

GHE ARTS OF
THE CHVRCH

RENAISSANCE
ARCHITECTURE

By Rev. E. Hermitage Day



The
Arts of the Church

EDITED BY THE
REV. PERCY DEARMER, M.A.

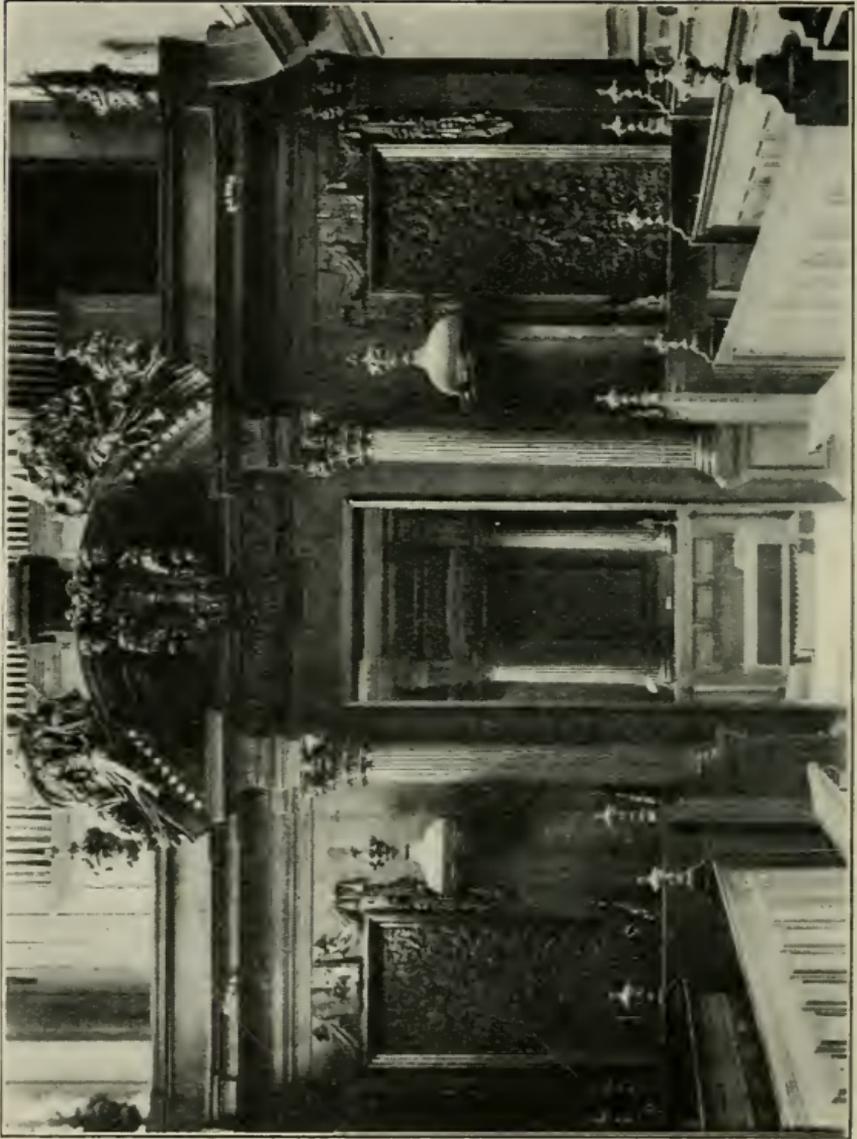
The Arts of the Church

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CHAPEL OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE SCREEN. 1694.

The Arts of the Church

RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND

BY

THE REV. E. HERMITAGE DAY, D.D., F.S.A.

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*WITH THIRTY-SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR*

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TO
E. V. E.

EDITOR'S NOTE

THE little volumes in the ARTS OF THE CHURCH series are intended to provide information in an interesting as well as an accurate form about the various arts which have clustered round the public worship of GOD in the Church of CHRIST. Though few have the opportunity of knowing much about them, there are many who would like to possess the main outlines about those arts whose productions are so familiar to the Christian, and so dear. The authors will write for the average intelligent man who has not had the time to study all these matters for himself; and they will therefore avoid technicalities, while endeavouring at the same time to present the facts with a fidelity which will not, it is hoped, be unacceptable to the specialist.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I AM indebted to my friend Mr. F. C. Eden for kindly reading the proofs of this little book, and for several valuable suggestions, and to Mr. T. G. Jackson, R.A., F.S.A., for allowing me to illustrate the beautiful chapel which he designed for Hertford College, Oxford

SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>INTRODUCTORY</i> - - - - -	I
VIGOUR OF ARCHITECTURE IN THE MIDDLE AGES - - - - -	I
CESSATION OF CHURCH BUILDING AT THE REFORMATION - - - - -	2
THE NEW MANNER WHICH THEN CAME IN -	4
ITS LEGITIMACY - - - - -	5
<i>THE RENAISSANCE MOVEMENT IN ITS INCEPTION</i>	8
THE RENAISSANCE A MOVEMENT IN THOUGHT -	8
THE RETURN TO CLASSICAL PRECEDENT IN ARCHITECTURE - - - - -	9
ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN ITALY - - - - -	10
AND IN ENGLAND - - - - -	11
THE CLASSICAL ORDERS - - - - -	12
<i>THE BEGINNINGS OF CHANGE</i> - - - - -	15
THE ITALIAN INFLUENCE IN ENGLAND - - -	16
AS AT ELY - - - - -	20
THE GERMAN INFLUENCE - - - - -	24
<i>THE INFLUENCE OF INIGO JONES</i> - - - - -	31
HIS EARLIER YEARS - - - - -	32
AND FIRST LEANING TO GOTHIC - - - - -	33
HIS CLASSICAL WORK - - - - -	34
ITS MERIT - - - - -	38

	PAGE
<i>THE LATER PHASES OF GOTHIC</i> - - - -	39
THREE CLASSES OF LATER GOTHIC - - - -	39
THE GOTHIC OF A LINGERING TRADITION - -	43
THE COMBINATION OF GOTHIC WITH RENAISSANCE - - - - -	56
THE PEDANTIC REVIVAL OF GOTHIC - - - -	70
WREN'S ACHIEVEMENT IN IT - - - -	71
ITS LAMENTABLE FAILURE - - - -	76
<i>THE EARLY WORK OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN</i> -	79
HIS EARLY YEARS - - - - -	80
HIS FIRST ESSAYS IN ARCHITECTURE - - -	82
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - - - - -	86
<i>WREN'S CITY CHURCHES</i> - - - - -	121
ST. STEPHEN'S, WALBROOK - - - - -	121
THE DOMED CHURCHES - - - - -	123
TOWERS AND SPIRES - - - - -	128
<i>OTHER WORK OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN</i> - -	134
COLLEGE CHAPELS AND LIBRARIES - - - -	134
THE ROYAL HOSPITALS - - - - -	144
THE SMALLER CITY CHURCHES - - - - -	145
THEIR CONFORMITY TO THE SPIRIT OF THEIR AGE - - - - -	149
THEIR DIGNITY, AND INFLUENCE UPON WORSHIP	152
<i>THE DECLINE OF ARCHITECTURE</i> - - - - -	153
WREN'S SUCCESSORS - - - - -	153
CONCLUSION - - - - -	161
<i>GLOSSARY</i> - - - - -	165
<i>INDEX</i> - - - - -	169

ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
CHAPEL OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE SCREEN. 1694 - - - - -	<i>Frontispiece</i>
EARLY RENAISSANCE DETAIL, LAYER MARNEY. c. 1524 - - - - -	17
ELY CATHEDRAL: BISHOP WEST'S CHAPEL. 1533	18
ELY CATHEDRAL: DETAIL IN BISHOP WEST'S CHAPEL. 1533 - - - - -	21
ELY CATHEDRAL: ROOF OF BISHOP WEST'S CHAPEL. 1533 - - - - -	25
ELY CATHEDRAL: WEST SIDE OF BISHOP WEST'S CHAPEL. 1533 - - - - -	29
WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1613	41
WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD: HALL AND DOOR- WAY. 1613 - - - - -	42
ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD. 1619-1642 - - - - -	45
BRASENOSE COLLEGE CHAPEL: EAST END. 1666	46
BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1666 - - - - -	49
BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1666 - - - - -	50
LEIGHTON BROMSWOLD CHURCH: A CAROLINE RESTORATION. 1632 - - - - -	53
LEIGHTON BROMSWOLD CHURCH: LEAD RAIN- WATER HEAD. 1632 - - - - -	57
LEIGHTON BROMSWOLD CHURCH: CAROLINE WOODWORK. c. 1632 - - - - -	58
LITTLE GIDDING CHURCH: WEST FRONT. 1714	61
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD: LAUD'S QUAD- RANGLE. 1636 - - - - -	62

	PAGE
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD: GARDEN FRONT. 1636 - - - - -	67
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD: GARDEN DOOR- WAY. 1636 - - - - -	68
STAPLEFORD CHURCH: PSEUDO-GOTHIC. 1783 -	73
SAXBY CHURCH. 1789 - - - - -	77
ELY CATHEDRAL: SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN'S DOORWAY IN NORTH TRANSEPT. c. 1662 -	83
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: SOUTH TRANSEPT -	87
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: FROM THE SOUTH- WEST - - - - -	93
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: THE NAVE - - - -	101
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: THE CHOIR - - - -	109
ST. STEPHEN'S, WALBROOK. 1679 - - - -	119
ST. BRIDE'S, FLEET STREET: THE SPIRE. 1700	125
ST. MARY-LE-BOW: THE SPIRE. 1680 - -	131
EMMANUEL COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE: WEST FRONT OF CHAPEL WITH CLOISTERS. 1673 - -	135
TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1694	139
TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1694	143
LINCOLN CLOISTERS: NORTH WALK BUILT BY WREN. 1674 - - - - -	147
ST. PHILIP'S, BIRMINGHAM. 1710 - - - -	155
BANGOR-ON-DEE: EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY TOWER ADDED TO A GOTHIC CHURCH - - - -	159
CHURCH OF THE HOLY REDEEMER, CLERKEN- WELL. 1889 - - - - -	160
NEW CHAPEL, HERTFORD COLLEGE, OXFORD. 1908 - - - - -	163

The Arts of the Church

RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND



CHAPTER I

Introductory

THE close of the Middle Ages saw the end of Gothic architecture. A previous volume in this series has sketched its rise, its glory and its decline. With the Reformation it ceased to be a living style.

The Reformation, beginning with the repudiation of the Papal Supremacy in 1534, put an end for a time to the building of churches, and so made the transition from Gothic to the architecture

of the Renaissance less gradual than it might otherwise have been. All through the Middle Ages there had been much building of new churches, and extension of old churches. Through three centuries and more great monasteries had been built, and were continually being enlarged. Almshouses and bedehouses had given other opportunities to the builder, who made of them religious houses in miniature. With the spread of education in the fifteenth century colleges were founded at Oxford and Cambridge, and many schools were established, and upon their buildings the mason and the sculptor were constantly at work.

But with the later years of Henry VIII building came almost to an end, so far as the Church was concerned. In the unsettled times of the later Tudor monarchs men would not build for religious uses, for they knew not whether their buildings would be allowed to endure. Nobles and courtiers, enriched with the spoil of the

monasteries, were rather occupied with the adaptation of old religious houses to domestic needs than with the building of churches. They were content to use the churches with which the piety of previous generations had endowed them, or not to use them, and in many cases the old buildings were at once allowed to fall into decay, with the slackening of religious zeal. The exuberant reign of Elizabeth saw the rise of great mansions, built too often from the spoil of the Church, but it saw little building of churches. In the reign of the early Stuarts things began to mend, with the revival of religion. By that time Gothic had ceased to express the architectural mind of the nation. The threads of the old tradition had been almost everywhere broken and lost. At Oxford, the home of lost causes, a pathetic attempt was made to keep the Gothic manner, but its spirit had departed. Here and there an isolated church, as St. John's, Leeds, represents a feeling

after the old ways, a desire to walk in the old paths. But for the most part the Church conformed to the fashion of the times, and in her building followed the principles and worked in the new manner which the Renaissance had brought in.

Few of us will deem the new styles and manner comparable with the old. For Gothic seems to express more perfectly than any other manner the spirit of the Catholic Church. It is the style which seems to give its most fitting setting to Catholic ceremonial. It gives the feeling of mystery which befits a Christian temple. It aspires, where styles modelled on and derived from classical architecture merely enclose, and often depress. In its detail it is the most free and lovely of all styles. It is sensitive, and responds readily to special needs and circumstances, even to special limitations.

Yet, when all is said and conceded, it would be a grievous mistake to think that in the post-Reformation architecture of

the Church there is little merit. In the Renaissance and the neo-classical work there is much to admire, much to respect. And it would be unwise to close our eyes to its beauty. Let it be admitted that there is nothing lovelier in all architecture than English Gothic, in the finest examples of the best period. Those, nevertheless, who are whole-hearted admirers of Gothic need sometimes to be reminded that in the whole history of Christian architecture Gothic is but an episode, a comparatively brief phase. From the passing of the Romanesque to the rise of the Renaissance was but a period of some three centuries and a half, in a history of nineteen centuries. It would be a narrow prejudice which refused recognition to any other style than Gothic: it would be folly to say that no other style may legitimately and fittingly be used in the service of the Church. There is no exclusively Christian or Catholic architecture. We have moved on, with a widening knowledge

and a growing sympathy, from the position of Pugin, who called Gothic architecture 'Christian architecture,' and dubbed everything that was not Gothic, heathen ; and from the position of Ruskin, who affected to distinguish between moral and immoral architecture. It is possible to defend the preference for one style over another, on the grounds that its results are more beautiful, or that it attains its effects by simpler methods. But it is unjust to condemn the work of those who preferred the Grand Manner, who considered that they were free to attain their end by methods which did not involve the exhibition of construction, who sought to gain broad effects of light and shade, proportion and mass, without greatly concerning themselves as to the methods by which the effects were to be obtained. The notions of reality and morality which have dominated the minds of some writers on architecture were not, in fact, present to the minds of the men of the

Gothic period, and are notions read into their work by later critics. And it is an extravagance of criticism which leads to such a pronouncement as that "all possible shades of human folly and licentiousness meet in late Gothic and Renaissance architecture."

Let us then approach our subject without prejudice, desiring only to see how men have built in accordance with their ideals, and in response to the influences of their times, doing their best in the service of the Church as they understood it, since the passing of the Middle Ages.

CHAPTER II

The Renaissance Movement in its Inception

THE Renaissance movement in architecture and in all art was the outcome of a movement in thought affecting the whole of Western Europe.

It coincided with a revival of letters, with a freedom of thought, with a criticism of old traditions and accepted standards. Dante and Petrarch were among those who first directed men's minds to the classical literature, and caused them to break away from contemporary modes of expression. The revival of Greek letters, caused by the dispersion of Greek scholars through the West after the fall of Constantinople, meant another divergence from the familiar and the accustomed. And with the revival of interest in classical

literature there arose the desire to follow the precedents of classical art.

The leading motive of the Renaissance movement in architecture was the closer and more general use of the classical forms, with a freedom in their employment which was necessary if the classical forms were to be successfully adapted to the needs of another religion and another plane of civilization. The movement in Italy represented not only a reversion to classical models, but the culmination of a discontent with the work which had been done in the Middle Ages. Gothic, which in one or another form had become dominant in almost all European countries, had never succeeded in establishing itself securely in Italy. Where it had gained a footing it had never remained unchallenged: it was always regarded as an importation, a barbarous importation—for that was the first significance of the word Gothic—from the North. The Italian never worked freely in it, but always with

a certain self-consciousness, a certain cramped exercise of its manner, for he was influenced by the classical remains which he saw around him, and so his Gothic buildings were at best but tolerably successful. Even as he used it he must have felt it to be unsuited to its environment, and to the climate of Italy. Only in Venice, where Gothic clasped hands with the Byzantine, and supremely gifted masters worked, had Italian Gothic been really admirable.

With Brunelleschi and Donatello and Alberti the movement began. They had great difficulties to contend with. The classical forms did not supply them with all the precedents that they needed. They had to employ the old features in new ways and new combinations. The early workers had to buy their experience with failures, and through experiment. But out of failure and experiment a new style came to the birth, a style which used the old modes of classical expression,

formulated in a short time its own rules and traditions, and ended by sweeping Gothic triumphantly from the field in every country where it had held sway.

It established itself first in Florence and the north of Italy. Rome was late in giving in its adhesion to the movement, though at last it accepted and used the new style with enthusiasm. By the middle of the sixteenth century the new architecture had settled down into a formulated style, and the works of Vignola and Palladio had a great effect in consolidating it, and in weaning men from essays and experiments.

It was at this time that Englishmen took cognizance of the movement, and began to give it serious study. They were late to appreciate the Renaissance, for they were content with their own traditional Gothic, and they were late also because France, also content with her Gothic, had not accepted the lead of Italy, and so could not pass on the

movement. Practically no Renaissance influence reached England through France until the time when French work influenced Wren.

The Renaissance movement in architecture was based upon the free use of the old classical orders which, originating in Greece, had been adopted with minor modifications by the Romans. The oldest and simplest of these orders was the Doric. In this the column rises from a circular base upon a square plinth. The column is fluted with channels less than a semicircle in section, and separated from one another by a sharp edge. Its capital has a square abacus, and is connected with the shaft of the column by an ovolo, or quarter-round moulding, with a small neck-mould below.

In the Ionic order the column is fluted with deeper channels, which are separated by a fillet or flat edge. It stands upon a moulded base, and its capital is adorned with volutes, or spiral scrolls.

The Corinthian order has a column of the same type as the Ionic, but the capital is deeper than in the earlier orders, and while it retains in a smaller proportion the volutes of the Ionic, it surrounds them with foliage of acanthus leaves.

Upon these columns rested the entablature, consisting of three parts, the architrave, the frieze and the cornice.

These were the forms which the Renaissance used, showing a great preference for the Corinthian. The round arch, or the horizontal architrave, was used above the columns, as suited the conditions of the work. And with variations of these simple elements of composition the Renaissance work was built up. Elaborate rules, based on the classic, were formulated for determining the exact proportions of each part of the work ; the diameter of the column had a fixed proportion to its height, the capital to its column, the intercolumniation, or space between the columns, had its set of relations to their

diameter. The architecture of classical times and of the Renaissance abounds in precise rules, and prescriptions of great nicety. But into these we need not inquire, since the modest aim of the present essay is to sketch in broad outline the general course of the Renaissance in our country, and the work which it produced, without the introduction of detail which might confuse, or of technical terms hard to be remembered and understood.

CHAPTER III

The Beginnings of Change

AT the beginning of the sixteenth century English Gothic had ceased to live. The Perpendicular style, a purely English development of Gothic, which had approved itself to the national mind, and in which a great deal of good building had been done, had reached its latest and its feeblest phase. Its composition showed no breadth of conception or generosity of sacrifice. Arcades had become gaunt and ungraceful, doorways shallow and shadowless, the lines of the window-tracery had stiffened into rigidity. Freedom and grace had passed from its ornament; a careless repetition of stereotyped enrichments, or of shallow panelling, alone relieved the prevailing flatness of

its surfaces. Gothic architecture seemed to be incapable of further effort, and to be expecting aid from some unknown quarter, some inspiration from a new source, the influence of altogether new ideas, of which the adoption would involve the passage to a new style.

