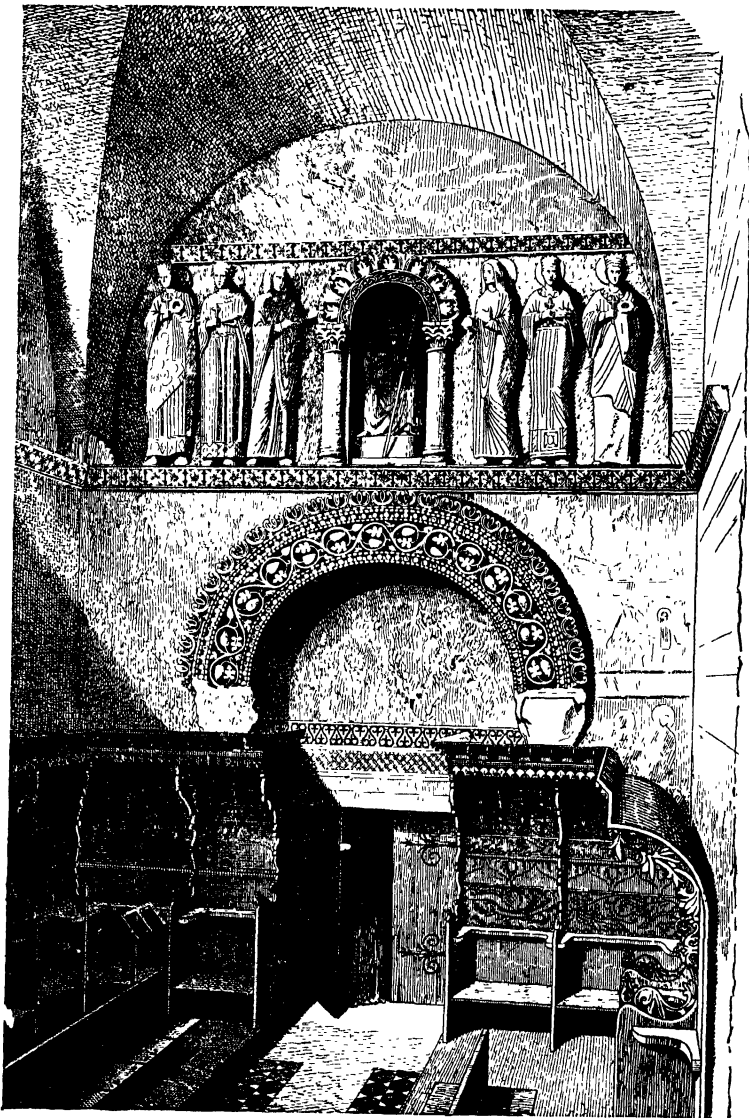


Fig. 179. Sta. Maria in Valle, Cividale.

each ornamented with a round-headed panel of white or colored marble. The pavilions which terminate these arcades are of three stories, the first story having three arched windows, the others four each. These openings are similar in form and decoration to those of the central arcades, but smaller. The frieze above the second story windows is ornamented in each pavilion with four panels of marble with bas-reliefs, and this decoration is repeated above the third story window.

The only other houses of this period and style which preserve in any considerable degree their original appearance are two which adjoin each other on the Grand Canal, not far below the bridge of the Rialto — the Casa Loredan and the Casa Farsetti. Both have been encumbered by Renaissance additions above the original architecture, but below these the forms are not substantially changed. The two buildings are very similar to each other in size and design; in the latter respect they much resemble the *Fondaco dei Turchi*, though of much smaller dimensions, — the Casa Loredan being about

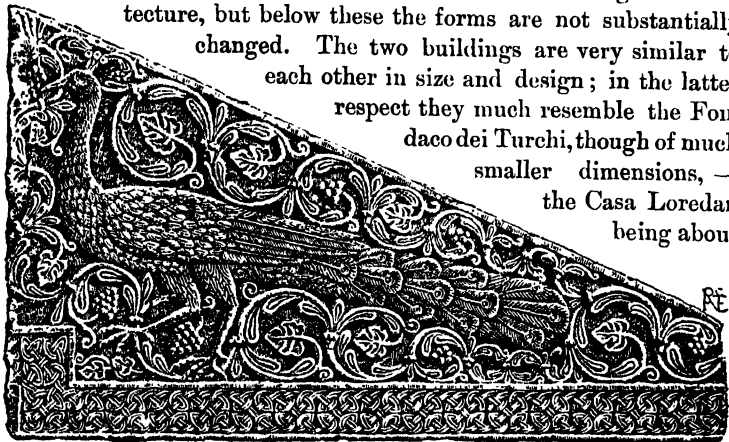


Fig. 180. Brescia. Fragment from S. Salvatore.

sixty feet long and its neighbor about seventy. Each had originally two stories, the front being in three divisions, of which the central one consisted of arcades with five stilted round arches below and three or four above. In the Farsetti the second story arcade rests on very small coupled columns not more than four inches in diameter, with simple capitals. (Fig. 184.)

The interest of these buildings resides, however, less in their general design than in their characteristic decoration, which, although sparing in quantity, — far too much so to give the impression of richness to the façades, — is of a quality and variety which make it highly typical of the Byzantine manner. The capitals of the columns

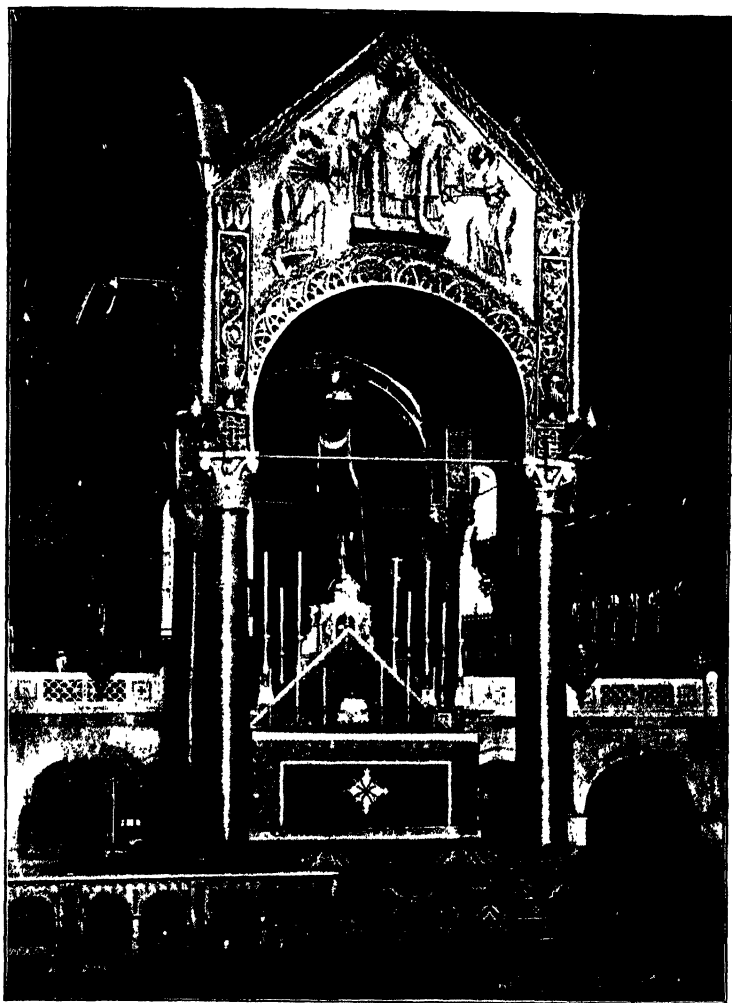


Fig. 181. Ciborium of S. Ambrogio, Milan.

are of several quite distinct forms, and vary not less in detail, from the braided lily capital so familiar to all students of St. Mark's church, to the simple high concave twin capitals of the coupled columns in the upper arcade of the Casa Farsetti. The single panels, sometimes round, oftener an upright rectangle, the latter sometimes with an arched head, set in the face of the wall, sometimes in

the spandrils of the arches, sometimes in a line or frieze above them, sometimes consisting of a simple disk of richly colored marble, sometimes of a geometric design in parti-colored stones, oftener of a bas-relief of a subject more or less emblematic, as a pair of birds, a grotesque animal, a winged figure, an angel, or a decorated cross, — are perhaps the most individual and invariably characteristic ornaments which can be mentioned. (Fig. 185.) Their use was continued long beyond the strictly Byzantine period, and forms one of the most usual and one of the most charming features of the earlier Gothic palaces of Venice during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

An interesting example of this method of decoration is seen in the façade of a small palace on the Grand Canal near the *Sti. Apostoli*, where the space between the arch-heads of the *piano nobile* and the decorated cornice above is filled by a series of panels alternately circular and arched, filled with various sculpture. The



Fig. 182. Ciborium of S. Apollinare in Classe.

arches are also noticeable for the shape of the archivolt moulding, which prefigures the change to Gothic forms. (Fig. 186.) The same thing is seen also in the *Palazzo da Mula* at Murano, an early Gothic palace, but showing well the earlier Byzantine method of decoration by panels. Here are two large upright rectangular panels flanking the central arcade in the second story, and two smaller ones of similar shape on the end piers, and over each a circular panel filled with tracery of various designs, while in each of the other two

stories are panels of different forms, arched, circular, and mixed, mostly containing reliefs of distinctly Byzantine character, but some enclosing plain disks of variously colored marbles.

One of the most characteristic of the early Byzantine palaces of Venice is a house in the Rio di Ca' Foscari (Fig. 187), fallen long since into a ruinous condition, but showing even in ruin much of the

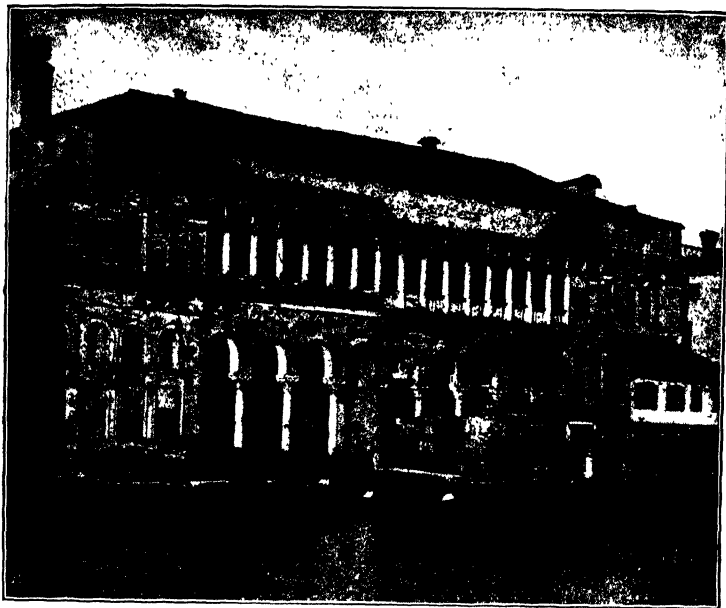


Fig. 183. Venice. Fondaco dei Turchi.

peculiar grace and charm of the Byzantine decoration. A great central arch some ten feet in span, slightly stilted, is flanked by four arches on each side of one third its breadth, but so highly stilted that their crowns are kept on a level with that of the central arch. The latter is surrounded by a compound archivolt, whose chief member is a broad band with the favorite motive of a vine, whose stem twists itself into a series of irregular circles filled alternately by birds and leafage. Outside of this is a narrow band with rigid upright leafage, and a crown moulding with the Venetian dentil. In the central space at the crown of the arch these are replaced by the Byzantine symbol of the hand raised in the attitude of benediction, between the sun and moon.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most beautiful pieces of decoration to be found in

<sup>1</sup> The figure, taken from Mr. Ruskin's folio supplement to the *Stones of Venice*, is wrong in the last detail, which is shown correctly in another plate of the same work.

Venice is in the doorway arch of a house called the Ca' Contarini, where the tympanum bears a winged angel carrying a shield, with the inscription "Pax huic domui," and the archivolt has a broad band of sculpture, the whole arch being inscribed in a square border with rosettes, and the spandrils being filled with circles enclosing each a pair of birds. (Fig. 189.)

The same feeling and method are seen in the doorway arch of a house in the Fondamenta Pesaro, where the tympanum is filled with a bas-relief representing two winged and kneeling angels bearing a shield between them, while above the shield is the half figure of a third angel holding in one hand a circular disk with a Greek cross in relief, the other being raised in the posture of benediction. The arch in this instance is pointed, but is surrounded by a broad border edged on both sides with the Venetian dentil and filled with a

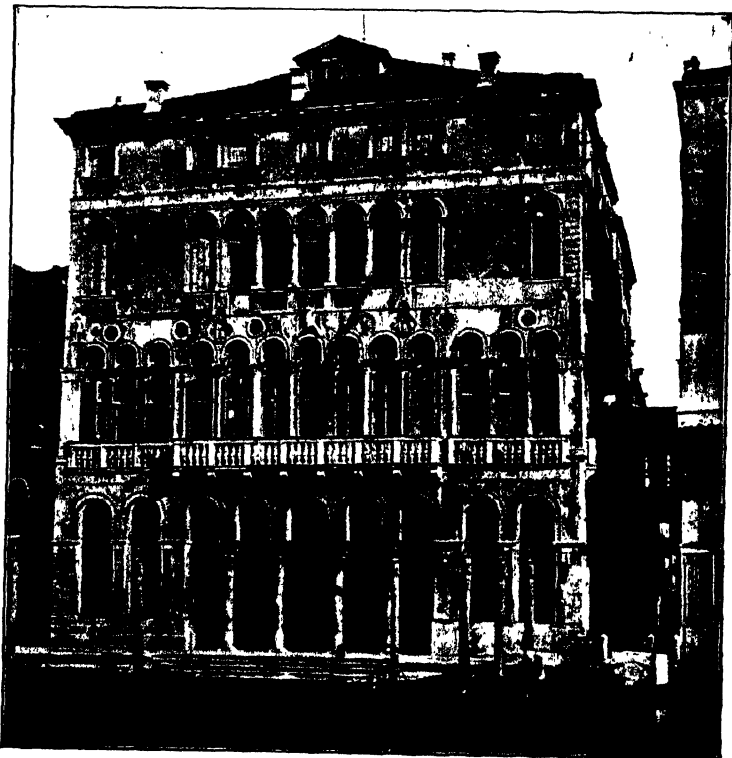


Fig. 184. Venice. Casa Loredan.



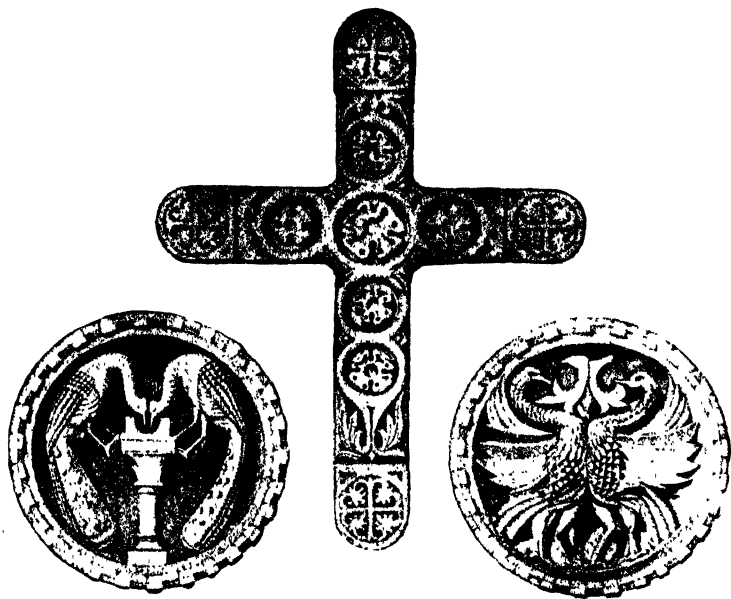


Fig. 185. Venice. Decoration of Palace Fronts.

meandering vine, the stem twisting itself into circles filled by fruit and leafage, by grotesque little animals, and in one instance by the Byzantine symbol of the raised hand with two fingers extended. The arch, as in the last mentioned example, is enclosed within a square, formed in this instance by a single row of the Venetian dentil; the spandrils were once filled with some decoration which has now quite disappeared. (Fig. 190.)

We come now to that building towards which all this gradual development of the Byzantine decorative spirit had been tending for centuries, and in which it found its last and crowning perfection — the church of St. Mark at Venice. As early as the middle of the ninth century (there is no certainty as to the exact date, but probably during the reign of the Doge Orso Partecipazio, from 864 on), a church was built to receive the body of St. Mark, which had been brought from Alexandria to Venice some thirty years before. It was, strange to say, a wooden church, but decorated profusely with marble columns and other precious materials which had been gathered by the Doge. This church was par-

Church of  
St. Mark.  
Venice

tially burned in 976, during a popular insurrection, but was at once repaired, and perhaps in whole or in part rebuilt. Whether it was again destroyed by fire we are not told, but somewhere near the middle of the next century, perhaps in 1043, under the Doge Domenico Contarini, a new church was begun in its place, of more enduring materials, which in thirty years was so far finished as to be ready to receive its decoration. The Republic had now passed its period of weakness and defence, and had reached a point of prosperity in which its resources were abundant and varied. They were all availed of with an enthusiasm which modern times find it difficult to comprehend, in the interest of the new cathedral. Domenico Selvo or Silvio was now the Doge, and his instructions went forth to all the servants of the state at home or in foreign parts, to do their utmost towards the adornment of the new St. Mark's. Officers of the army, officers of the navy, ambassadors, masters of trading ships in the hundred ports where the flag of Venice was displayed, merchants residing or visiting in the lands, whether near or far, where an older art had accumulated its treasures, especially in Constantinople, where the

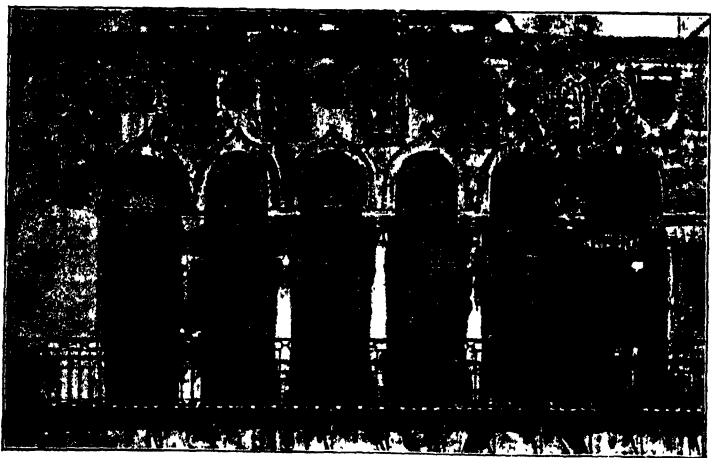


Fig. 186. Venice. Decoration of Palace Front

Venetians were very numerous, all were enjoined to beg, borrow, or steal whatever materials could be made available in the great work.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Those readers who hold to Mr. Ruskin's idea of the Venetian character in the days of the greatness of the Republic will perhaps be shocked or indignant at the tone of this statement. But it is quite certain that there was much of the freebooter in the Venetian trader, and a good deal of very questionable dealing in the official intercourse of the

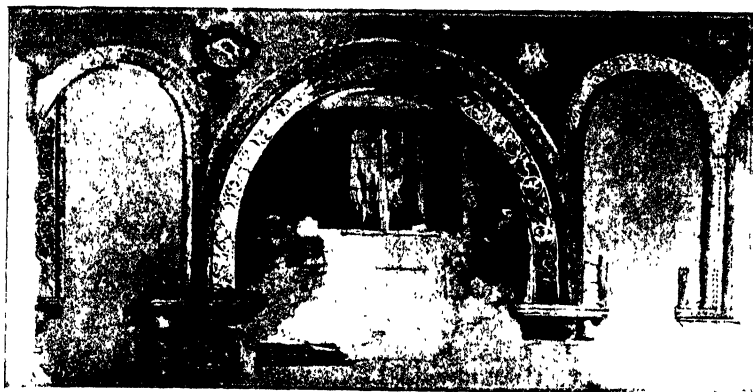


Fig. 187. Venice. House in Rio di Ca' Foscari.

