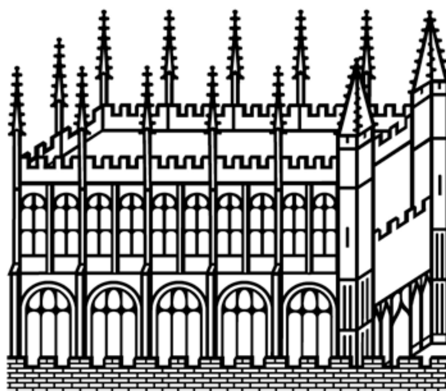

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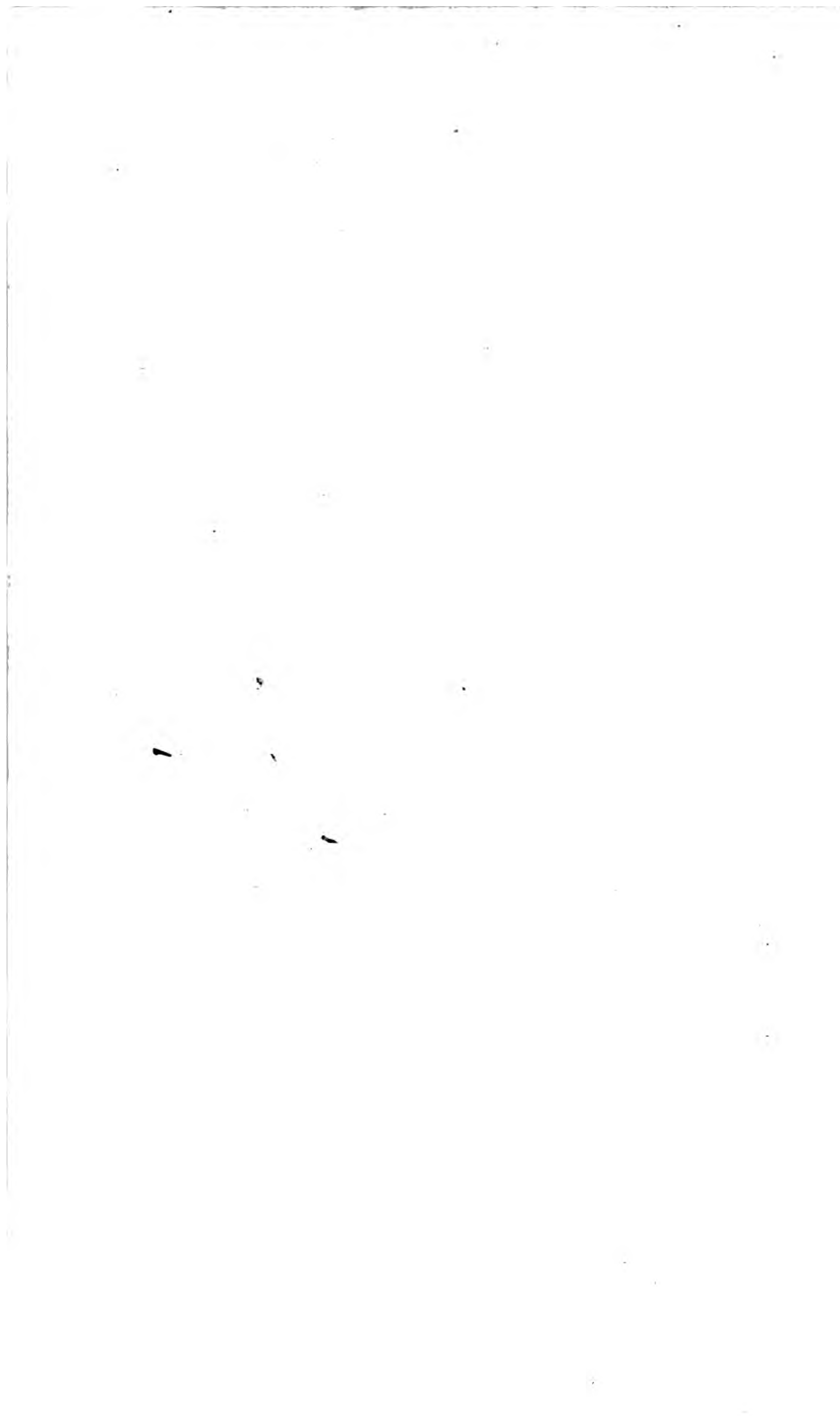