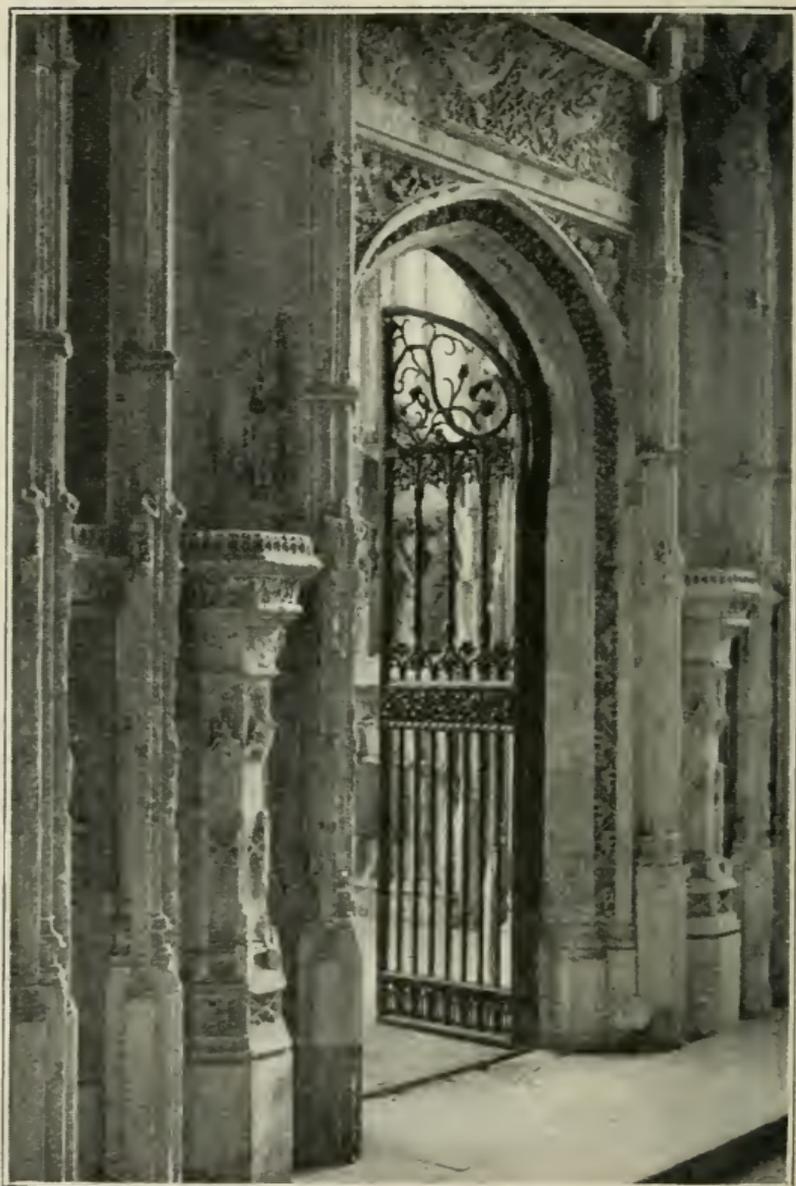
ITALIAN INFLUENCE

In 1512 the Italian Torrigiano had been summoned to design the tomb of Henry VII in Westminster Abbey, and with his coming the Renaissance first began to make itself felt in England. The first sign of the approach of the Renaissance is apparent in buildings wholly Gothic in their main lines, but admitting a new and vigorous type of ornament in their detail. This ornament was the work of Italian craftsmen, of whom some came into England to seek employment, and some were brought over by wealthy Englishmen to carry out special work.



EARLY RENAISSANCE DETAIL, LAVER MARNEY. c. 1524.

(See page 19.)

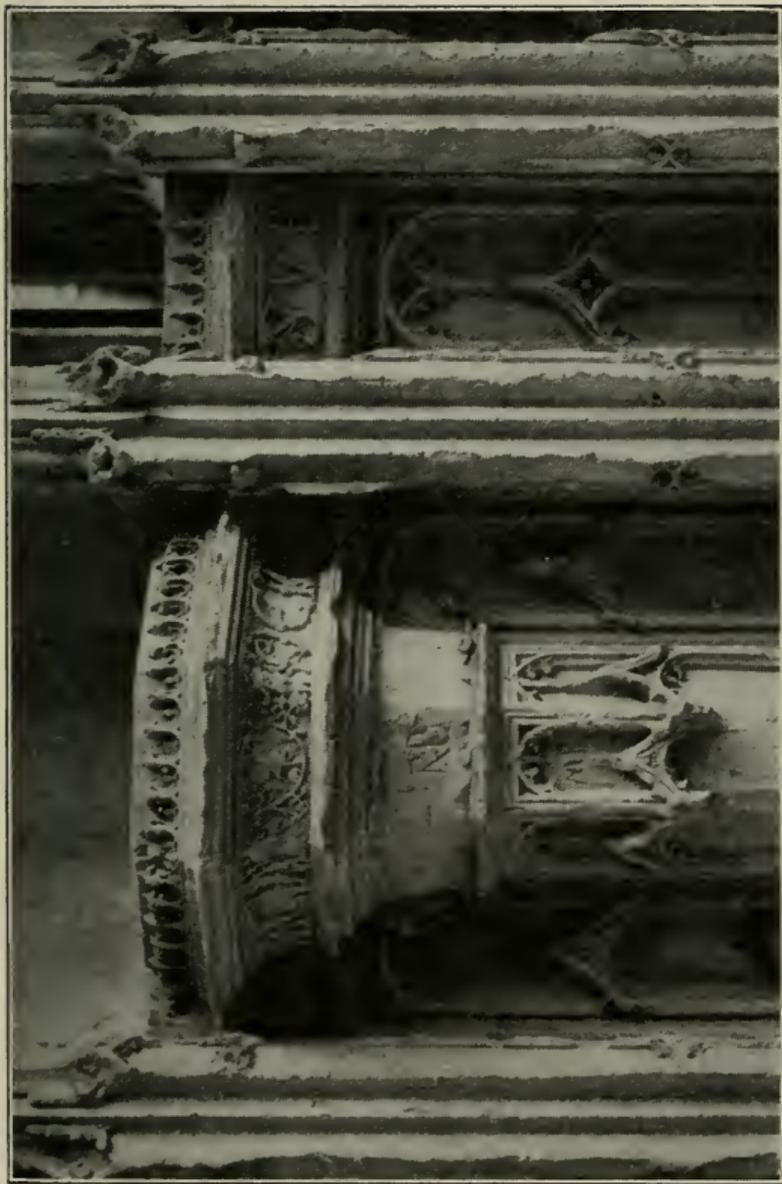


ELY CATHEDRAL : BISHOP WEST'S CHAPEL. 1533.
(See page 20.)

In the very interesting Perpendicular church of Layer Marney, in Essex, we find examples of this Italian work. Lord Marney had been Ambassador to Venice, and had learned to appreciate the art then current in Italy, and the art of the ages which had given it birth. When he returned to England he brought with him Venetian craftsmen to work the ornament of his new house of Layer Marney Towers, of which a splendid fragment remains to show what its glory would have been if the original design had been carried to completion. And these Italian craftsmen were employed also upon the tombs of the Lords Marney in the church hard by. Between the chancel and the north chapel is a tomb of which the canopy and the base are faced with terra cotta, bearing Renaissance ornament; and at the head of another tomb in the north aisle is an altar, perfect except for the loss of its *mensa*, constructed of brick faced with terra

cotta, ornamented in three panels with wreathing.

Another and a more noteworthy example is in the chapel of Bishop West, built within the easternmost bay of the south choir aisle of Ely Cathedral. In structure it is wholly Gothic, of no unworthy kind, though it was designed so late as 1533, and it shows that the Italian was not yet allowed to plan, though he was called in to adorn. Above and below the numerous niches with which the chapel walls are ornamented space was left for the display of his skill in arabesques. A cavetto moulding round the doorway is filled with a flowing pattern of foliage, and a broad cove over the doorway gave him his most liberal opportunity. Everywhere the bishop's motto, *Gracia dei sum id quod sum*, is found in lettering which must have seemed a daring innovation upon the black letter of the time. The ceiling also was assigned to him, and he treated it with singular skill. The con-



ELY CATHEDRAL: DETAIL IN BISHOP WEST'S CHAPEL. 1533.

(See page 20.)

servative design of the chapel made it necessary to retain the general lines of the fan-vaulting of the period. But instead of keeping to the shallow panelling characteristic of the later fan-vaulting, the craftsman treated it with coffers, or deeply sunk panels, divided by moulded ribs into compartments of which the sunk surface is relieved by designs slightly raised upon a tinted ground. The iron gates are effective, though not very skilfully wrought in every part. The whole of this exquisite chapel deserves close study. In less capable hands its decoration might have easily become oppressive, but it is so varied and delicate that it is, in fact, delightful both as a whole and in detail.

It is chiefly in the southern counties that we find examples of the decorative work of Italian craftsmen upon buildings planned and executed by Englishmen in the last phase of the Gothic tradition. At Winchester, for example, Italian workmen were found, some of

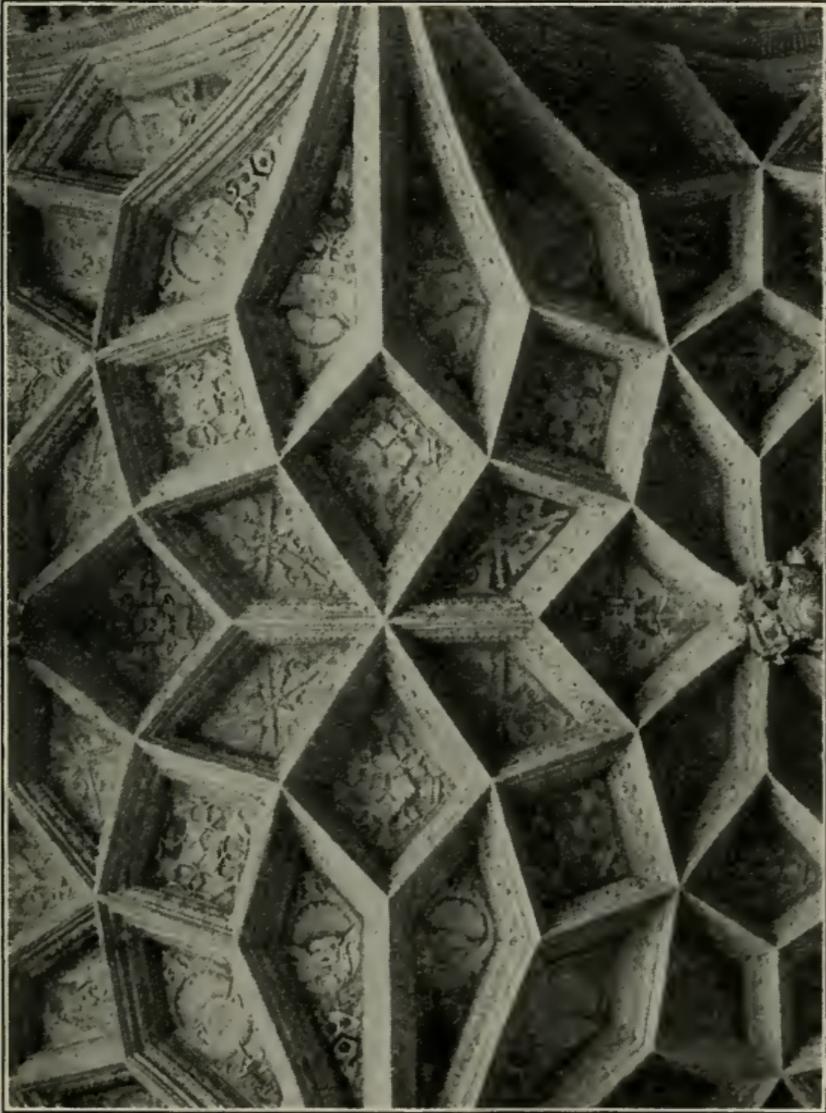
whom had arrived at Southampton as journeymen seeking work, others of whom were doubtless attracted by the settlement of Italian merchants in the city. We are not surprised therefore to find the Italian touch in the work of two bishops of the later Tudor period. Bishop Fox built in 1524 the side screens of the presbytery; and while they were mainly Gothic in line, the detail of their ornament, and that of the chests which were set above them to contain the bones of prelates and kings, is thoroughly Italian. The chantry of Bishop Gardiner is of Perpendicular work, even to the vaulting, but Italians were called in to design and execute the reredos, and to panel the lower part of the exterior and ornament its frieze. At Christ Church Priory, also not far from Southampton, there is a like blending of late Perpendicular work with Renaissance detail in the chantry of Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, where friezes of Italian work run above the

cusped panelling of the English workmen.

It is evident in all these examples that two groups of workmen were engaged upon the work at the same time, and that while the planning and much of the execution was retained by Englishmen, the Italians were assigned a strictly limited field for the exercise of their decorative skill, and that within these set limits they were free. Their work was recognized as delicate and beautiful, a welcome relief to the formality of the Perpendicular manner, but it was not allowed to become important, nor were they admitted to any share in the design of the whole work.

GERMAN INFLUENCE

What the ultimate influence of the Italian work might have been, what the course of its conflict with an expiring Gothic, we can only conjecture. For



ELY CATHEDRAL: ROOF OF BISHOP WEST'S CHAPEL. 1533.

(See page 20.)

with the Reformation the employment and the influence of the Italian craftsmen, always limited, came altogether to an end. England, in the days of Elizabeth, was no place for those who adhered to the Papal obedience. On the other hand, it was a haven of refuge for foreign Protestants, and the Italian craftsmen were replaced by those who had fled from persecution in Germany and the Low Countries.

But the Germans had very little direct influence upon the art of the Church, though we find their hand in many of the domestic buildings of the time. The Church had for the moment ceased to build. The old parish churches were more than large enough for a population which no longer thronged them, and was fast losing the habit of worship. They were allowed to fall into decay and foulness, as the third Homily sufficiently witnesses. Chapels were no longer added to them, for chantries and guilds had been swept away. There were no monks

or nuns to be housed. In the confusion of the time education had come almost to a standstill, the Universities were all but deserted while controversy raged. A few schools, it is true, were founded out of the wreck of other foundations, a few almshouses, like that at Warwick, were built to replace the many bedehouses which had been dissolved, and to afford a shelter to some who in other ages would have been tended by the Religious Orders. And that was all. The Church built little, her craftsmen were out of employment.

The Germans, then, found their chief occupation in the great houses which asserted the wealth and pride of the Elizabethan age. With the passing of feudalism it became safe to replace the frowning castle and the moated manor-house by the mansion, with its great windows looking upon courtyard and terrace and pleasaunce. There was gold to build with, from the spoil of Monastic

houses, and from the riches of the isles of the West, and more than one great English house has been paid for by the treasure-chest of Spanish galleons. There was the desire to build, for closer contact with men of other lands had made Englishmen far more luxurious than of old. It was an age of personal aggrandisement, and men felt free to spend upon themselves, and upon the gratification of their pride, what in another age they would have devoted to religion or the common weal.

The Germans, therefore, could affect the art of the Church only indirectly, through their work in domestic architecture, touching in its turn the architecture of the churches, and in the ostentatious monuments which the taste of the age permitted, and upon which men spent when they could no longer found chantries. And it is well that this was so, for the German work was far inferior to the Italian which it superseded. It was



ELY CATHEDRAL: WEST SIDE OF BISHOP WEST'S
CHAPEL. 1533. (See page 22.)

founded on a less exact knowledge of the classical manner; its detail was often coarse and uninteresting. And a school of English builders was beginning to be formed, in sympathy with the Renaissance manner, and capable of using it skilfully, if not as yet excellently.

CHAPTER IV

The Influence of Inigo Jones

FROM the accession of Elizabeth to the earlier years of the reign of Charles I, it can hardly be said that there was a definite school of architecture in England, least of all of architecture employed in the service of the Church. The Gothic tradition was fast expiring, and yet men were still working in it, clinging to the past all the more that they were not in close touch with the developments of architecture upon the Continent. The Renaissance had not yet captured English architecture, though it was exercising a great influence upon all detail, and many domestic buildings were being built in it. It was a period of eclectic experiment, and of indecision. Men were waiting for some

movement to carry them along, some personality of distinction who might give them a lead.

And the later years of Elizabeth's reign gave birth and training to one whose work was destined to have a great influence upon the whole course of architectural development in England. Inigo Jones was born in 1573, in London. While he was still young his ability was recognized by certain patrons of genius, who after the fashion of the time gave him the opportunity of travelling in Italy. Before returning to England he studied also the architecture of Denmark, and, if tradition be trustworthy, he designed several buildings in that country. In 1610 he was appointed Surveyor to the Prince of Wales. His duties involved the superintendence of minor building and garden planning about the royal residences; and he was much in request for the designing of masques, a trivial occupation in which he had long been employed. His office

of Surveyor came to an end with the death of Prince Henry in 1612, and again he travelled in Italy, collecting works of art for the Earl of Arundel, and perfecting his knowledge of classical and Renaissance architecture, not only among the buildings themselves, but also in the writings of the Italian masters of architecture.

On his return to England he began a more serious practice of architecture than he had before attempted. At first it seemed that for all his study of the Italian work his preference would lean to the Gothic style, for the chapel of Lincoln's Inn, his earliest work for the Church, is in Gothic. The tradition that he designed the composite church of St. Catherine Cree is probably inaccurate. But St. Alban's, Wood Street, was certainly designed by him in Gothic, to replace the mediaeval church which had in 1632 become too dilapidated to be safe. The church was destroyed in the Great Fire of London, and was rebuilt by Wren, so that

we have no knowledge of Inigo Jones' design, except the sole fact that it was Gothic.

Whatever tendency Inigo Jones may at first have shown towards Gothic, and we do not know how far he was influenced by conditions laid down by those who commissioned him, his best work was to be done in the classical manner. The Banqueting House at Whitehall, the fragment of a vast design, was his greatest work, and one which brought him immediate and enduring fame. In the judgement of Mr. Blomfield it is "the most accomplished piece of proportion in England, and not inferior to the finest work of Palladio and the great Italian masters."

The disturbances of the Civil War, and the consequent impoverishment of the Church, prevented Inigo Jones from designing as many buildings for the Church as might have fallen to him in happier times. He arrived at his maturity just

as the troubles became acute, and since he himself was a determined Royalist, and intimately associated with the Court, he was compelled to seek safety in flight when the Royalist cause was lost. And for several years before that the Church had not been in a position to undertake many great works. We have therefore but few churches from his designs.

Among the few is that of St. Paul, Covent Garden. In it the main features of Inigo Jones' work are preserved, for though it was burnt down, it was rebuilt on the old lines. It is much more than the finest barn in England, as it has been contemptuously termed, for though its exterior is exceedingly plain and severe, it shows a masterly treatment of the few and simple elements of its composition, and its eastern face towards Covent Garden has a portico in Doric, with a pediment, of real dignity.

For the Church Inigo Jones' most important work was done upon the Cathedral

of St. Paul's. King James himself, moved to solicitude for the dilapidated building, had appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into its state, and among the Commissioners was Inigo Jones, whom from his position at Court it would certainly have been difficult to pass over. But the Commission effected little, and nothing of importance was done until King Charles had come to the throne, and moved thereto by Laud had appointed a new Commission. Funds were raised by Laud's enthusiasm, and a great part of the exterior wall was cased, and something was done upon the interior to preserve it from the desecration which had been the careless custom of centuries, and to fit it for the more reverent worship which was a fruit of the Laudian Revival. And to the western front was given a noble portico of one order of Corinthian columns, wider than the nave, with which the portico was connected by volutes. It attracted, as it deserved, the unstinted praise of Wren,

who hoped to be able to retain it after the Great Fire, and to incorporate it with his new work. But it was badly damaged, and Wren found it necessary to take it down, and though he replaced it by a west front more original and in some respects finer, the disappearance of the portico was a real loss to our architectural tradition.

Upon the art of the Church the work of Inigo Jones exercised an influence rather indirect than direct. Though he did little ecclesiastical work, he gave the whole course of English architectural development a more definite direction. His public and domestic buildings set a standard which was at once accepted in lieu of the incoherent and eclectic traditions of a century. He brought architecture to the first principles of the Renaissance, and recovered it from triviality. And his achievement is happily summarized by Mr. Blomfield, his most enthusiastic admirer among modern writers.

“His extraordinary capacity is shown by the success with which he freed English architecture from the imbecilities of the German designers, and started it on a line of fresh development, borrowed, it is true, from Italy, yet so successfully adapted to English traditions that it was at once accepted, and followed by the best intelligence of the country for the next hundred and fifty years. His especial strength lay in his mastery of proportion, his contempt for mere prettiness, and the rare distinction of his style. His own theory of architecture was that, in his own words, it should be ‘solid, proportional according to the rules, masculine and unaffected.’ No man has ever more completely realized his own ideal of his art.”