The response was immediate and hearty ; a great store of material, old and new, was gathered together from the outlying colonies of Venice and from all the Eastern countries with which her commerce connected her. The greater portion of this was from the Byzantine churches of Constantinople and other cities of the Greek empire, but remains of Greek and Roman classic art, spoils of Arabian and Persian monuments, fragments of early Christian architecture from the coast of Asia Minor and from the cities of Central Syria, as well as rich marbles and other costly stones as yet uncut, were also gathered in great quantities. Probably no similar instance exists in history of such a world-wide contribution of the spoils of older times and of foreign lands for the adornment of a single monument. It is not the least remarkable merit of this wonderful building that so great a variety of heterogeneous details should have been absorbed into a harmonious system of decoration, with no loss of consistency or of just subordination.

Much heated discussion has been wasted on the question whether the architect of St. Mark's was an Italian or a Byzantine. It is a

Republic with her neighbors. At the time of the building of St. Mark's, although the Venetians were the undisputed masters of the immense commerce which centred at Constantinople, they were "thoroughly unpopular there from their haughtiness and their absorbing all the wealth and commerce of the city. Their numbers were very great; as many as two hundred thousand are said to have lived in the Venetian quarter. They proved quarrelsome neighbors, however, and we hear constantly of faction fights between the Venetian and the Lombard residents. They owned land outside the city, and frequently married into the great Greek families." (H. F. Brown: *Venice; an Historical Sketch of the Republic*, p. 100.) Domenico Selvo was deposed in 1085, after reigning fourteen years.

question which can never be answered with certainty, and is really of the least importance, since, whether the one or the other, it is clear that he was penetrated and inspired by the genuine spirit of Byzantine decoration. It should, however, be noted, as I have said before, that the plan of the church is in no respect distinctively Byzantine, but shows much more affinity with many of the Romanesque churches of North Italy than with the typical churches of Constantinople or Thessalonica.<sup>1</sup> It is a Greek cross (Fig. 191), with nave, transepts, and choir of a uniform breadth of about thirty-eight feet, all flanked by aisles, of the width of twenty feet in the nave and choir, and fifteen feet in the transepts, the separation of the aisles from their central spaces being effected by screens of columns and arches which form narrow bridges leading to the small galleries at the ends of the

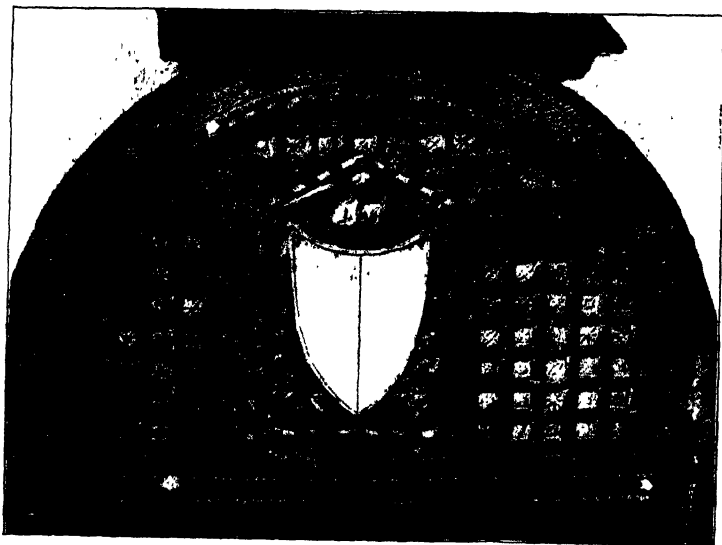


Fig. 188. Doorway Arch of House in Campo S. Margherita.

transepts appropriated for the use of women. The interior length excluding the apse is about one hundred and seventy feet, and the breadth across the transept a little greater. At the intersection of the arms of the cross are set four great piers about twenty-one by twenty-eight feet in plan, of which the construction is peculiar. Each

<sup>1</sup> It is believed that the plan of St. Mark's follows closely that of the Church of the Apostles at Constantinople, built by Justinian, and now no longer existing, of which the detailed description by Procopius seems to indicate a general similarity to St. Mark's.

pier shows on the plan in the form of four small piers about six and a half feet square, between which in two directions pass the aisles of nave, transepts, and choir. The small piers are joined

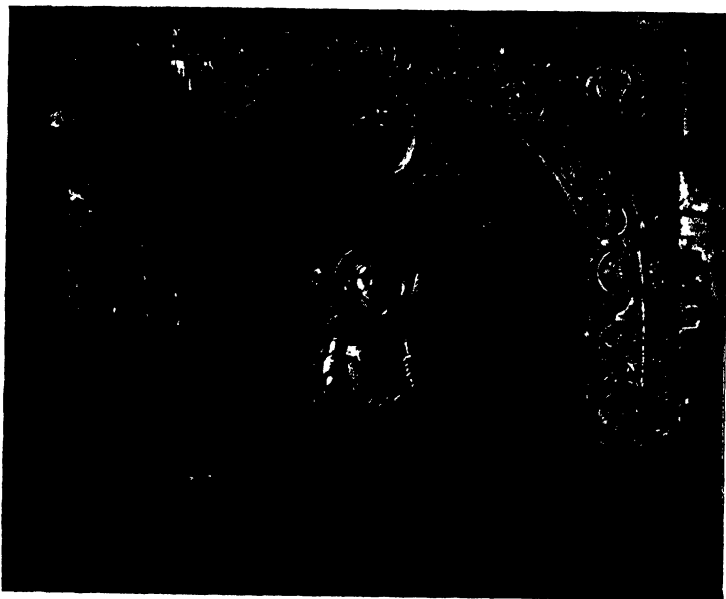


Fig. 189. Doorway Arch, Ca' Contarini.

twice in their height by round arches spanning the aisles, by which means the solidity of the great piers is preserved, while the obstruction to space and circulation is avoided. The square space enclosed within the four small piers is covered by a flat dome eleven feet in diameter. Four broad arches springing from the great piers carry the central dome, which is a hemisphere forty-two feet in diameter, built up from true spherical pendentives, and of entirely Byzantine character, without a drum, with a ring of solid brickwork for one third of its height, pierced with sixteen small round-arched windows, above which the shell has a thickness of about thirty inches, diminishing to twenty inches at the crown, while a vertical wall of similar thickness, rising from the ring at the base, supports the high wooden outer dome, of later construction, which forms so prominent a feature of the exterior of the church, but which has absolutely no prototype in the Byzantine churches of the East. (Fig. 192.) The crown of the inner dome is about ninety-two feet above the pavement.

Over the single square bays of the nave, transepts, and choir rise domes of similar form and construction, that of the nave being of the same diameter with the central dome, but lower, while all the other domes are both lower and smaller. The great arches which support the central dome are repeated at the ends of the nave and transepts by others of the same breadth; the six aisles are covered by similar arches; so that each of these domes is buttressed by four barrel vaults whose breadth is about one half its diameter. Few domes have so ample provision for their stability. The aisles of the choir terminate like the choir itself in semicircular apses. The central apse, however, projects from the east wall in the ordinary manner, while those of the aisles do not. Neither apse has windows, but in all of them the outline is broken by semicircular niches in the thickness of the wall, three in the central apse, and five in the side apses. The floor of the choir is raised some three feet above that of the nave, and beneath it, extending also under the choir aisles, is a vaulted crypt divided into five aisles by columns of Greek marble supporting round arches. The crypt formerly contained the shrine of the saint, directly under the high altar of the church above. The crypt, being some feet below the sea level, was subject to so frequent inundations that in the sixteenth century it was abandoned, and remained closed for three hundred years. It has lately been taken in hand,—its floor raised considerably, and modern methods employed to exclude the water, with complete success. A smaller

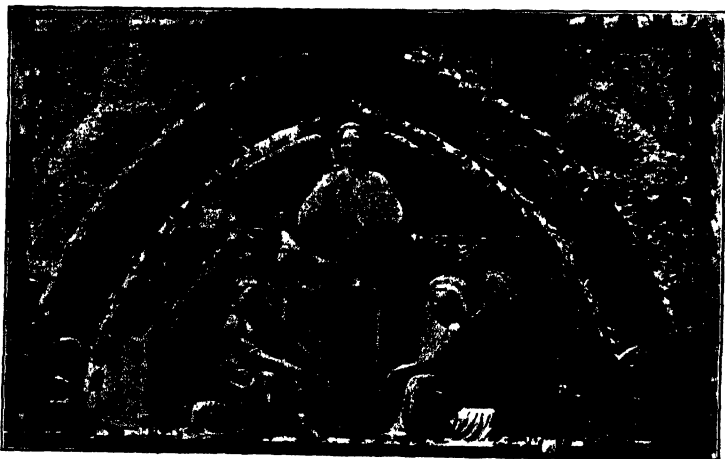


Fig. 190. Doorway Arch of House in Fond. Pesaro.

and lower crypt, two bays deep and three broad, was discovered in 1890, extending under a portion of the crossing. (Fig. 194.) The choir and its aisles are closed by a screen of columns on high pedestals carrying a horizontal entablature surmounted by a close range of statues.

The church, as consecrated in 1094, had probably an outer porch or narthex on the western end, covering the breadth of nave and aisles, with an open gallery above it. This porch appears to have been rebuilt in whole or in part

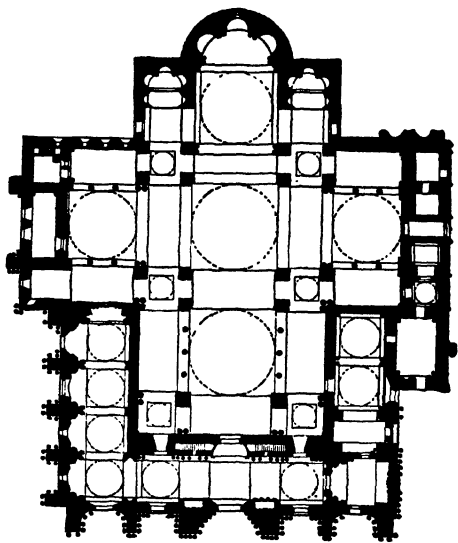


Fig. 191. Plan of St. Mark's, Venice.

during the twelfth century, and to have been extended so as to enclose the nave and aisles on both sides, and to abut against the walls of the transepts. The portion of it adjacent to the south aisle was at some date not now discoverable made into a chapel dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and used as the baptistery of the church. The remaining portion, covering the front and north side, is divided by pointed arches into square bays, each covered by a low dome. Three doorways in the front portion enter the nave and aisles of the church, and a fourth in the northern portion enters the transept.

It is this extraordinary porch which gives to the exterior of St. Mark's its altogether unexampled aspect. The principal front presents an arcade of five broad and lofty round arches, covering recesses of great depth, of which the central and two end recesses are nearly semicircular in plan, the intermediate ones square, but all ornamented by a multitudinous array of columns in two stages, covering the jambs and faces of the piers. The shafts are of very various kinds of marble, porphyry, alabaster, and verde antique, and of various sizes and shapes, round and polygonal, smooth and fluted, — most of them brought from the East in obedience to the command of the Senate, — many bearing Armenian and Syriac inscriptions engraved in the stone. The capitals are all of white marble, but of

an inexhaustible variety of form and design. The central arch is much the largest of the arcade, having a diameter of about thirty feet, and is surrounded with a broad archivolt of extremely rich and beautiful carving, cutting up through the long balustrade which surmounts the arcade. All the arches enclose square doorways with stilted arched heads, some round, others pointed, — the doorways closed by bronze doors, their arched heads filled with window tracery, over which, and filling the head of the great arch, are mosaic pictures. This great arcade is flanked at either end by a small supplementary arch projecting beyond the line of the façade, and treated like the great arches of the centre. The first story occupies perhaps two thirds of the height of the façade. Above it — the long balustrade forming a strong line of demarcation between the two stories — is a range of five round arches answering to those below, but treated, so far as the arches themselves are concerned, with much greater simplicity. The central opening, much broader and higher than the rest, is entirely filled by a great window through which a flood of light is admitted to the nave, and in front of which stand the four colossal bronze horses brought in 1204 from the hippodrome at Constantinople. Over the crown of the arch is the lion of St. Mark on a blue ground of mosaic studded with golden stars.

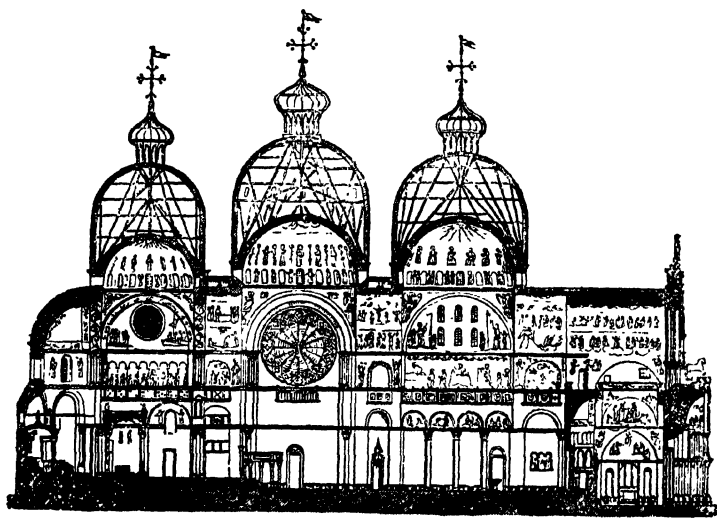


Fig. 192. Longitudinal Section of St. Mark's.



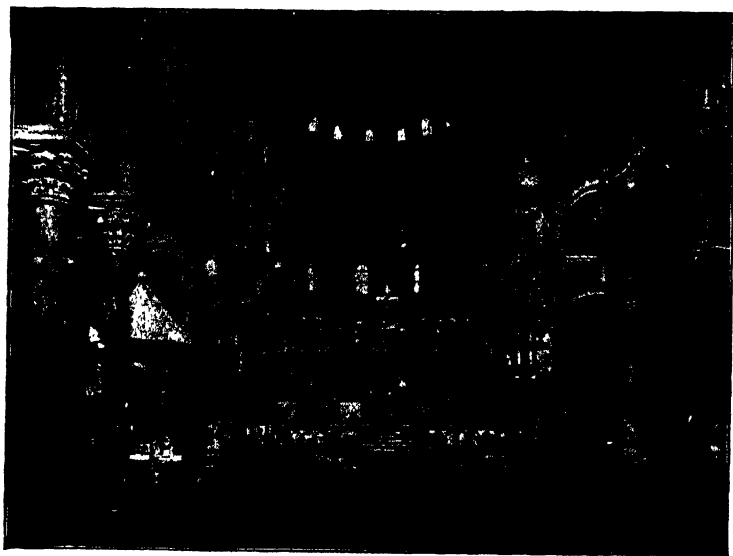


Fig. 193. Interior of St. Mark's.

The four lesser arches enclose each a small, plain, round-headed window, the head of the arch being filled with mosaic. All the arches are surrounded by carved archivolt, — that of the central arch much the largest and richest, — and all are surmounted by ogee gables decorated with wildly extravagant crockets, consisting of statues and masses of foliage, and terminated by finials carrying statues. Between the gables and at the angles of the façade are tall pinnacles with arched canopies enclosing statues and capped with spires. Behind these rise the five domes of varying sizes and heights, covered with metal, and crowned with fantastic, bulbous cupolas. The effect of the whole is one of indescribable strangeness, as far removed from the soaring majesty of the Northern cathedrals as from the noble simplicity and repose of the Greek temples; yet from neither of these does one receive a more profound or lasting impression.

On the flanks of the church the architecture of the façade is continued as far as the transepts. Thence eastward the decoration in great measure ceases, the lower portion, as high as the balustrade, being faced with thin slabs of marble, and ornamented with a great variety of fragments of parti-colored marbles, bas-reliefs, and mosaics, mostly disposed in panels; while the upper portions are of rude brickwork, plastered and without ornament. The north transept has

a broad recess covered by a high pointed arch. The south transept has a great rose window with thin Gothic tracery, quite out of keeping with anything else in the church.

In the matter of decoration, whether of form or color, St. Mark's is a storehouse of the most infinitely varied and richest examples of Byzantine art. Not even in S. Sofia at Constantinople, the central and typical monument of the Byzantine style, is the ornament either so profuse, so varied, or of such uniformly high character. Every form of sculptural decoration which I have spoken of in the preceding pages, — the capitals, the archivolts, the spandrels, the detached panels in the walls, the parapets, — all are represented here by examples of the most interesting and characteristic description.

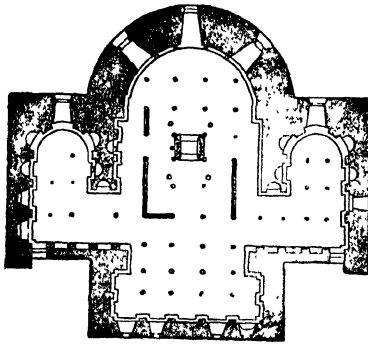


Fig. 194. St. Mark's. Plan of Crypt.

Of the capitals many are of more or less classic form, generally of the Corinthian type, but with the Byzantine feeling showing itself in the freer and less conventional leafage. Of the fully developed Byzantine capitals all the various classes are exemplified, — the most simple as well as the richest, — the convex block capital, its outline a simple curve, with its face covered with acanthus leafage; the finer form with the profile of a cyma-recta, often divided ver-

vertically into well-defined sections, giving to its intricate foliage the most admirable effects of light and shade (Fig. 197 A); the still finer development, in which the outline becomes a double cyma (Fig. 197 B); the various basket capitals, sometimes changing from the circle at the shaft to the square at the abacus by absolutely straight lines, sometimes taking the cushion form for half its height, with the braided or basket work covering so much of its surface, while the upper half is of a quite different character (Fig. 197 D); a capital in the porch, where the angles are occupied by birds with their spread wings nearly meeting in the centre of the faces (Fig. 197 C). A singular form from the exterior of the church is represented in Figure 197 F, the outline changing from the circle to the square by straight lines, but with the angles scarcely marked at all, except slightly at the top by a large leaf folded back against the sides, which are covered with leafage and fruit. This example shows well

a marked characteristic of Byzantine carving, the drill-holes, which give a peculiar piquancy and force to its foliage. In some instances, an octagonal shaft is crowned by a capital, which changes from the octagon to the square at the abacus by means of flat triangular faces at the angles, all the faces being covered with an interlacing pattern nearly or quite detached from the bell.