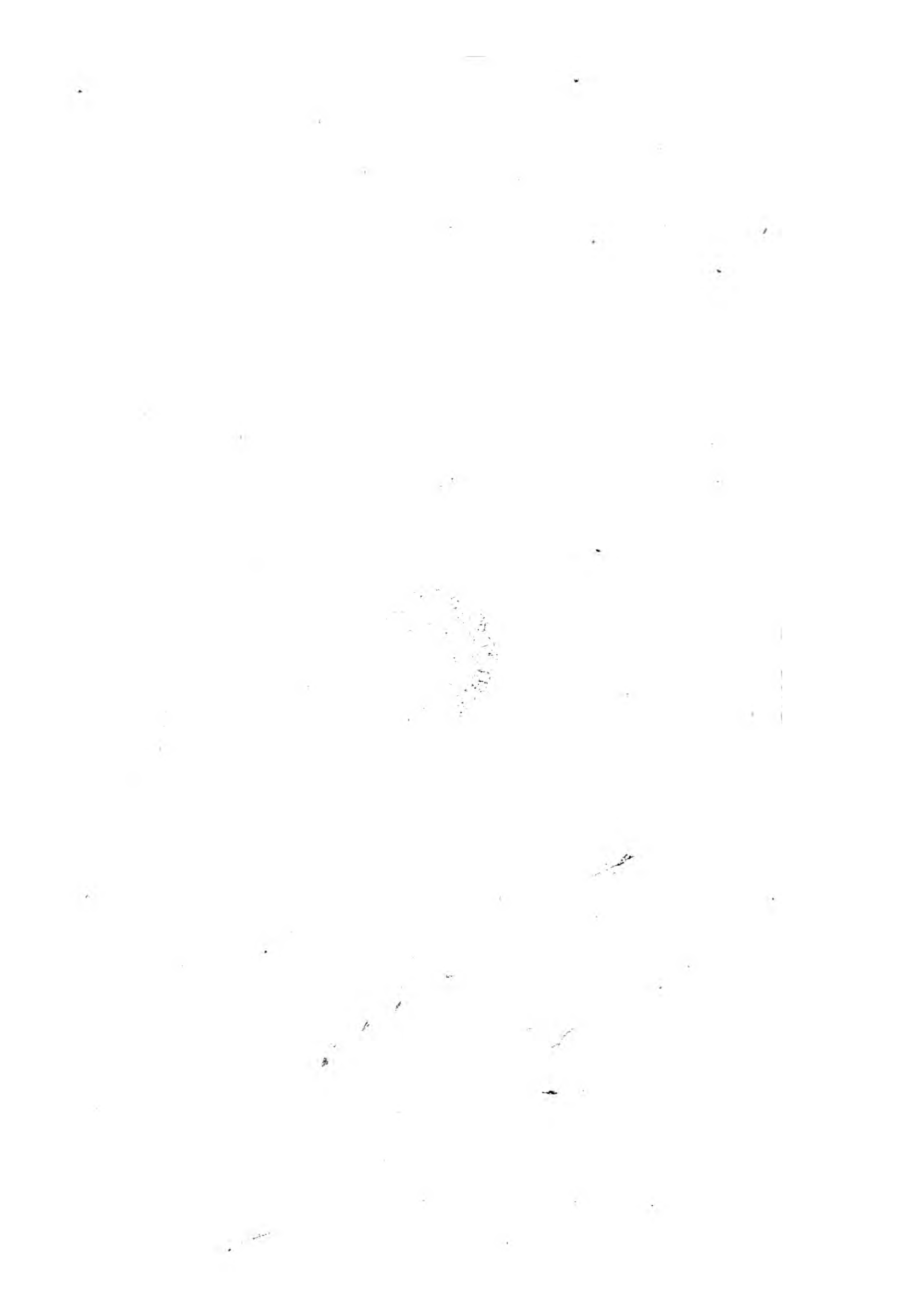

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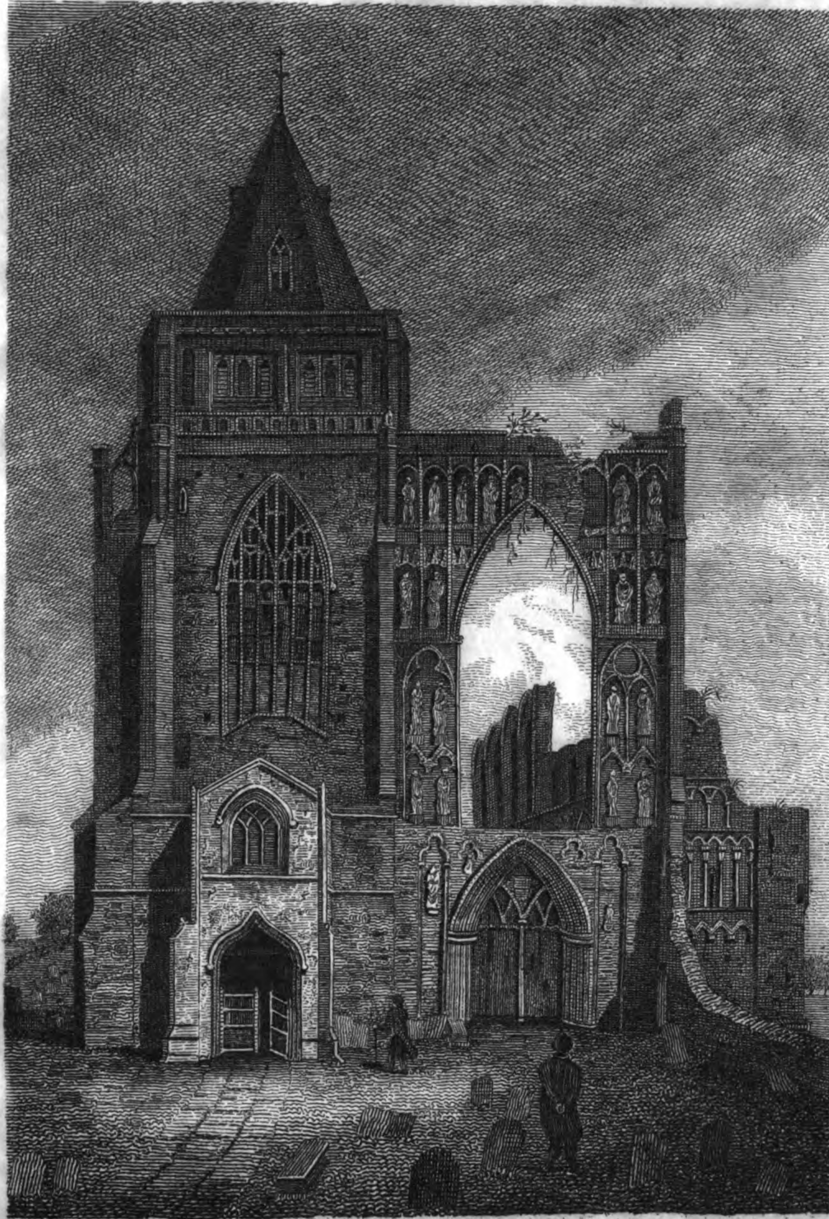

West View of **CROWLAND ABBEY** *Lincolnshire.*

THE HISTORY

OF

CROWLAND ABBEY,

DIGESTED FROM THE

MATERIALS COLLECTED BY MR. GOUGH,

And published in Quarto in 1783 *and* 1797;

INCLUDING AN ABSTRACT OF

THE OBSERVATIONS OF MR. ESSEX,

RESPECTING THE

ANCIENT AND PRESENT STATE OF THE ABBEY,

AND THE ORIGIN AND USE OF

The Triangular Bridge.

"Nihil scriptum miracula causa."—TAC.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN APPENDIX,

CONCERNING THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE

Pointed Architecture,

From the Essays collected by Mr. Taylor.

STAMFORD;

Printed and published by J. Drakard:

AND SOLD IN LONDON BY BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY; NICHOLS AND CO.;
LONGMAN, HURST, AND CO.; SHERWOOD AND CO.;
AND SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL.

1816.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE principal object of the following work is to illustrate the progress of the building, and to endeavour to fix the dates at which the several parts of it were put together. It is, therefore, particularly addressed to the curious who visit the ruins, to whom the quarto volume, if we except the part which describes the WEST FRONT, is of very little use. But since this object alone would have furnished no variety, it was thought more generally interesting to preserve the principal events connected with the history of the convent, the abbots, the tutelary saint, the scite of the Abbey, and its various fortunes during the feudal ages. In all these particulars, the author has frequently found occasion to differ in opinion from former writers; and he could by no means preserve many of the facts undisputed, which they had delivered with so much solemnity; he must, therefore, be answerable for his own errors, if such they are, and for giving a turn to some of the most important events in the history, entirely different from his predecessors.

For these reasons he thinks it indispensible that he should sign his name to the work, lest its faults should be imputed to some other person.

BENJAMIN HOLDICH.

ERRATA.

Page 19.—For "by grace of" read "by *the* grace, &c."

Page 23.—It is said in the note that the word *Anchorite* is not English; but both *Anchorite* and *Anchoret* are in Johnson's Dictionary,—the former is vulgar, but not obsolete.

Page 37.—For *Ceured* read *Cenred:* this error arose from the obscurity of the MS. and was unfortunately continued through the copy.

Page 51.—The name of the village should be *Castor*, not *Caistor:* the error was in the quarto. It is thought that there was anciently a communication between the *Nen* and *Welland*, by way of Thorney.

Page 53.—The word *perhaps* is inelegantly repeated.

Page 82.—For *adversay* read *adversary*.

Page 129.—For 960, substitute 860.

Page 132.—Note.—These drains have, by later acts of parliament, been placed under the jurisdiction of the court of sewers; but this does not prevent the evil complained of.