CHAPTER V

The Later Phases of Gothic

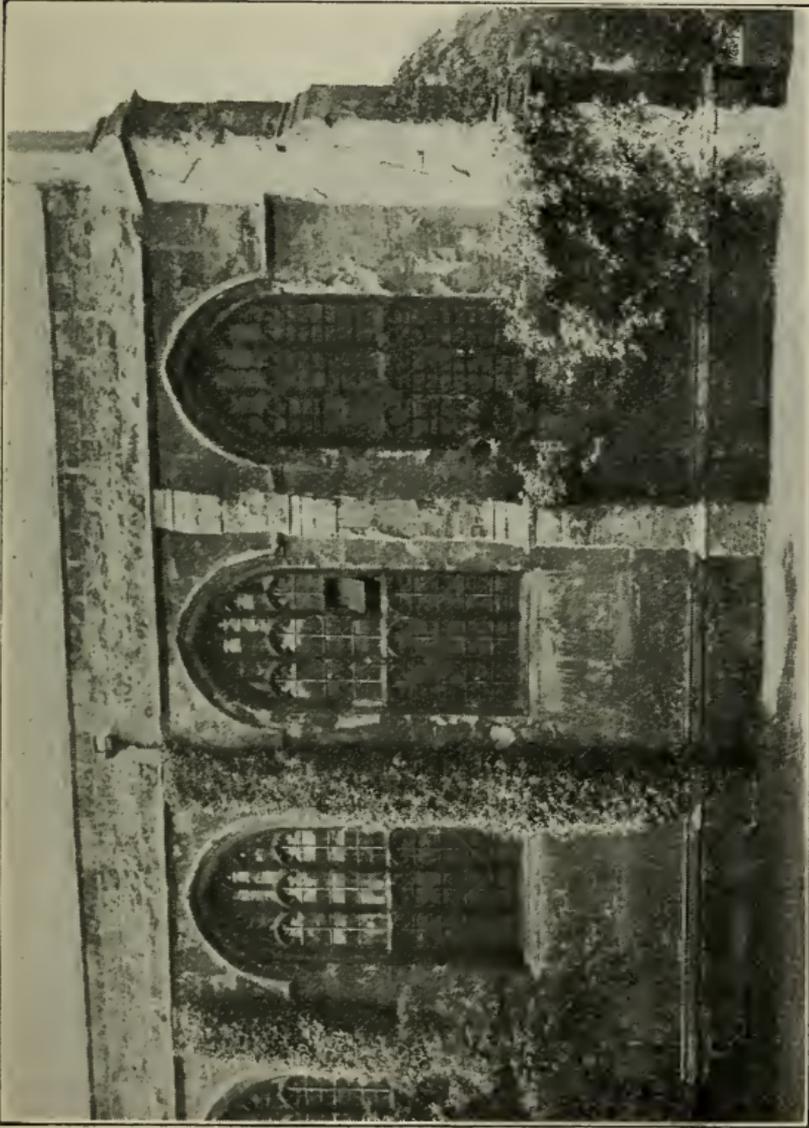
THE Renaissance style did not at once and completely supplant the Gothic. In some places, as at Oxford, the older style waged a long contest with the advancing Renaissance. And it will be convenient to consider together all the types of Gothic which are found to have been in use after the Renaissance had begun to make its influence strongly felt.

The later Gothic may be divided into three classes. In the first we may place all work which represented a sincere attempt to continue the old tradition, to work in the Gothic which had absorbed England for nearly four centuries. That attempt was marred by a declining knowledge. It showed a continual forgetful-

ness of first principles, it was too often oblivious of beauty, it worked with little generosity. But it was nevertheless quite sincere, in that it was no pedantic revival, but deemed itself to be in the direct line of succession.

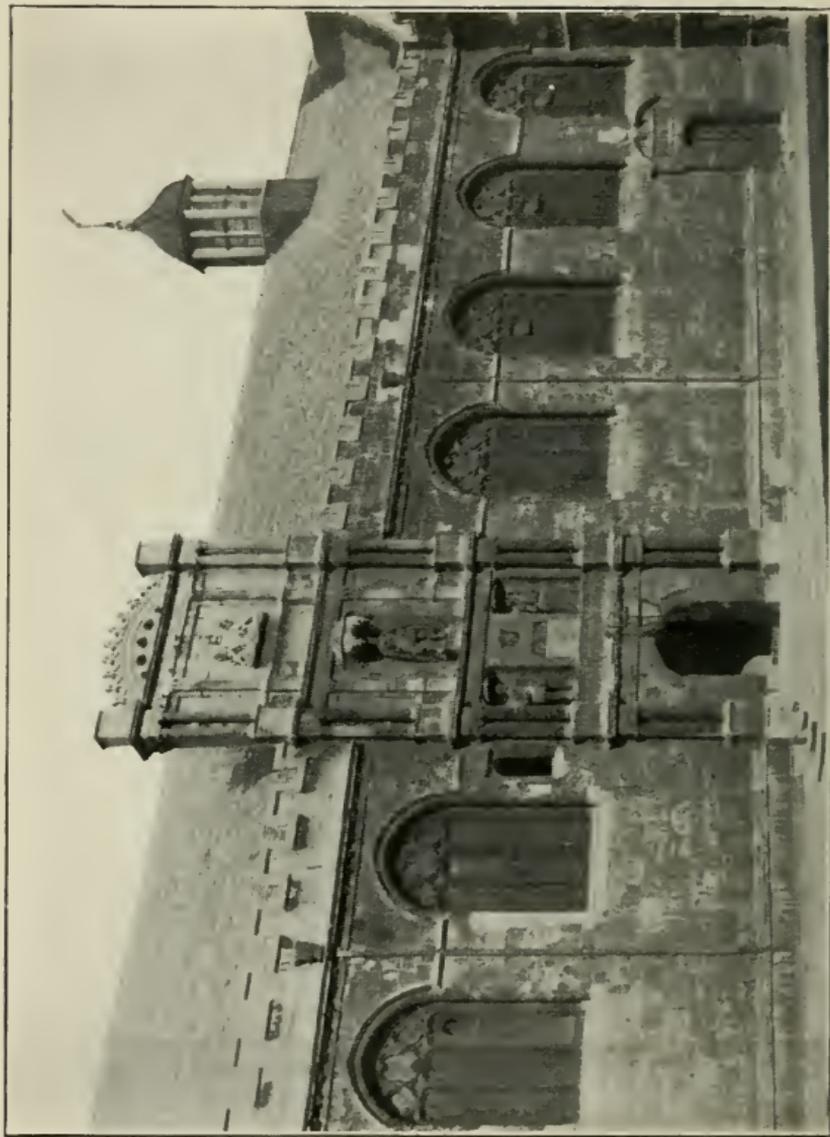
The second class includes the Gothic of those who attempted to combine in one work the features of two styles, who saw the beauty of the detail of the new manner, and incorporated it in buildings which kept in the main to the old lines. The attempt was exceedingly interesting, and it produced buildings of which a few have a singular charm, even though they are full of incongruity and inconsistency.

The third class includes the Gothic of the pedants and the imitators, who worked in a corruption of Gothic very intolerable, who produced buildings of no beauty or interest, who could not appreciate the real merit of the old work, and who were therefore unable even to copy it intelligently. Such was the Gothic of the later



WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1613.

(See page 47.)



WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD: HALL AND DOORWAY. 1613.

(See page 47.)

part of the eighteenth century, the Gothic of Strawberry Hill, of the churchwardens and village carpenters whose achievements have become a proverb for all that is scamped and mean.

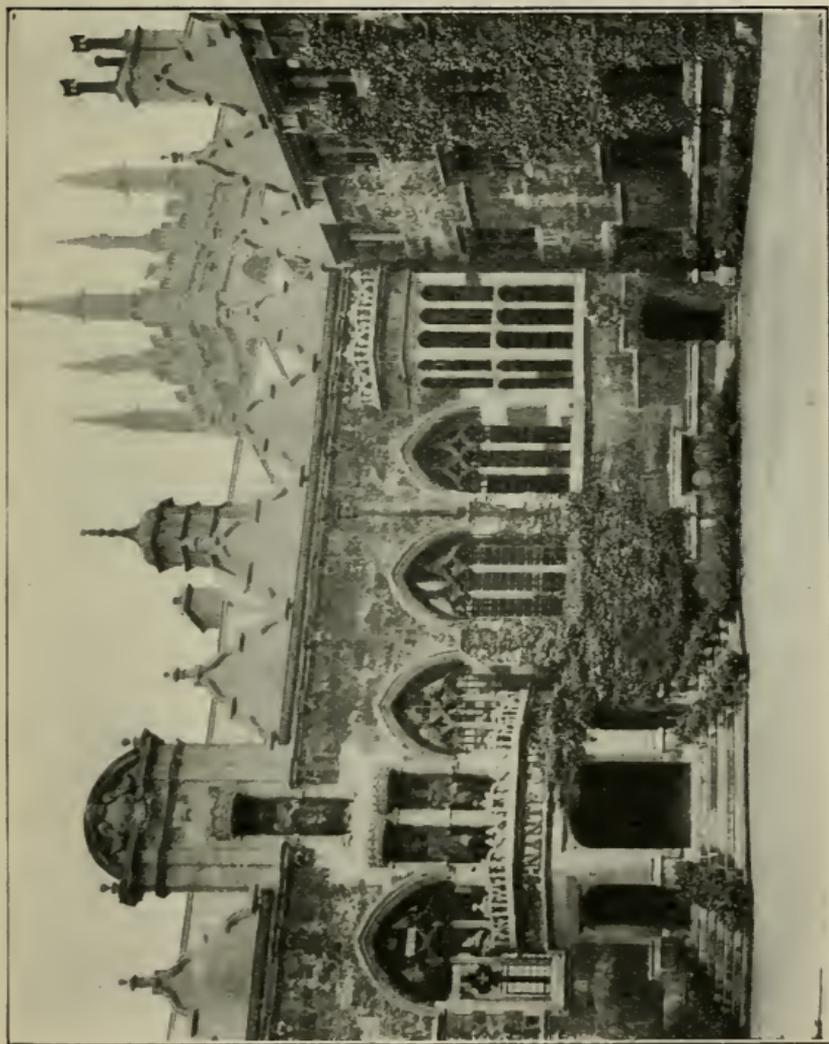
THE GOTHIC OF A LINGERING TRADITION

Of these classes the first two are well represented at Oxford. The Reformation had made a great break in the life of the University. Strife about religion had as its immediate result the desertion of the schools, in which few lecturers and fewer scholars remained. But with the Elizabethan settlement and the revival of letters in the latter half of the sixteenth century Oxford began again to attract students, and its old vigour of life returned. There was much to be done in the reorganization of colleges which had been brought almost to ruin by change. There were halls to be remodelled which had formerly been attached to the

Religious Orders, now dissolved. New foundations were rising, by the liberality of those who saw to what straits the work of education had been brought, and who gave generously that the Church and realm of England might not be wholly wanting in learned men. So there was a great activity of building in Oxford at the end of Elizabeth's reign and in that of James, until the temporary triumph of Puritanism again checked it.

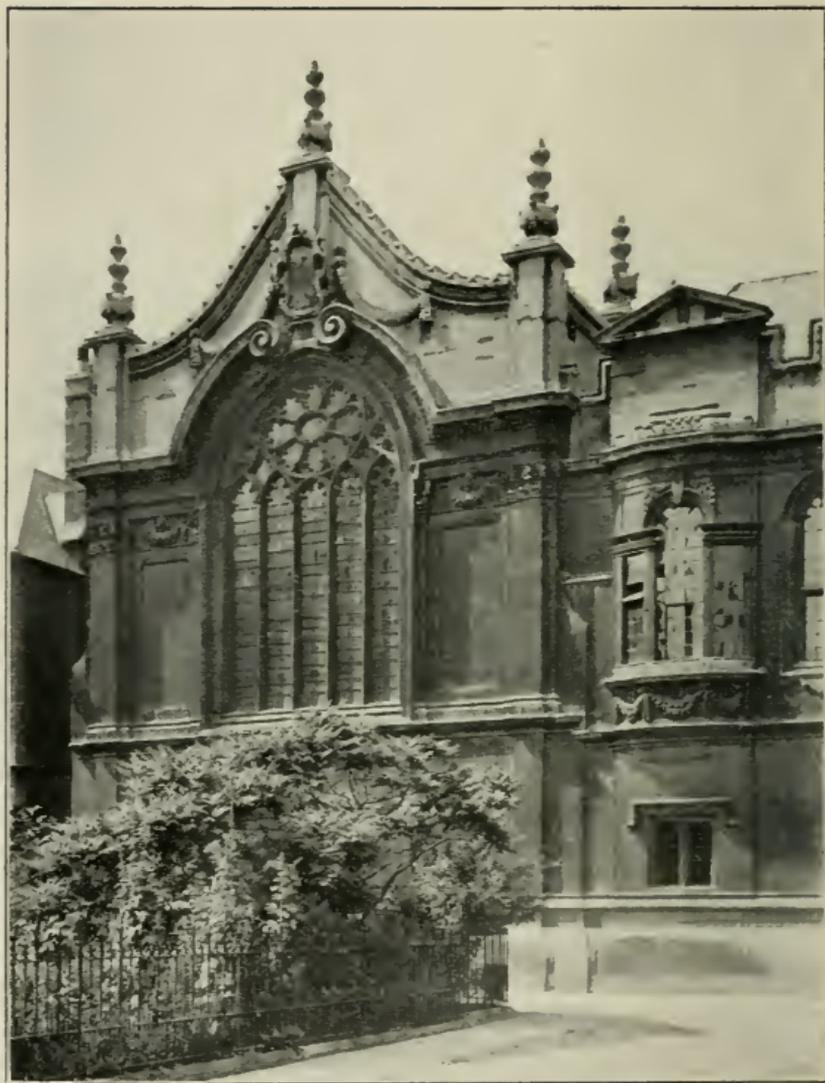
And a great part of the new building was done in a kind of Gothic. Oxford has ever been most loyal to her past, even to "lost causes and impossible ideals." The glamour of the Middle Ages still lingered within her walls. It was natural that the new builders should be influenced by their surroundings, and should conform their work to them. They continued therefore the old manner.

The proscholium of the Divinity School shows some vaulting of a late Gothic type, mixed with Renaissance detail, of which



ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD. 1619-1642.

(See page 52.)



BRASENOSE COLLEGE CHAPEL: EAST END. 1666.
(See page 59.)

the general effect is not bad. But the building which exhibits most clearly the persistence of a real knowledge of Gothic is Wadham College.

The chief part of the college is of one period, the second decade of the seventeenth century. Founded by Sir Nicholas and Dame Dorothy Wadham, it witnesses to their connection with the West country. The masons employed upon the buildings came from Somersetshire, a county where a noble tradition of building lingered on, and they worked in the style with which they were familiar, encouraged by the Gothic of the Middle Ages which they saw around them.

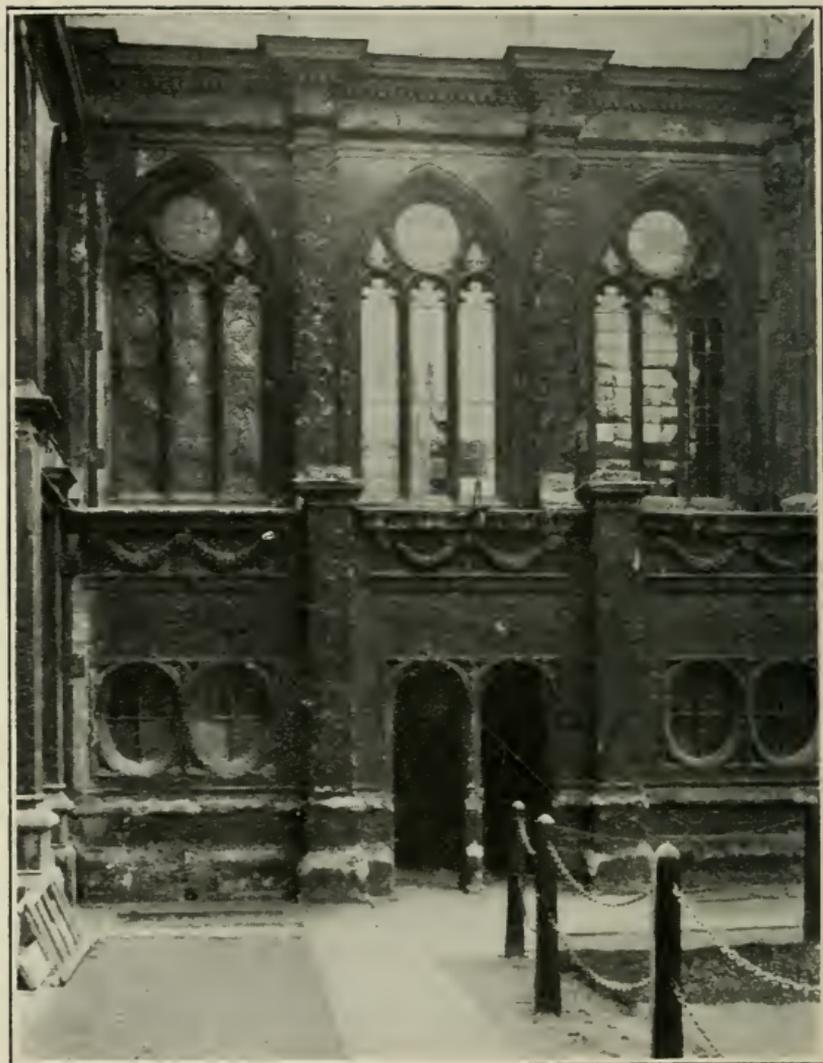
The buildings, it is true, are not consistent. The great doorway opposite to the entrance gate is classical. The ante-chapel shows a mixture of Gothic with Renaissance. But the chapel itself is Gothic, of a late type but almost pure, so good in fact that Rickman pronounced it to be of the beginning of the sixteenth

century, and when confronted with the documents which proved it to date from 1613, persisted in his opinion, saying that no documents could prove what was manifestly impossible. The windows of the chapel are excellent, and the tracery can hardly be distinguished from that of a purely Perpendicular building. The arches also which divide the antechapel into three compartments are of a Perpendicular type. The tracery of the antechapel windows is of a different type. Though it has flowing lines, scroll work is introduced, and the lines are tied at the point of contact with little bands of stone presenting a kind of small boss in the plane of the tracery. The sections of the mullions and jambs are different from those of the purer Gothic of the chapel windows. Yet from some points of view, from the garden especially, the impression which the building conveys is Gothic; one would say at a first glance that the proportions of the chapel, and the gabled



BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD : THE CHAPEL. 1666.

(See page 59.)



BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1666.

(See page 59.)

front and square Tudor windows could only have been designed in the sixteenth century. Within, the woodwork, contemporary with the masonry, leaves us in no doubt as to its date, and the classical doorway to the hall betrays its surroundings. Still, there is much in the building to show that the old traditions lived, and that to follow them was a joy to the craftsmen, who used the manner without conscious imitation.

The chapel of Jesus College is one of the best examples of seventeenth century Gothic. It was built in 1621, and the east window looking upon Turl Street is fifteen years later. At a glance it might be set down without hesitation as Perpendicular. A certain weakness in the lines of the tracery alone betrays it.

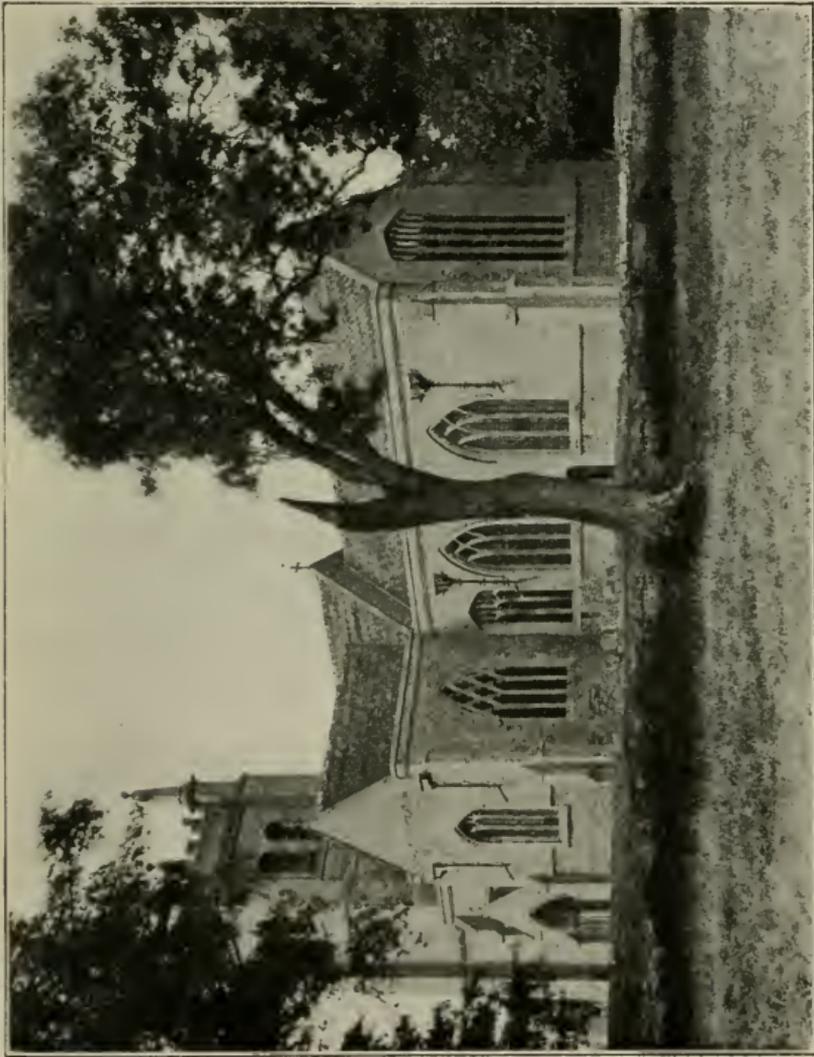
The hall and chapel of St. Mary Hall, now incorporated with Oriel, were built between 1632 and 1644. Here there is a very good east window, of Perpendicular type, but the side windows are very

weak and debased, and convey something of the impression of the worst Flamboyant, having flowing lines under a semicircular head.