Fig. 195. Interior of Narthex, St. Mark's.

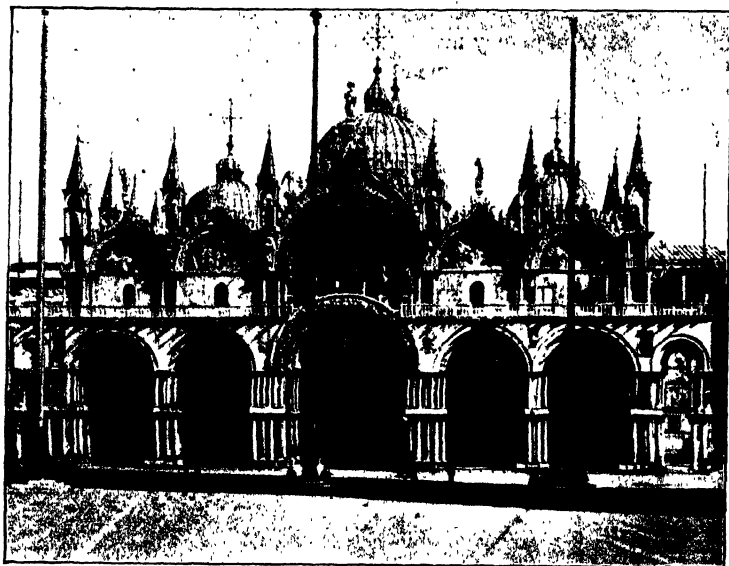


Fig. 196. Venice. Church of St. Mark's.

The stilt-block had well-nigh disappeared before St. Mark's was built, but it is still to be seen, though partially disguised, over some of the interior columns of the porch. The square bays into which the porch is divided are separated by very broad and low pointed arches, which spring on the outer wall from piers, and on the inner wall next the church from pairs of coupled columns. Under the two arches which enclose the central compartment of the front, which are broader than the rest, these pairs are doubled, and the columns have small Ionic capitals without the usual abacus, crowned by an immense stilt-block with four trapezoidal faces covered with elaborate and beautiful leafage, with a cross in the centre of the principal face. A cornice of four highly decorated members joins the stilt-blocks of each pair of columns, and from it springs the broad transverse arch, in the soffit of which, between the two pairs of columns, is a small spherical niche surrounded by an enriched archivolt, and itself decorated with a radiating motive. The composition is one of the most beautiful to be found in the whole church. (Fig. 198.) A similar coupling of columns, their capitals united by a cornice, is seen in the apse.

The archivolts surrounding the great central arches of the porch

in both stories, and the inner arches of the doorways, are masterpieces of decorative sculpture. The construction of these archivolts and of the soffits which join them is such as invites ornament. Two broad thin plates of marble at right angles to each other, the angle marked commonly by a simple roll moulding, sometimes by the Venetian dentil, the outer plate generally enclosed by a strong cavetto, enriched by the addition of a dentil or other ornament—such is the typical form

of this most characteristic feature. We have seen it employed as the central decoration of the private houses of

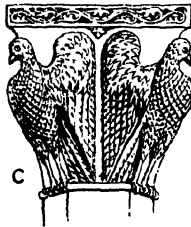
Venice at about the same time as at St. Mark's, but here it reached, as we should expect, a more complete and striking development; in the central arch the archivolt is about forty-two inches broad. (Fig. 199.) In the central doorway beneath it, the jambs have three orders of columns, from which spring three concentric archivolts. The middle one is plain, but the other two, each having a



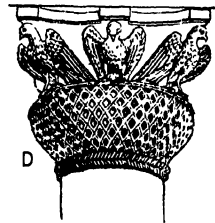
A



B



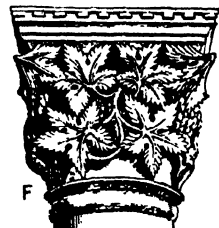
C



D



E



F

Fig. 197. Capitals from St. Mark's.

breadth of about twenty-one inches, are covered with sculpture in relief of great richness and beauty. The two bands are absolutely different in character. In the inner one, a strong stem, upborne in the outstretched hands of a figure bestriding a grotesque beast at

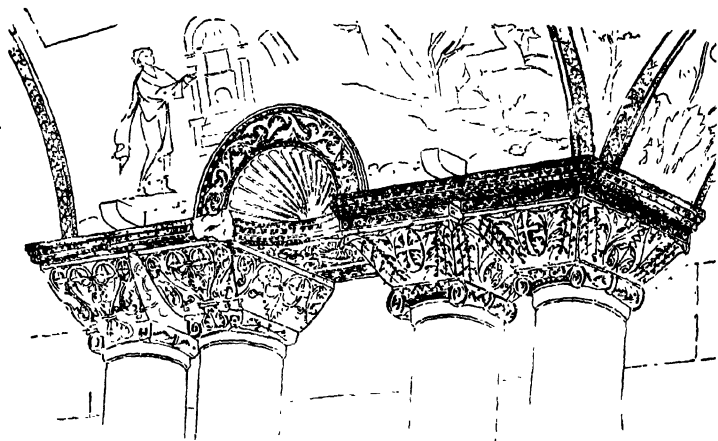


Fig. 198. St. Mark's. Capitals in Porch.

the spring of the arch on either side, twists itself into an interlacing pattern with men, women, and children in various action, mingled with birds, animals, and foliage. In the other band is a series of single female figures holding open scrolls, and following the curve of the arch, much as the canopied saints in the vault of a Gothic doorway. But the skill and the artistic sense which govern the composition are not Gothic but Greek. The first four figures on each side are standing; then, as the curve approaches the horizontal, the next figures recline, and still higher are seated, the crown of the arch being occupied by a symmetrical group of figures forming a centre of the whole composition. The soffits of these arches are also sculptured. In the two doorways on either side of the centre, the arch and its spandrels are enclosed in a square, and the sculpture, both in the spandrels and the archivolts, is relieved against a ground of mosaic, golden in some instances,<sup>1</sup> and in others of varied colors. It is hard to imagine any architectural decoration carried to a higher pitch of delicacy and beauty. (Fig. 200.) On the northern side of the porch, the easternmost arch, which contains the entrance doorway, has a broad archivolt, which, as well as the soffit, is covered with sculpture of great richness, and beneath it, the arch immediately covering the head of the doorway, which is of Arabian form, and a smaller and similar arch within it, of which the tympanum is filled with a fine figure subject in relief, are both enclosed within archivolts of a character similar to that of the great arch above them.

<sup>1</sup> As in the first door on left from centre. See *Stones of Venice*, v. 2, pl. 6.

The interior of the church shows much less exuberance of sculptural decoration than the exterior. The columns of the screens which separate the nave and transepts from the aisles have capitals which follow pretty closely the Corinthian type, and were probably taken from a building of ancient date; but the capitals of the few columns attached to the walls, which carry the transverse arches which span the aisles, are distinctly Byzantine, and of various design,



Fig. 190. St. Mark's. Central Arch of Façade.

but in no case of especial interest. The same may be said of the capitals of the choir screens. The columns of the two hexagonal ambons, which stand in front of the choir, have, singularly enough, capitals quite without decoration. The most interesting example of sculpture within the church is perhaps the small arcade under the choir screen, which closes the upper portion of the crypt, and which is believed to have formed a part of the church of 976. It consists of stunted octagonal columns with somewhat rude capitals half as high as the shafts, carrying flat stilt-blocks, from which spring round arches with roll mouldings and narrow decorated archivolt. The spandrils are covered with delicate and graceful bas-reliefs of foliage, flowers, and fruit

of most varied design and thoroughly Byzantine in character.

There is nothing in the interior of the church which answers at all to the magnificent archivolt which form so prominent a feature of the exterior decoration. The arches of the screens are surrounded only by simple mouldings.

Beyond what I have mentioned, the chief sculptural decoration of the interior of St.

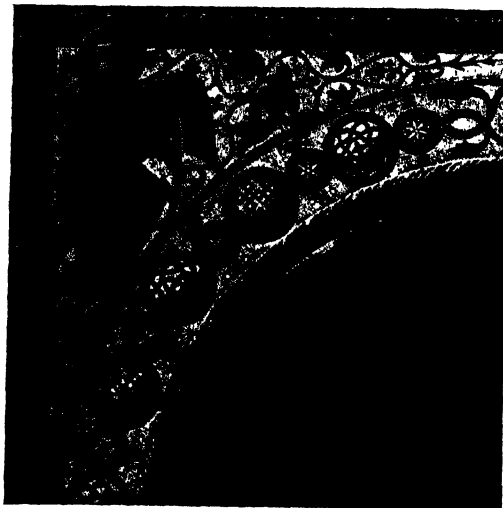


Fig. 200. St. Mark's. Mosaic and Sculpture in Arches.

Mark's is in the various parapets of choir, galleries, and ambons. Many of these are doubtless preserved from the ruins of the older church of the tenth century, and vary greatly in character and design. The parapets are commonly divided into panels forming nearly or quite a double square, with a sculptured panel often enclosed by a braided band, or a border of leafage. The panels are filled sometimes with acanthus leafage, often growing from a vase in the centre, and often mingled with flowers and fruit of quite other plants, roses, grapes, pineapples, palms, etc., and with figures of birds and animals, as peacocks, doves, lions, hares, etc.

But if the interior of St. Mark's is inferior to the exterior in the



amount and interest of its sculpture, the balance is fully restored by the extent and magnificence of its mosaics. The walls are faced to the height of the nave screens with slabs of a pale marble to which age has imparted a mellow tone. Above this both walls and vaults throughout the church, including those of the nar-

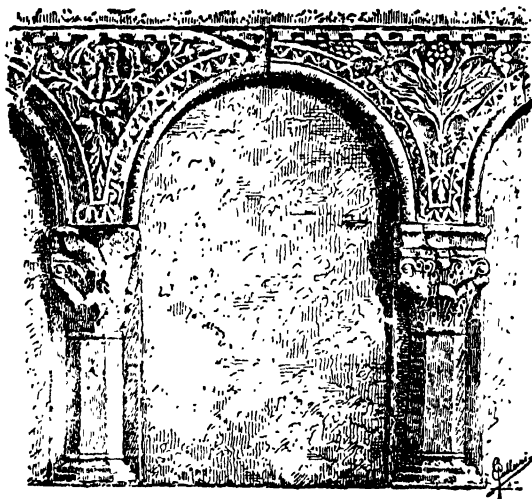


Fig. 201. St. Mark's. Arcade under Choir Screen.

thex, are covered with gold mosaics, of which the greater portion belong to the period just following the completion of the church, while some are as late as the sixteenth century. The earliest, though comparatively rude in execution (or perhaps because of that fact), are by far the more interesting and admirable, as adapted to their



Fig. 202. St. Mark's. Panel of Parapet.

purpose of surface decoration. The setting is irregular, and the pieces are surrounded by a broad joint of white plaster. But the pictorial subjects are treated with simplicity and grandeur, the colors are at once rich and harmonious, and the effect of the whole interior, thus decorated, is one of overwhelming solemnity and splendor. The color decoration is so universal throughout the church, that it can hardly be said as in most churches to culminate at any special point. But in the choir the beauty of the architectural forms is so perfect—the great semi-dome of the apse with the three niches in the wall below; and the barrel-vaults of the flanking aisles with their broad galleries, all dominated by the dome of the choir—that the mosaic, which (at least in the apse) has a sweeter blending of colors and a more delicate harmony than elsewhere, produces here a stronger and deeper impression than in any other portion of the church.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CENTRAL ROMANESQUE

I HAVE spoken of the striking differences in style and construction between the churches of the more strictly Lombard cities of the North, from the eighth to the twelfth centuries, and the contemporary churches of the cities lying a little to the south of this region. If we go a little farther in this direction, as far as Tuscany, the contrast is much more marked. Here the differences are fundamental, and are difficult to account for on any ground of origin or character in the population. Difference in character there doubtless was, and in later centuries, of which the records are less scanty, it was, in part at least, easy to recognize and define. But the distinctions between the cities, as we see them in later days, were such as were developed under conditions of which we have no reason to assume the existence before the beginning of the twelfth century.

At the end of the tenth century the feudal system was in full swing all over Europe. Italy was governed, from Friuli in the north to Salerno and Benevento in the south, chiefly by hereditary dukes, vassals of the Empire, whose energies were for the most part fully employed in fighting the various foreign invaders, — Hungarians in Lombardy, Saracens in South Italy, Byzantines on the eastern coast. It was not until the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the Northern cities began to erect themselves into independent republics with distinct and emphatic national traits and modes of life. Yet in the cities of Central Italy, — in Pisa, Lucca, Florence, Pistoia, Toscanella, — the churches which were built in the eighth and ninth centuries, or even earlier, but which were in most cases partially rebuilt during the eleventh, present, as I have said, radical differences in plan, construction, and design, from the nearly contemporary churches of the Lombard cities a little to the north.

Lucca and Pisa are especially rich in examples of these early churches, contemporary or nearly so with San Ambrogio of Milan and San Michele of Pavia, and covering the period between the beginning of the eighth and the end of the eleventh century, — a period

*Decline of  
the feudal  
system.*

which saw the decline and extinction of the Lombard rule in Italy, the establishment of the Carolingian power, the distribution of the more important cities among the great feudatories of the crown, and the beginning of the long and bitter quarrel between the emperors and the popes, which for centuries transformed the Italian cities into fortified camps, and kept their population in a state of perpetual warfare.

The rude and formless exterior of rough hewn stones, the heavy interior piers with their massive arches, the vaulted naves, the low clerestory of the Lombard churches are replaced in these more southern cities by exteriors of marble whose forms express accurately the interior disposition, by the thin arcades with long lines of classic columns, by the wooden roofs and the high clerestory of the Roman basilicas. Whereas in the Lombard churches the only decoration was the sculpture, and this was of ex-

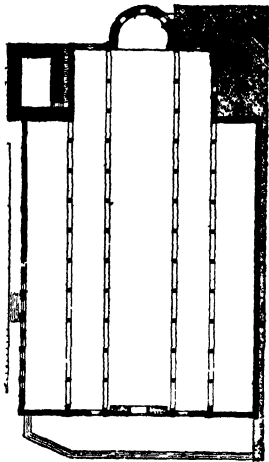
traordinary vigor and variety and individualism, though extremely rude in execution, in the Tuscan the sculpture is rare, and for the most part conventional in character, but of extreme delicacy of execution; while the love of the Italian for warmth and glow of color leads him to the use of varied materials of contrasting tones.

In Lucca the earliest church now existing is San Frediano, of which the foundation goes back to 690, or even earlier, to 570, when the first church was built on that site. It can scarcely be regarded as a typical church of the seventh century, in view of the strange transformations through which it has passed. It is a five-aisled basilica, and stood originally without the walls;

Fig. 203. Lucca. S. Frediano.

but when in the eleventh century the old walls were destroyed and a new circuit built, enclosing a part of the suburbs, San Frediano was brought within the city. Its orientation was then reversed, and a new apse built at the west end, the old one being removed, and the outer aisles divided into chapels. The square tower which flanked the west front before the reversal still stands, — the lower portion being probably a part of the church of 690, — the upper part dating from the twelfth century. But in spite of all the changes it has under-

Character  
of the early  
churches.



San  
Frediano,  
Lucca.

gone, the interior is still an interesting example of the Northern basilic church. (Fig. 203.) It is about two hundred and seven feet long, and eighty feet wide; its nave and aisles are separated by lines of antique columns, eleven in number, of unequal sizes, and with capitals of varying design, carrying simple round arches, with a high clerestory above, pierced by small, plain, round-arched windows, and covered by a wooden roof, of which the timbers were originally carved and gilded, but which has been renewed in recent times. The ancient church had no transept, but the similitude of a transept has been created by the removal of the three first columns in each line at the eastern or entrance end of the church, and

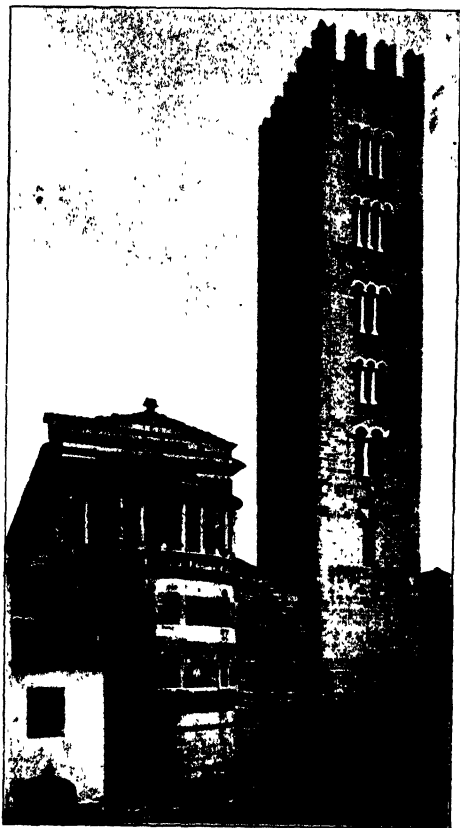


Fig. 204. Lucca. S. Frediano. West End.

the conversion of that portion of the outer aisles to the westward of these columns into chapels. There is nothing in this simple and primitive interior which shows in any way the influence of the Lombard architecture which prevailed at the time of its erection in the cities a hundred miles to the north; little, indeed, to distinguish it from the basilicas of Rome. The same may be said of Sant' Andrea of Pistoia, dating from about the middle of the eighth century, and of SS. Apostoli of Florence, said to have been built by Charlemagne about fifty years later. Both were largely rebuilt in the eleventh or twelfth century. Both have the rectangular three-aisled basilican plan, with arcades supported on more or less classic col-

umns, the nave terminating in a round apse. Neither of these churches has a projecting transept, but in Sant' Andrea the two westernmost bays of the aisles are made a choir, and enclosed, a square pier being substituted for the column on each side the nave.<sup>1</sup>

San Pietro a Grado near Pisa (Fig. 205)

*Pisa.* is of the same family with those just mentioned, dating probably from the beginning of the ninth century, and built originally with a western apse and with the front to the east, but reversed about the end of the century, when the church was lengthened by the addition of five bays, and three new apses built at the east end; but the original apse remained. In the nave arcades, the voussoirs are alternately of black and white marble, the spandrils are decorated with roundels, and the whole surface of wall above the arcades is covered with early frescoes.

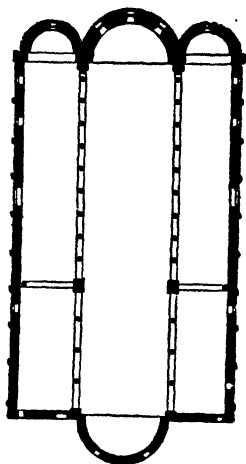


Fig. 205. Pisa. S. Pietro a Grado.