Appendix, Page 168.—For *neebule* read *nebule.*

N. B. The author not having had it in his power to inspect the proof sheets, begs the reader's indulgence for the foregoing variations.

INTRODUCTION.

MATERIALS for the *History of Croyland* were collected with great pains and patience by Mr. Gough, and the voluminous authorities which he has quoted, are a proof at once of his assistance and his success. Besides collecting whatever has been preserved by the writers on *monkish remains*, he had recourse to societies of antiquaries, and many public and private libraries; tracing with indefatigable industry the slightest mention of any paper relating to the subject which was thought to be extant, and following several of these with successful assiduity, step by step, until he recovered them from the dust and mould in which they had been for ages ob-

scured. This will be sufficient to satisfy the reader as to the authenticity of the following abridgement; to obtain more materials is scarcely to be expected; and for those which we have, I conceive it is in vain to search for better authority.

Reliques such as I have mentioned were likely to be sacred in the eyes of an *antiquary;* and as " we are apt (says Dr. Johnson) to value our productions in proportion to the labour they cost us," it is not surprising that he should have preserved every scrap which his unwearied search discovered. " The labour we delight in physics pain." But since he could hardly be expected to propagate this *ardor deliciæ*, his readers may be excused if they find his book wearisome in the perusal; disheartening in its length, and disgusting in its repetitions. To obviate these faults is the object of the present edition; for the quarto volume being too bulky to obtain general circulation, an abridgement of it, preserving what is interesting, and endeavouring to bring the materials into something like order and method, may be

found an acquisition in this pleasing department of literature. To facilitate study, to ease the labour of research, and bring the reader to the end of his journey by the shortest road, are objects of some importance in matters of which people would rather rest in ignorance than pursue information at disproportionate cost and trouble.

Another object, therefore, in this edition is *cheapness;* for next to the tediousness of unnecessary letter press, is the vexation of unprofitable and useless *blank margin.* Some modern *book makers,* who seem to be ambitious of good company, are accessible only to the great; but those who would be useful as well as amusing, and contribute to knowledge rather than sacrifice to vanity, must court a more general acquaintance with mankind, and assume a form less ostentatious, and better suited to that soberness of economy which generally accompanies a sound understanding and a correct taste.

In this age of typographical emulation, it has become the fashion to buy books rather for shew than use; at this

shrine I have no ambition to sacrifice; and persons of a different description will be glad to be excused from labouring through a mass of unconnected matter, which serves only to weary the attention and defeat the memory. What I have undertaken is but to tell a long story in fewer words; having attention to closeness of narration as far as that is consistent with perspicuity; and regarding succinctness of detail as inferior only to accuracy of description: in a word, to conduct the reader through a labyrinth of historical records so that he be neither stung by the nettles, nor entangled in the briars that encumber the rubbish of antiquity. How far this is accomplished the public must decide: to fail in literary attempts is equally the fate of prosing dullness, as of precipitate impatience; but the task of a drudge is more likely to be rendered abortive by want of care than by want of ability.

All the praise an author can hope for in an abridgement, must be derived from his manner of rendering the narrative; with those occasional observations which

enliven attention, and alleviate the painful desire of certainty in things that must depend on conjecture. The most injudicious manner of writing in the history of antiquities, appears to be that of continually exciting the reader's wonder, and leaving him lost in stupor, where thought is of no service. The quarto volume presents near 80 pages of minute *monkish history*, with their miracles and mummeries very faithfully set down, without either doubt or comment; and the reader is referred to 170 pages more of appendix, consisting of records and ordinations, awards, charters, grants, &c. &c. all which it may be very proper to preserve somewhere, though the greater part of them have now neither use nor authority. One would have thought that this had been sufficient in all reason; but we are seriously informed, in the preface, that we must be content with these *brief materials* until *time or accident* shall bring to light a certain manuscript which it is hoped would supply the interval in the history of the Abbey, from 1486 to its dissolution under Henry the 8th.

This MS. so much desired, was at length obtained, and a second appendix was published in 1797, consisting of nearly 100 other pages, of surveys and authorities, decisions, rights of boundary, and parish accounts; together with the legendary history of St. Guthlac, and *this is the manuscript*, from which the world had been encouraged to hope so much. Respecting the interval above mentioned the MS. is wholly silent; it seems to have been compiled from the very materials which Gough had already given, with this only difference, that it is much shorter. Sir John Harrington, the author, either knew nothing more, or (living in the time of Henry the 8th) he found the subject of the *dismemberment* too delicate to be then treated of. Or, rather, he might be an antiquary, who never compose a history of their own times.

A reverence for antiquity, and especially in matters relative to sacred history, is one of the most pleasing traits of human intellect; a feeling common to every thinking man; a sympathy which unites all vir-

tuous minds. But this may be carried too far in contemplating that period of church history, when the lazy inhabitants of a monastery possessed every thing of property, power, and privilege, which are now, more serviceably to man in his individual and social capacity, distributed in the surrounding districts as the excitement of industry and the reward of economy. The former authors of the history of Crowland have left it in doubt whether the dismemberment of the abbies be not a thing greatly to be lamented. What their veneration for those establishments ought to have been, I leave those to judge who are truly sensible of the blessings of our present constitution in civil and religious liberty.

That king Henry the 8th intended any advantage to mankind in destroying these institutions, is no where insisted on; the good that has since, in some measure, proceeded from his rapacity, pride, and personal ambition, was not of his seeking. It seems very difficult to reconcile this part

of his conduct to that bigotry in religious matters, which is constantly ascribed to him: he that burnt *Lambert* with a slow fire for denying *transubstantiation*, himself abjured the pope, and destroyed the monasteries!—Such inconsistencies may be expected from the most rigourous professors of religion, whose conduct is governed by no principles.

The historians of Crowland would fain entrap the imaginations of posterity, and make us believe that these edifices were the seats of virtue and innocence, raised by the devotion and piety of their inhabitants; as if craft and power did not always build palaces out of the labour and privations of ignorance and superstition. They are also complimented for their munificence, and taking care of the poor; but to give something back of all which they took away, seems no great stretch of charity; and we may easily imagine that the poor are better provided for now that the produce of personal labour is secured to its possessor. It is true that this does

not altogether prevent want, for what can annihilate human profligacy?

It must be considered as a happy thing that these monastic societies were not in existence during the struggle for religious reformation; and especially that the protestant church has not incurred the odium of suppressing them. Henry the 8th did but pave the way for the easier introduction of the reformed religion, by destroying these rallying points of physical and moral strength; which, had they continued until later times, in league with the papal power, might have suppressed the progress of intellect and knowledge, and perpetuated the reign of darkness and superstition: Incense and idols might still have been found in our abbies, though tortures and the inquisition had been found necessary to support them.