The chapel at Lincoln College was a few years earlier in date, and is on the whole better, with good tracery and fairly consistent mouldings.

In Oriel College, of which the hall and chapel were built in the five years beginning in 1637, the style is weaker, and there is a greater admixture of classical detail, with the strapwork characteristic of the Renaissance domestic work. It is nevertheless picturesque enough, with its oriel window, and porch approached by a flight of steps. In the chapel are traceried windows under heads either pointed or semicircular, resembling those in St. Mary Hall.

And among the most remarkable of all the pieces of seventeenth-century Gothic at Oxford is almost the latest. The staircase by which the hall of Christ



LEIGHTON BROMSWOLD CHURCH: A CAROLINE RESTORATION. 1632.

(See page 60.)

Church is approached, with the fine fan-vaulting carried on a central shaft, was wrought by one Smith, of London, in the time of Dr. Fell, 1640.

Work of a type similar to that at Oxford appears in very few parish churches. The very general neglect of the churches over long terms of years, and the custom of executing such repairs as were done in some variety of the Renaissance, makes the amount of work worth studying very small. But in restorations there was a tendency to follow the lines of the ancient work. Bishop Hacket's work at Lichfield was intended to reproduce the old; and the good people of Higham Ferrers were careful when their church spire fell to rebuild it on the old lines, and with much of the old material.

But we have in St. John's, Leeds, a very interesting example of a church entirely new, and keeping alive the Gothic tradition. It was built in 1632. The arcade which divides the church into two

equal and similar parts is of pointed arches, and with the exception of the ornament on their capitals they might pass for Gothic. The windows of the nave have cinque-foiled lights under square heads. But the fittings of the interior are quite definitely Renaissance in character, for the Gothic work is restricted to the masonry. The roof has panels of plaster, a fine screen of Jacobean work runs the whole width of the church, and the semicircular arches above it have strapwork in their spandrels. The pews have cresting of the Jacobean type, and the pulpit and reading pew are equally consistent with their period.

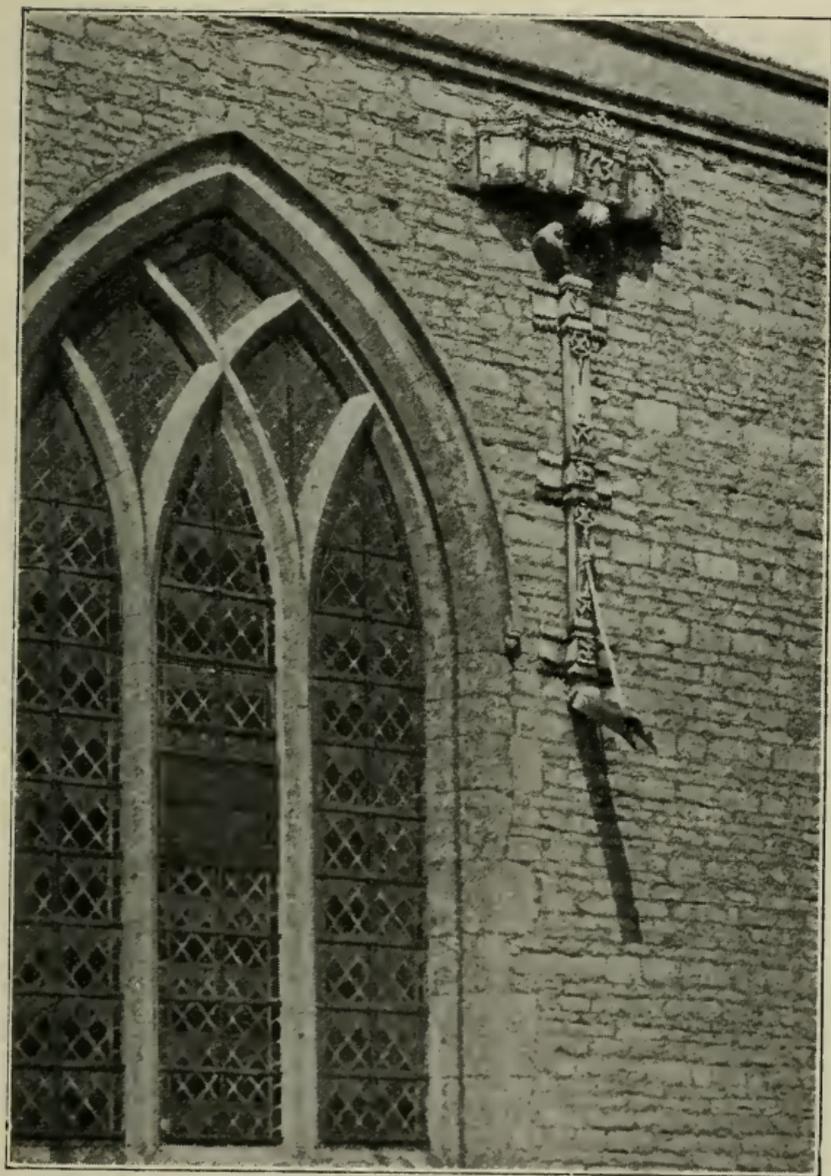
The ruined chapel of the house of the Lytes, at Lytes Cary in Somersetshire, rebuilt in 1631, is almost consistent Gothic, but in this county Gothic, in which so many great churches had been built in the sixteenth century, died very hard, and the survival at Lytes Cary is

less strange than it would have been elsewhere.

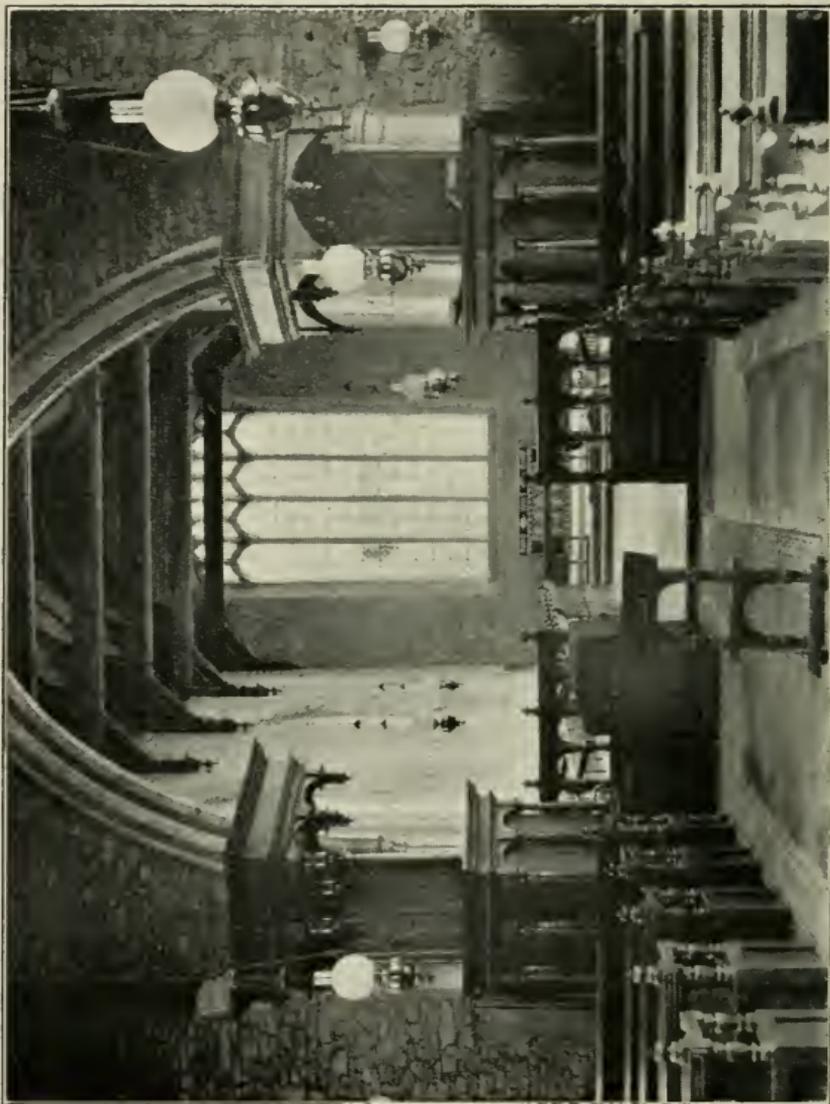
There was always a feeling that Gothic was proper to the buildings of the Church and that its use asserted desirably the continuity of the Church after the Reformation with the Church of the Middle Ages. Bishop Cosin, that strenuous asserter of continuity, used it therefore at Bishop Auckland.

THE COMBINATION OF RENAISSANCE WITH GOTHIC

In the parish churches there are comparatively few examples of the combination of Gothic with Renaissance. But Bishop Jewel added to the church at Sunningwell, in Berkshire, a six-sided porch in which the two styles are commingled. In the main it is classical, for at the angles projecting columns carry an entablature, in Doric, and the doorway is round-headed with classical mouldings.



LEIGHTON BROMSWOLD CHURCH: LEAD RAIN-WATER
HEAD. 1632. (See page 60.)



LEIGHTON BROMSWOLD CHURCH : CAROLINE WOODWORK. c. 1632.

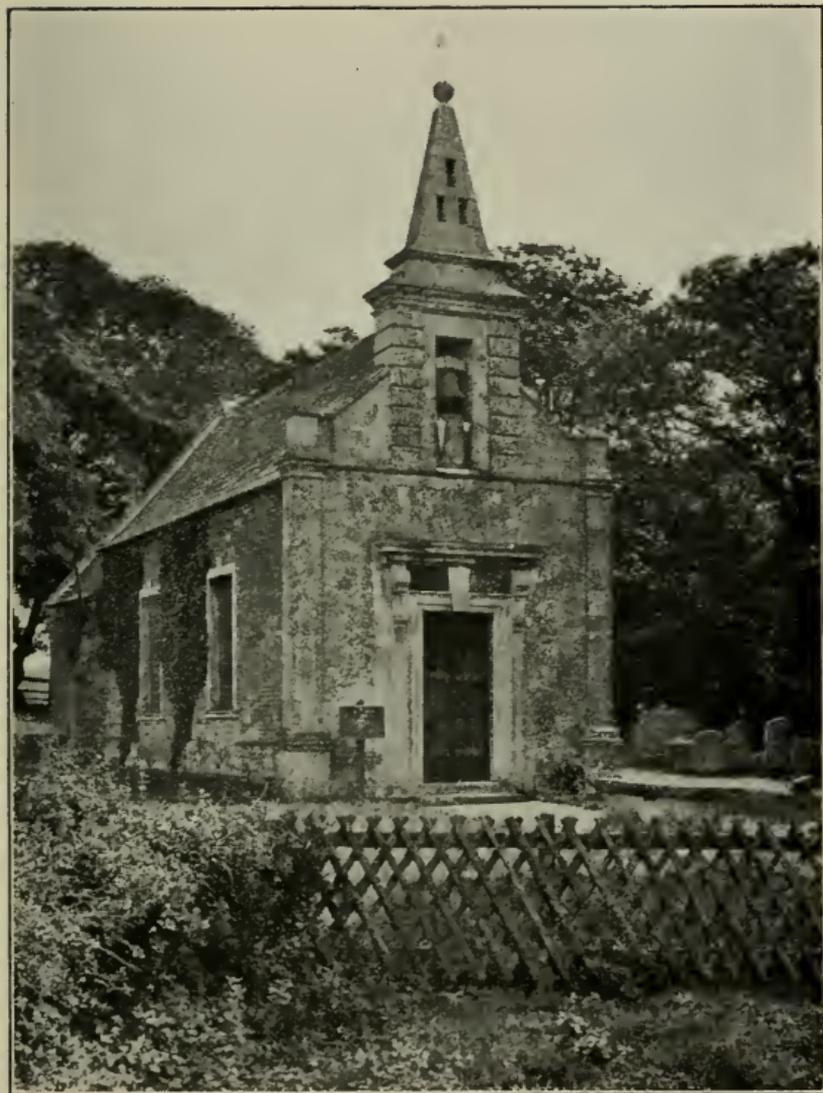
(See page 60.)

But in each face of the porch, except that occupied by the doorway, there is inserted a single-light window of late Perpendicular type, with a cinque-foiled head and a hoodmoulding over it.

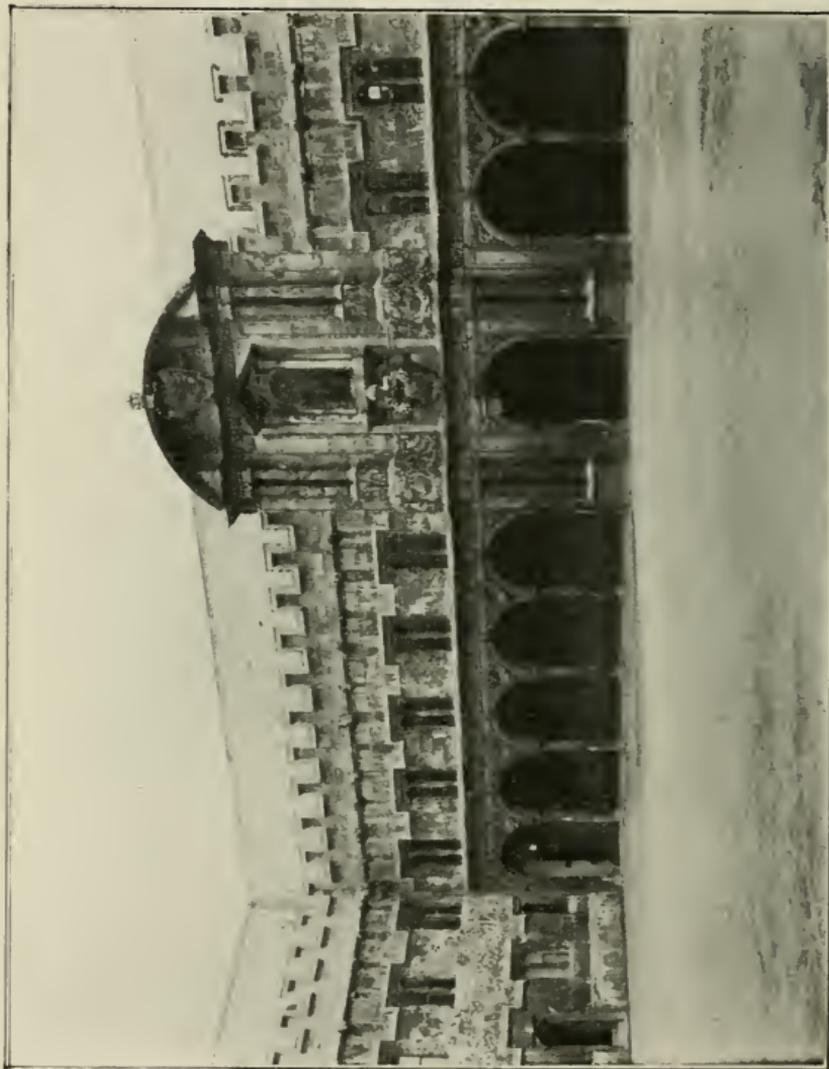
The chapel of Brasenose College represents a determined effort to blend the two styles. And the effect is strangely delightful, though those who find it so would be perplexed to give adequate reasons. The east front of the chapel, looking upon the square of the Radcliffe Camera, has a large window, filled with tracery of a Gothic character, but above it is a classical pediment, and the ornament round it is classical also. So, too, the windows on the north side are traceried, but are flanked by pilasters, carrying an entablature. The doorway is classical, beneath a square-headed traceried window, with Corinthian pilasters on each side. It is all very quaint and delightful, a jumble certainly, but a jumble greatly to be preferred to formality or

weak copying, and in this building Gothic and Renaissance consort more harmoniously than elsewhere.

Other works in which the meeting of the styles may be studied include the ruined chapel of the priory at Burford, built about 1635 by Speaker Lenthall. There the east window is of three lights, and, like the north and south windows, has tracery without cusplings, but almost all the rest of the building is of classical work. At Leighton Bromswold, restored in 1632-4 by the Ferrars of Little Gidding for George Herbert, there is an attempt to retain the Gothic idea in the through-tracery of the windows, but the tower is Renaissance, and the church is furnished with benches and pulpit and reading pew in generous Caroline woodwork. So at Abbey Dore, restored for Lord Scudamore in 1634 by the capable carpenter Abel who did so much half-timbered building in Herefordshire, the old Cistercian church shows a little



LITTLE GIDDING CHURCH : WEST FRONT. 1714.
(See page 60.)



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD: LAUD'S QUADRANGLE. 1636.

(See page 66.)

sympathy with Gothic in the masonry of the restoration, but much delight in the Renaissance in the timber work of its roof and screen.

Another and a less beautiful combination of Gothic with Renaissance is to be found in the chapel of Peterhouse, Cambridge. It was built by Matthew Wren, then Master of the College, and soon to be Bishop of Ely, in 1639. The chapel was connected with the court by cloisters with depressed arches; and the west front, though it shows a classical arrangement, has a window with late Perpendicular tracery, and a doorway of the same type. The styles are not so much combined as confused, and the confusion is well exemplified in the niches on the west front. They are flanked by tiny pilasters, and below they have flowing scroll work of a definitely Renaissance character, but above they run up with crocketing and finials, in the manner of a Gothic niche.

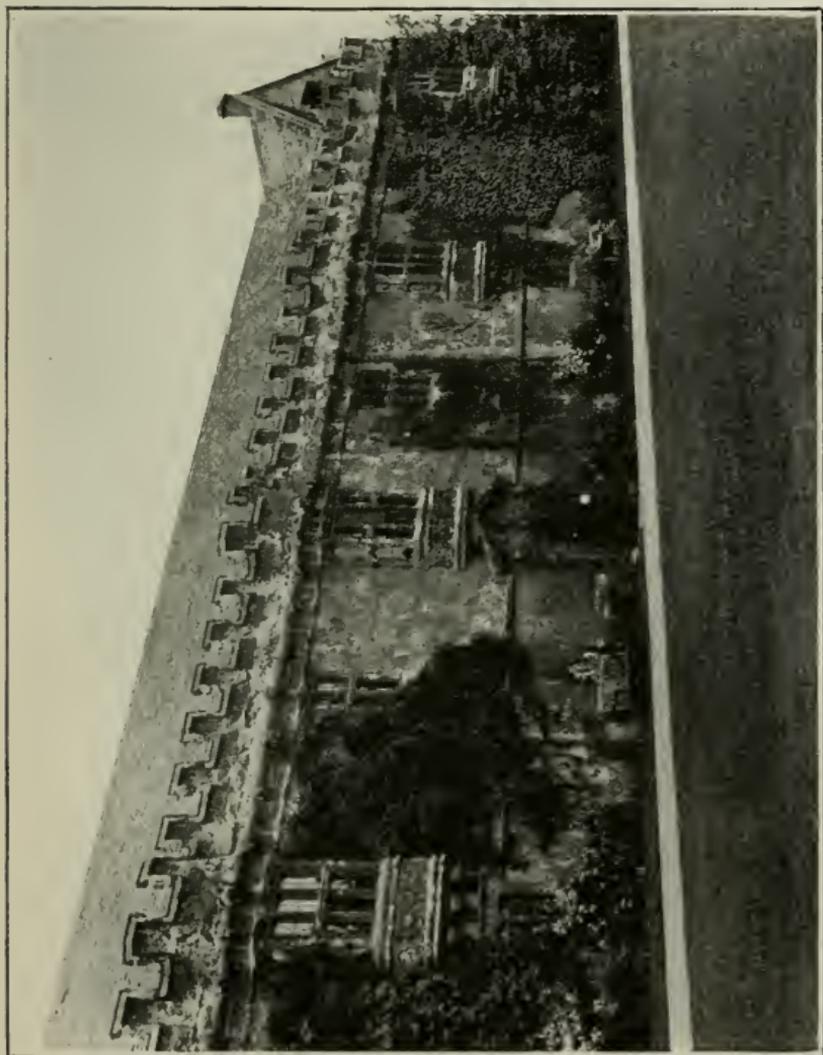
The work at St. Catherine Cree, in the

city of London, is a little earlier, for the church was consecrated by Laud in 1630, with a reverent ceremonial which excited the wrath of the Puritans, and formed a count in the indictment against the archbishop. St. Catherine Creechurch, or Christ Church, deriving its name from the Priory of Christ Church, Aldgate, in the precincts of which it stood, had become ruinous, and its rebuilding a necessity. In it the two styles met, and those responsible for its design were probably men accustomed to work in both Gothic and Renaissance, for the whole building shows signs of vacillation and indecision. And this seems to militate against the theory that it was designed by Inigo Jones, who was not prone to waver between styles, or to betray hesitation in his designs. The church has a nave and narrow aisles, divided from the nave by arcades of round arches supported by Corinthian columns. But the ceiling is groined, in a weak Gothic, with ribs

roughly imitated from the Perpendicular. The clerestory windows have cinque-foiled heads. The great east window has five cinque-foiled lights, above which is a rose, suggesting the wheel of St. Catherine, the whole enclosed under a square head. The church presents surprises and incongruities, and yet it cannot be pronounced displeasing, for the arcades and the east window are good, and the building somehow manages to convey a certain sense of unity.