At Toscanella the two remarkable churches of Santa Maria and San Pietro, both of great antiquity, — the former going back to 595, the latter some thirty years later, — were both rebuilt in the eleventh century, but retain substantially the original plan and interior disposition. Both churches show the same adherence

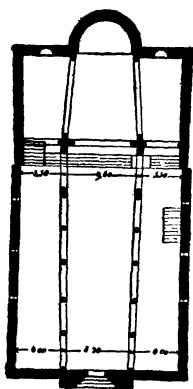


Fig. 206. Toscanella. S. Pietro.

to the basilican plan which we have remarked in the early churches of Lucca and Pisa, but with some interesting modifications. The nave and aisles are separated by simple arcades with columns, in the one church of five bays, in the other of six, which terminate in two massive piers which support transverse arches across the nave and aisles, the central one of which has somewhat the character of the triumphal arch of the Roman basilicas. Beyond these arches is a broad transept not projecting beyond the aisle walls, divided into three portions by single arches in the line of the nave arcades. The central division has a semicircular apse, of nearly the full width of the nave; in San Pietro the side divi-

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, p. 291.

sions have apsidal niches. The floor of the transept is raised some feet above that of the nave, and beneath it is a fine crypt. These churches must be among the earliest examples of a vaulted crypt occupying the whole space beneath the transept. In San Pietro (Fig. 206) the arches of the transept converge sharply towards the east end, for what reason does not appear, and in Santa Maria there is a slight convergence of the side walls of the aisles, but this is probably accidental.<sup>1</sup>

These interesting interiors are less similar in design than in plan. In the older church the columns are alike in size, and their capitals



Fig. 207. Toscanella. S. Pietro.

are Corinthian. The arcades are surmounted by a moulded cornice with carved consoles, above which is a comparatively low clerestory, with a single small round-arched window over each arch. In San Pietro (Fig. 207) the nave arches rest on stout columns of various sizes, without bases, and with capitals of varying design. Between the columns of each arcade runs a continuous bench of stone, which shuts off the aisle. Above the arches rises a high blank clerestory wall, which has just under the roof a continuous blind arcade of small arches on a moulded string-course, four of the arches being pierced by windows.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dehio and Van Bezold.

<sup>2</sup> Mothes, pp. 396-370.

But the churches thus far spoken of are exceptional in their plan. The churches which are most characteristic of the central Romanesque, which found its culmination in the cathedral of Pisa, follow in plan the great basilicas of St. Peter, St. Paul, and the Lateran, with fully developed projecting transepts, but, unlike these, divided, by a single broad arch in the line of each of the nave arcades, into three divisions, and with a broad apse opening from its centre.

In Lucca Santa Maria Fuorcivitas (Fig. 208), San Giovanni and San Michele (Fig. 224), and in Pisa San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno (Fig. 209), are examples. All except the last are of the eighth century, San Paolo being a hundred years later. They are all more or less classic in detail, with Corinthian columns carrying absolutely simple round arches without mouldings, a small round-headed clerestory window over each arch, resting in Santa Maria Fuorcivitas on a thin moulded string, the string being

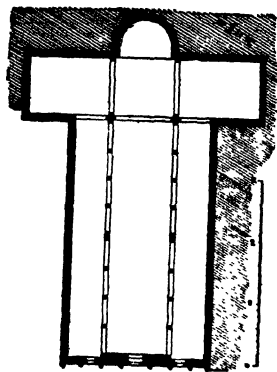


Fig. 208. Lucca. Santa Maria Fuorcivitas.

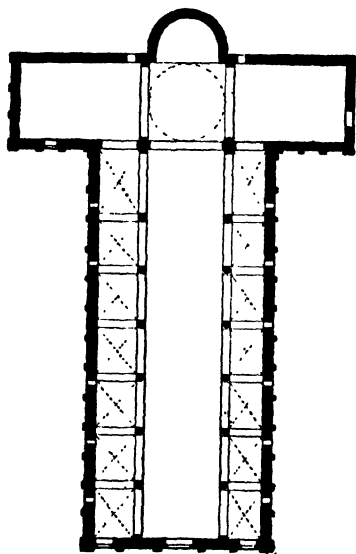


Fig. 209. Pisa. S. Paolo a Ripa d'Arno.

in the other examples below the windows. The nave arcades terminate at the transept in a pier, whose plan is a square with a pilaster or engaged column on each face, and from which arches spring across nave, aisles, and transept.

Note here a step in the development of plan which is important, the continuation of the nave arcades by a single great arch spanning the transept, and dividing it into three square bays, — an arrangement never seen in the Roman basilicas, but of which examples are to be found in some early Eastern churches, as the Holy Apostles at Constantinople, the church of the

The basilican plan still the rule.

But modified in treatment.



Holy Sepulchre at Bethlehem, and others.

It is an arrangement adopted frequently in the Romanesque churches of Normandy and in the contemporary churches of Southern Italy. In the former it leads naturally to the covering of the central division of the transept by the low square tower so characteristic of the Norman churches. In Italy it led equally logically to the high dome with drum, which became in the eleventh century the great distinguishing feature of the Pisan Romanesque architecture, or to the octagonal lantern

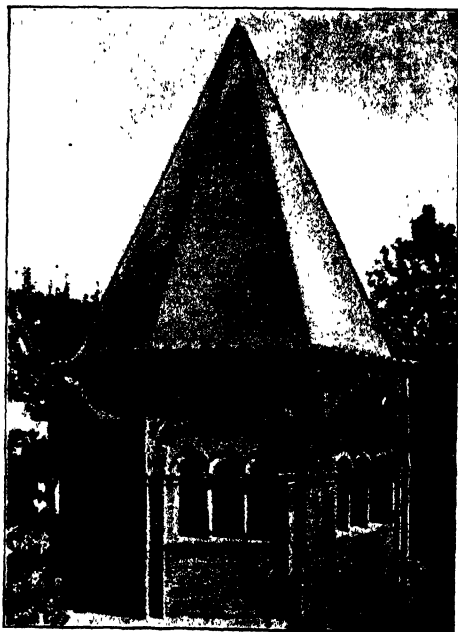


Fig. 210. Pisa. S. Agata.

of the Lombard. The earliest example of the dome as resulting from the plan is San Paolo a Ripa.

All roofs were of wood and without ceilings, but in San Paolo a Ripa an exception is seen, perhaps a change from the original construction. The aisles are divided by transverse arches into square groined bays, and the square of the crossing is covered by a dome, prefiguring the arrangement adopted two centuries later in the cathedral.

The greater part of the early churches were, as I have said, rebuilt or restored more or less completely during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the exterior which we see to-day is as a rule largely the work of the later builders, and follows in design, as we shall see, the later fashions. But to this rule we see a notable exception in San Pietro a Grado at Pisa, which, surrounded by churches of the later Romanesque style, still retains its Lombard exterior, and might stand at Milan or Pavia, the walls of aisles, clerestory, and apses being divided into bays, not by pilasters and arches, but by flat pilaster strips joined by arched

Lombard  
character  
in the  
exteriors.

corbel-tables, the latter feature being carried up the slopes of the gables in the true Lombard style.<sup>1</sup>

The same may be said of two small octagonal churches also at Pisa, Sant' Agata and San Sepolcro (Figs. 210, 211, 212), both

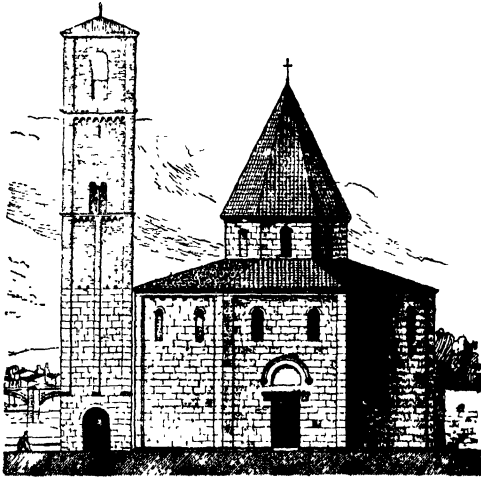


Fig. 211. Pisa. S. Sepolcro.

thoroughly Lombard monuments. In the former, the inside diameter is about twenty-three feet; there is no division of the interior: the angles of the exterior are marked by pilaster strips, joined at the eaves by an arched corbel-table; in each face of the octagon is a triple-arch window with mid-wall shafts and round bearing arch; the walls are of brick, and carry a high pitched

octagonal roof. San Sepolcro, perhaps fifty years later than Sant' Agata, was built as a Templar church on the return of some of the Pisan Crusaders about 1120, with an inner octagon thirty feet in diameter, of high pointed arches, springing from strong piers, covered by a dome, and a very broad and high surrounding aisle covered by a wooden lean-to roof.

The tenth century appears to have been all over Europe a period of inaction and of suspense. Few churches were built, and few enterprises of moment undertaken.<sup>2</sup> The records of this century, which may be regarded as the darkest period of the dark ages, are extremely scanty; <sup>3</sup> but it seems certain that a belief in the approaching end of the world was very prevalent, and that the year 1000 was to bring the moment of annihilation. That critical moment once passed in safety, confidence

Revival of building in the eleventh century.

<sup>1</sup> R. de Fleury, *Mon. de Pise*, p. 38, pl. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Förster (*Geschichte der Ital. Kunst*, i. 132-134) says the rebuilding of S. John Lateran, begun in 904, was the only considerable work of architecture undertaken in Rome during the tenth century.

<sup>3</sup> Hallam says, "The darkness of the tenth century, no contemporary historian dissipates." *Middle Ages*, i. 221.

returned,<sup>1</sup> and the next two centuries saw a great revival of activity in all directions. All over Italy the old churches were everywhere restored or enlarged or wholly rebuilt, and new churches were founded generally on a more splendid scale than had been attempted hitherto.<sup>2</sup>

In Pisa, which all through the Lombard and Frank-

Greatness  
of Pisa.

ish domination had approached perhaps more nearly

than any other Italian city to an independent existence, and which, by virtue of its position and the restless energy of its people, had created and maintained a foreign commerce far in advance of any of its rivals, the civic spirit of the people was stimulated to the highest point during the eleventh century by the constant wars in which the city was engaged. The long struggle with Lucca, which was to last, with varying fortune and with intervals of uneasy peace, for nearly four hundred years, began in 1003. More important still

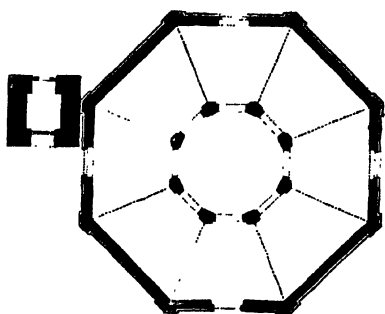


Fig. 212. Pisa. S. Sepolero.

<sup>1</sup> "Now when the third year after the aforementioned one thousandth year was drawing nigh, men began, all over the world, but particularly in Italy and Gaul, to renew the edifices of the church, although the greater portion of them were so noble as not to require such renewal. But every nation was emulous that it might possess a nobler temple than any other. And it was as if the world gathered itself together, and put away its old age, to clothe itself in a white vestment of churches. And in the end, almost all the cathedrals, village churches, and chapels of monasteries were made over by the faithful into something better." Raoul Glaber, *Hist.*

<sup>2</sup> The question is often asked: how was the money provided for the building of all the costly churches which arose out of the poverty and torpor of the dark ages? The question is easily answered. The Church of Rome had been, even in the earliest centuries of its history, under the Pagan emperors, a comparatively wealthy body. But from the time of Constantine the conditions were favorable to a very rapid increase of its wealth. Constantine, by a special edict issued from Milan in 313, made it permissible for private persons to bequeath property to the church and for the church to hold property in land. This edict was followed by an express and rigid prohibition for the church to alienate any portion of its possessions. From this time a continual stream flowed into its treasury from all quarters of the Christian world. Lands were given to the bishops or to monasteries by princes and lords, many of whom entered the cloister, and either surrendered their property at once or bequeathed it when they died. All sorts of contributions were levied on the faithful, — the most fruitful occasions being masses for the dead and prayers for souls in purgatory. It is estimated that at the end of the tenth century, — the period of which I have just been speaking, — the church owned in France and England about one fifth, and in Germany about one third, of all the land. See Lacroix, *Vie mil. et rel. du Moyen Age*, p. 12; Hallam, *Middle Ages*, vol. i. p. 500.

was her vigorous and determined resistance to the Saracens, now firmly established in Sicily, and for a time in Sardinia, and making constant attacks upon the Italian coast cities. This struggle was maintained by Pisa with great energy and almost single-handed throughout the eleventh century, beginning in 1004, when a quarter of the town was sacked by the invaders, and culminating — though by no means ceasing — with the brilliant capture of Palermo in 1062. From this exploit the Pisan fleet returned in triumph, bringing a great wealth of booty; and it was in the first flush of pride and thanksgiving for their amazing success that the citizens began the next year the building of the great cathedral which is the type of the Central Romanesque, and which remains to-day one of the noblest churches in Europe.

Along with the warlike enterprises of the Pisans went a similarly bold and adventurous commerce, which carried their vessels into all the waters of the Levant, and of which the fruits enriched the city beyond all other towns of Italy. The Pisans were thus in a position to carry out their pious project, unvexed by considerations of economy,<sup>1</sup> and the work was begun in 1063.

The plan (Fig. 213) was conceived on a scale of which the only examples hitherto had been the great Roman basilicas of Pisa Cathedral. St. Peter and St. Paul. It is a Latin cross, of which the longer arm measures about 320 feet in length by 115 feet in breadth, while the transept is 230 feet long and 60 broad. It is a five-aisled church, the nave about 45 feet wide from centre to centre of the nave columns, and the side aisles about 16 feet wide, the inner rows running across the transept to the east wall of the church, as in S. Martino at Lucca, while the outer rows turn and flank the transept. The columns of the nave arcades are of unpolished granite, those of transept and choir of marble, with Corinthian capitals, carrying rather narrow round arches of white marble perfectly plain. Above is a triforium arcade composed of square piers over the columns below, joined by round bearing arches, each enclosing two smaller round arches divided by a small column. Above this again is the unbroken clerestory wall, of white marble with narrow courses of black, and pierced by single narrow arched windows, nine in number, placed without relation to the nave arches. The nave is covered by a flat wooden ceiling, panelled and decorated with gold and color. The

<sup>1</sup> Yet they seem to have come to the end of their resources before the work was finished, for we are told that the Emperor Alexis I. sent over certain funds in 1090 for the completion of the cathedral. Mothes, p. 726.

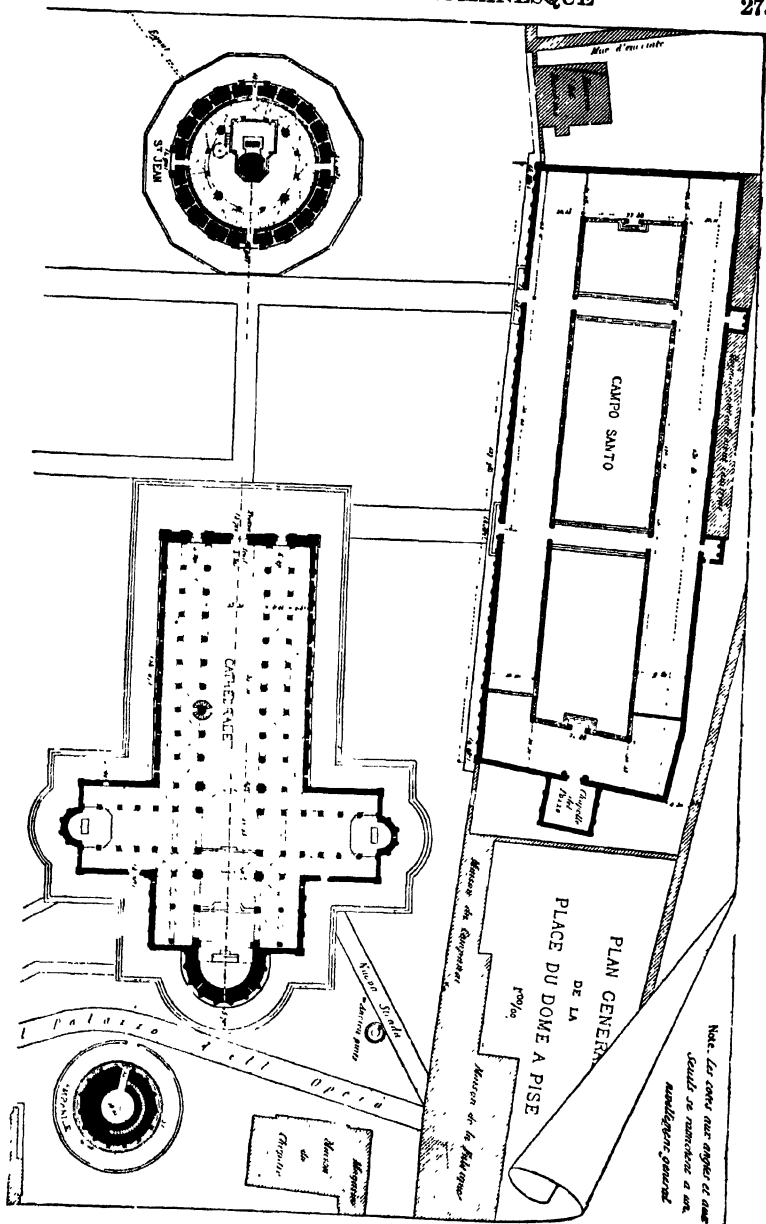


Fig. 213. The Pisa Group.

aisles are covered by groined vaults without ribs, and the inner and outer aisles are separated by arcades of pointed arches, but with smaller and lower columns than those of the nave arcades. Over the aisles is a triforium gallery unvaulted, with a ceiling like that of the nave, the inner and outer galleries being separated like the aisles below by arcades, composed in this case of groups of four arches on columns, separated by square piers set over each alternate column of the lower arcade of the aisles. These galleries are of unusual height, and the outer one is lighted by windows in the aisle wall. The bays of the transept aisles are separated by transverse arches and covered by barrel vaults. Those of the long arm are not separated, and are groined. The choir has two bays before the apse, and is flanked by two aisles on either side like the nave. But the vaulting of these is in two groined bays instead of four.

I have said that the earlier and smaller churches of Pisa and Lucca followed in their plan the early Roman basilicas, — the transept forming with the nave and aisles not a cross, but a T. The builders of the cathedral, while governed in other respects by the example set by Rome, followed in their plan the fashion of the Lombard churches so far as to complete the cross by continuing the nave and all its aisles for two bays beyond the crossing, forming a choir of which the central aisle terminates in a semicircular apse covered by a hemispherical vault. The central aisle of the transept has a similar termination at each end, and it is to be noted that the transept, through its extraordinary length, its flanking aisles, and its apsidal terminations, is developed to an importance scarcely found, so far as I know, in any other church in Italy. The crossing, an oblong space forty by fifty-five feet, bounded on the east and west by high pointed arches, is covered by an elliptical dome, pointed in section, and raised on a low drum lighted by small square windows, the transition from the square to the elliptical plan being made by means of simple squinches. The windows of the church are mostly filled with stained or painted glass, much of it of ancient date.

The first impression which we get from this great and splendid interior is of the mingling of two opposite streams of influence. Its inspiration is in the first instance clearly classical, like that of the earlier Pisan churches, and derived from the early basilicas of Rome; yet another influence carries it far beyond the likeness of any Roman example. The great uninterrupted lines of arcade, with their shafts of polished stone, and their Corinthian capitals, the high clerestory, the panelled and decorated ceiling, are all of Rome. But



Fig. 214. Pisa. Cathedral.

the developed choir beyond the transept, the grouped arches of the triforium, and most of all the central dome above the crossing, prove that the strong Lombard architecture, which had for two centuries been covering the North of Italy with its rude and sombre churches, had not been without its influence. The result of this combination shows how completely the genius of the individual architect was able to fuse the two opposite influences, and to create a work which in its effect resembled neither the Roman nor the Lombard churches, but which possessed a grandeur and a charm wholly its own, and wholly new. The multiplicity of columns, large and small, the varied perspectives obtained by the turning of the outer aisles to follow the transept, the lightness and unusual form of the central dome, the beauty of the materials everywhere employed, and the delicacy and elegance of the details, are together quite without parallel in any contemporary or earlier monument in Italy.