In order to bring the following work within the compass desired, every thing has been left out which does not apply to the history of the Abbey, and the present state of its ruins. The present race of

mankind look upon those ages of superstition with mingled emotions of pity and contempt, and are wearied with following the monks through the vicissitudes of their sufferings and splendour; now called upon to exult in their prosperity and reverence their power, and, bye and bye, to condemn their enemies and deplore their misfortunes; to gather from their alternate wealth and poverty how they plundered the people, and how the government (in those times violent and predatory) robbed them in its turn. In all emergencies the state had recourse to the coffers of the church; but, during the Saxon heptarchy, the monasteries suffered greater evils from the wars of the contending monarchs, being laid under heavy contributions, and plundered by one or the other as opportunity served. Hence it was that Crowland Abbey, comparatively secure from its situation, remote from the general scene of action, and having no practicable road, became so populous: in troublesome times it was the resort of many persons besides the

religious; kings, when defeated, took refuge here, and Ethelbald, who was a conspirator and a rebel, fled hither and was concealed and comforted by Guthlac.

The antiquary, to whom utility is the least possible consideration, will turn with disgust from an abridgement of these precious materials; but to the general reader, it will be thought sufficient, if, in addition to the history of the ancient and present state of the building, are added some brief notices respecting its governors and its discipline. Taking, therefore, the most material facts from the quarto volume, I have only added thereto such observations as the duty of an historian, I think, necessarily requires. A dry narrative of facts, is rather a chronology than a history; the most delightful part of the latter being always that in which deduction is rationally employed in disentangling discordant testimony, and ascribing events to their most natural causes. To actions there must be motives; these designate character, and develope passion; and thus the reader is

led to consider the uniformity of our common nature, and by unravelling past events, to contemplate the history of his species.

THE HISTORY

OF

CROWLAND ABBEY.

CHAP. I.

Of the Scite of the Abbey.

THE history of Crowland Abbey is rendered peculiarly interesting by the singularity of the situation in which the Abbey is built, not only because the history of the fens is in itself curious, but because the insular situation of the monastery rendered it a place of comparative safety, and therefore much known and noticed, during the most sanguinary period of the feudal ages.

Before the fen countries were embanked, through which the waters of the Nen and the Welland descend in their course to the sea, there were many islands interspersed about them. These islands were not only larger or smaller, according to the height of the floods,

but more or less in number at different periods of the year; for, in summer, many parts, or parcels, of those which are still the highest lands were dry, though in winter they were overflown.

Of these islands, that now called Crowland* was the most distinctly marked, there being about five miles of low marsh between it and Peakirk, (the nearest peninsula of the uplands of Northamptonshire,) and about the same between it and Thorney; the latter place being not so far distant from the peninsula of Whittlesea, and still nearer to the projecting high-lands of Northamptonshire at Eye: in truth, *Thorney* was always accessible, for there is an isthmus which joins it to the uplands.

But Crowland was, in winter, an island, and in summer it was surrounded by boggy marshes not easily traversed by horse or foot people; though partially dry, and by patches cultivated. The whole island, perhaps, in the winter, did not comprise an hundred acres of land; in the wettest seasons, probably, not half that quantity; and though, in summer, a great deal of the adjacent fens were free from water, yet, without doubt, they presented to the eye a widely extended waste, covered with reed, rushes, flags, and other aquatic productions; the greater part of them being the resort of wild-fowl, and seldom traversed but by those who sought to take them. Hence it must appear that there was no practicable road to it; so that, when the place came to be the resort of many superstitious persons, there was (as Malmsbury expresses it) "a perpetual track of persons sailing backwards and forwards."

* The original name is not known: it was called anciently *Crulande*, *Cruiland*, *Crogland*, and afterwards *Croyland*.

Even in summer, the readiest way to it was by water, as it is likely that the main course of the Welland ran very near to the island; and was, probably, by a canal, when the place became populous, made to run through the village. But to state the matter thus is to differ from former historians, who will needs have it, that the *Welland* and *Nen* rivers anciently met under Crowland bridge. Since this is what I can by no means myself believe, it becomes my duty to state the reasons of my dissent, which will be found in the end where we treat of the bridge; only observing, by the way, that since the sides of the island were not abrupt, but gradually declining; and since the village was built on those sides, (towards the west, and north-west of the Abbey,) it is much more likely that they should bring a rivulet through the village artificially, than that the river should have forced its way through a part of the elevated land; but when we consider, further, that it forms an *acute* angle at the bridge to pass through the north-street and recover its original course, it seems to require a very sturdy belief in traditionary authority to persist in this notion.—But to return—

The island being small, and the place being solitary, (at a time when population was not great,) it remained long without a claimant and uninhabited; but during the frequent wars in the time of the heptarchy, it was probably observed to be a place where repose might be, at least, hoped for; or rather, it owed its first distinction to a sort of rage for *anchoritism*, which at that age pervaded the *devotees* of christianity; and hence it had first a hut, then an oratory, and presently a monastery; which, however, being several times

ransacked, (when nothing was safe where property could be seized,) there arose, at length, out of the vicissitudes of its fortune, a magnificent structure which became a mitred Abbey, largely endowed, and secured in its possessions and its power by many charters from succeeding monarchs for a period of about 800 years.

To this description, if I were to adopt the facts as they are stated by the monks, I should have to add a strange account of the *deep moory and miry bottom* upon which the Abbey was built. In order to enhance the difficulties of the building, and dignify their labours, we are told that innumerable *piles* (some call them *planks) were driven, and a prodigious quantity of heavy earth was brought from the uplands, nine miles by water.*—In answer to this it will be sufficient to say that the substratum of the island was gravel, and as they would probably chuse the highest part upon which to build the Abbey, they would find no more difficulty in making a good foundation there than in many other highland situations: digging somewhat wide and deep they would throw out a great deal of gravel, and below that they would find clay; in the softest parts of this they might drive piles, and lay slabs of wood (planks) upon them; with large and broad stones, filling the interstices with gravel, and so on. The *heavy earth* said to be brought, might be *sand* to form cement, which, as it is not to be found in every place, they might bring *nine miles*.

There are, indeed, some facts connected with the natural history of the fens, which go to prove that the subsoil undergoes a gradual change; and, so far as this deserves discussion, it cannot be more properly placed

than in treating of the scite of the Abbey; but if we should grant that the clay rises nearer the surface than formerly in some places, (for it does not appear to be uniform,) and in others gravel, yet these premises could not affect the conclusion. The Abbey was built on an island, which could only be so by differing in elevation, and consequently in subsoil from the fens surrounding it; that is to say, however it happened, there was a small spot of high land incumbent on firm gravel detached from the highlands in general. This is in nothing wonderful, for it is not a solitary fact; but to suppose that it could lie many feet higher than the surrounding country, and consist of the same soil lying on the same bottom, is altogether improbable: there are no such freaks in nature; all moory countries, as far as they are moory, are nearly level; the same in their origin, and uniform in progress, it is impossible to conceive how one part should rise much above another. For the sake of illustration we might suppose the fen countries to be once like an empty dish with an uneven bottom; some of these inequalities rose so high that they were never encrusted with the gradual formation of aquatic soil, which always continued rising till the countries were drained. But these knobs were not perpendicular; they had very gradually declining *bases;* and such, at any rate, is the fact about Crowland, for gravel is found a few feet below the surface a considerable distance from the Abbey, especially to the north and east.