At St. John's College, Oxford, we get a delightful example of the friendly meeting of the styles, in the buildings added by Laud, in which some of the relics of his life and death are preserved. He had the honour of inaugurating the buildings in the presence of the King and Queen, in 1636. An unprejudiced and capable critic, of another college, has said of the Canterbury buildings at St. John's that for charm they can hardly be surpassed in Oxford. Two sides of the

quadrangle are in the classical manner, with beautiful arcaded cloister walks, and niches and ornament finely executed above their doorways; and though they are open to the charge of having no artistic relation to the other two sides of the quadrangle, they are in themselves entirely admirable. The garden front, on the other hand, shows an admixture of Gothic, and is almost Tudor in its general effect. But the gateway is Renaissance, and the oriel window above it, though Gothic in general feeling, is panelled in its lower part in the Renaissance manner. All this work at St. John's has been persistently attributed to Inigo Jones, on the authority of Heylyn, who as a chaplain of the King and Laud's biographer ought to have been in a position to speak with knowledge. Mr. W. H. Hutton, however, the historian of St. John's, can find not the slightest evidence to support the attribution, and Mr. Blomfield sees in the



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD: GARDEN FRONT. 1636.
(See page 66.)



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD: GARDEN DOORWAY.
1636. (See page 66.)

work the hand of a sculptor rather than of an architect. It presents features which Inigo Jones rarely employed, and details which are Flemish in feeling. It shows, too, the hesitancy which led us to think that St. Catherine Cree cannot have been from his design; and Mr. Blomfield is probably right in suggesting that it was the work of Le Sueur, who was responsible for the statues of the King and Queen, and whose name occurs in the college books, from which that of Inigo Jones is wanting. The authority of Heylyn is great, but he wrote long after the completion of the buildings, and may have been misinformed on this point. Whoever gave to Oxford the design of these buildings has well deserved her gratitude, for they are among the best known and the most justly praised of her college buildings.

There is much more likelihood that the porch added to the University church is by Inigo Jones. If it be mentioned

here, it is not because it shows in itself an admixture of styles, but because it shows that a Renaissance addition to a Gothic church may be made with great happiness of effect. It is to Laud that we owe the addition, though indirectly, for his chaplain Dr. Owen caused it to be made, and it had Laud's approval. It is a work of the year 1637, a fine composition with twisted columns, and a niche containing a devout statue of St. Mary and the Holy Child; and one can only regret that its custodians allow the beauty of its lines to be obscured by huge masses of creeper. Like St. Catherine Cree, it brought trouble upon Laud when accusation of Popery was made against him.

THE PEDANTIC REVIVAL OF GOTHIC

St. John's, Leeds, was perhaps the last of the parish churches which were built in Gothic as a living though an expiring tradition. There it was used by men

upon whom the Gothic influence was still effective. They were the last inheritors of a tradition, and they used it as their inheritance, and naturally.

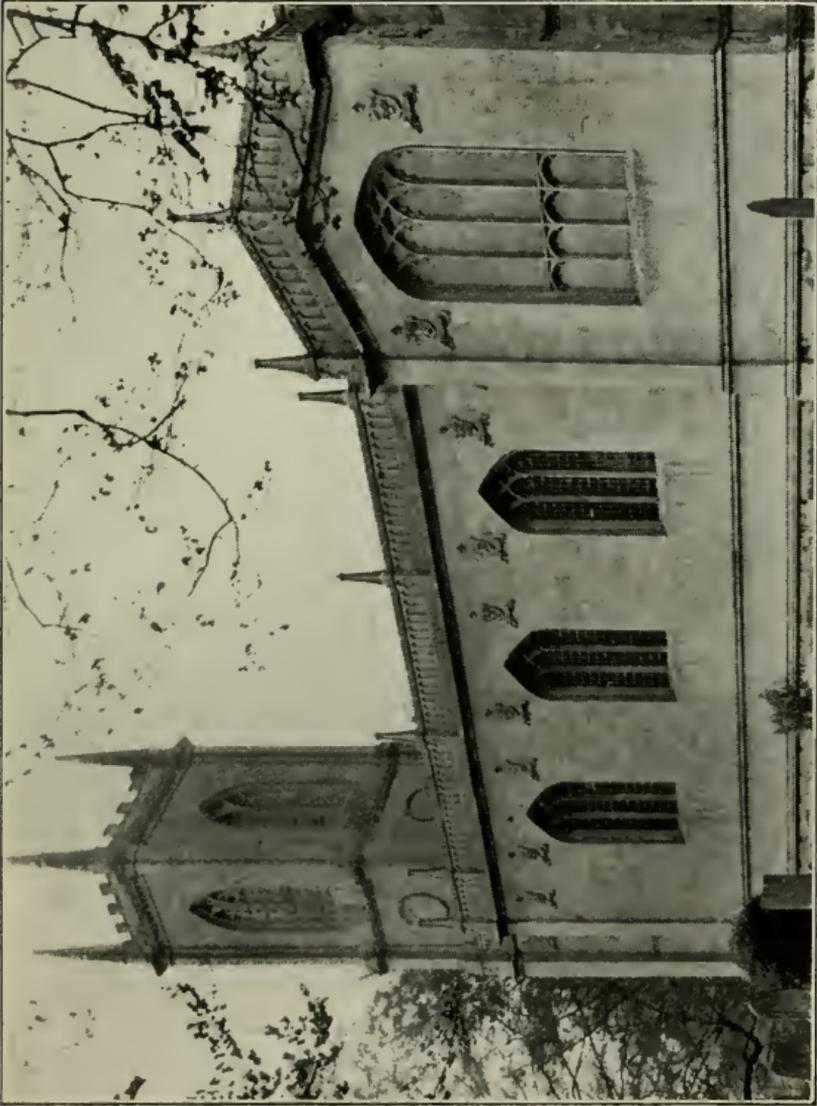
To this latest phase of Gothic the Civil War may be said to have put an end. The Gothic that was used afterwards had no real link of thought or sympathy or craftsmanship with the Middle Ages. It was consciously imitative of the old work, and not descended from it, and therefore it is not of great interest, though for the sake of completeness it may be briefly described in this place.

Its artificial character is evident in the fact that Sir Christopher Wren, whose whole sympathy was with the Renaissance and neo-classical manner, worked in Gothic when he was obliged, using it with extreme conscientiousness but without any interest which might give his work vitality. For Gothic in general he not only had no sympathy, but he actively

disliked it. It seemed to him to lack beauty, and to proceed on faulty ideas of construction. His criticism of mediaeval construction is penetrating and severe, and is moreover founded upon more knowledge of Gothic work than he is usually given credit for.

Yet commissions to work in a mode of Gothic came to Wren, and he did his best with them. At Oxford he consented to carry out Dr. Fell's wishes, and to build a tower over the gateway of Christ Church, upon the base which Cardinal Wolsey had left incomplete. If Tom Tower attained success, it was rather in the exhibition of Wren's nice sense of proportion and balance, than in any attainment of the true Gothic feeling.

A more important work came to him after the Great Fire. The old Church of St. Mary Aldermary had been destroyed, with the exception of the tower and the lower part of some walls. Fifteen years later Wren was called in to rebuild it, on



STAPLEFORD CHURCH: PSEUDO-GOTHIC. 1783.
(See pages 76, 78.)

the condition imposed by the benefactor that the church should be as nearly as possible a replica of the old. No measurements or drawings would seem to have been available, and Wren had to rely upon his own knowledge for the execution of the detail. The church is a fair example of the Gothic of the time, and the fan-vaulting is interesting, though Wren introduced some small details inconsistent with the manner. Though the tower had survived the fire, it had been damaged, and a few years after the rebuilding of the church the tower had to be taken down, reconstructed, and heightened. The effect from a little distance is tolerable, and the tower gives a touch of interest to an ugly street, but the pinnacles are too heavy, and there is a monotonous repetition of ornament, especially at the corners of the tower.

But it is in his towers that Wren's Gothic is at its best, and his dislike of it least evident. Those of Westminster

Abbey, for which he was in part responsible, might have been much worse. St. Michael's, Cornhill, has a tower suggested by Magdalen tower at Oxford, and its proportions are good, better than its detail. At St. Dunstan's in the East, Wren adopted the form of spire supported by flying buttresses springing from the angles of the tower. Not even the mediaeval builders were entirely successful in this type, as Newcastle and the Scottish examples witness, and Wren used it clumsily, and his spire and buttresses have no grace. But it pleased him, for he saw that it presented little resistance to the wind. The tower of St. Alban's, Wood Street, shows a better detail than most of his towers, but the proportions are not so good, the pinnacles are too low and illdisposed, though the windows are well managed. In the tower of St. Mary's, Warwick, rebuilt after a fire in 1694 together with the nave and its aisles, Wren worked in a mixture of

styles. The tower is well-proportioned, with fairly good pinnacles, and the windows are passable ; but the effect of the tower is ruined by a series of Renaissance niches flanking the windows on each face of the tower, and giving a restless effect.

The latter part of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries saw the building of a number of country churches in what was supposed to be Gothic. They were for the most part built by landowners upon their estates, and they followed at a great distance the precedent of the churches of the neighbourhood. Their detail was a jumble of Gothic imperfectly understood, and Renaissance incongruously applied, and the great majority of them are very sorry spectacles. And when the literary circles of the eighteenth century began to affect an interest in the past, one result was seen in the churches which were designed in the "Gothique taste." One such we may illustrate, that of Stapleford, near Melton Mowbray. The windows



SAXBY CHURCH. 1789.

(See page 78.)

might be worse, but that is all the compliment that can be honestly bestowed upon the structure, which is indeed deplorable, and in contrast with its neighbour and contemporary at Saxby, a small classical building which is at least unaffected. Yet Stapleford is well built, which the later Gothic churches were not, for the most part. Their poverty of construction matches the futility of their design, and is the less to be regretted because it will prevent them from cumbering the earth through a long term of years.

CHAPTER VI

The Early Work of Christopher Wren

WITH the latter half of the seventeenth century we come to the work of Christopher Wren. To no one else in the English Renaissance, to few men in the whole history of architecture, has been given so long a series of splendid opportunities ; few have risen so easily to the full height of their opportunities, or exercised their art with so patient a care, so great an aptitude to learn, even to the end of their career.

It might at one time have seemed probable that Wren would remain merely a versatile amateur, of that type of which the eighteenth century was to produce so many examples, men of a certain cleverness and of some artistic power, who

busied themselves with architecture because it was the fashion of the moment, and a reasonable employment for a man of sense and sensibility. But both in character and in ability Wren was of too fine an order to remain merely a dilettante. If at first he seemed to slip easily into such practice of architecture as was permissible to the cultivated, his art soon gripped and possessed him, and to it he gave himself without reserve, finding in architecture the means through which his many-sided genius could best express itself. More than any other man he has left the impress of his personality upon London, most difficult of all great cities to impress, not only in the work for which he was personally responsible, but also through the influence of his school, a school of a few apt and proficient pupils, and many followers more or less competent, who handed on the tradition of the master.

Wren was born at East Knoyle Rectory in Wiltshire, in 1632, the son of

Christopher Wren the elder. He passed his boyhood in a home devoted to the royal cause, and at Westminster School, no less Royalist under Dr. Busby's rule. His uncle Dr. Matthew Wren had been translated from Norwich to Ely in 1638, only to spend long years of his episcopate in the Tower as a political prisoner. Christopher Wren the elder had succeeded Matthew Wren in the Deanery of Windsor, there to suffer Puritan sack and spoliation, and the deprivation of his benefice. Christopher the younger went up to Wadham College, Oxford, in the year of the King's martyrdom. He devoted himself to mathematics and mechanics, and his ability was recognized by his election to a Fellowship at All Souls, and appointment to the Gresham Professorship of Astronomy in London.

The Restoration brought liberty to the Bishop of Ely, and the royal favour to his nephew, who from being Doctor of

Medicine and Savilian Professor of Astronomy, became assistant to the Surveyor-General of the King's Works. That he had had no practical experience in architecture was of little moment. Others were in like case, and all had their experience to buy and their craft to learn, for the Civil War and the supremacy of the Puritans had put an end to all building. And Wren had already become accustomed to having tasks and offices assigned to him for which he had little qualifying experience, accustomed also to devote himself to his new offices with a zeal which surmounted all difficulties.

Almost his earliest, if not his first work in architecture, was a doorway in Ely Cathedral, undertaken at his uncle's desire: and though we may regret the intrusion of his classical doorway into the noble Norman of Abbot Simeon's north transept, it is an honest piece of work, good of its kind, and interesting as the early essay of one who was destined to



ELY CATHEDRAL: SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN'S DOORWAY
IN NORTH TRANSEPT. c. 1662. (See page 82.)

accomplish many and great things. Another of his early works was larger and less successful. Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, wished to build a theatre at Oxford in which to perform the University Acts, which had hitherto been held, not without irreverence, in the University church. He devoted to it a large sum of money, and summoned Wren to its design. The Sheldonian Theatre is one of the experiments in which Wren failed, though his mechanical skill is evident in the planning of its flat ceiling. But at the same time he was engaged upon a really successful building at Cambridge, for the Bishop of Ely. Pembroke College Chapel is a work of reticence and dignity, in which the most important part, the west front, though hampered by its abutment upon the street, is yet very happy in its four engaged Corinthian pilasters, its niches to relieve the wall surfaces, otherwise flat and shadowless, the simple cornice and pedi-

ment, and the quaint hexagonal lantern, set back a little from the pediment.

A few months of study in Paris in the winter of 1665 constituted, as Mr. Blomfield has pointed out, the only period of real study that Wren ever had, for immediately upon his return from France he entered upon the laborious works which were to engage him for the rest of a long life. If Wren himself regretted that he never travelled further, never saw Italy, we need not echo that regret. For the French visit, short though it was, influenced deeply and not altogether favourably his work in the succeeding years. A longer period of travel and observation might not improbably have weakened rather than strengthened his work, and by leading him to rely overmuch upon precedent and to seek inspiration from the work of others, would have checked the natural development of his own powers, and fettered the free expression of his ideas.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

It was in the early weeks of 1666 that Wren returned from France to London. The city was only just free from the plague, and upon it another catastrophe was about to fall, of which one result would be the provision of a life-work for Christopher Wren.

Even before the Great Fire Wren had been invited by the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's to report upon the condition of their cathedral church, which was giving them great anxiety. With the Reformation the great church had fallen upon evil days. In 1561 a fire had destroyed the spire, and six years later a restoration had effected little good. In 1620 a Royal Commission had been appointed, and had accomplished nothing. Upon the accession of Charles, Laud had taken the matter in hand. The west sides of the transepts were cased, and a portico was added by Inigo Jones as part of a new



Photo]

[Cyril Ellis.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: SOUTH TRANSEPT.

(See page 88.)

west front, which had small towers and volutes connecting the body of the church with the aisles. The work was interrupted by the troubles of the Civil War, and at the time when Wren was called in the whole structure seemed to be in danger. The whole roof of the south transept had fallen in, fissures had opened in other parts of the vaulting, the pillars were spreading, the walls seemed to be tottering to their fall. Wren proposed a scheme of reconstruction, in which the fallen spire should be replaced by a cupola built over a wide space gained by cutting off the inner corners of the transept crossing. This was an idea which Wren had cherished from the first, and it is certain that he derived it from the cathedral at Ely, where Alan of Walsingham, after the fall of the early tower, had dealt in the same way with the transept crossing, and raised over it his glorious lantern.

But Wren's designs for saving what remained of old St. Paul's were not needed.

No sooner had his general scheme won the approval of the Commissioners than the Great Fire broke out, and when it had wrought its will the work of centuries was reduced to pitiful ruin. There lay before Wren the task of rebuilding not St. Paul's only, but also the greater part of the parish churches of London.

There was still some thought of repairing the cathedral, or at any rate of putting part of it in order while a plan of rebuilding was matured. But the building itself determined the question. As the ruins began to be cleared, more of the church began to fall, the new portico was threatened, the rest of the building tottered. The Commissioners rose to the occasion. Through Sancroft, then Dean, they intimated to Wren that they had no desire for half-measures to save expense, but that they would wish him to "frame a Design handsome and noble, and suitable to all the Ends of it, and to the Reputation of the City and the Nation, and

to take it for granted that Money will be had to accomplish it." Theirs was a great resolve to be taken in all the loss and confusion of the time, when the city and its churches lay in ruins, a resolve which in these degenerate days, when in times of greater prosperity it is difficult to find money to keep the great building adorned and repaired, we can but admire and envy. A Royal mandate followed, commanding the clearing of the site about the foundations of the old church, and it was followed five years later by a Royal Warrant for the re-erection of the cathedral in such a way as to "equal if not to exceed the Splendour and Magnificence of the former Cathedral Church, when it was in its best estate."