One of the most beautiful and unusual effects is that produced by the closing in of the longer sides of the rectangle at the crossing. The inner aisles with their galleries are, as I have said, continued across the transept, but the composition is varied. The transept is spanned by three unequal arches, the central one much the widest,

with a space of wall above banded, as are all the walls, by thin courses of darker marble, — above which is the triforium carried across as a bridge, with three arches answering in width to those below, but each enclosing a group of smaller arches, four in the central arch and two in the sides. The view of the long three-aisled transept through these two stories of arches is one of the most striking to be found in Italy.

What I have said of the interior of this cathedral is still more emphatically true of the exterior. (Fig. 215.) The Roman basilicas, however “all glorious within,” — to use the words of Mr. Freeman, — are certainly, as regards their exterior, not architecturally imposing. The Lombard churches were as a rule clumsy in outline and rude in execution, and the interest we feel in their exterior architecture, apart from certain characteristic details, comes mainly from the way in which it illustrates the Lombard character, and from the remarkable sculptural decoration with which it is enriched. But the Pisan architect meant that the outer aspect of his temple should worthily answer to the splendor of its interior, and he produced a church, of which one of the most notable merits is the consistency of treatment, by which every portion received its just study and enrichment, — no portion being sacrificed for the benefit of another. This perfection is doubtless due in great part to the fact that the church was built, — not according to the general rule, by fits and starts, — but steadily and rapidly, being completed in every part within less than forty years from the laying of the foundation, and during by far the greater part of that time under the direction of the original architect.

The west front was doubtless, as usual, the latest portion of the work, yet its design must have been fixed from the beginning, since it governs all the rest. It is in five distinct stages of arcades, of which the second rises to the height of the aisle walls, and the third includes the height of the aisle roofs, while the fourth and fifth represent respectively the height of the clerestory wall and the roof of the nave. The first story is a high blind arcade of round arches, seven in number, and of unequal size, springing from engaged columns, whose capitals are of the Corinthian type, but dissimilar, the arch-heads, except the central one, containing each a pattern of marble inlay, alternately round and lozenge-shaped. Three of the intervals are occupied by rather plain square doorways, with classically moulded architraves and entablatures, and surmounted by an arch filled with reliefs. All the other stages of the façade consist of



open arcaded galleries, of nearly equal height, with small round arches springing from shafts of white or gray marbles, whose capitals are joined by lintels to the wall behind, which is pierced by narrow round-arched windows, sometimes single, but generally grouped. The upper two galleries have only the breadth of the nave. The angles of the front and the apex of the low gable are crowned by statues. The spandrils of all the arches above the first story, together with the small portion of wall above them, are adorned with a delicate and beautiful inlay of colored marbles, while the string-courses which separate the stories and the cornice moulding are enriched with sculpture in low relief.

With this beautiful façade the remainder of the exterior is, as I have said, in perfect accord. The high blind arcade of the first story is continued quite around the church, except that on the side apses it is a little lower than elsewhere, a series of square panels being introduced above the arches. The second arcade of the front is represented on the flanks and on the east end by an order of thin pilasters, with a window in every alternate interval, but on the great eastern apse and on the apse of the south transept the arcade of the façade reappears as an open gallery, with a second gallery above without arches. On the high clerestory and on the gable ends of choir and transepts the fourth arcade of the façade is continued. The elliptical dome rests on a low octagonal drum, of which each visible face has a broad round arch springing from angle pilasters.

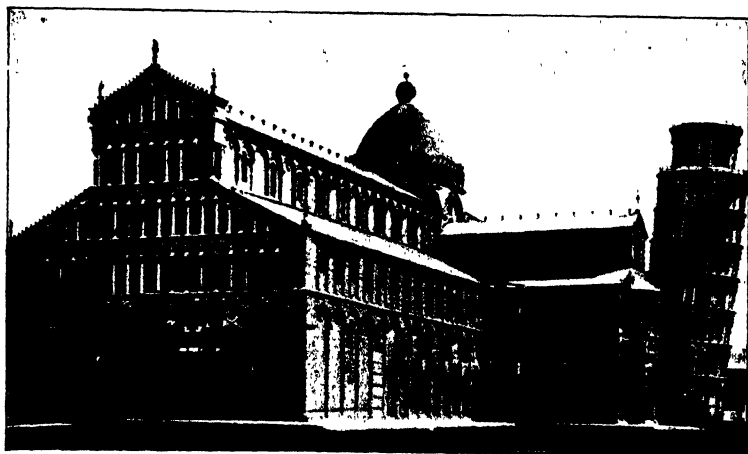


Fig. 215. Pisa. Cathedral and Campanile.

The roofs of the nave and choir abut against and nearly smother the drum, leaving free only the faces towards the transepts, whose roofs are considerably lower than that of the nave. This arrangement produces the one serious defect in this beautiful and nobly consistent design. Above the drum the base of the dome is encircled by a thin fringe of cusped and gabled arches with pinnacles between. This is an addition of the thirteenth century, somewhat out of keeping with the seriousness of the general decoration.

The refinement and elegance which are the chief characteristics of this church are heightened by the material of which it is built. The walls are faced without and within with white marble, of which the brilliancy is softened by occasional thin courses of dark gray marble. This must have been one of the earliest instances in North Italy of the use of marble for the exterior walls, and the suggestion may well have been taken from the Saracens, with whose works, not only in Sicily but in the East, the Pisans had become tolerably well acquainted. The decoration is quite in accordance with the delicacy and fineness of the material. No such architectural ornament had been seen in Italy as the combination of sculpture and marble inlay which enriches the arcades of the façade, though the inlay resembles in character much of that which adorns the accessories of some of the Roman basilicas, the ciboriums, the ambons, the balustrades of the choir, and the like. It is in the sculptures if anywhere in this church that the Byzantine influence is to be looked for which has been so generally recognized. Some of the capitals and imposts, from which spring the arches of the first story, bear groups of figures mingled with the acanthus foliage which are thoroughly Byzantine in character; and to a less degree the same may be said of the string-course over the second arcade, and of the shafts which flank the central doorway.<sup>1</sup> But the extent of the Byzantine influence on this church has been greatly overstated. Whether the architect, Buschetus or Buschetto, was a Greek or an Italian is a question which has been much debated, but as to which the truth will probably never be known. The long and somewhat stilted inscription on the tablet to his memory, which is set against the wall in the northernmost arch of the façade, leaves this point in doubt. If he was a Greek he was certainly not an enthusiastic adherent of the Byzantine theory either of construction or of design. No dome could be less like a Byzantine dome in its plan, its support, its construction or its buttressing than that of Pisa. Nor can any church well be raised on a ground plan

<sup>1</sup> See R. de Fleury, *Mon. de Pise*, pls. 47, 48.

less resembling that of a typical Byzantine church than the Pisa cathedral. Whatever features of the church can reasonably be reckoned as Byzantine are those of detail and of ornament merely, and these are only such as a brilliant architect who had seen foreign parts and studied their architecture might readily adopt, with the intelligent eclecticism of an artist who declines to be bound by tradition, but is ready to adopt and make his own whatever decorative forms he may meet which suit his purpose. We may moreover not unrea-

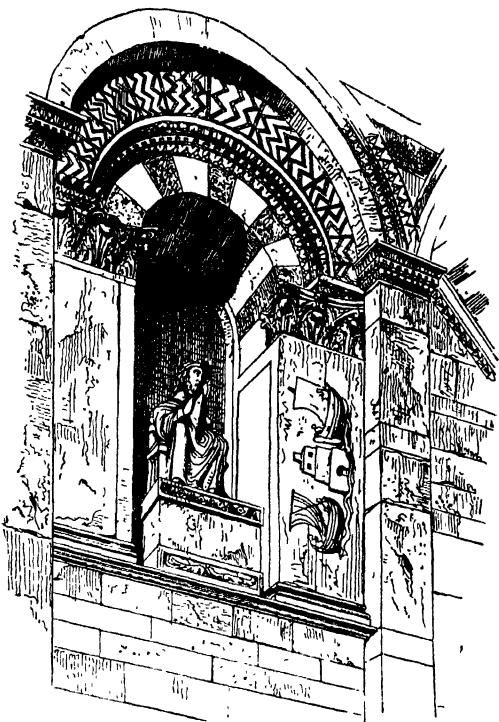


Fig. 216. Pisa. Niche in Apse Wall.

sonably presume that a native Byzantine, loyal to the traditions of his own art, would, even if his plan and construction were prescribed, have left a much stronger Byzantine impress on the general scheme of decoration. The absence of mosaic<sup>1</sup> — to mention only a single feature — is of itself strong evidence against the presumption that the architect was a Greek. On the other hand, the presence of Byzantine sculpture in the decoration of the façade implies nothing more than the employment by the architect of one or more of the Greek artists, of whom great numbers had found occupation in Italy for three hundred years, and whose work is to be seen in numberless churches, of all styles, from the north to the south of the peninsula.

At the death of Buschetto, which occurred in the last years of the eleventh century, the church was nearly finished. But its actual

<sup>1</sup> The mosaics of the apse and choir date only from the beginning of the fourteenth century. They have been attributed to Cimabue.

completion was accomplished under his successor Rainaldo, who seems to have been associated with Buschetto from the first, and whose work is commemorated in an inscription over the first arcade, which seems to indicate that it was he who finished the façade. The church was complete in 1100, but its consecration was deferred until 1118, when the ceremony was performed by Pope Gelesius II.

The building of the campanile was delayed for another half century. Pisa had been giving her attention to the enlargement of her boundaries, which had become too narrow for the growing population. The cathedral and the foundations of the baptistery, which were laid in 1153-54, lay outside the old walls of the city. A new circuit of walls was determined on, which should enclose a broader area and take in the cathedral. The work was given to Bonanno, a citizen of Pisa, and was begun in 1153 and finished in about twenty years, during which time the architect had so far won the confidence of the magistrates that he was entrusted with the building of the great tower. The foundations were begun in 1174. The tower, owing largely to the accident of its remarkable inclination, is one of the most widely known buildings in Europe; but it is notable also by reason of the grace and elegance of its design, and as forming an important part of a particularly noteworthy group of buildings. It is a cylindrical tower with an inner diameter of twenty-four feet and an outer diameter of about fifty feet, including the engaged columns. Its walls, exclusive of these columns, have in the first story a thickness of about twelve feet. The design is in strict harmony with that of the cathedral, consisting of repeated stages of arcades, seven in number, on the main body of the tower, with a single additional arcaded stage of smaller diameter but greater height. The first stage has the familiar high blind arcade of the Pisan churches, — fifteen arches carried on engaged columns, with the lozenge-shaped inlay in the arch-heads, of which here it occupies the whole surface. The other six stages of the main body of the tower are open arcaded galleries of nearly equal height, with thirty arches each, exactly similar in character to those of the façade of the cathedral, even to such details as the thick plate of marble which forms the abacus of the columns, and which is carried back as a lintel to the wall behind the arcade. The elegant mosaic decoration which fills the spandrels and surmounts the arches of the cathedral façade is, however, lacking in the tower; and in general it may be said that the later work shows much less refinement and grace of

The Campanile of Pisa.

detail than the older. In the wall which is encircled by the galleries, there are no windows, but a simple square doorway in each stage connects the gallery with the interior of the tower. In the eighth or belfry stage, which has, as above stated, a less diameter than even the solid part of the tower below, the arcade is a blind arcade as in the first stage, the arches, sixteen in number, being supported on engaged columns, every third column being omitted to give space for a broad arched opening. In the arches between these are smaller openings set high in the wall, their arched heads concentric with the arch of the arcade. This stage is crowned by a small pointed arched corbel-table. The original design doubtless contemplated a conical spire, which was, however, never built. In the lowest story a characteristic doorway, with the broad flat pilasters, the heavy decorated lintel, the stilted bearing arch, its tympanum filled with a fresco,—occupies one of the arches.

Some facts concerning the remarkable history of this tower during the period of its construction will not be out of place. The ground was well known to be treacherous, and the foundation, which rests on a great number of piles, was made to cover a circle some twelve feet greater in diameter than the wall of the tower at the ground level. But when the first stage was completed to the level of the first gallery, a height of about thirty-five feet from the ground, the floor of the gallery was discovered to be sensibly out of level, and in building the first open arcade the fault was corrected by making the south side about an inch and a quarter higher than the north. But the settlement continued, and the same device for correcting it was employed on the second and third galleries, the difference in the latter being nearly three inches. At this point alarm seems to have seized the builders, and the work was suspended, to be resumed only after an interval of sixty years.<sup>1</sup> The settlement continued during this interval, so that when in 1234 Benenato made a survey of the building preparatory to resuming the work, the cornice of the third gallery was out of level by some six inches. The inclination was again corrected in the fourth gallery, after which there seems to have been another interval of inaction. In 1260 a third architect, William of Innspruck, is in charge, and continues in the fifth and sixth galleries the attempts of his forerunners to disguise the continual settlement. At this point, the main body of the tower being complete, the work was again abandoned for a long period, at the close of which, in 1350, Thomas of Pisa undertook to finish the tower. He

<sup>1</sup> Possibly less. Mothes gives the probable date of the suspension of the work as 1186.

found the settlement during the interval to amount to some eight or nine inches, which he partially corrected by a series of steps surrounding the base of the belfry stage — the steps being of unequal height on the north and south — and partially by a similar inequality in the height of the wall. The tower was then believed to have found its bearing at last. The belief was, however, ill founded. The settlement has apparently continued to the present day, and the cornice of the belfry stage, in spite of all the corrections I have mentioned, is now some thirty inches out of level, while the overhang of the tower to the south is about fourteen feet, in a total height of about one hundred and seventy-eight feet.<sup>1</sup>

During the same year in which Bonanno was beginning his work on the new fortifications of Pisa the foundations of the baptistery were laid. This work was given to Diotisalvi, who a few years before had built in Pisa the small octagonal church of San Sepolero, and who planned the baptistery on much the same lines, though on a much larger scale. It is placed in a line with the axis of the cathedral, and some two hundred feet to the west of it. The foundations were begun in 1153, with an outer circle ninety-eight feet in diameter, and continued the next year with the inner ring of about sixty feet, consisting of twelve round arches carried on eight single columns with capitals of the Corinthian type, and four square piers composed of four flat pilasters. The surrounding aisle is divided by transverse arches into groined bays; above it is a triforium gallery with barrel vault, opening into the central space. This central space is covered by a conical or rather polygonal dome, which is believed to have been in its original form truncated, with an opening for light at the summit as at the Pantheon of Rome, and the floor has an inclination to allow the rain-water to flow away. This cone was originally the visible exterior covering of the central space, and the outer aisle was covered by a low-pitched lean-to roof, rising from the outer wall, of which the design followed that of the façade of the cathedral, as was the case with the tower, having the high blind arcade, with engaged columns supporting twenty round arches, and two arcaded galleries above with sixty arches each. When the lower story was complete the builders had come to the end of their money, and a suspension of the works ensued, during which a forced contribution was levied on the population of the city, by which every family, to the number of

*The  
Baptistery  
of Pisa.*

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, p. 737; R. de Fleury, pp. 60-67.

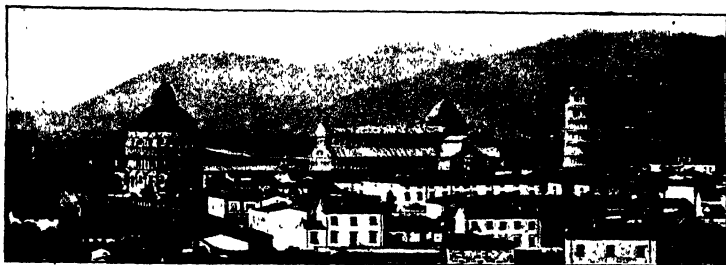


Fig. 217. The Pisa Group

thirty-four thousand, furnished one denier or gold soldo.<sup>1</sup> Whether the building was ever completed according to the original design appears uncertain. But in 1278 the upper gallery was removed, the second gallery was quite transformed in character in accordance with the newer Gothic spirit, which had begun to be felt in Italy, by covering each couple of arches with a high, thin, crocketed gable, enclosing a niche with a statue, and with high decorated pinnacles between the gables: and a third stage was added, no longer circular, but polygonal in plan, without either gallery or arcade, but divided into bays, each containing a round-arched window surmounted by a crocketed gable, of much more substantial character than those below. Between these gables the wall is carried up nearly to their summit, as a base for the outer dome, which conceals the greater portion of the original cone, but leaves its upper portion protruding, and capped with a small hemispherical dome of its own. (Fig. 218.) The result of this combination is one of the ugliest roofs in existence, and its ugliness is only emphasized by the division of the broken surface into bays by thin crocketed ribs.

The change of design in the thirteenth century was a signal misfortune, as the building, finished according to the original conception, would have completed a trio of monuments of remarkable purity and individuality of design, and of a consistency with each other quite unparalleled in mediæval Italian architecture.

The baptistery, in spite of the unsatisfactory effect produced by the departure from the original plan, will always be interesting by reason of the extreme beauty of much of its details and ornament. The most notable feature of the exterior is the principal doorway, a charming composition in the purest Pisan style, very similar to the great central doorway of the cathedral, but richer and more exuberant

<sup>1</sup> The gold soldo had a value of about \$2.40 of American money.

in its decoration. (Fig. 219.) As in the cathedral, the doorway occupies one of the arches of the great arcade, and the shafts of the two great columns are covered with strong Byzantine foliage in relief. Within these columns, the square opening is flanked by pilasters,

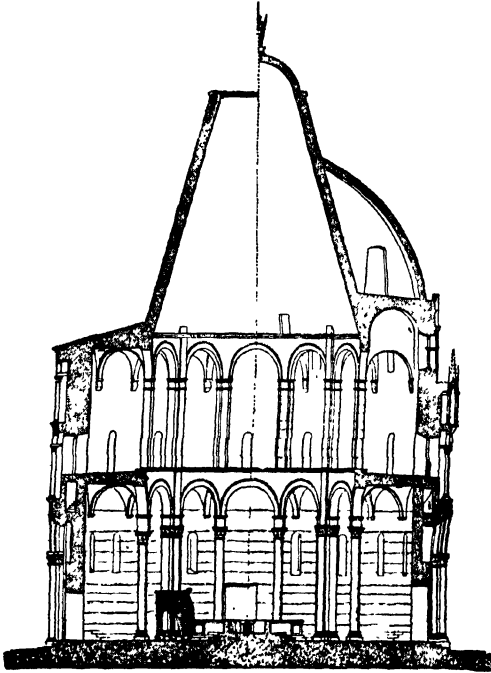


Fig. 218. Pisa. Section of Baptistery.

whose faces, forming the jambs of the arch, are decorated with square panels, each enclosing a group of small figures, and by a smaller column covered, like the outer ones, with foliage of Byzantine character, but more delicate and in lower relief. The lintel of the opening is covered with small groups of figures in very high relief (some of the members being quite detached from the background), very varied in subject, executed with great delicacy and finish, and enclosed within small arches

of irregular forms and sizes.<sup>1</sup> The cornice above the lintel has a row of beautiful half length figures of saints holding tablets in their hands. In the tympanum are three full-length statues, of the size of life, the Virgin and Child in the centre. The reliefs and panels of the door-jambs are continued around the arch.