Still the assertion recurs, "that gravel is now found at the bottoms of ditches where many years ago a man might thrust a long pole into soft mire."—I think

this must be held to be incredible even by those who may doubt whether there was once any gravel where the Abbey was built; for however it rose it most probably rose together, gradually indeed, and the knob had the start, but how that should have stopped and the rest continued rising it is difficult to conjecture.

The author of the quarto *History of Croyland* was a learned antiquary, and such persons, I am afraid, too eagerly believe traditionary marvels; it is very certain that no man is now living who remembers any man who could *thrust a pole* as aforesaid. It must therefore be said, that certain old men have said, that they have heard their fathers say, that people used to say formerly, that they could *thrust a long pole, &c.* *Marrat*, in his *Sketches of Lincolnshire*, refers the investigation of this subject to Mr. Wyche, who knows that it is in vain to inquire into it. Mr. Gough very confidently appealed to *Mr. Scribo*, the then rector, who had been told the story over and over till he grew old, and began at last to believe it.

In considering the natural history of the fens there are certain periods distinctly marked, but no data to determine their duration; the beds of marine shells must have been deposited before the subterranean timber, which is now found, grew: that is to say, this flat country was *sea* before it was *land*. But if this were so, it must have been many ages before the bottom could have been covered with such a deposition of vegetable putrefaction as to support forests of timber; which, however, have now been so long destroyed, that, together with the difficulty of banking out the sea and keeping the land dry by mills, we have no concep-

tion how they could grow there. Some parts of these forests were obviously burnt when destroyed; other parts were chopped down,—for the roots are found standing, and the bodies lying along; other parts, again, appear to have been thrown down by a flood, or a violent wind, for they are torn up by the roots and all lie one way.

There are reasons, moreover, for believing that this timber was all planted where it is now found, not by nature, but by the hand of man; for though, by nature, timber grows principally of one kind in certain places, yet the different kinds grow on soils and sub-soils of distinct variety. Now in these fens we have, upon soils identically the same, and at no great distance, nothing but oak in one place, and in another nothing but fir. Besides which it, perhaps, never was found that a bog was, by nature, covered with a forest of timber; for if the mast could be supposed to fall upon it, yet the winter's water would destroy the seeds before they could vegetate: accordingly in the western territory of the United States of North America, there are places vacant of timber (called *prairies*) of all sizes and shapes, from half an acre up to many hundred acres. The land round about them, and from them for many miles, rises but little, yet is covered with good timber, which never encroaches on the bogs even by a single tree. Now if one of these prairies were drained so as to lie perpetually dry, it is obvious that, by the fall of the mast, it would soon be overrun with trees.

It must, however, be confessed that this point, though it be ever so firmly established, leads to nothing. Whatever changes the fen country has undergone, it

was in the state in which the builders of Crowland Abbey found it, in the time of the Romans, and, most probably, many ages before. There are few things in which human wit is more idly employed, or sooner turned to folly, than in endeavouring to trace backwards the works of the Almighty: the beds of marine shells prove nothing; there are multitudes of marine productions in gravel itself, and those too of several distinct dates, as conchologists know very well; there are also marine productions in the hardest stones at the tops of the highest mountains that were ever climbed by man: to what purpose, therefore, should we enquire into the formation of a little tract of flat land which was formerly, it seems, a puddle, and may hereafter become an oyster-bed? The remotest notices of history, and the Roman remains of banks and roads, shew that it has been at least two thousand years as it now is; (except the drainage;) for the same materials are found in the same places respectively, which that warlike people dug up to make their causeways. If any one would search farther on this subject and find nothing he may look into Richards's History of Lynn.

But if the account of the *moory foundation* be not very credible, there is yet another particular mentioned respecting this island in its rude and uninhabited state, which needs no circumstantial refutation: it was said to be infested by *dæmons*. The islands in the great lakes in North America are believed by the Indians to be inhabited by spirits, which appears to be a case perfectly parallel. The boldness and bravery of Guthlac in venturing to explore, and daring to live in such a place, were likely to excite astonishment; and he

laid hold of the credulity and superstition of the people to enhance their veneration, for he pretended to have had many combats with these disagreeable visitors. At length, when he found that the visits of the fearful and ignorant people would be more beneficial, he gave them to understand that, by the help of St. Bartholomew, he had expelled the dæmons from the island. From this we shall pass by easy transition to the life of St. Guthlac.

CHAP. II.

Of the Life of St. Guthlac.

In the *History of Croyland* there is but little said directly concerning the life of the tutelary saint, and that little is so variously related that there seems to be almost nothing that is certainly known. To set down one report and contradict it by another, appears to be a strange way of writing history, unless, at last, the whole be summed up, and the evidence be truly valued. When this is done, it amounts to no more than this: *that there was such a man as Guthlac; that he left the army and turned monk; that he built an oratory at Crowland, and there succoured a pretender to the throne of Mercia, who afterwards built a monastery in that place.*

But the compiler of the *quarto history*, knowing that such an account, so barren of interest and embellishment, must form a very inadequate foundation for the character of a hero and a saint; and having, besides, other materials in his hands, he has added whatever he could collect, without once considering the contradictions and improbabilities with which the narrative is deformed. Before we attempt a sketch of this farrago, we will look for a moment into *the origin of the monks*, and trace them to their next remarkable period, *the order of the Benedictins;* from whence they gradually rose to wealth and luxury, forgot their original, and forfeited their character.

There is, probably, no person of ardent imagination and excursive thought, with a slight tincture of enthusiasm, who has not, in the early period of manhood, considered the pure principles of christianity as being incompatible with the interests and pursuits of civilized life: the deceits of trade, the hypocrisy of ambition, the chicanery of professions, and the masked fraud and perpetual lying of common business, exhibit a scene to the intellectual eye so little in unison with the spirit of the gospel, that it is but just to say there does not appear to be any conviction of that sort intermingled with it. When to these are added the influence of the fiercer passions in the intercourse of common life, and especially in populous countries, the tenets of the gospel seem to be fairly set at nought by the greater part of those who profess to believe them. But this is not all.

The perpetual pressure and difficulty of procuring the means of subsistence, and meeting all the demands of law and custom, make it necessary for the bulk of

mankind to strive together in order to supply their mutual wants by the force of individual exertion; to this end *cunning* is highly conducive, and hence it becomes intimately united with all the concerns of life.

Such a view of human society, (without any feature of declamation,) urged by necessities which are unavoidable, and deformed by vices which seem to be irremediable; above all, the anxious contention for childish things and transient possessions, must appear altogether uninteresting to an ardent mind, sensible of the shortness of life, and embued with the faith of Christ Jesus. Accordingly, it is not surprising in the early ages of christianity that many of those who saw no hopes of reforming human society, should retire from it; this was probably the origin of the monks: although *Camden* says "the original of a monastic life in the world proceeded from the rigorous and fiery persecutions of the christian religion; to avoid which, good men withdrew themselves and retired into the deserts of Egypt, to the end that they might safely and freely exercise their profession."—[*Brit. p.* 555.]