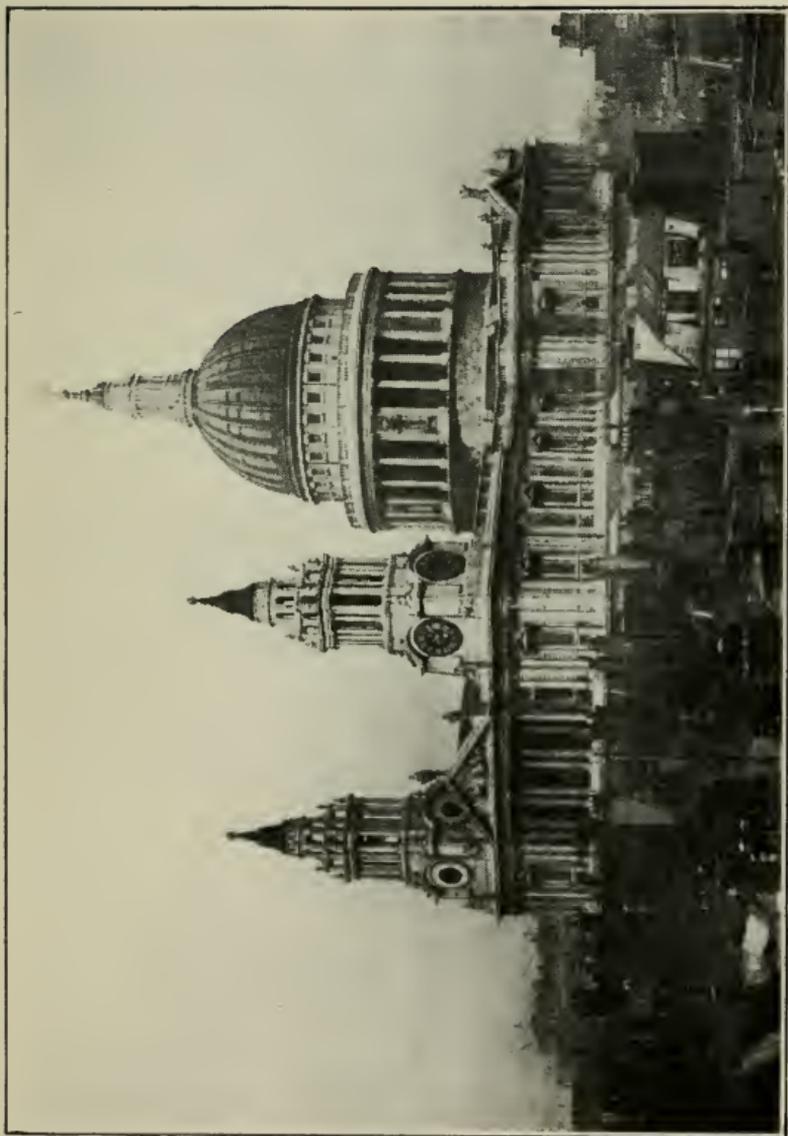
For the new cathedral Wren made several designs. One of the earlier, and that which he himself favoured, was for a church in the form of a Greek cross, with a dome at the crossing. The plan failed to commend itself to the cathedral

authorities, who saw in it too great a departure from the English tradition, though they desired to have a large dome-space to serve as an auditory. The design is preserved in the library of All Souls College, and we shall not share Wren's regret, nor mingle our tears with his at its rejection. For the outline of this design is heavy and the dome oppressive, even though the rise of the dome is shorn of its stateliness by the concave curve to it from the low drum. Other drawings and suggestions followed, and the time occupied in the final demolition of all that remained of the mediaeval church, and the complete clearing of the site was not wasted, for it gave time for patient consideration of the final plan. Wren's mechanical skill enabled him to devise engines for bringing the ruins down and clearing them away.

In every work that he undertook Wren was scrupulously careful that the actual construction should be of the soundest.

He took extraordinary pains to secure good material, and to employ it to the best advantage. And his care was shown at St. Paul's in the pains he took that the foundations should be adequate to the carrying of the great weight. By experimental borings, and deep excavation, with a pier of sunk masonry and an arch at a weak point, he provided for all that he foresaw. He secured unbroken ground for his walls by avoiding slightly the old lines, and letting the axis of the new building lie somewhat to the south of the old. Unfortunately he could not foresee the twentieth century engineer, that mole that creeps in the earth so fast, with his main sewers and tubes for railways.

In the preparation of the final design Wren had been obliged to take into account certain criticisms directed against his earlier drawings, and to conform to certain requirements of the cathedral authorities. There was a prejudice in



Photo]

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

(See page 97.)

[Valentine.

favour of the traditional arrangement of a cathedral, with choir, nave and aisles. For these his final design provided. But even the approved design was not in the end carried out. Alterations of a far more radical kind than the terms of the warrant sanctioned were made, and for the better. For Wren was a worker who never ceased to learn, and his designs took their final shape only as his buildings grew towards completion under his eye. In the approved design the dome is surmounted by a spire, in diminishing stages, and itself springs from a flatly curved stage resembling part of a larger dome, so that the dome is relatively unimportant.

Once begun the building progressed steadily. The north-west chapel was opened for daily service in 1699, the nave being then unfinished. Three years later the whole building was sufficiently advanced to be used for a service of thanksgiving for the victories of Marlborough, and two years later it was completed. It

had been begun and finished under one architect, and to this it owes its great unity, a unity remarkable in so large a work.

When we have said that St. Paul's is a work of the English Renaissance we have gone as far in definition as would be safe. It is neither purely classical nor Italian, it derives from several sources. It is the work of a master who combined and arranged without slavish following of precedent, and without incongruity. Its general arrangement is rather Gothic and traditional than anything else. Some of its detail is Greek. It has the round arch of the Romanesque, and the dome which came from the East.

Externally the cathedral is of two stages, and in this it differs from Wren's earlier conception of a building of one external order. The upper stage is only a screen, corresponding to nothing in the interior of the church, for the aisles do not rise to the full height of the exterior walls. And this screen wall has incurred the criticism

of the purist, who is wont to denounce the building as a sham. But it is to be remembered that even in the best ages of Gothic certain parts of some buildings were not perfectly sincere. It was not unusual for the west front of a great church to be treated separately from the nave and aisles behind it. Thus, at Wells the great west front has been treated as a screen for statuary in niches, and it does not correspond to the section of the nave and aisles behind it. Wren had therefore respectable precedent for gaining his desired effect of mass and proportion by a method which has been accused of unreality. It is even more important to remember that the screen walls cannot be condemned as masses of useless masonry, from the constructional point of view. They have their essential part to play in securing the stability of the church. For it was by these walls, with their weight of masonry, that Wren made his building secure. Buttresses were a method of

gaining stability which he could not employ consistently with the manner in which he worked. Therefore he built the walls to a great height, and by their additional weight he counteracted the thrust of the vaults of the nave and aisles, establishing the building as firmly as if he had used buttressing. The screen walls compensate the absence of buttresses, and themselves conceal the buttresses which distribute to the aisle walls the thrust of the clerestory stage. They have the same function to perform as the heavy pinnacle which gives additional value to the Gothic buttress. Æsthetically, the screen walls are necessary to prevent the mass of the nave and choir from being dwarfed into insignificance by the dome, as also to give evident solidity to the building which carries it, and, therefore, to let the dome itself have its proper value.

The west front is a modification of that which Wren had at first conceived. His

first thought was of a front in one great order, not altogether unlike the portico of Inigo Jones. Maturer judgement led him to depart from this, perhaps assisted by the consideration of the difficulty of obtaining blocks of stone of sufficient size for the vast pillars of a front in one order. Inigo Jones' portico remained standing for some years after the Great Fire, and Wren had therefore ample opportunity of considering the exact form which his front might aptly take. For whatever reasons, he determined at last to compose it of two orders, and the result, whatever purist objection may be preferred against it, is undoubtedly very dignified and noble; more so than a front in one order would have been, for it avoids the risk of oppressing by the magnitude of its component parts and details. The use of two orders has indeed the effect of increasing the apparent height. Six pairs of fluted columns compose the lower order, slightly advanced from the main line of the front,

giving within the portico a depth of heavy shadow. The coupling of the columns is a departure from classical precedent, but it finds justification in the convenience of the approach to the doors, and it gives more value to the doors themselves, a consideration of importance since the church is used for great public functions. Above an entablature the second order rises in four pairs of columns, carrying their own entablature and the pediment. The number of columns in the second order is reduced from twelve to eight in order that the façade may not appear top-heavy, and to give space also for the development of the scheme of the flanking towers, so that they shall appear parts of the design complete in themselves. Above the end pairs of columns in the lower order the pilasters of the towers take the place of columns in the upper order. The two lower stages of the towers correspond with those of the rest of the front, and one cornice runs for the

entire width of the front above the second order. A stage with round openings, filled in the south tower by the clock face, is surmounted by a transitional stage, introducing the stage of Corinthian columns, gracefully disposed to carry the diminishing octagonal stage crowned by the dome. The value of these western towers is very great, whatever point of view be taken. From a near point of view they appear to give dignity and strength to the whole façade, recalling in their main outline the general idea of many a Gothic front : if a more distant point of view be taken they lead the eye up to the great mass of the dome behind them. Like the best Gothic towers they are given evident solidity and much plain surface in their lower stages, and the ornament increases towards the top, lightening the whole effect. The ascent of steps by which the portico is approached completes the arrangement, and though one might wish that these steps were wider, so as to give a broader



Photo]

[S. Bertram.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: THE NAVE.

(See page 113.)

base and a more gradual ascent, yet they are not inadequate.

Behind the towers are the two chapels, of St. Dunstan, and St. Michael and St. George. Each has now its altar. St. Paul's is designed for many altars, for one might be placed in each bay of the aisles ; it is said that James, Duke of York, prevailed to have this arrangement, thinking perhaps that the time would come when the cathedral would be used for the Roman services. There are other altars beside these and the high altar, the altar of St. Faith in the crypt, and that in the Jesus Chapel at the east end.

The outer walls, being in two stages throughout, are pierced in the lower stage by the aisle windows, with round heads. The upper stage, the screen wall, is blind, except where the apse needs light. Both stages have their orders of Corinthian pilasters, the place of windows in the upper stage is taken by niches. A heavy cornice is crowned by a parapet, rising

above the north and south porticos, at the ends of the transepts, into pediments, and with its line broken by statuary. The transept porticos are pleasant compositions in one stage of Corinthian columns supporting a semicircular entablature. The apse is treated simply as the natural termination of the church, for Wren did not yield to any temptation to make the east end assertive. Here the exterior corresponds to the interior, and the apse has its three windows in each stage: the solid parapet is carried up a little higher than the balustrade above the screen walls of the aisles.

Beneath the windows on the exterior walls are panels ornamented with carving of foliage, scrollwork and cherubs. They have been severely criticized, but they repay examination, for they are very varied, and many of them are charming.

Sir Christopher Wren's great work is crowned not adequately merely, but nobly, by its splendid dome. Some sort of

cupola or dome was from the first considered necessary to the new St. Paul's. The spire of the old St. Paul's towered above the houses of the ancient city, and since it was considered unfitting that the new building should fall short in any respect of the old, it was determined that the new church should assert itself as strongly and decisively above the rebuilt city as the spire had done above the lanes and courts of mediaeval London. A dome or cupola enters into all Wren's conceptions and draft designs, and it is the feature which clearly gave him the most anxiety, varied continually as he thought out his plan to completion and perfection. And of all the domes which he sketched or constructed that of St. Paul's is by far the noblest, and that not only on account of its greater size.

In the designing of the dome an initial difficulty presented itself. It was from the first seen to be necessary that the dome should consist of two parts, if both

the exterior and interior effect were to be satisfactory. For if the outer dome had been only the exterior surface of the inner dome, the elevation would necessarily have been shallow and mean, unless it had been crowned by some such pile of masonry as appeared in the warrant design. And if the inner dome had been only the interior surface of a dome externally effective, its appearance to the eye of a spectator looking upward from the floor beneath would have been almost that of a vertical tunnel, a vast shaft. It was essential therefore that the dome should have at least two component parts: an inner dome which should not play havoc with the interior effect of the building nor fatigue the eye with its gaunt height, an outer dome which should soar upward with a true stateliness.

Considerations of construction ultimately determined that the dome should include a third component part. The inner dome rises with its own drum stage

above the transept crossing. The outer dome, surmounted by the lantern, rises above its own drum, which does not correspond with the inner drum, and the spring of the outer dome is from a level only a little lower than that of the highest point of the inner dome. Thus the exterior and interior effects at which Wren aimed are both attained. And between the two domes there is a cone of brickwork, concealed from view, which takes the weight of the stone lantern, and by an ingenious framework of timber supports also the shell of the outer dome. At the base of the cone, for further security, a channel is cut in the heavy course of Portland stone, to contain a double ring of iron chain to tie all together, the channel being filled up with lead.

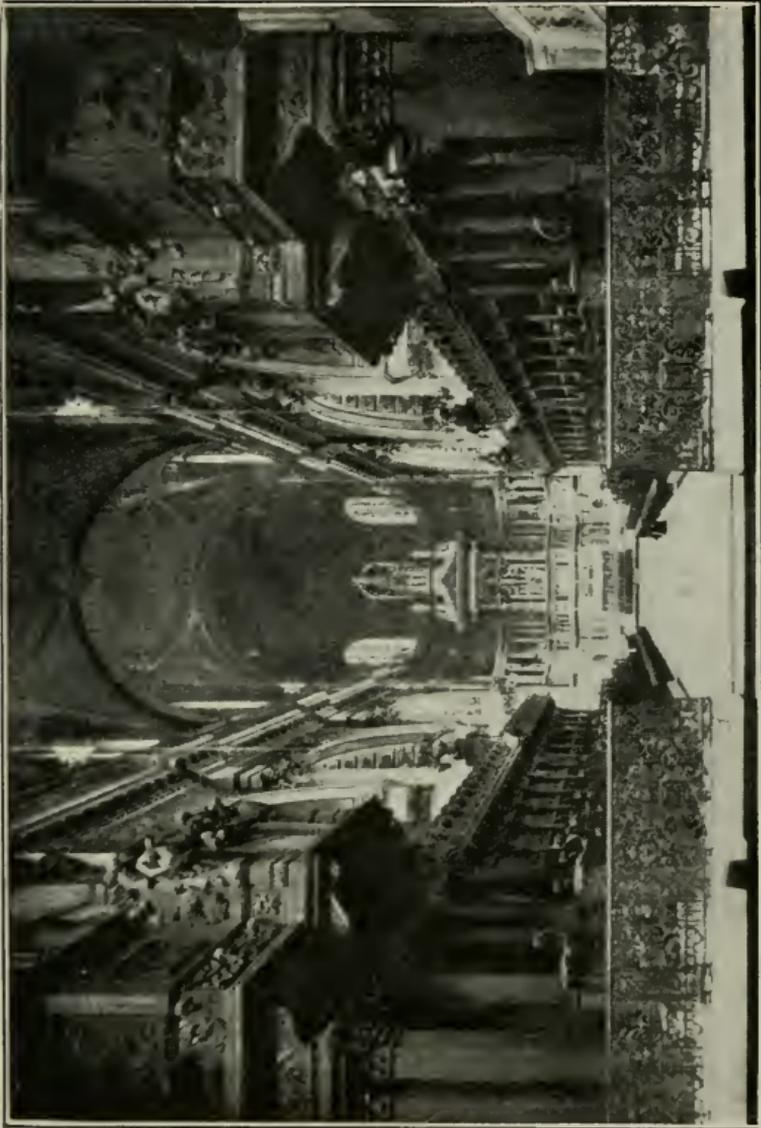
In no work more than in the construction of this double dome and cone is Wren's mastery of the mechanics of building more evident, his provident care for the absolute security of his building, his

fine sense of proportion. Both from within and from without the dome satisfies the eye. And the method of its construction is of the soundest. It ought not to be necessary to defend it against the criticism that it is an elaborate sham. Those who prefer this criticism are apt to forget that the sincerity of the Gothic builders did not lead them to make their vaultings correspond with the roofs above them; nor were they compelled by considerations of honesty in construction to leave their towers open to the top, so that the whole could be seen from within.

The stone lantern which the brick cone supports, though it is solid and grave, is yet proof against any charge of heaviness. It is of four octagonal stages: the lowest is comparatively plain, and is relieved only by niches and doorways; the second has sixteen coupled columns, and four windows; the third is again plain, with small circular windows above those in the stage below; the fourth is an octagonal

dome of lead, rising to the ball and cross. The whole composition of many harmonious parts rises with fine dignity and graceful sweep to the cross which marks the building as a temple of GOD, asserting the desire to consecrate the city at its feet, and to illuminate the life of the toiling multitudes below. Its proportion and its poise are alike perfect; and if Wren had no other title to our gratitude, and to the honour of many generations, this at least would have secured him fame. There is, perhaps, no great dome in the world so entirely suited to its surroundings, so fitted to be the visible centre of a great city.

As we pass to the interior of the cathedral we may note at once how the insistence upon the retention of the main lines of the former building, and upon the preservation of the traditional arrangement of an English church has prevailed, and how, in spite of the difficulty of combining these lines with classic detail, Wren



Photo]

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: THE CHOIR.

[Valentine.

(See page 117.)

attained the effect of a homogeneous and consistent whole, in which there is little or nothing to offend the sense of proportion. It is, indeed, true that for a classical building it seems at first glance to be narrow, and the nave and choir may be thought of insufficient width in proportion to their length and height. In this comparative narrowness there is seen the maintenance of an English tradition, for the mediaeval cathedrals and larger churches of England were, as a rule, longer in proportion to their width than those of the Continent. And as the majesty of the interior is realized, this impression disappears. From the west end the eye travels along the nave, delayed for a moment where the nave roof ends with the misty spaces of the dome, and then follows the line of the long choir, stayed at last by the lofty reredos which in recent years has provided a fitting dignity for the high altar.

The effect of the westernmost bay gains

much from the two chapels which flank the nave and aisles, and give to this bay a greater width. And the chapels are in another way a great addition to the interior effect of the church, for they offer those quiet corners in which a classical church is often wanting, and of which the absence may lead us to contrast unfavourably our first impressions of a classical church with those conveyed by a Gothic church, with its aisles and chapels and parcloes which give shadow and a touch of mystery. The south-west chapel, recently furnished for its proper use, as the chapel of a knightly order, after centuries of less noble employment as a Consistory Court, and as the shelter for the Wellington Monument, is the lighter, since the one window for which alone Wren could find place lets in the southern sun, and the chapel is less hemmed in by buildings than the corresponding chapel to the north-west. This, St. Dunstan's Chapel, which has been

used continuously for service for divine worship since the opening of the cathedral—used, indeed, before the main part of the building was yet available—is dark to the point of gloominess. But both are beautiful with their panelling of oak ; and their apses east and west redeem from formality what might otherwise have been uninteresting rectangular plans. Westward of the south-west chapel is the tower containing the geometrical staircase, a *tour de force* in construction, exemplifying Wren's skill in mechanics. At its base is the Dean's door, a beautiful composition on the exterior with its bold pediment and sculpture of foliage and heads, above the plain doorway. Within, the staircase ascends above a fine niche, surrounded with carving and surmounted by a screen of ironwork comparable with any in the more public parts of the cathedral, which has supplied the motive for some of the ironwork recently inserted as part of the scheme of decoration.

The piers of the nave arcade are faced with Corinthian pilasters, continued above their foliage in a kind of stilt to the cornice, which is of sufficient width to serve as a gallery to give access to the upper parts of the church. These pilasters are cabled for a third of their height. Above the cornice is a stage plainly panelled, surmounted by a second cornice, and above this spring the arches of the vault. A window lights each bay of the vaulting. In the composition of this arcade Wren showed himself no slavish follower of classical models, for he deliberately broke rules and sacrificed conventions in order to attain his end, and to give a degree of lightness to his work which would otherwise have been impossible. His was the true freedom of the artist, who, following good precedent and accepted canons, declines to be rigidly bound by them, and who when violating the exact rules of the manner in which he works, justifies the violation by

the attainment of a new beauty. Here the result certainly justifies the means employed to gain it, and though Wren's treatment of the entablature is free to the point of licence, it finds ample pardon.

The great arches of the vaulting correspond to the pilasters of the bays, and between them are the saucer-domes, which in the choir have lately received emphasis by their decoration in mosaic. That decoration of this kind was the original intention of Wren is evident from the fact that he made the saucer-domes of brick and stucco, leaving a surface to which mosaic might be applied, and did not construct them of the Portland stone used generally in the building. We may doubt whether Wren himself would have approved the Byzantine mosaics which have been placed in them. Beautiful in themselves, they are not entirely consonant with the spirit of the building, and though they have made of the formerly dingy choir a place splendid with light and gold

and varied colour, though they witness to the patient skill by which an art long lost has been recovered, yet perhaps the earlier mosaics of Watts and Britten in the spandrels of the dome are more consistent with Wren's work.

From the nave we pass into the space beneath the dome through a kind of blind bay, more than thirty feet in length, formed by the great piers carrying the dome. The dome is borne upon four main arches, and four subsidiary arches. The support of the lantern at Ely, from which Wren derived the idea of the dome above the transept crossing, presented far less difficulty to the architect than the arcading to carry the far heavier dome did to Wren. Alan of Walsingham, working with the pointed arch, was able to vary the width of his arches to fill the unequal spaces. Wren had to resort to the expedient of arching the smaller spaces with lower arches, having each an ornamental arch to relieve the wall above it, which

would otherwise have presented a blank surface, and would have emphasized unduly the variation in the width of their spans, and setting yet another arch above these, just beneath the bold cornice which carries the Whispering Gallery. This gallery is immediately below the drum, which at this point begins to lean slightly inward. The lower stage of the drum is plainly panelled, and the upper is pierced with square-headed windows, and relieved by niches, both niches and windows being set between pilasters. Above the shallow entablature which these support, the dome proper curves upward to an opening in the middle of the dome, through which, and through a similar opening in the brick cone, the lantern stage is dimly seen.

The transepts seem to be short, since a proportion of what would in another case have been transept is taken by the dome space, and each transept has but one bay beyond the piers carrying the dome.