The interior of the baptistery is simple, the decoration being confined to the capitals, which are generally of the Corinthian type, but much less pure than those of the exterior. Some of the pilaster capitals, however, show the hand of the Lombard sculptor, with men and beasts fighting, etc. The wall of the aisle is banded at regular

<sup>1</sup> This lintel has been called by competent critics the best work of sculpture of the twelfth century.



intervals with thin courses of dark marble, and pierced with small round-arched windows filled with stained glass. In the centre of the building is the octagonal font, a beautiful work of the thirteenth century, raised on three steps, its low walls divided into square panels, two on each face, separated and bordered by narrow bands of mosaic, and each containing a rosette with sculptured border. The altar is of similar design. The pulpit, a well-known work of Nicolo Pisano, of the date of 1260, is octagonal, its panelled sides filled with crowded groups of figures, and supported on highly decorative round arches, cusped, which spring from eight columns, of which every alternate one rests on the back of a standing lion. The stair by which the pulpit is reached is enclosed between solid walls of serpentine divided into panels by decorated bands of white marble.

The justly famous group of the "Quattro Fabbriche" was completed more than two hundred years after its commencement, by the



Fig. 219. Pisa. Principal Doorway.

building of  
the Campo  
Santo of  
Pisa.

soldiers of the second crusade, returning to Pisa towards the end of the twelfth century under Bishop Lanfranchi, brought home with them from Palestine, as is recorded in the chronicles of the time, five hundred ship-loads of sacred earth. We may allow what we please for the pious exaggeration of the chroniclers. Ground was bought on the north of the cathedral, and the houses which stood upon it were demolished to make room for a cemetery. But the

thirteenth century was well advanced before the work was begun. The foundations of the Campo Santo were only laid in 1278. It consists of a great rectangle about seventy feet wide and three hundred and fifty feet long, surrounded by a cloister some thirty-five feet wide, with arcades of round arches of twelve feet span springing from square piers, their heads filled with tracery of a Gothic character which was added some three centuries later. The cloister, of which the details show the greatest delicacy and refinement, is covered by a rude open timber roof, and its pavement is composed in great part of stone slabs which form the covering of tombs, while its walls are covered with the crumbling frescoes of Orcagna, Giotto, Benozzo Gozzoli, and other masters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The exterior walls are of marble, with a height of about thirty feet, faced with a blind arcade of tall round arches similar to that of the lower story of the cathedral, but with flat pilasters instead of columns. There are no openings with the exception of the three simple doorways, over the central one of which is set a Gothic canopy or shrine added perhaps a hundred years later, and enclosing a group of figure sculpture by Giovanni Pisano.

For more than a hundred years the cathedral of Pisa furnished the exterior model upon which most of the churches of Pisa, and some of the neighboring cities, were either built or restored. In Lucca and Pistoia especially, and to a less extent in Florence, we can trace its strong influence; and even in South Italy, as we shall see later, there are several instances which show a close imitation of its most characteristic features.

A group of Pisan churches, of moderate size, mostly dating originally from the ninth or tenth century, were restored during the latter half of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth, with so close a resemblance in exterior design to the cathedral as to make it seem probable that some of them at least may have been by the same architect. San Casciano, San Paolo a Ripa d' Arno, San Frediano, San Michele in Orticaia are the most important of these. The first named was originally a small basilica founded in 805, with only three bays, but lengthened late in the eleventh century by the addition of five bays. Whether the exterior was brought to its present form at that time or at the time of a later restoration in 1180 is not sure. The church is unfinished above the aisle roofs, but as far as it goes the exterior follows closely the design of the cathedral. The fine blind arcade is carried all around. reach-

Smaller  
Pisan  
churches.

San  
Casciano.

ing on the flanks to the cornice of the aisle wall, with five arches on the front, in three of which are characteristic doorways, with the broad pilasters, the heavy lintel covered with sculpture, and the round bearing arch, which are peculiar to the churches of Lucca and

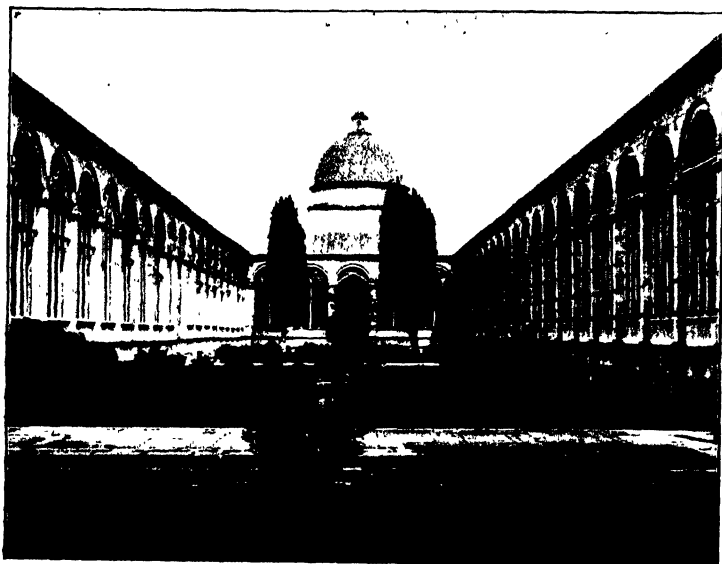


Fig. 220. Pisa. Campo Santo.

Pisa. Above the light string which continues the aisle cornice is the beginning of an upper stage, of which the close-set bases of slender engaged colonnettes indicate an intended decoration in harmony with that of the completed first story. The upper walls are, however, carried only high enough to allow of a small double-arched window in the centre of the front. The details are all classic in feeling, and of great refinement, many antique fragments being availed of in the decoration.<sup>1</sup>

The most interesting of the small churches of Pisa is S. Paolo a Ripa d' Arno. I have spoken of its plan (Fig. 209) and its central dome, which was perhaps the forerunner of that of the cathedral. The foundation of the church goes back to the earliest years of the ninth century, being thus almost exactly contemporary with that of S. Casciano. Its rebuilding appears to be assignable to the year 1060, which is three years

S. Paolo  
a Ripa  
d' Arno.

<sup>1</sup> R. de Fleury, p. 36, pls. 4, 5; Mothes, p. 314.

before the commencement of the cathedral. If this date is correct it becomes a doubtful question which of the two exteriors is the earlier. They are so similar that they well may have been the work of the same architect. In some respects the smaller church is the more admirable. (Fig. 221.) It has one stage less on the façade and on the flank than the cathedral, with the result that the flank has only the two arcades of the aisle wall and clerestory, a clear gain in consistency of treatment. On the other hand, the upper arcades of the façade are less carefully designed than in the cathedral, their shafts are of various shapes — plain and twisted, — with capitals of various design, the gable of the façade is a whole stage above the roof behind it, and the lower arches of the façade are not on a line with those of the flanks, which are higher. The transepts having no aisles, their roof drops below that of the nave, as in the cathedral. The dome has no drum.

San Frediano, dating originally from 1007, has certain peculiarities of plan, such as the division of the aisles by transverse arches into square bays, each covered by a square dome, and the square projecting choir instead of the usual apse, also with a low dome. The original wooden roof was replaced at some uncertain date by a groined vault, which carried the nave gable of the façade to an unusual height above the aisles. And the façade itself follows much less closely than most of the contemporary churches of Pisa the prevailing type. It has the high blind arcade, of seven arches, but so broken in upon by the three doorways that four of their supporting pilasters are interrupted just below their capitals. Above the cornice of the first story the usual small arcades are replaced by a high story of three blind arches reaching to the point where the original roof rested on the walls, the central arch being filled by a two-light window. The upper portion of the wall, added when the nave was vaulted, is bare and unfinished.<sup>1</sup>

Two nearly contemporary Pisan churches, S. Pietro in Vincoli and S. Nicolo, both dating from the early years of the twelfth century, show in their façades a similar variation from the established type. In S. Pietro the usual high arcade of five arches, with square doors in three of them, and the alternating lozenges and circles in the arch-heads, is varied by the introduction of a two-light window over each of the doorways. Above the first story the face of the nave is covered by a single blind arcade of three tall arches on pilasters, with a two-light window in the centre

<sup>1</sup> R. de Fleury, pl. 7; Mothes, p. 373.

arch and the lozenge-shaped inlay in the other two, the whole surmounted by the low gable answering to the nave roof.<sup>1</sup>

S. Nicolo is a ruin, but the design of its façade is still to be traced. It much resembled S. Pietro, except that it had no windows in the lower arcade. The interesting feature of S. Nicolo is, however, its bell-tower, round below and octagonal above, which stands at the northern angle of the façade.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning S. Michele in Borgo, there is a fragment of history which gives it an individual interest. The church was originally, according to a tradition, made from a Pagan temple, at a very early date not now known. In 990 it seems to have belonged to a rich citizen of Pisa named Stefano, who, wishing to restore and enlarge it, put the work in the hands of two monks, from the Benedictine monastery of Nonantula near Modena, —

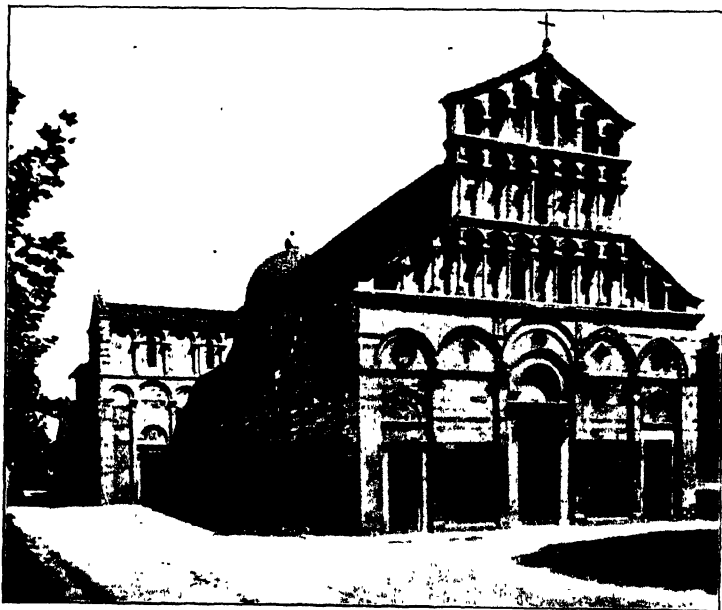


Fig. 221. Pisa. S. Paolo a Ripa d'Arno.

Pietro and his nephew Buono. Buono, who appears to have been the active member, is said to have made journeys to Rome and to the island of Elba in search of materials for the work, and to have

<sup>1</sup> R. de Fleury, pl. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94, pl. 33; Mothes, p. 729.

brought shafts and capitals, and perhaps other fragments, from both sources. The church was lengthened, and a new façade and campanile added. The work was finished in 1018. Mothes presumes only the lower portion of the present façade to have been the work of Buono, the church having undergone a second restoration in 1304, when it is probable that the three arcaded galleries were built, which brought the façade into general resemblance with the Pisan type. Like others of the later churches of Pisa, however, these galleries are composed of narrow pointed and cusped arches, the columns being only slightly removed from the wall behind. The façade has much lightness and elegance, but lacks the consistency of the earlier churches of the style.<sup>1</sup>

S. Caterina and S. Francesco show interesting variations from the usual plan. The long nave is flanked in the former by a single aisle, only for perhaps a third of its length, on the south side towards the eastern end, giving somewhat the effect of a half transept, from which opens in the axis of the nave, not an apse but a square projecting choir or chancel, flanked by two square

chapels, after the manner of the Franciscan churches. Fig. 222 shows the plan completed, with aisles on both sides. S. Francesco has no aisles, but a long nave opening by a great pointed arch into a transept terminating in a square choir flanked by three chapels on each side. The transept arms are cut off from the centre by two broad high-pointed arches on either side. S. Caterina has a façade, in which the Pisan type is modified by the Gothic influence, as in S. Michele in Borgo just noticed. The façade is high and narrow, and the usual high arcade appears in the first stage, here of three arches on engaged Corinthian columns, the middle arch filled by the square doorway with the bearing arch. Above are two ranges of open arcaded galleries, in which the arches are pointed and cusped. In the upper arcade the arches increase in height towards the centre, following the rake of the high gable, and the central arch, much broader than the others, is placed over a rose window, set in a square

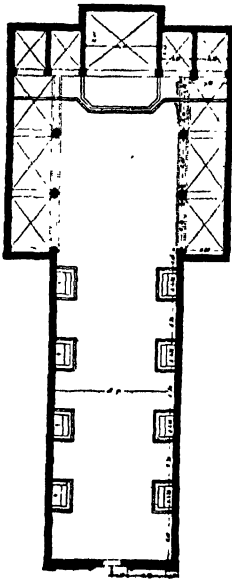


Fig. 222. Pisa. S. Caterina.

<sup>1</sup> R. de Fleury, p. 39, pls. 43 and 61; Mothes, p. 366.

surrounded by a border of square panels, with rosettes, as in the façades of Monza and Orvieto.<sup>1</sup>

Lucca is but a dozen miles from Pisa, and the period during which the churches were built which have been noticed above was a period of great activity in Lucca. That a style of architecture so striking and so graceful as the Pisan style should exert a strong influence on the architecture of the cities so nearly contiguous as Lucca and Pistoia was inevitable. Yet it is interesting to see what modifications the style was subjected to when it was within certain limits adopted by those cities.

Lucca has many noteworthy churches, of which S. Martino the cathedral and San Michele are the principal. The latter was founded in

Lucca.

762 by a certain Lombard Teutprand and his wife, Gumpranda, but substantially rebuilt towards the close of the twelfth century. The cathedral has a still more ancient history, having been built by St. Frigidianus as early as 560, and promptly destroyed a few years later by the Lombards in the first fury of their invasion. It was, however, rebuilt, and stood until 1050, when it was again rebuilt by Pope Alexander II. A subsequent restoration and enlargement introduced many Gothic features of great interest and beauty, but enough of the church of the eleventh century remains to show how strong the Pisan influence must have been. Of both S. Michele and

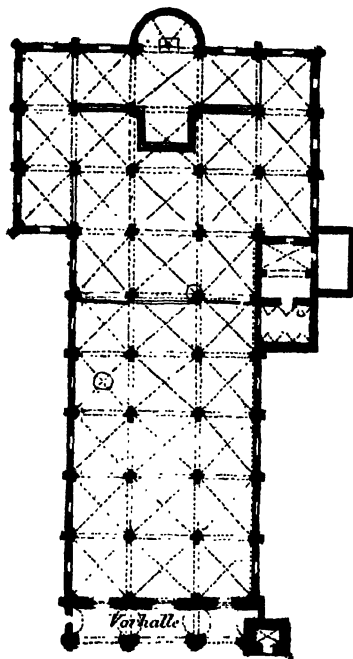


Fig. 223. Lucca. Cathedral.

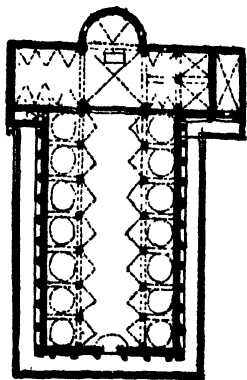


Fig. 224. Lucca. S. Michele.

<sup>1</sup> R. de Fleury, p. 96, pls. 35, 36.

S. Martino the façades were added about the end of the twelfth century. Both façades were the work of one architect, Guidetto, of whom nothing more than the name is known, but whose likeness is said to be preserved in a sitting statue in one of the galleries of the façade of the cathedral.

Of the two façades, that of San Michele follows more closely the Pisan model, but follows it in a somewhat unintelligent way, being for the most part a mere screen or frontispiece, absolutely out of relation with the church behind it, — perhaps, indeed, the most extravagant and absurd example of this unreasonable habit of the Italian builders, fully one third of its height being above the roof of the nave. It has, like the cathedral, five stages, of which the first is the usual blind arcade, of seven arches, with lozenges and circles in the arch-heads, and three doorways, of which the central one is much like that of Pisa, while the others are small and plain. The remaining stages are open arcaded galleries, with the same disposition as at Pisa. The second and third, of fourteen arches, run across the whole width of nave and aisles; the fourth and fifth, which are entirely above the roof of the church, of six arches, have only the width of the nave. Among this great collection of columns there are scarcely two alike. The shafts, as in the similar instance of S. Maria della Pieve at Arezzo, are round, octagonal, spiral, twisted, fluted, or coupled, of irregular sizes and lengths, covered in many cases with bas-reliefs or zigzags, and fitted with capitals as various in size and form as the shafts. They are evidently the spoil of many older buildings. The stages are separated by heavy convex belts, enriched with Byzantine carving. The wall behind the galleries is pierced with windows of various forms, mostly two-light openings under a broad bearing arch, with deeply splayed jambs and three orders of jamb-shafts and arch mouldings. In the fourth stage is a small wheel window. The peculiar interest of this façade lies in its extraordinary decoration, of which indeed the variety of columns just mentioned may be considered a part, and which shows how far, even in his close imitation of the general design of the Pisan churches, the architect was removed from the Pisan spirit, and how strong was the influence of the older and wilder Lombards. The spandrils of the arches and the small portion of wall between the arcades and the string courses are covered with an inlay of white marble on a ground of dark green serpentine, in which geometrical patterns are mingled with figure subjects representing mostly scenes from the chase, these being in rectangular panels of various sizes and shapes, irregularly



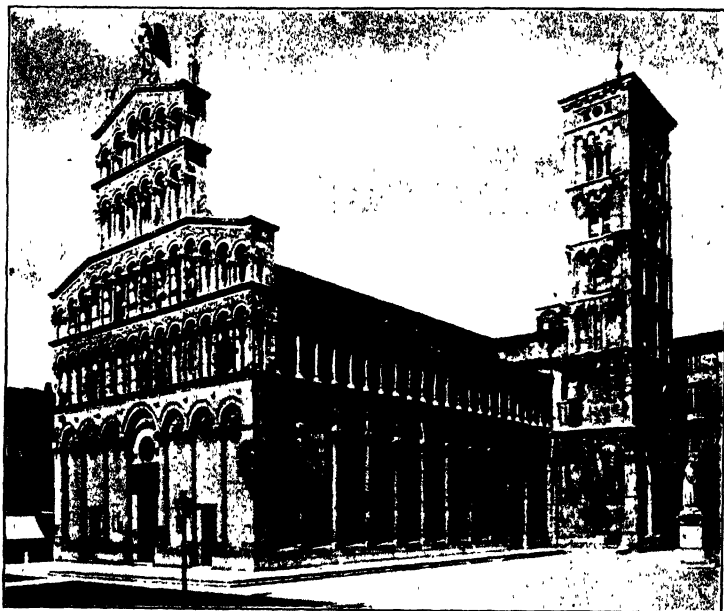


Fig. 225. Lucca. S. Michele.

placed, but of the greatest nicety and delicacy of execution, curiously at variance with the rudeness of the drawing. It is the Lombard thought expressed in the Pisan language, the spirited but barbarous stone sculpture of San Michele of Pavia being abandoned in favor of the marble mosaic of Pisa, but with the old subjects retained.<sup>1</sup>

The blind arcade of the first stage and the first arcade above it are continued on the flanks of the church, the aisle walls being of unusual height. The clerestory, on the other hand, is very low, and its only feature is a series of small plain round-arched windows.