Be this as it might, "they lived at first solitarily in caves and cells, from whence they were called by the Greeks *monachi;* but their numbers increasing they began, as nature itself prompted them, to live sociably together."—[*Ibid.*] They spent their time in prayer, and in such labour as was necessary to supply their own wants, giving what they had to spare in charity. This way of living naturally embraced great austerity, and removed its followers wholly from those interests which agitate society. Their numbers were greatly increased by their reputation for sanctity, and a desire,

which is so pressing upon human nature, to be assured of salvation; and, accordingly, a considerable share of the most serious and devout among christians, during the second and third centuries, were joined to them, either by direct cohabitation, or by occasional intercourse. These societies were extremely instrumental in preserving and exhibiting the pure spirit of the gospel, and in spreading the faith among nations and people: indeed they may be considered as that form and force of moral power which immediately grew out of, and succeeded, the apostolic mission.

In process of time they set up such establishments as their means afforded; from the produce of their own labour, and the donations of pious persons, they erected habitations, which, from their living in common, were called *cœnobia;* they were also called *monasteries* because they still (the monks) retained the appearance of solitary life, " and there was nothing in those times (says Camden) esteemed so truly religious." Thus they accumulated and spread, living under vows of poverty, humility, and chastity; and employing their time in prayer, and practising such exercises as were suited to the mortification of the flesh, and calculated to inspire mankind with reverence for their piety, and conviction of their sincerity.

" From the introduction of christianity among the Saxons, there had been monasteries in England; and these establishments had extremely multiplied by the donations of princes and nobles, whose superstition, derived from their ignorance, and increased by remorses for the crimes into which they were betrayed by their precarious and predatory way of life, knew

no other expedient for appeasing than profuse liberality towards the ecclesiastics. But the monks had hitherto been a species of secular priests, who lived after the manner of the present canons or prebendaries, and were both intermingled in some degree with the world, and endeavoured to render themselves useful to it. They were employed in the education of youth; they had the disposal of their own time and industry, and were not subject to the rigid rules that were afterwards imposed upon them." Especially it appears, "that hitherto they retained the choice, without quitting the convent, of a married or a single life."—[*Rapin, b.* 4.]

Thus they continued useful and zealous, until the appearance of St. Benedict, who with undoubted piety, but with more enthusiasm than good sense, introduced new rules, and erected the monks into an order under strict dicipline and uniformity of dress; these rules were calculated to seclude them from society, and formed a convenient handle by which they were presently seized into the power of the court of Rome, and were first made instrumental to its purposes, and quickly subdued and debauched by its corruptions.

"The Benedictins, (says Rapin,) carrying farther the plausible principles of mortification, secluded themselves entirely from the world; renounced all claim to liberty, and made a merit of the most inviolate chastity. These principles and practices, which superstition first engendered, were greedily embraced and promoted by the policy of the court of Rome."—[*Ibid.*]

Upon this beginning, by a master-stroke of policy, and after much labour and perseverance, the Roman pontiffs succeeded in introducing perpetual celibacy

among the monks; by no other means could their connection with the civil power, and their liability to family influence, be entirely removed. Accordingly, when this was once accomplished, they were reduced to implicit obedience, and engaged to promote with unceasing industry the grandeur of their own order: hence the see of Rome acquired sinews and nerves in every country of christendom.

Becoming thus the engines of the hierarchy, they quickly departed from the piety of St. Benedict, and lost sight of the duties of their station and the great end of their establishment; outward ceremony was substituted for inward piety, and they had presently nothing left of their original but *celibacy* and their *black gowns*. Incited by the court of Rome they made it their chief purpose to amass wealth, to which end they practised all the arts by which superstition may be cajoled; they exhibited mock miracles; they entered into every man's family who had aught to give, and into every man's bosom who had property to bequeath, aggravating the fears of the dying, and extorting donations by such arts as their craft readily presented.

They now began to build stately edifices, and to perform their rites, which became pompous and imposing, amidst a profusion of expensive decorations; and all the insignia of riches and splendour environed the humble order of St. Benedict: when palaces begin to be built for the service of God, religion is on the decline.

The motives to enter into this order were now entirely changed; there were inducements to the idle as well as the ambitious; power, immunity, ample provi-

sion, superior reputation; exemption from care and labour, (the two most pressing evils of human life,) and from military vassalage, which in those times rendered life itself continually precarious. Accordingly, the monasteries multiplied, and filled with persons who were not drawn by motives of piety, nor impelled by sentiments of devotion operating on superior mind and more refined humanity. They made "sweet religion a rhapsody of words." "Thus they sunk into luxury, intemperance, and sloth; abandoned themselves to all sorts of vices; extended their zeal and attention to worldly affairs; took part in political cabals and court factions; made a vast augmentation of superfluous rites and ceremonies to blind the multitude and supply the place of expiring virtue; and, among other meritorious enterprizes, laboured most ardently to swell the arrogance by enlarging the power of the Roman pontiff."—[*Rees's Cyc. art. Benedictins.*]

This order was introduced into England about A. D. 556, and, of course, it had subsisted considerably above a century before the birth of Guthlac; during this interval a great number of monasteries were built by the Saxons, and this emulation of building was assiduously encouraged by the monks in those early times, insomuch that nothing was thought so acceptable to God as to build and endow monasteries: there were no crimes of great men that might not be thus expiated; and though it does not appear that the corruptions of the order had attained their height in this country before the time of *Dunstan*, (from 900 to 950,) yet their juggling in miracles and pretentions to prophecy were common previous to the birth of Guth-

lac; it follows, therefore, that the motives to enter into this order, already privileged and deceitful, were at least questionable at that time.

Guthlac was born (according to the M. S. collections of Sir Thomas Cave) in 673; and Felix, the Burgundian monk who wrote his life about 730, (not more than 15 years after his death,) informs us that he was the son of *Perwald*, a nobleman of Mercia, and that his mother's name was *Tette* or *Tetha*. Of his education there is no authentic account; at a very early age he became a soldier, as all people were at that time who were not of the *religious*; and, being the son of a nobleman, he had the command of the vassals who belonged to his father. The *History of Croyland* extols his exploits, and the history of England testifies as to his humanity; but as no accounts are preserved of any *just and necessary* wars in those times, such as, at least, legitimate the duties of the soldier, we are left to conclude that he was but a successful leader of one of those predatory bands which were continually making inroads on the neighbouring territories, and plundering their weaker neighbours; in this warfare, the kingdom of Mercia may be supposed to have had the advantage, as it was the largest of the heptarchy. It is said that Guthlac always returned *one third part* of the spoils he took, which his historians seem to consider as a sufficient expiation of a continued course of violence and bloodshed. But "at length tired with this dangerous and laborious calling, and reflecting on the transient vanity of worldly glory, and the lamentable end of many celebrated heroes, he bid adieu to war and bloodshed, and ordered his troops to elect a new leader in

his room, declaring he would no longer fight under any other banner but that of religion. Nor could all the arguments of his affectionate followers [granting that they used any] dissuade him from his resolutions; for A. D. 697, he with great eagerness and haste retired to the famous monastery of Rippington, or Ripondon, (Repton,) Derbyshire, and there embraced a religious life. Here our saint spent some time; but aiming at still greater austerities as the road to absolute perfection, he determined to lead an eremetical life, and for his greater mortification chose for the place of his retirement the isle of Croyland, at that time a most horrid and uninhabited place. Of this seat of his retirement he took possession on the feast of St. Bartholomew, A. D. 697, being then but 26 years old, &c."—[*Abst. of his life in the M. S. of Sir Thomas Cave.*]—But Gough says he entered at 25 on a life of solitude, (which differs not much,) leaving the army at the age of 24. Another account, in the appendix by Gough, makes him live fourteen years at Repton instead of two, which leaves him but little time to figure as a soldier.