The choir continues the main lines of the nave, and terminates in the apse, lighted by windows in two stages. The aisles of the nave and choir have their bays recessed in an almost semicircular sweep. These recesses are being filled with monuments, some of them of a singularly unfortunate kind. But it was probably the original intention of the King, at the prompting of the Duke of York, that they should be so designed as to afford space for altars. And one could wish that the monuments were replaced by altars, at which the Holy Sacrifice might be offered at even more frequent intervals, for the convenience and gain of the multitudes whose work lies around the cathedral.

The crypt is severely plain and impressive, showing plain or Doric pillars carrying the simplest vaulting. Here, too, is a chapel, that of St. Faith, with its altar.

In St. Paul's we find Wren, if not at his highest, at least at his most majestic,

in work which will ever preserve his memory as that of one of the very greatest of architects. It entirely expresses his genius. And we may be allowed to quote here some admirable words in which Miss Milman, the latest and in many respects the most illuminative interpreter of Wren's life and work, sums up his achievement: "Christopher Wren was a typical son of his century, a century which shunned mystery, which had no quarrel with the inexorable laws of nature, no longing to escape life's durance, no eagerness for a higher state of spirituality than is easily compatible with the life of every day. Gothic belongs to an early stage of civilization, when the world was young and loved to wonder, while Renaissance is a renewal of youth, and renewals are of necessity self-conscious. As surely as youth loves to wonder, so surely maturity prefers to understand, and it is mature man's delight in reason which the art and literature of that day so admirably illus-



Photo]

[Cyril Ellis.

ST. STEPHEN'S, WALBROOK. 1679.

(See page 121.)

trate. As in the great Puritan epic the poet, dealing with matter of awful import, obviously loves to slip the yoke for a while, and refresh himself by sensuous description and musical epithet (concessions to a need for recreation which Puritanism was powerless to root out), so, to work as severely conscientious as Wren's, garlands and pouting *putti* give relief. Gothic relaxes effort in grotesque, while the Renaissance prefers the dimpled limbs and irresponsible laughter of little children."

CHAPTER VII

Wren's City Churches

OF the half-hundred churches which Wren built for the fire-ruined city of London, that of St. Stephen, in Walbrook, is accounted by the general voice to be the finest, as it is certainly one of the most ingenious in its construction. Its exterior is severely plain, for when it was built the church was hemmed in by houses, and presented even less aspect to the street than it does to-day. Even the tower was probably hidden, for Wren has left it plain and grave, and even heavy, but the spire is a light and graceful composition, enriched by thoughtful detail. The interior is very remarkable in the effect which Wren obtained in what is on plan a rectangular hall. A clever

arrangement of columns so divides the rectangular space that the interior presents the effect of a church with nave, aisles, and transepts, a dome surmounting the transept crossing. Perhaps the most just of the criticisms which have been directed against it is that the dome of timber and lead appears to be inadequately supported upon the columns and their entablature and the eight arches which rise above them, and the absence of the drum which frequently leads up to a dome gives a further suggestion of insecurity. And, indeed, the architect himself had his doubts as to its complete stability, doubts which the lapse of nearly two centuries has proved to be happily unfounded. In the cross views obtainable at almost every point in the church, the eye rests with pleasure on the groups of Corinthian columns, rising to the entablature and its ornamented frieze, and to the wide dome above the middle of the church. We must regret that the fine pews which find

place in most of Wren's churches should in this be replaced by poor benches and chairs, entirely incongruous with the splendid work around and above them.

It has been noted that the earlier of Wren's parish churches, built while as yet the plans for St. Paul's Cathedral were not finally settled, exhibit several essays in dome construction, and that when St. Paul's had finally taken shape the dome construction was abandoned. They had been in the nature of experiments, and when experiment had yielded its result, Wren ceased to build domes. St. Swithin's, by London Stone, is one of these early churches, and it shows an ingenious arrangement. The church is not large, and Wren roofed it in with an octagonal cupola or dome, divided by bands into compartments, lighted by four circular lights, and carried by engaged columns. St. Mary-at-Hill is another of the domed churches, and here, too, the dome is carried by four Doric columns,

so that the church is given aisles, and a cruciform appearance. St. Antholin's, Watling Street, had an elliptical dome, which has disappeared with the church, to the loss of architecture, since it formed one of the series by which Wren attained to his knowledge of doming methods. St. Mildred's, Bread Street, is one of the few churches by Wren which remain much as he left them, untouched by the restorer to the obliteration of their original features. In this church he adopted a new plan, dividing the rectangular building into three compartments, raising a dome over the middle compartment, and covering the others with barrel vaults. St. Mary Abchurch is nearly square, and it is covered in with a large dome, of which the pendentives come down to brackets on the wall, with groining to fill the angles of the walls. The arrangement is very ingenious, but the effect of the pendentives is heavy and umbrella-like. Where the church was not domed, Wren often



Photo]

[S. Bertram.

ST. BRIDE'S, FLEET STREET: THE SPIRE.

1700. (See pages 126, 129.)

followed the plan of a simple nave and aisles, with recessed sanctuary and flat ceiling.

In the fine interior of St. Bride's, Fleet Street, the aisles are divided from the nave by coupled columns, of which the effect is partly lost by the fronts of the galleries above the aisles cutting the columns at two-thirds of their height, and by the pilasters set against the columns to take the weight of the gallery. The arcade is of round arches of such thickness that the soffits admit of coffering, and the arches which span the nave are also coffered in their soffits. The ceiling is round, and lighted by an oval window in each bay. St. Clement Danes has an ornate interior, for more money than usual was available, and here the gallery fronts are not allowed to cut the main columns, but have their own support, and a second order of Corinthian columns carries the roof. The same arrangement was followed at St. James', Piccadilly.

One order of columns is used at Christ Church, Newgate Street, and the gallery fronts rest upon the unusually high pedestals of the columns.

It is strange that Wren, who usually gave interiors of great dignity, should have allowed himself to plan so bald and secular a church as that of St. Laurence Jewry, a rectangular hall to which a north aisle is added. It is a preaching house of no dignity, but it was built during the rectorate of a Latitudinarian.

In the detail of Wren's churches there is much to study, though it is open to criticism, and is sometimes coarse. The entrance lobbies are often well planned, and the staircases which ascend from them to the galleries are dignified, reminiscent indeed of domestic work, and characteristic of a comfortable age, but good and suitable to their place. The galleries and pew fronts, especially those of the State pews and those of the churchwardens, exhibit delightful woodwork, and the

panelling of the walls should be noted. The doorways are usually good, that of St. Margaret's, Lothbury, is almost perfect in its quiet dignity.

To the towers and spires he gave special attention, since his design in rebuilding the churches of the city was to let a church which could not be expected to tell very successfully against the mass of secular buildings clustering round it, at least make its presence marked by rising above them. It seems also to have been his intention to lead up to the great dome and western towers of St. Paul's by towers and spires of variety and merit, which should each possess individuality, and add its own value to the general scheme, while avoiding all possible suggestion of rivalry. How much the west front of St. Paul's would lose if the delicate spire of St. Martin upon Ludgate were not there to give contrast! Even the obtrusive ugliness of the railway viaduct across Ludgate Hill cannot wholly destroy its effect. And

from the bridges and the opposite side of the river the loss would be still greater if the steeples of the churches did not help out the general effect. Some of them have disappeared, including one or two of the finest, but enough remain to give something of the effect which Wren aimed at, an effect not yet destroyed—since the skyscraper is happily not naturalized among us—by the greater height of modern buildings.

In the designing of his spires Wren was confronted by a great difficulty. He could not use those lines which give infinite charm of delicacy and grace to the mediaeval spires, for they were foreign to the style in which he worked. He was compelled, therefore, to make his spires of diminishing stages, and so to lay himself open to the criticism that they present a telescopic appearance. The criticism is often just. Such a spire as that of St. Bride's, Fleet Street, for all its merit, cannot fail to suggest the teles-

cope, and the difficulty of avoiding the appearance becomes the greater with every addition to the number of diminishing stages. Yet Wren was justified in his boldness. It was extremely courageous to attempt spires at all, under conditions so onerous ; that he managed it so often with credit is perhaps as great proof of his genius as any other. It was a necessity of the conditions that he should sometimes fail. The spire of Christ Church, Newgate Street, for example, diminishes too rapidly, and its stages are too varied, to give a just effect, and it presents the appearance of the fortuitous and ambitious compositions which the child makes with his box of bricks.

But how graceful and full of charm is the steeple of St. Mary-le-Bow! The tower rises upon a square base, with increasing enrichment to a bold cornice, carried on pilasters, above which are ornaments of a pinnacle outline, which carry on the lines of the pilasters. Within



Photo]

[Cyril Ellis.

ST. MARY-LE-BOW : THE SPIRE. 1680.

(See page 130.)

a balustrade connecting these corner ornaments rises a drum, and the columns of a peristyle of singular beauty, on the cornice of which are volutes, leading to an upper order of columns surmounted by an obelisk and vane. It is all exquisitely proportioned and effective from every point of view.

Wren delighted in timber and lead spires, since they gave him the opportunity to combine the colour of lead and Portland stone in a scheme very suitable to the London atmosphere. That of St. Martin's upon Ludgate is very graceful. From a base stage above the cornice of the square tower an ogee curved dome reduces the square to an octagonal plan, and leads to a gallery, and thence to a slender spire which emphasizes the church in a rather difficult situation. The ogee line appears again, though with less success, at St. Mary Abchurch and St. Margaret, Lothbury. St. Nicholas, Cole Abbey, is less happy in its concave

sweep to the gallery below the top stage. St. James', Garlickhithe, has an interesting upper stage above its plain tower. The outlines of the spire of St. Margaret Pattens are exceptionally graceful. The steeple planned for St. Magnus, London Bridge, has a beautiful cupola, and though the design violates the classical proprieties, it is among the most successful in its general effect.

It is, perhaps, just to praise Wren for his successes without blaming him for his failures where towers and spires are in question, for the limitations of his style are so narrow that not even his genius was at all times able to work successfully within them.

CHAPTER VIII

Other Work of Sir Christopher Wren

IT was fortunate for the many clients of Wren that he possessed a force of character in itself amounting to genius, and qualities in which men of great artistic power have not seldom been found wanting. He had a power of application, a capacity for continuous work, which enabled him to undertake a number of commissions in addition to the labour which his office as Surveyor, and the planning and supervision of the work at St. Paul's, imposed upon him.

COLLEGE CHAPELS AND LIBRARIES

During the years in which the preliminary works at St. Paul's were proceed-



EMMANUEL COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE: WEST FRONT OF CHAPEL WITH
CLOISTERS. 1673. (See pages 136, 137.)

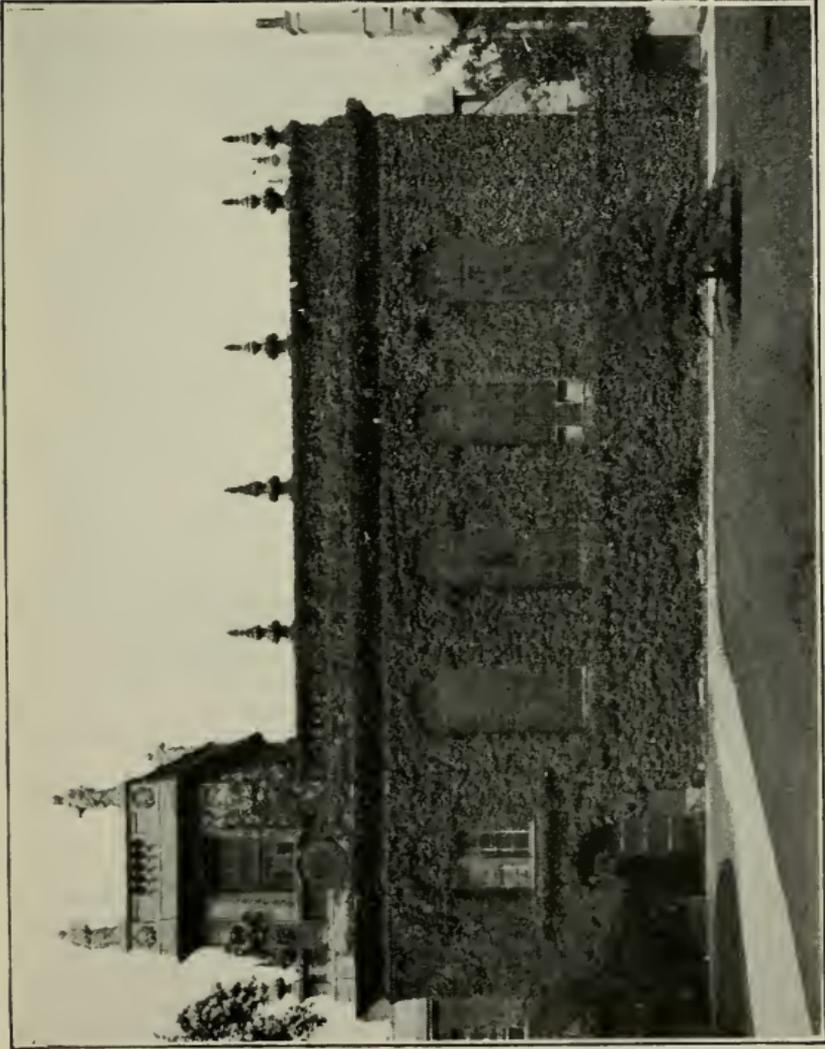
ing Wren was busy elsewhere. He built at Cambridge a new chapel for Emmanuel College, a commission which doubtless came to him as the result of his earlier success at Pembroke College. Emmanuel was freeing itself at last from the austere and not always reverent Puritanism which had characterized the College since its foundation, and it demanded a comelier chapel. Wren was no plagiarist, but he was not too proud to accept suggestions from work with which he was familiar, and in the designing of Emmanuel he seems to have had in mind the work which his uncle, Matthew Wren, had done at Peterhouse. But he greatly improved upon the unsatisfactory composite building at Peterhouse. He adopted the main lines of its arrangement, setting the chapel in the middle of a line of building forming a side of the court, upon which the west end of the chapel abutted, and connecting it with the wings by open cloisters, under a covered gallery. The cloister is of five

bays on each side, the façade of the chapel has one order the whole height of the cloister and the gallery above it, supporting an entablature which carries a turret running through the pediment, and terminated in a dome. The façade is simple and dignified, though the earlier scheme which he employed at Pembroke is to be preferred, in which the setting back of the turret or lantern gives the pediment its full value, and avoids the flatness noticeable in the front of Emmanuel Chapel. The work was done between 1665 and 1677.

The chapel of Trinity College, Oxford, may with some certainty be referred to Wren, for though his letters referring to it are ambiguous, yet the excellence of the composition and the detail seems beyond the achievement of that gifted amateur, Dr. Aldrich, to whom, aided in his work by suggestions from Wren, the work is often attributed. It was erected in the general rebuilding of the college in the

time of its great President, Dr. Bathurst, and the works were in progress in the spring of 1693. The interior is one of the finest in Oxford of post-Reformation times. The stallwork, screen, and paneling, are very pleasant; the ceiling is enriched with well-disposed ornament. The reredos would be more successful if the two pillars were larger and more clearly adequate to the weight of the pediment, and if they asserted their lines more strongly against the adjacent masses of carving, which being lighter in colour are rather assertive in their contrast with the graver tone of the principal work. A characteristic of Trinity Chapel is the fragrance of the cedarwood: *Halat opus Lebaniqne refert fragrantis odorem*. The exterior of the chapel is plain, its tower rather dumpy, and marred by the domesticity of its square windows.

Soon after the appointment of Dr. Barrow to the Mastership of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1672, he added a great



TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1694.
(See pages 137, 138.)

library to the college buildings, and Wren gave his services as architect. The library is a long building, of which the frontage to the court is rather monotonous in its repetition of one type throughout its eleven bays, and its flatness cries for relief. But the interior is quite masterly, finely-proportioned, well-lighted, furnished with bookcases worthy of the gravest authors, an ideal place for serious study.

Another library which Wren began two years later exhibits qualities of a different kind. Dr. Honywood, preferred to the Deanery of Lincoln at the Restoration, was one of the many excellent and learned parish priests whom the persecutors of the Church had driven into exile. In Holland he had occupied himself in studies, and in the collection of books, and when opportunity at last permitted—for at Lincoln he found everything to be done in the despoiled and disorganized cathedral church—he resolved to build a library for his

books. The north walk of the exquisite cloisters had fallen into ruin before the Reformation. Those, therefore, who complain of the intrusion of Wren's classical work upon the delicate Decorated work of the eastern and western cloister walks are not entirely justified, for no mediaeval work was destroyed in order that Wren might have a site for the dean's library. And it was a good thought to rebuild the north cloister walk, and so to enclose the garth once more. Happily Wren remained uninfluenced by the spirit of the place, and by the Gothic which surrounded him. The intrusion of an artificial and affected reminiscence of Gothic upon the fine mediaeval work would have been intolerable ; and though Wren was willing to work in Gothic when it was made a condition of his employment, he never chose it when he was left free, and his essays in Gothic were never completely successful, though they were often interesting. Therefore he designed his new

cloister walk as a somewhat severe colonnade in the classical manner, supporting the library above. It is carried upon slender Doric pillars, and the library is well lighted and suitable to its purpose, with an interior doorway of great beauty as its principal detail. The exterior gains by the varying of the ornament and mouldings of the windows, and the work is one which impresses by its good proportion and the purity of its line. We can scarcely regret its insertion in the Gothic cloister as we look from the inner wall of the cloister walk upon the earlier work to right and left, and there is here a charm in the contrast which all but the prejudiced will admit. Wren, as became a Fellow of All Souls, was in a happy and sympathetic vein when he designed these libraries, with all their interior convenience for the student, their exterior suggestion of the gravity of scholarship.

His public office brought him also commissions as a servant of the King. It was



TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD: THE CHAPEL. 1694.
(See page 138.)

natural that to one whose early studies in astronomy had been serious and fruitful should fall the commission to build the new observatory at Greenwich. Works of charity were housed in the Royal Hospitals of Kilmainham, in Ireland, and Chelsea, where soldiers disabled in the wars might spend the remnant of their days in secure comfort, at the cost of the nation they had served. Miss Milman has pointed out the kindly care with which Wren planned for the old and broken men: his provision of a piazza where they might sit in the sun and warm their old limbs, of broad stairways with wide treads and generous handrails, by which they might gain the upper floor without unnecessary fatigue. The chapel of Chelsea Hospital has an apse, and above the altar is a fine altarpiece, of which the entablature and segmental pediment are carried by two pairs of delicately proportioned Corinthian columns.

WREN'S SMALLER CITY CHURCHES

After the Great Fire many commissions came to Wren from the city of London, to whose citizens he had already commended himself by his pains in superintending the building of the temporary churches which had to serve them during the desolation of the city. Not many of the mediaeval churches escaped the fire, and in most cases it was determined to rebuild them upon the same site. Wren had conceived a scheme for the rebuilding of the whole city, upon a new plan. If this had been carried into effect, it would have made of London the noblest of modern cities, and the first, if we except New Winchelsea, to show unity of thought in its planning. But poverty prevented the execution of the scheme. There was no money to carry it out, for it would have involved much purchase of land, and the equivalent of the modern "compensation for disturbance," even though, as appears

from some chance references in writings of the period, the equity of the principle of "betterment" was already beginning to be understood. So the idea was abandoned, and with it a unique opportunity was lost.

But the parishes, for all their poverty, must have new churches, and of all architects, perhaps in any age, Wren was the one most fitted to design the many new churches of the city.

It is a customary, and too often a justifiable, ground of complaint against architects that being primarily solicitous for the realization of their ideas, and for the artistic value of their buildings, they are often forgetful of the conditions imposed upon them, and of the purses of their clients. To this rule, if it be a rule, Wren was an honourable exception. He accepted loyally the conditions of his employment, he delighted to show his skill in overcoming difficulties, and in meeting the particular circumstances of each case. The poverty of a parish seemed to him a



LINCOLN CLOISTERS: NORTH WALK BUILT BY WREN. 1674.
(See pages 140, 141.)

challenge to do the best he could for it, with the limited funds. His conscientious care, shown in the preliminary works at St. Paul's, to secure good material and sound construction was evident in all his work, small as well as great. His first thought was to ensure solidity, and to do his best with the money. In this he was helped by the conditions of building in a densely crowded city. Of many of his churches but one side or one end would be seen, and if by the addition of a tower or spire he could make the church assert itself against the competition of the surrounding houses, he was well content to let the walls be plain and the windows unadorned, and to limit himself to one doorway of dignity. A wise economy left him the more free to attain the interior effects he desired.