The façade of the cathedral is much less loyal to the Pisan model than that of San Michele. It is in four stages, of which the first presents the unusual feature of an open porch extending quite across the front, with three broad round arches carried on strong square piers, with an order of jamb-shafts and corresponding

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, p. 302; Dehio and Van Bezold, pl. 236. The reader is also referred to the very interesting and characteristic remarks of Mr. Ruskin on this façade and its decoration in the Appendix No. 8 to the first volume of the *Stones of Venice*.

This fine façade, as well as that of the cathedral, has been mercilessly restored — or rather renewed — since 1860.

arch mouldings, piers and archivolts being in alternate courses of white and dark marble. On the faces of the two middle piers are set two engaged shafts covered with reliefs, much in the style of the shafts which flank the central doors of the cathedral and baptistery at Pisa. They carry an outer band or archivolt with Byzantine leafage. Interposed between this archivolt and the capitals of the columns are projecting corbels with grotesque Lombard beasts. Above the arcade of the porch are three stages of arcaded galleries, much in the style of those of San Michele, but bearing a more just relation to the body of the church, the first two running across the whole breadth of nave and aisles, while the third covers the front of the nave. The number of arches in each arcade is the same as in San Michele, — fourteen in the two lower and six in the upper, — the columns are similarly heterogeneous in character, and the spandrels and the small strips of wall above them are covered with a black and white marble inlay, in which geometrical patterns are mingled with figures of animals and men, similar to those of San Michele. The porch with the galleries over it was, as I have said, a later addition of the beginning of the thirteenth century, badly joined to the older church, of which the angles and gable of the original façade still appear behind the newer structure. The wall of the first story, under the great porch, has the Pisan blind arcade of seven arches, three of them pierced by square doorways with bearing arches above them. Under two of the blank arches the wall is enriched with horizontal bands of sculpture, similar in feeling to that of the frieze over the doorway of the Pisa baptistery, — figures under small arches below, and in rectangular panels above, very elegant and refined. The great central doorway is extremely fine; the square opening is covered by a high lintel with thirteen full-length figures of saints, and a second lintel above with rigid upright foliage, and the tympanum bearing three figures in high relief of the Saviour between two flying angels. The whole is enclosed within three orders of jamb-shafts with corresponding arch mouldings. The walls of the galleries above are pierced with broad round-arched windows, with deeply splayed columnar jambs and arch mouldings. The façade is flanked on the south by a noble square campanile, thoroughly Lombard in character, having a perfectly plain wall to nearly the height of the front, and divided above by strong arched corbel-tables into five nearly equal stages, with round-arched openings increasing in number from one to four, the last stage finishing with forked battlements.

The remainder of this interesting church is less consistent with the façade than is the case with San Michele. The restoration of 1308-1320, which added greatly to the beauty of the church, was inspired by quite other models than those of the Pisan Romanesque. The Gothic, both of France and of Germany, was making itself felt in Italy, and the interior of San Martino, as well as the greater part of its flanks, is to a considerable extent transformed in accordance with Gothic forms. The interior in particular, with its high and narrow vaulted nave (but in square bays), its compound piers, its noble triforium, with two groups of traceried arches in each bay, and its double transept, has a distinctly Gothic effect. The arcades of nave and triforium are carried across the transept, as at Pisa. But in the east end of the church the Pisan architecture reappears in its purity. The high blind arcade, with its slender engaged shafts rising

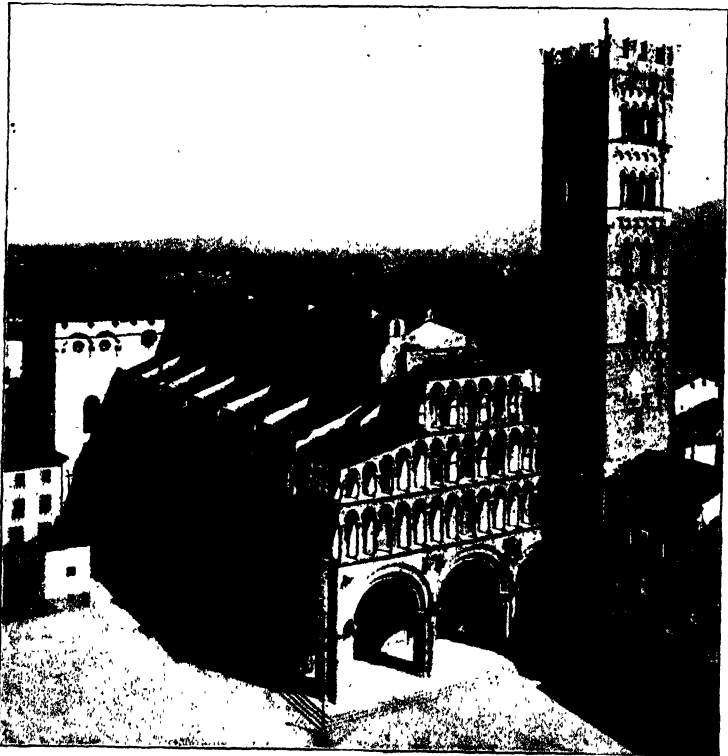


Fig. 226. Lucca. Cathedral.

from a continuous base, its bands and alternate voussoirs of dark marble, and its lozenges under the arch-heads, is carried through the whole breadth, including the apse, where three alternate arches are filled each by a fine window, with two orders of jamb-shafts and arch mouldings. The second arcade becomes on the apse a free gallery, while on the flat wall the arches, four on each side, are divided by an engaged pilaster into groups of two arches each, separated by a slender column standing just detached from the wall; an unusual arrangement which gives variety to the composition while not detracting



Fig. 227. Lucca. Cathedral.

ing from its unity. In the half gables of the aisle roofs, the same division of the wall is maintained by engaged shafts without arches rising from the string course which continues the aisle cornice to the sloping decorated eaves cornice.<sup>1</sup>

Although Lucca has no other smaller churches. examples in which the Pisan style is so fully adhered to as in the two churches above noted, yet there are several smaller churches in which the distinctive fea-

tures appear with more or less completeness, notably Santa Maria Fuorisportam, an ancient church, dating from the eighth century, of which the usual rebuilding in the twelfth or thirteenth century was only partially completed. As far as it goes, it is thoroughly Pisan in character, with the high blind arcade carried around the flanks and transepts, and on the façade surmounted by two light arcaded galleries, to which a third should have been added. The three doorways of the front are very characteristic and complete.

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, pp. 739-781; Dehio and Van Bezold, pl. 235.

Santa Giulia, originally built about 964, but restored shortly after 1200, and San Giusto, earlier in origin and perhaps restored a little earlier than Santa Giulia, are, as far as the façades are concerned, complementary of each other. Santa Giulia has the high blind arcade of three arches on the front, of which the middle one contains a characteristic doorway, while the upper part of the façade is perfectly



Fig. 228. Lucca. S. Giusto. Head of Doorway.

plain, with the exception of a two-light window under a pointed bearing arch, and an arched corbel-table following the rake of the low gable. San Giusto, on the other hand, has an unbroken wall to the height of the aisle roofs, while the upper portion of the façade covering the end of the nave is enriched by two stories of arcades in the Pisan manner, but without the classic delicacy of feeling which distinguishes the Pisan work. The point at which the new work began is clearly indicated by the alternation of white and dark courses in the upper portion. In the lower stage of this façade are three doorways, of which the two opening into the aisles are plain, though characteristic in form. But the central doorway (Fig. 228) is one of the most brilliant examples in existence of the peculiar type which belongs almost exclusively to the Central Romanesque and to that particular division of it which is represented by Pisa and Lucca, and in a less degree by one or two of the neighboring and smaller cities. In San Giusto the heaviness and even clumsiness of the general arrangement is redeemed by the richness and beauty of the decoration. Here we see very clearly the hand of the Byzantine sculptor. The opening is flanked by two broad, flat, and absolutely plain pilasters, without other base than the moulded base course of

the church from which they rise, but with large and beautifully wrought capitals with two orders of acanthus leafage, and each with a nondescript animal climbing up its outer edge. These pilasters support an inordinately massive lintel, whose height is one half the breadth of the opening (which is about six and a half feet), and whose face is covered with a most characteristic and admirable piece of Byzantine carving, — a meandering vine deeply undercut and wreathing itself into a series of six circles, filled with sprays of buds and leafage. Above the lintel is a strong cornice moulding, also covered with carving, but of a somewhat coarser character. From the extremities of this cornice spring two consoles each supporting a crouching lion, from whose back springs the outer archivolt of the bearing arch, a vigorous band of carving with foliage and heads in high relief. Within this archivolt are some strong and plain arch mouldings springing from short fragments of impost, supported each by a single human head. The tympanum is filled by a decaying fresco.

Two other doorways of the same type may be cited, perhaps even more remarkable than that of S. Giusto. One is also in Lucca, in the church of S. Giovanni. (Fig. 229.) In this instance, as in all those where the doorway fills an arch of the main arcade of the front, both the lintel and its cornice drop below the spring of the main arches, and are carried on plain square pilasters, of which the capitals are replaced by a group of sculptured figures projecting boldly inward. The face of the lintel bears a range of thirteen standing figures, and its cornice, which continues the line of the capitals of the flanking columns, is carved with Byzantine foliage. Of the members which compose the bearing arch, the innermost springs from behind two sitting human figures, the outer from two crouching lions, while the tympanum has no sculpture, but in its centre a small wheel window.

The other doorway, that of S. Pietro at Pistoia, bears a closer resemblance to that of S. Giusto above described. The two pilasters which form the jamb of the opening do not project from the wall, and are made of several pieces of marble jointed in the most irregular manner; their capitals are much in the Corinthian style, but very freely treated, one of them having a grotesque Lombard beast in place of a volute. Below the capitals is a flat necking, with an inlay of black and white marble with varied subjects in the style of those of the cathedral at Lucca. The heavy lintel bears on its face a delicate arcade with minute colonnettes, and a standing figure in each

arch — its cornice carved with a meandering vine in the true Byzantine manner. The arch is composed of large strong mouldings, undecorated, except the outer archivolt, which is richly sculptured.

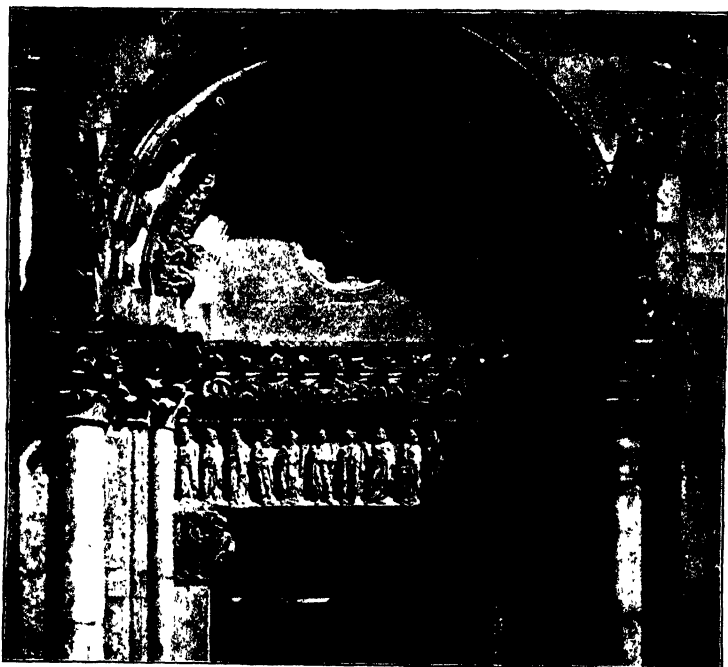


Fig. 220. Lucca. S. Giovanni. Head of Central Doorway.

The tympanum has no other decoration than a single standing figure relieved against narrow courses of dark and white marble.

In Pistoia, lying some forty miles east from Lucca, the Pisan influence is still to be plainly traced, although there is no such conspicuous instance of it as the two great churches of Lucca furnish. The cathedral was an eighth-century church, but, like so many others, was renewed in the twelfth century with radical changes both without and within. The present façade, the work of Gruamons or Gruamonte, — of whom only the name is known, but whose work appears, certified by inscriptions, on various important buildings of this and the neighboring cities, — was simply built up in front of the older one, which is still visible behind the open arcades of which the new façade is composed. The first stage is





aspect is altogether unique. It is that of an unbroken rectangular wall, divided into three stages of blind arcades, of which the lowest follows accurately the Pisan fashion, being considerably more than half the whole height of the wall, and consisting of a series of fourteen arches carried on slender pilasters, which rise from a continuous base course, themselves provided with bases and leafed capitals. All these arches are blank, and have the lozenge-shaped panel in their heads, with the exception of one, the ninth in order from the left end of the front, which contains a doorway of characteristic form, a square opening flanked with pilasters, which carry a heavy sculptured lintel surmounted by a bearing arch. On either side of this doorway a slender column is substituted for the pilaster. The second and third arcades are of twenty-seven and thirty-eight arches respectively, sensibly stilted, and carried on full columns set against the wall. In all these arches, as well as in those of the lower arcade, appears the Pisan lozenge, except in five arches of the second stage, which are pierced with narrow round-arched windows. The wall is banded throughout its whole height with equal courses of white and dark marble, except the spandrels of the arches and the narrow



Fig. 230. Pistoia. S. Pietro. Lower Portion of Façade.

covered by a somewhat ungainly porch stretching across the whole front of the church, consisting of seven round arches, alternately broad and narrow, of dark and white marble, supported on slender single columns. Above the arcade is a sort of attic, showing a blank wall divided into panels by bands of dark marble, the central arch cutting up into it. Above the porch are two stages of arcaded galleries extending across the breadth of the nave front, and covered by a gable which is above the nave roof, and which, as well as the half gables of the aisles, is faced, not with an arcade, but with a series of columns following the rake of the cornice. Here is the Pisan disposition of parts, but the grace of the design and the delicacy of execution, as well as the exuberant and refined decoration, are quite wanting. The flanks show on the aisle walls the high Pisan blind arcade, with the characteristic lozenge in the arch-heads, and a row of plain square windows above, probably of later date. The clerestory is low and without interest.<sup>1</sup>

This church has a notable tower, standing at the northern corner of the façade, — of which the lower portion was, according to tradition, a tower of defence, belonging to the municipality, plain and square, with a two-light window on each face near the summit. To this were added, presumably as a part of the rebuilding in 1160, three stages of open arcaded galleries, and again in 1302 a belfry stage, with a high pyramidal roof. This tower is the noblest feature of one of the most picturesque and interesting squares of Italy.

S. Andrea has much the same history as the cathedral. Built about 748, it was restored by Gruamons in 1166, with a new façade built over the older one. The first stage has the regular Pisan blind arcade with the lozenge under the arch-heads, the parti-colored inlay above, and the three characteristic doorways, of which the middle one is an unusually fine example. With the first stage, however, the Pisan work comes to an end; the upper portion of the façade covering the face of the nave, and the half gables of the aisles being of a nondescript character. The church has a pulpit by Giovanni Pisano similar to his father's in the Pisa baptistery.<sup>2</sup>

But the most interesting of the Pistoian churches is S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas, also an eighth-century church, of which the south flank at least must have been entirely rebuilt, about 1166, by the same Gruamons whose hand we have already seen in the cathedral and in S. Andrea. (Fig. 231.) Its present

S. Giovanni  
Fuorcivi-  
tas.

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, pp. 290-755.

<sup>2</sup> Mothes, p. 291.

aspect is altogether unique. It is that of an unbroken rectangular wall, divided into three stages of blind arcades, of which the lowest follows accurately the Pisan fashion, being considerably more than half the whole height of the wall, and consisting of a series of fourteen arches carried on slender pilasters, which rise from a continuous base course, themselves provided with bases and leafed capitals. All these arches are blank, and have the lozenge-shaped panel in their heads, with the exception of one, the ninth in order from the left end of the front, which contains a doorway of characteristic form, a square opening flanked with pilasters, which carry a heavy sculptured lintel surmounted by a bearing arch. On either side of this doorway a slender column is substituted for the pilaster. The second and third arcades are of twenty-seven and thirty-eight arches respectively, sensibly stilted, and carried on full columns set against the wall. In all these arches, as well as in those of the lower arcade, appears the Pisan lozenge, except in five arches of the second stage, which are pierced with narrow round-arched windows. The wall is banded throughout its whole height with equal courses of white and dark marble, except the spandrils of the arches and the narrow



Fig. 230. Pistoia. S. Pietro. Lower Portion of Façade.

spaces between them and the string courses, which are covered with a small geometrical inlay.

I have said enough to show how individual and distinct a style is that of Pisa, of which the features and principles were adopted with more or less of loyalty by Lucca and Pistoia, in spite of the hostile relations which commonly prevailed among these cities.<sup>1</sup> It is singular to observe how closely circumscribed was the influence of this

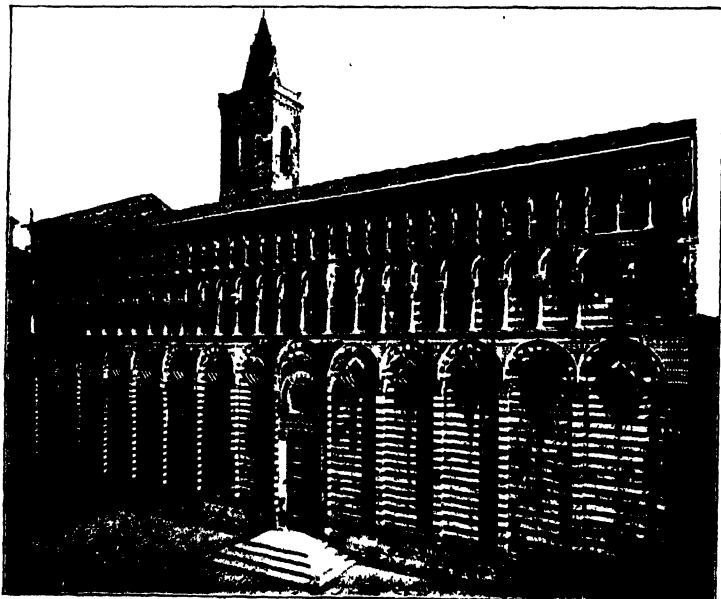


Fig. 231. Pistoia. S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas.

style in spite of its strongly individual character and its essential charm. Scarcely anywhere in Italy, except in the towns I have already mentioned, and in some curious instances in the south of Italy, which will be noticed in a later chapter, are any examples of it to be found.

In Volterra, however, an ancient city lying about as far to the south of Pisa as Pistoia is to the east, the cathedral, built originally about 1120, but lengthened in 1234 under Nicolo

<sup>1</sup> Pisa and Lucca were at war with each other as early as 1003, and there was little peace between them for four hundred years. Pistoia was too small a city to carry on a prolonged war, but could not escape "entangling alliances," alternately with one and the other of her greater neighbors.