If we were to preserve all the contradictions respecting him, we could only conclude that the authors must have told what they did not know; the fond relations of the monks, who alone usurped the province of history in those ages, reduce the matter to a perfect chaos of improbability and mystery. Leaving the letter of the narrative, therefore, for the present, we may proceed with what really happened, in the language of common sense, and addressed to the exercise of a sober judgment.

In those early ages, the monkish establishments, by the fabrication of miracles, &c. drew upon them all the awe and reverence of mankind; the fame of a soldier was vulgar in comparison with the sanctity of a monk. These institutions were then rising into popularity, and it became the rage of the time to be of this apparently holy and mysterious order. Guthlac, whose education was above the vulgar, and his mind naturally superior, perceived that the principal tides of wealth and power were likely to set into that channel; together with ease and safety, and a renown more durable than that which is usually obtained by courage and good fortune. He, therefore, left the army, and placed himself, for a probationary term, at the monastery (then famous) of Repton; but not satisfied with remaining an idle monk and undistinguished, he determined to become an *Anachoret;* and since such a resolution might easily be made more remarkable by circumstances, he chose, for the place of his retirement, an island, which, in the vulgar apprehension, was infested with evil spirits.

While he was enquiring concerning the flat countries a monk named *Tatwin* gave him information of an island in a remote solitary place, which several persons had in vain attempted to inhabit, but were obliged to abandon by the frightful appearances they had seen there. " This (says his historian) but awakened Guthlac's curiosity, &c."—In fact it was a particular precisely calculated to inflame the desire of singularity so manifest in the imagination of our young religious; and he rightly concluded that a resolution to live in

such a place would draw upon him the wonder and admiration of the surrounding inhabitants.

The conclusions to be deduced from hence may be repelled by observing that he retired to voluntary castigation, and it appears that he died at an early age, (about 40,) before he had realized the dreams here supposed. His singularity, however, had procured him the notice he looked for, and being visited by a bishop, and in favour with the heir to the throne, he found himself in a fair way to become the abbot of a great monastery, which he covenanted with the heir to build and endow, but death suddenly cut short his hopes, and left him with the reputation of a saint, but denied him the glory and immunities of an abbot.

The facts contained in this relation are told with sufficient particularity in the *History of Croyland*, chiefly gathered from his life by *Felix*, but in part translated from the latin of *Ingulphus*, abbot here in the time of *William the Conqueror;* the account is summed up by *Gough* in these words: "he passed ten years in his solitude, during which, by grace of God, he received the order of priesthood, and was honoured with the gift of miracles and prophecy. But his miracles were greater after his death, his body being preserved a whole year uncorrupted; and in consequence of his merit, the monastery which was founded on the spot where he was buried, remained unhurt and unimpaired by the storms of war and the various revolutions." This is given on the authority of *Malmsbury*, but it seems rather unfortunately prefixed to a work which describes the plundering and destruction of the Abbey so many times. To this account there is nothing

added but a few lines respecting what passed between him and *Ethelbald*, the founder of the Abbey:

" The holy man comforted him with every assurance of success, [in his pretentions to the throne,] and the pleasing prospect that his good fortune would be brought about *in the easiest and safest manner* without battle and without bloodshed. In return for this flattering promise he vowed to found in this very spot a monastery in honour of God and Guthlac. It happened that the holy man did not live to be a witness of Ethelbald's advancement; but his care for his friend did not end with his life. He appeared to him in the same place, and gave him a sign in confirmation of his assurance."—[*Gough's History of Croyland.*]

The promise which Guthlac made to Ethelbald, he exerted himself, most probably, to bring about by means perfectly natural, and peculiarly within his power; for, as great numbers of people resorted to him, he might very easily convince them of the legality of Ethelbald's claim, and assure them that heaven intended him for the successor of Ceolred; (Ceured;) moreover, by a flattering picture of his piety and good qualities, he might excite the love and veneration of his future subjects. In the mean time he took care to obtain from the heir-apparent a promise to confirm his island in perpetuity, with an extent of property *five miles every way*, rent free. This request the expectant of a kingdom readily granted; but Guthlac dying before his promises were fulfilled, and Ethelbald fearing that the faith of the people should fail, he carefully supported it by the story of the apparition: his residence among monks had taught him the use that might

be made of superstition. It seems, however, that Ceured died directly after, for *in one year* after the death of Guthlac, (so happily is the tale related,) the Abbey was built and the body of the saint (which was found uncorrupted) removed into it.

A few years after his death, a monk (Felix) was ordered to write his life, (he being contemporary,) for the purpose, as we may suppose, of preserving the uncommon events and those favours of divine grace which distinguished his character. How comes it, then, that, since this life is extant in latin, materials should be wanting to compose his history? And yet so it is, that excepting his being a soldier and turning monk, there is little known of him but by conjecture.

We shall here preserve some passages of that notable production as they are selected in the *History of Croyland;* the *life* has, indeed, been translated more at length, but not published, neither is it fit to be introduced verbatim into any serious work, nor into any sober family. But in the history of the life of one monk written by another, we might expect a good sample of the marvellous; and accordingly the whole relation is calculated to excite the veneration of the ignorant and superstitious people.

Some particulars of the life by Felix, are thus compressed by Gough:—" Guthlac was the son of Perwald, a nobleman of Mercia, his mother's name was Tetha. In his youth he distinguished himself in the army, but as soon as he had completed his twenty-fourth year, he renounced the world, and was shorn a monk in the monastery of Repton, under the abbess Elfrida. In the midland parts of Britain is a marsh or fen, be-

ginning from the banks of the river called *Gronte*, (not far from a castle of the same name,) * overhung by stagnated vapours, and interspersed with islands and streams, reaching from north to south to the sea. Tatwin, by divine guidance, came in a boat to one of these solitary desert islands, called *Crulande;* to which also came Guthlac on St. Bartholomew's day, and in an hollow by the side of a heap of turf, built himself a hut in the days of Ceured, king of Mercia; when the Britons gave their inveterate enemies the Saxons all the trouble they could. Certain demons assumed their shape, and came to torment Guthlac, and tempted Beccelin, his clerk, to murder him. Ethelbald, afterwards king but then an outlaw, came hither with Earl Witfrid, afterwards abbot here; and Egga, another of his companions, was seized with an unclean spirit, as was also Huctred, a young man of family among the East Angles. Hedda, bishop of Lichfield, came to Guthlac, and ordained him priest, and consecrated his oratory in Croyland. Egburga, † daughter of king Aldulph, [a king of the East Angles,] sent him a leaden coffin and [a] shroud. In his dying moments Beccelin being by him, was ordered to fetch his sister Pega, who immediately came to him. Gunnilda, a nun, was another of his admirers. As he had predicted the crown to Ethelbald, he requested a quiet settlement in

* Camden reckons this tract of fens, *from the borders of Suffolk to Wainfleet in Lincolnshire*, 68 miles; and observes that the rivers which run through and overflow it in winter, are the *Ouse*, *Grant*, *Nen*, *Welland*, *Glene*, and *Witham*. Of these *Grant* alone bears any resemblance to *Gronte;* *Grant* is the same with *Cam*, and *Grantbridge* is an ancient name for *Cambridge;* there is also an ancient castle near Cambridge.