It would not be easy to name another architect who, commissioned to build so many churches in a style far more narrowly limited than the Gothic, would have

brought to the task a like fertility of invention. The problem was rendered intensely difficult by the fact that they were collected within so small an area. But in the city churches of Wren there is a quite extraordinary variety. We are conscious of scarcely any repetition. If his favourite methods of treatment are easily discerned, the skill with which he varied them is apparent also. Many of the city churches are mere rectangular rooms, when reduced to their primary elements, and yet they contrive to avoid monotony. In each there is individual treatment, and a thoughtful consideration of such special factors as the site or surroundings introduced into the problem of design.

Certain main characteristics, of course, are common to many of them. Wren's churches were designed to answer to the religious requirement of a particular period. They reflected, as all true architecture reflects, the spirit and the temperament of their time. Miss Milman has critically

estimated that spirit, pointing out that the devotion of the age was very reserved in expression, that the interiors of Wren's churches produce, as they also witness to, a mood of complacency inconsistent with missionary zeal, or searching of conscience, or, we may add, of abandonment in worship. They were designed for men who worshipped in the physical comfort to which their material prosperity might be thought to entitle them; who thought much of the sermon and desired to hear it at their ease, in surroundings which should not distract by any suggestion of austerity. The Churchmen of the previous generation had been driven out of their churches, they had worshipped, as Evelyn noted in his diary, in dens and caves of the earth, they had witnessed the spoiling of much that they had valued as their inheritance from the Middle Ages, or from the Laudian revival of comeliness and beauty. But their sons had entered upon easier times. With the Restoration the Church

had come to her own. It was not strange that there should be a certain reaction, that after penury and spoliation men should desire even in their churches a dignified ease.

Yet these churches are not, after all, mere places in which to hear sermons. Christopher Wren was of a very reverent spirit, and he came of a family of good traditions in Churchmanship. And as he took care that while St. Paul's was in building there should be no toleration of profanity among the workmen, as he was always loth to use in secular building stones which had once formed part of a church, so he provided for the dignity of the sanctuary, the due administration of the Sacraments, in the churches which he planned. He gave great care to the altar-piece, with its details, and to the rails which enclosed the altar, and the screens which in some churches guarded the chancel. He was no niggard when provision was being made for the font, and

his marble fonts, with their fine covers, show some of the most beautiful detail for which he had to provide, and they continued the English tradition of a covered font.

And the influence of Wren's churches was excellent and enduring. It became operative at a critical moment. The loss in the Nonjuring schism of many of the finest spirits and the best theologians of the English Church, the accession of the Hanoverian sovereigns, with their fatal influence upon English religion, the arrival at place and power of the Latitudinarians, the free-thinking philosophy of the age of Deism, all these were influences tending to destroy reverence, and to weaken regard for the Sacraments. It is at least probable that Wren's churches, with their quiet insistence upon the dignity of worship and the prominence of the Sacraments, did much to keep alive the true tradition, and to make ultimate recovery more possible.

CHAPTER IX

The Decline of Architecture

WREN'S SUCCESSORS

WREN was original and masterful. And perhaps these qualities in his character account for the fact that though he influenced architecture for many decades, he left no school, though he had a few pupils who tried to continue his tradition. Much work, all the best of the time, came into his hands, and he was able to keep it, and did not condescend to delegate it. With his death, therefore, his particular use of the Renaissance style, which Mr. Blomfield aptly calls a genial use, came to an end. His

contemporaries and successors did not share his originality and power. They were unable to ignore rules with freedom and with success as Wren had done. Since they were not men of like genius they remained under the necessity of observing the precedents and the strict rules of style; and though their work was more correct than Wren's it was far less meritorious.

Of those who were Wren's contemporaries and successors one of the most interesting was Henry Bell, who, in addition to the houses and the charming Customs House with which he adorned his native town of King's Lynn, designed also the church of North Runcton, three miles out of Lynn. The few buildings which he left make us regret that he accomplished so little. His work was of a delicacy and distinction which was not shared by many of his contemporaries.

The great masses of Sir John Vanbrugh



Photo)

[C. G. Mason.

ST. PHILIP'S, BIRMINGHAM. 1710.

(See page 157.)

are overpowering, and suggested the satirical epitaph :

“Lie heavy on him, earth, for he
Laid many a heavy load on thee.”

And yet it was only in the disposition of mass that his work attained merit. And unfortunately Vanbrugh, rather than Wren, was followed by Hawksmoor, though for thirty years he had been Wren's assistant. To him we are beholden for St. Mary's Woolnoth, with its enormously heavy façade, crowned by twin turrets : a composition which shows a fine order of Corinthian columns in a place unsuited to it. He was successful in the portico of St. George's, Bloomsbury, and its interior has a certain dignity, but the exterior of the church is ruined by the absurd spire with its figure of George I. His best work is at Christ Church, Spitalfields. In that church the stately portico and the real originality of the tower and spire exhibit his better

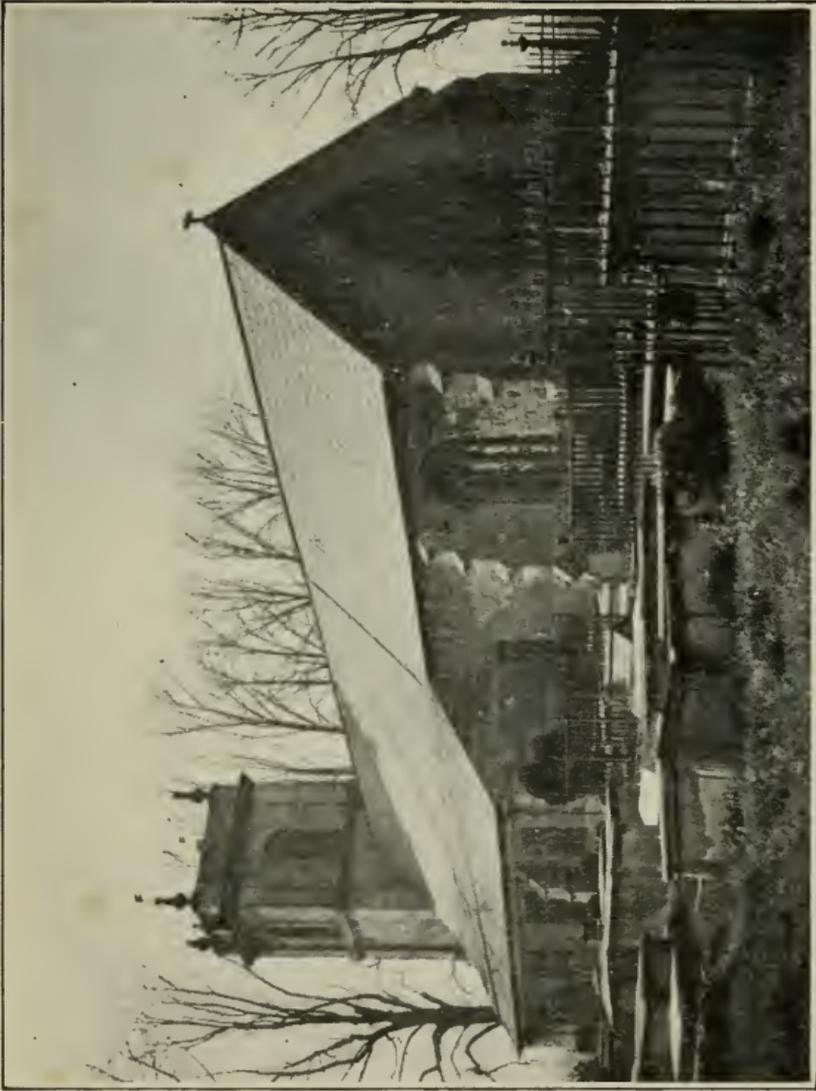
qualities. His also is the front of Queen's College, Oxford, a work which one welcomes chiefly for the excellent foil which it gives to the Gothic front-ages which lie on either side and opposite to it.

At Oxford there is some interesting work of the talented amateurs, chief of whom was Aldrich, Dean of Christ Church. To him we owe parts of Christ Church and Corpus, and the church of All Saints, in the High Street, of which the interior is adequate, and the exterior, especially in the view which we get of it from Turl Street, is admirable, showing a tower and spire of masterly proportion and excellent and restrained detail.

In St. Philip's, Birmingham, the pro-cathedral church, Thomas Archer left a fine work, with a beautiful tower and spire, in which the concave sweep of the sides, the pilasters at the angles, and the lantern, are managed with more than skill.

Nor is the interior, which has been altered since Archer's time, less satisfying. It is among the finest provincial churches of its type, and by it Archer, who did comparatively little work, securely established his reputation.

Gibbs, who designed the Senate House at Cambridge and the Radcliffe Library at Oxford, more successful in the former than in the latter, left two notable churches in London. St. Mary-le-Strand, which at last stands out in solitary state, freed from the houses that formerly shut it in on the north side, is a fine work, though Gibbs was hampered in its design by those who commissioned him, and its western façade, with an ingenious steeple in three orders, is impressive, though the walls, of two orders, are awkwardly divided horizontally. St. Martin's-in-the-Fields is a greater work, and its portico is unrivalled in London, save by St. Paul's. It is successfully combined with the steeple. Gibbs also designed the plain



BANGOR-ON-DEE: EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY TOWER ADDED TO A GOTHIC CHURCH. (See page 161.)



CHURCH OF THE HOLY REDEEMER, CLERKENWELL. BY
JOHN D. SEDDING. 1889. (See page 162.)

and modest church of St. Peter, Vere Street.

CONCLUSION

With the passing of Wren's contemporaries and immediate successors architecture began swiftly to decline. Nothing noble was built. There was no inducement from the Church to lead architects to make a real study of their art as it affected church building, and their churches became slovenly and mean in design. Where a little money was available they were prone to copy unashamedly buildings of merit. Inwood's work at the new church of St. Pancras, for example, boldly reproduces the Caryatid porch of the Erechtheum. In every county may be seen the disastrous work of the time, in the ugly towers and porches patched upon ancient buildings, in the barn-like churches awkwardly fitted to ancient towers.

The Gothic revival was the beginning of a new era. The quality of the work which it produced became better with each decade. From a mere copying of old work it developed into a living art. But Gothic has failed to influence permanently the architecture of public and private life. Such costly failures as the Houses of Parliament and the Law Courts only show that Gothic can never again become the style of everyday life. Our streets witness to the fact that buildings of which the style derives from the classical and Renaissance work are found more suited to modern needs. Gothic will always be used for a large proportion of churches. But here, too, Renaissance has its fitness, especially for town churches. It has been late in coming to its own again; twenty years ago Sedding was severely criticized for his Renaissance church in Clerkenwell. To-day old prejudices are being laid aside. Even those whose devotion to Gothic is beyond question are ready to concede that



NEW CHAPEL, HERTFORD COLLEGE, OXFORD: BY T. G.
JACKSON, R.A. 1908. (See page 164.)

the style which gives us such buildings as the new chapel of Hertford College, Oxford, possesses a beauty, a dignity, and a fitness for use which we should be rash to criticize, and foolish to decline.

GLOSSARY



- Abacus.* The uppermost member of a capital.
- Acroterion.* A pedestal for a statue or ornament on the apex or the lower angle of a pediment.
- Apse.* A semicircular termination to a building; or a semicircular recess; usually vaulted with a half-dome.
- Arabesque.* Ornament in low relief, upon a flat surface, sometimes painted; usually a fantastic medley of figures, foliage, masks, and scroll-work.
- Architrave.* The lowest and weight-carrying member of an entablature, resting upon the abaci of the columns.
- Archivolt.* The moulding of an architrave carried round an arch.
- Astragal.* A small semicircular moulding, or bead.
- Attic Storey.* A storey above the principal entablature.

- Cartouche.* A tablet, usually with scroll edges, to carry an inscription or coat of arms, but often left blank.
- Coffering.* A method of ornamenting a dome, a ceiling, or the soffit of an arch, by deeply-sunk panels, divided by ribs or flat surfaces.
- Console.* A bracket composed of two volutes, with their direction reversed, projecting but slightly from the wall, and resembling a modillion used vertically.
- Cornice.* The uppermost member of an entablature.
- Corœ.* A broad concave moulding, or surface, employed under boldly projecting eaves, or to connect a flat ceiling with the walls.
- Cupola.* A dome.
- Entablature.* A horizontal weight-carrying structure, resting upon columns or arches. The lowest member of the entablature is the moulded *architrave*; the middle is the *frieze*, which may be either plain or ornamented; the uppermost is the projecting *cornice*.
- Fluting.* Vertical grooving or channelling, used to ornament the surface of a column. The fluting is sometimes filled for a

- third of the height of the column with a convex moulding, and the fluting is then said to be "cabled."
- Modillion.* A bracket of two reversed volutes, projecting boldly from the wall, used as the support of a cornice, like a console used horizontally. It has usually an acanthus leaf ornament on its lower surface.
- Lantern.* A structure surmounting a dome or roof, pierced to admit light.
- Palladian.* A neo-classical style used by Palladio [1518-1580], a Venetian architect whose work greatly influenced that of Inigo Jones.
- Pediment.* A triangular head, a flat gable, used at the ends of buildings, and over porticos and doorways. It is sometimes curved or "bowed" in the upper part. A "broken" pediment has the mouldings interrupted, so that the upper part of the curve or the apex of the triangular head is wanting.
- Pendentive.* That part of a domed vault which comes down into the angle of a straight-sided building covered with a dome.
- Peristyle.* A colonnade surrounding a building or court.

- Pilaster.* A flat column placed against a wall or pier or larger column.
- Portico.* A range of columns, usually with entablature and pediment, forming a porch.
- Soffit.* The under side of an arch, lintel, or cornice.
- Strapwork.* An ornament of flat pierced stonework, used as a cresting or ornamental parapet.
- Stylobate.* A plinth, or plain continuous base under a series of columns or pilasters.
- Volute.* The spiral scroll characteristic of the Ionic capital. Used also of the spirals employed to fill the angles between a nave and its aisles or portico, and other angles of a similar kind.

INDEX

- Abbey Dore, 60.
Alan of Walsingham, 88,
115.
Alberti, 10.
Aldrich, Dr., 137, 157.
All Saints' Church, Oxford,
157.
All Souls College, Oxford,
91.
Almshouses, 2, 27.
Approach of the Renais-
sance, 16.
Arcades, 15, 66, 126.
Archer, Thomas, 157, 158.
Arundel, Earl of, 33.
- Barrow, Dr., 138.
Bathurst, Dr., 138.
Bedehouses, 2, 27.
Bell, Henry, 154.
Blomfield, R., 34, 37, 66,
85, 153.
Brasenose College, Oxford,
59.
Brunelleschi, 10.
Burford Priory, 60.
Busby, Dr., 81.
- Charles I, 36, 81, 86.
Chelsea Hospital, 144.
Christ Church, Newgate
Street, 127, 130.
Christ Church, Oxford, 52,
72, 157.
Christchurch Priory, 23.
Christ Church, Spitalfields,
156.
Church of the Holy Re-
deemer, Clerkenwell,
162.
Corpus Christi College, Ox-
ford, 157.
Cosin, Bishop, 56.
- Dante, 8.
Decline of Architecture, 153-
164.
Divinity School, Oxford, 44.
Domes, 95, 97, 104, 106,
115, 122-124, 137.
Donatello, 10.
- Elizabethan Age, 2, 26-28,
31, 32, 44.
Ely Cathedral, 20, 82, 115.

- Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 136, 137.
- Fan-vaulting, 22, 74.
- Fell, Dr., 54, 72.
- Fox, Bishop, 23.
- Gardiner, Bishop, 23.
- German Influence, 24 ff.
- German work, inferiority of, 28.
- Gibbs, James, 158.
- Gothic Architecture, Transition period, 1.
- ,, English, 5, 15, 44.
- ,, Period, 5, 6, 7, 9-11, 16, 31, 39, 40.
- ,, with Renaissance, Combination of, 56, 60, 63.
- ,, Latest phase, 70, 71.
- "Gothique" - designed Churches, 76.
- Grand Manner, 6.
- Great Fire of London, 33, 37, 72, 86, 89, 98, 145.
- Hackett, Bishop, 54.
- Hawksmoor, Nicholas, 156.
- Henry VIII, 2.
- Herbert, George, 60.
- Hertford College, Oxford, 164.
- Heylyn, Dr., 66, 69.
- Honywood, Dr., 140.
- Hutton, W. H., 66.
- Italian Influence, 16 ff.
- James I, 36, 44.
- Jesus College, Oxford, 51.
- Jewel, Bishop, 56.
- Jones, Inigo, 31-38, 66, 69, 86, 98.
- Laud, Archbishop, 36, 65, 66, 70.
- Layer Marney Church, 19.
- Leighton Bromswold Church, 60.
- Lenthall, Speaker, 60.
- Le Sueur, Eustache, 69.
- Lincoln College, Oxford, 52.
- Marney, Lord, 19.
- Milman, Miss, 118, 144, 149.
- Neo-Classical work, 5, 71.
- North Runcton Church, 154.
- Old Classical Orders :
- Corinthian, 13, 36, 59, 64, 100, 122, 126, 156.
- Doric, 12, 35, 56, 123, 142.
- Ionic, 12.
- Oriel College, Oxford, 51, 52.
- Owen, Dr., 70.
- Palladio, 11, 34.
- Pembroke College, Cambridge, 136, 137.

- Peterhouse, Cambridge, 63,
136.
Petrarch, 8.
Perpendicular manner, 15,
23, 24, 65.
- Queen's College, Oxford, 157.
- Radcliffe Camera, Oxford,
59, 158.
Rickman, Thomas, 47.
Royal Hospitals, 144.
Ruskin, John, 6.
- St. Alban's, Wood Street,
33, 75.
St. Antholin's, Watling
Street, 124.
St. Bride's, Fleet Street,
126, 129.
St. Catherine Cree Church,
33, 63-65, 69, 70.
St. Clement Danes Church,
126.
St. Dunstan's-in-the-East,
75.
St. George's, Bloomsbury,
156.
St. James', Garlickhithe,
133.
St. James', Piccadilly, 126.
St. John's College, Oxford,
65.
St. John's, Leeds, 3, 54, 70.
- St. Laurence Jewry, 127.
St. Magnus, London Bridge,
133.
St. Margaret's, Lothbury,
128, 132.
St. Margaret Pattens, 133.
St. Martin upon Ludgate,
128, 132.
St. Martin's-in-the-Fields,
158.
St. Mary Abchurch, 124,
132.
St. Mary Aldermary, 72.
St. Mary-at-Hill, 123.
St. Mary Hall, Oxford, 51,
52.
St. Mary-le-Bow, 130.
St. Mary-le-Strand, 168.
St. Mary's (University)
Church, Oxford, 69.
St. Mary's, Warwick, 75.
St. Mary's, Woolnoth, 156.
St. Michael's, Cornhill, 75.
St. Mildred's, Bread Street,
124.
St. Nicholas', Cole Abbey,
132.
St. Pancras' Church, 161.
St. Paul's Cathedral, 36,
86 ff.
St. Paul's, Covent Garden,
35.
St. Peter's, Vere Street, 161.
St. Philip's, Birmingham,
157.
St. Stephen, Walbrook, 121

- St. Swithin's by London Stone, 123.
 Salisbury, Countess of, 23.
 Sancroft, Archbishop, 89.
 Saxby Church, 78.
 Scudamore, Lord, 60.
 Sedding, J. D., 162.
 Senate House, Cambridge, 158.
 Sheldon, Archbishop, 84.
 Sheldonian Theatre, 84.
 Simeon, Abbot, 82.
 Stapleford Church, 76, 78.
 Sunningwell Church, 56.
 Torrigiano, 16.
 Towers and Spires, 72, 74, 75, 100, 104, 128-130, 132, 133, 156, 157.
 Trinity College, Oxford, 137, 138.
 Vanbrugh, Sir John, 154, 156.
 Vignola, 11.
 Wadham College, Oxford, 47-51.
 Watts, 115.
 Wells Cathedral, 96.
 West, Bishop, 20.
 Westminster Abbey, 16, 74.
 Winchester Cathedral, 22 ff.
 Wren, Sir Christopher, 33-37, 71 ff, 103 ff.
 Wren, Dr. Matthew, 63, 81, 136.
 Wolsey, Cardinal, 72.

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