Pisano, shows in its façade much of the Pisan character,—a high blind arcade in the middle division, with the lozenge in the arch-heads and an open gallery in the gable.

In the other cities of Tuscany, although there is no such marked peculiarity of style as we have seen in the Pisan buildings, there is yet an equally decisive contrast with the buildings of the Northern cities, where the Lombard style prevailed; while the affinity with the Pisan architecture is sufficiently affirmed by the prevailing classicism of the details and arrangement, and by the more or less general use of color in the walling, obtained through the medium of light and dark marbles in contrast, in the form of panels and geometrical inlays, and of horizontal bands of dark marble alternating with the white marble of the walls. We observe, as a rule, much less

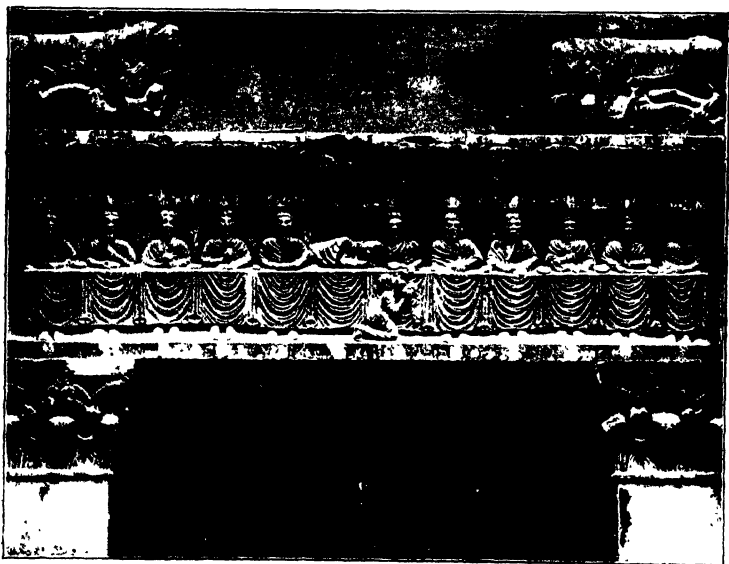


Fig. 232. Pistoia. Door-head of S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas.

solidity of construction than in the North, the walls are generally of brick, and in the façades marble is used in the form of thin plates overlaying the brick as a veneer, instead of forming the substance of the wall. This has its effect on the decoration, which is reduced for the most part to surface decoration, to the exclusion of the solid columns and capitals and high relief of the Lucca churches.

Of the Florentine architecture of the Romanesque period San

Miniato is the most familiar and the most characteristic example. Originally of extreme antiquity, it was rebuilt in 1013 and the following years. In plan it is radically different from the churches I have just been describing. There is here no transept whatever. The plan is a simple rectangle of about seventy by one hundred and fifty feet, with a nave about thirty feet wide between the columns, and two side aisles, with a round apse terminating the nave. The length is divided into three equal parts or bays by two piers in each of the nave arcades, each pier consisting of four grouped Corinthian half columns, of which that towards the nave rises above the arcade, and takes the spring of a massive round arch spanning the nave. From the opposite column of the pier a similar arch spans the aisle. Over these arches the masonry is carried up to the roof, forming low interior gables in the nave and half gables in the aisles. The other two columns of the pier are members of the

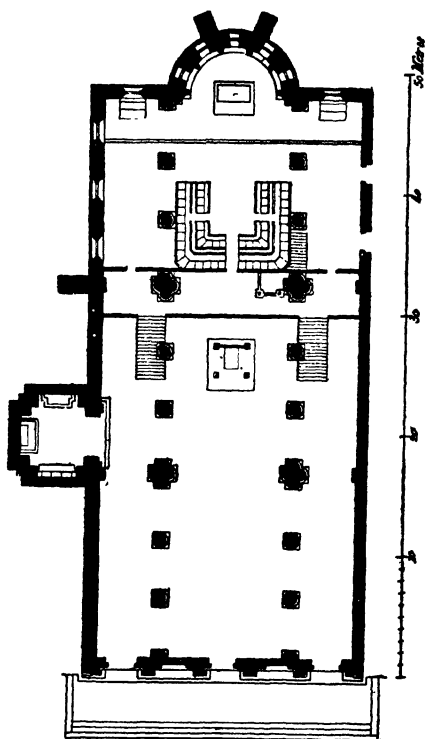


Fig. 233. Florence. S. Miniato.

nave arcade, of which three arches fill each interval between the great piers. The arrangement is similar to that of Santa Prassede at Rome. The clerestory wall is pierced by five simple round-arched windows in each division. The aisles are without windows. Both nave and aisles are covered by open-timber roofs of low pitch, with tie-beams decorated with gold and color. The easternmost division both of nave and aisles is made to constitute a choir, the floor of which is raised some eleven feet above that of the nave proper, and reached by two staircases from the aisles. Beneath is a spacious and beautiful crypt, of uncommon height, its floor only about four feet below that of the nave,



Fig. 234. Interior of S. Mimato.

occupying the full width of the church, and opening into the nave by three broad arches, the arrangement being very similar to that in San Zeno at Verona, and the cathedrals at Modena and Parma. The crypt is divided by six rows of columns into seven aisles, of which the three in the centre correspond in width to the nave above, and two to each of the side aisles. The great apse of the choir is repeated in the crypt. The columns are connected by lines of arches in two directions, which divide the ceiling into groined bays. The two lines of columns and arches, which are under the arcades of the choir above, are somewhat rudely broken in upon by the columns of the upper arcades, which are continued down through the vaulting to the pavement of the crypt, without regard to the size or disposition of the lower columns and arches.

The exterior is of brick, and of extreme simplicity, with the excep-

tion of the façade. Here the Pisan influence may be traced in the high blind arcade of five round arches on Corinthian columns which make the lower stage. But the treatment is different from the Pisan treatment, and the doorways which occupy the middle and two end arches are plain rectangular openings with a classic moulded architrave. The upper stage, following the outline of the interior, has a central division answering to the front of the nave, with an order of flat Corinthian pilasters, surmounted by a low pediment, and flanked by the low half gables of the aisle roofs. The only opening in the whole façade, except the three doorways of the lower stage, is a single small rectangular window in the middle interval of the second stage. The front derives its character from its decorations, which consist of a panelling of black and white marble covering nearly the whole surface of the wall, the bald and somewhat coarse design of which is in the strongest contrast to the inlay we have seen adorning the fronts of the Lucca churches, and even to the less remarkable but still delicate and beautiful inlay of Pisa. The decoration of the interior is of the same character,—the spandrils of the nave arcades and those of the great arches which span the nave, as well as the wall of the clerestory and the arch-heads of the apse, being laid off in black and white patterns, even more uninteresting and poverty-stricken than those of the exterior. There is, however, something better than this in the screen which forms the front of the raised choir. It is a panelled wall, about five feet high, of various marbles, the frieze containing a mosaic of animals and geometrical figures of great richness and delicacy. A pulpit at the end of the screen has a decoration of similar character.

The basilican type also appears in the cathedral of Fiesole, whose rebuilding, begun in 1013, was very nearly contemporary with that of San Miniato. It is a small church, with nave and aisles covered by an open-timber roof, and separated by large columns built up in courses with Corinthianesque capitals, varied in design and mostly from older churches, supporting perfectly plain round arches, above which is a high plain clerestory wall pierced with narrow round-headed windows on the south side. It has a projecting transept and an apsidal choir, of which the floor is raised some twelve or fourteen steps above that of the nave, from which it is reached by stairs from each aisle, and is brought forward so as to include the crossing and transepts, under all of which is a fine crypt like that of San Miniato, opening by three round arches into the nave and with Ionic columns supporting the groined vaulting. The



façade has been greatly changed from its original design, which showed a blind arcade on engaged columns and a parti-colored wall facing. The square tower was built in the early years of the thirteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Like so many of the ancient churches this has now no hint of antiquity; both inside and outside all is new.

The only other ecclesiastical building of importance in Florence which can be cited as an example of the Romanesque architecture is the baptistery, and this an unsatisfactory example, since it is of so many and so uncertain dates that its relation to the other buildings of its style is difficult to determine. It was built originally as a church, and, according to some authorities, as early as the sixth or seventh century.<sup>2</sup> For a very long period, perhaps until the beginning of the twelfth century, it served as the cathedral. Whatever may have been its original form, it must have been very different from that of recent times, since no dome of the size and form of that which now covers the baptistery could have been built in the seventh century.<sup>3</sup> The



Fig. 235. Florence. S. Miniato.

construction was at first doubtless of a much more humble character, but as to the date of its final rebuilding no trustworthy records appear. The best indication is perhaps to be had from the baptistery of Parma, which was begun in 1196, and of which the plan and general construction bear much resemblance to that of Florence. Both buildings differ from the typical baptistery, of which the first example was that which Constantine built in Rome, but which was so generally adopted in Lombardy as to form one of the most characteristic

<sup>1</sup> Mothes, p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> De Caumont, Hübsch, Del Rosso. Cordero believes it to have been built under Justinian.

<sup>3</sup> See Mothes, pp. 253, 254.

features of the Lombard architecture, and which was adhered to in Tuscany in such prominent examples as that of Pisa. Of these typical baptisteries, the ground plan, with its central space, circular or octagonal, enclosed by a ring of arches and surrounded by the circular or octagonal aisle, often covered by an arcaded gallery, governed the construction, of which the central feature was the dome covering the central space, and therefore of moderate size, with the lean-to roof covering the surrounding aisle. The rule was, as we have seen in a previous chapter, not without its exceptions, but these were almost invariably on a smaller scale, the baptistery of Parma being almost the only instance to the contrary.

The Florence baptistery is an unbroken octagon of an inside diameter of nearly ninety feet. Its interior architecture is now more classical than Romanesque, the lower of its two stages following in its general disposition the Pantheon at Rome. Each side has a flat niche flanked by detached Corinthian columns of red and gray Sardinian marble with a low entablature. On one side this niche is expanded by a later addition into a rectangular apse covered by a barrel vault, under which is an altar, the vault rising to the height of the entablature of the second stage. This stage has an order of composite pilasters over the columns of the lower story, three intervals to each side of the octagon, with coupled arches in each intercolumniation, opening into a narrow gallery, not continuous, lighted by small windows in the outer wall. Over the second stage is a high blank attic wall, from which rises the octagonal dome, with an elliptical outline, its crown one hundred and three feet above the pavement. The eye of the dome was originally left open, as in the Pantheon, but in 1150 it was covered by a lantern.

The exterior is in three stages, of which the lower two make practically one, with a high blind arcade around the building, three arches on each face of the octagon, with piers at the angles and slender columns between, and an entablature over the arcade. The third stage is an attic with an order of flat pilasters, and the building is covered by a low octagonal roof. There is no hint on the exterior of the high dome within, any more than at Parma. There are three doorways in the lowest stage, of Renaissance character, one of which is adorned by the two columns of porphyry, which the Pisans sent as a gift, in 1117, in recognition of the help rendered by the Florentines in the war against the Balearic Isles, then just at an end. This doorway is closed by the magnificent bronze gates of Ghiberti. Besides the doorways the only openings in the walls are a series of Renais-

sance windows in the second stage. The wall surface in the second and third stages is decorated with a panelling of black marble on a white ground, of much the same character with that of San Miniato, though added to the building as late as 1290 by Arnolfo da Cambio. How much of the old exterior remains is exceedingly doubtful.

Toscanello, a small town lying far to the south of the Tuscan cities, and within the circle of Roman interests and traditions, had little or no part in the stormy mediæval life of <sup>Toscanello.</sup> which they were the theatre, and it is not easy to trace the way in which either the Lombard or the Tuscan influence was brought to bear on its architecture. Yet the two churches of Toscanella, whose plans have been described above, are in all, except their façades, of which I will speak directly, early Lombard churches, dating, San Pietro from 628, S. Maria even earlier, but both rebuilt with various changes, chiefly affecting the exterior, during the eleventh century. S. Pietro is built on the slope of a hill, which gives so much additional height to its east end that its fine crypt, which belongs <sup>S. Pietro.</sup> to the original construction, is quite above the ground level, and is lighted by five windows in the apse. The apse has thus on the exterior three stages, of which the lower two are (as are also the flanks of the church, both on the aisle walls and the clerestory) divided into bays by pilaster strips ending in arched corbel-tables, quite in the Lombard style. The third stage is similarly treated, but more subdivided and with an arcaded gallery. The interior has been already noticed on page 268.

On the façade, the disposition of whose parts indicates that of the interior, the older Lombard architecture, in which, however, the Pisan influence may be traced, still retains its place on the front wall of the aisles, which is faced on each side with a blind arcade of four arches on slender engaged shafts, the middle shaft omitted to give place for the doorway. But the wall terminates with a half pediment instead of the Lombard half gable, both the horizontal and raking cornice bearing, however, the characteristic arched corbel-table. The aisle doorways

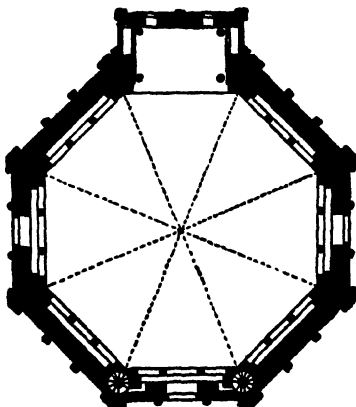


Fig. 236. Baptistery, Florence.

are of rude Lombard character, in strong contrast to those of the Tuscan churches which we have examined; without lintels, but with the panelled slab of the tympanum resting directly on the capitals of the inner jamb columns, and the arch mouldings loaded with coarse and rude leaf decoration. The lintel is replaced by a thin string decorated with an egg and dart ornament, with bead and reel above. The central division of the façade, which projects some twenty inches forward of the sides, is of strikingly different character, and evidently of later date, and it is here that we see the refining influence of the Pisan school, though the Pisan forms are much modified. The composition presents a combination of features of remarkable elegance, and quite without a parallel except in the sister church of S. Maria. The central doorway still retains in general the Lombard form, with three orders of jamb-shafts and corresponding square archivolts. But the shafts are slender, their capitals are delicate, and the outer band of the arch has at its beginning on the right hand a fragment of Cosmati work, which is repeated on the narrow frame of marble which encloses the square opening. Above the doorway is a beautiful little arcaded gallery of eleven arches supported on delicate marble columns, with Ionic capitals and with decorated arch mouldings. The arches are not built with voussiors, but each arch is cut out of a single block of marble, the vertical joints being over the columns. The refinement of the architect is illustrated by the treatment of this arcade, which does not occupy, as is commonly the case, the whole breadth of the wall, but a square pier is left at each end of it, on the angle of which is a griffin, with the greater part of his body in high relief against the wall, but the head, breast, and fore legs projecting boldly beyond the angle. The arcade is surmounted by a light decorated string supported on carved corbels. Nothing can well exceed the combined grace and vigor of this charming composition, in which the best characteristics of the Lombard and the Pisan architecture are united, with an effect which is equalled by neither.

The upper stage of the façade is remarkable for a large rose window, which is perhaps the earliest example of that feature in Italy. The circle occupies the whole height of the stage and is set in a square, of which the four angles are charged each with a single figure in relief; the two low figures being those of winged lions, the upper being on the left a bird with extended wing and on the right a human figure. On each side of the rose is a small two-light window, the two arches supported on very slender columns of white marble, and the whole

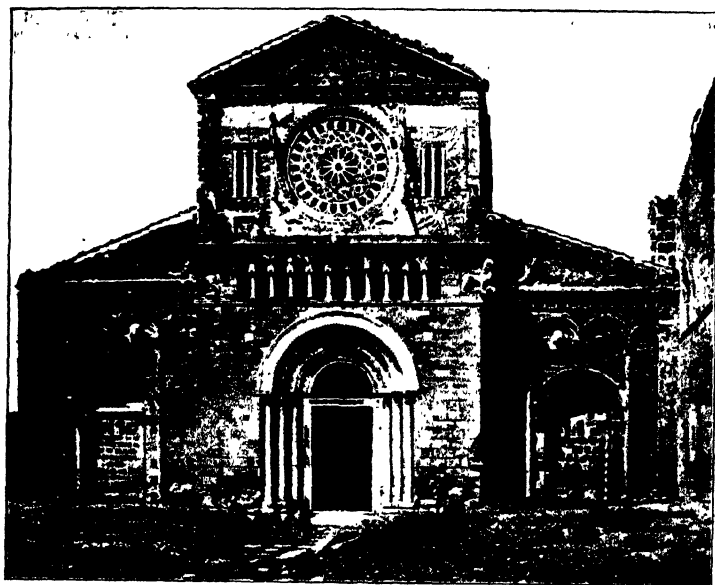


Fig. 237. Toscanella. S. Pietro.

window enclosed within a broad band of decoration strongly Byzantine in character, — that of the left hand window consisting of a series of circles, each containing a half-length human figure in relief, and that on the right of a meandering vine. Fragments of ancient Byzantine sculpture are set in the wall below the windows. The pilasters, which strongly mark the angles of this stage, rest on the backs of beasts, which stand boldly forth from the wall. Between the pilaster capitals runs a thin decorated cornice supported on corbels, a repetition of that over the arcade. A low pediment finishes this remarkable façade, which I have described perhaps with excessive particularity, because it is one of the most striking examples in Italy of the brilliant eclecticism of an unknown architect whose work stands alone and refuses to be classed. The rebuilding of the church is presumed to have occupied the years between 1039 and 1090, which would make the façade closely contemporary with the cathedral of Pisa. But the façade of Pisa, with all its richness and elegance, shows no such architectural capacity and invention as the much humbler work of the unnamed architect of Toscanella.

The façade of S. Maria is somewhat later than that of S. Pietro,

which it resembles so closely as to make it probable that the two may have been the work of the same architect. The doorways, especially those of the nave and the south aisle, are richer and finer, though the great central doorway has, like that of S. Pietro, three orders of jamb-shafts and arch mouldings. The outer member has the same coarse leaf decoration which we have seen in the north doorway of S. Pietro. But here a light lintel intervenes between the capitals and the tympanum, which is covered with reliefs, and the inner jamb-piers carry on their faces each a full-length figure of a saint, while the vertical edges of the intermediate members between the shafts are chamfered and decorated with the nail head ornament so common at a somewhat later period in the Venetian architecture. The arcaded gallery of S. Pietro above the doorway is here repeated, but with much less perfection of detail. The columns are of various sizes and design, evidently taken from older buildings, and their capitals are much more florid than those of S. Pietro. The false construction of the arches is also repeated, each arch being cut out of a single block. The square piers at the extremities of the arcade bear each a griffin, but here the beast is wholly relieved against the wall instead of projecting from it. And the corbels of the cornice which runs above the arcade are unequal in size, and the heads which decorate them are rude and coarse both in design and execution.

The upper stage of the front has, as in S. Pietro, a great rose window, but occupying here so much of the wall space as to leave no room for any other feature except four emblematic figures in relief, evidently of earlier origin and of various sizes and forms, set in the wall at the top, bottom, and sides of the circle. The tracery of the rose is distinctly better than in S. Pietro. The angle pilasters of S. Pietro are wanting, and the angle is marked only by a thin band of lozenges. The cornice is gone, with the exception of a line of small thin corbels like those of the clerestory, and indicating that the flat arched corbel-table of the clerestory was repeated on the façade.















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