† Called *Aelfrid*, or *Elfrida*, by Felix. She was the abbess at Repton, where he professed.

his island five miles every way, rent free, and confirmed by charter under his seal, in the presence of his prelates and nobles, whereon the king afterwards founded the monastery."—What *prelates* and *nobles* had he, a conspirator and an outlaw, in his exile?

This jumble is nothing to the purpose; there is no such name as *Wilfrid* among the abbots, and the bishop from whom he received his consecration is elsewhere said to have been of *Dorsetshire*.

The passages which follow are taken from an abstract of the same life, published from Sir Thomas Cave's M. S. collections for Leicestershire, by Gough, in the same volume, (or rather as an appendix to it,) who never stopped at contradictions nor sought to explain difficulties.

"Guthlac was a celebrated saint and Anchorite, * descended from the blood-royal of the Mercian kings, born A. D. 673, about the termination of the Saxon heptarchy, when Egbert, 17th king of the West Saxons, reduced the generality of the Saxon kings under his government, and became the sole monarch of this kingdom. ‡ If we may credit the relation given by Felix the monk, the sanctity of his life was foretold by the appearance of a cross near the house of his mother during her pregnancy with him. However, his younger years were employed in the exercise of arms," &c.—stating what we have extracted of his turning monk, and taking possession of his solitude.

"St. Guthlac acquired great reputation, and was much respected in his retreat at Croyland, &c. Neither

* Properly *Anachoret*, (a solitary,) but popularly *Anchoret; Ancherite is not English.*

‡ This was in the year 800, 127 years afterwards.

had he fewer or less terrible foes to contend with, than when he directed the scene of war on a more public stage; for the monk Felix, who wrote his life, assures us that he was disturbed here by evil spirits, and infernal delusions, to as great a degree as St. Anthony ever was. The same author farther relates that St. Guthlac was once hurried away from his cell by demons, and carried by violence to the very gates of hell, into which they threatened to cast him for invading their *own island* of Croyland, as they called it; but his tutelar saint, Bartholomew, defended him in this, as well as all other perils, and made them convey him quietly back again to his own cell, so that the saucy devils had only their labour for their pains."

It seems that the devils have no power over dead saints, though it is known that they often disgrace the living ones; and this phrase, *their own island*, may appear to have an odd kind of force, either satyrical or prophetic, to those who know that the place is called to this day sometimes *little hell*, and sometimes *cursed Crowland*. It seems that though Guthlac expelled the devils for a while, yet they found means to get possession of their own place again.

But, seriously, it is no difficult thing to explain the laxity of morals, and the peculiar state of society in Crowland, upon the common impulses of human-nature; and those who doubt whether the principles of agrarian law would not make mankind happier, would do well to take a lesson from the conduct of the people of Crowland. The whole place being divided into copyholds, and every tenement having an allotment of land to it, which the occupier either owns or rents,

there is a manifest want of subordination and decency of manners in the first place. Every occupier farms his allotment in such a way as to find the greater part of his annual employ thereon, and seldom cares to labour for hire in order to increase the comforts of his family; but rather spends his idle time (which always accumulates upon the hands of those who own no master) in pot-houses, or in lounging about the streets, or in some other way scarcely less idle and not more reputable: hence there is a latitude of speech, a saucy independence, and a beggarly pride, which obtrude themselves constantly on observation. There is no magistrate, and the people own no superior; there is no great proprietor, or his agent, who might keep them in check by his power, or by the hope of his favour; "there is no king in Israel,—and every one does what is right in his own eyes."

But to return to our author,—"To make the saint amends for these disagreeable visitors, he had (if Felix is not misinformed,) the daily society of an angel, who conversed with him, and remained invisible to every one besides: for his disciple Beccelin declares he had often heard him discoursing in his solitary hours with some person, but was ignorant who it was, till St. Guthlac told him as he lay at the point of death."

"One day while Guthlac and his friend St. Bartholomew were in earnest conversation together, two devils in human shape suddenly presented themselves, and joined them, suggesting a habit of fasting to the hermit, who forthwith *seeing their design* put them to flight. Shortly afterwards he found himself assailed, during his nightly prayer, by an host of unclean spirits,

who insinuating themselves through every crack and crevice of the building, filled the whole with their ugly shapes. They had fierce countenances, terrible figures, great heads, long necks, lean faces, ghastly complexions, dirty beards, hairy ears, sour fronts, savage eyes, stinking mouths, teeth like horses, fire-belching throats, blubber lips, hoarse voices, burnt locks, puffed cheeks, high chests, scaley thighs, bowed knees, crooked legs, swollen ankles, distorted feet, wide mouths, and uttered dissonant clamours. In an instant they bound the holy man hand and foot, and hurrying him out of his cell, plunged him into the mire of the fen, and dragged him through the bushes, tearing his limbs. After they had made him pass the greater part of the night in these trials, they gave him a little respite, and commanded him to quit the desert. On his steadfast refusal they beat him with iron whips, and then raised him up aloft in the air, which to the north was darkened by horrible flights of unclean spirits who hurried him away to the very mouth of hell, and gave him a view of the varied torments."—This must have been a strange way of enticing him to sin, and not like the craft and subtlety which are usually ascribed to the devil.—We will here conclude *the life*, to which there is nothing authentic which can be added.

It is every where forced upon our observation that very little is known of St. Guthlac but by conjecture: Felix, we may suppose, had but scanty materials, and made it is chief care to embellish his narrative with those particulars which fitted him for the hero of a monkish romance. Miracles were necessary to attract visitors and offerings, and the fabrication of these were the

chief care of Felix; who for this and other like deserts, was afterwards consecrated a bishop of the East Angles. We cannot but observe that the history in this resembles all others, the origin of which is without authentic records; several hundred years are frequently crowded into a page or two, with a few conjectures and guesses very little to the purpose. The greater part of what is told concerning Guthlac has altogether the air of fable, and seems to have been set down by one who must needs say something, but whose invention was exerted to astonish the vulgar, and who had not the art to render fiction delightful.

There is a strange account of one *Pega*, said to be sister to Guthlac, and who, it appears, lived with him, or in a hut about half a mile from his oratory, during the whole, or the greater part of the time of his residence on the island. As the monks had the power of sanctifying whatever belonged to themselves, and to one another, so they made a saint of *Pega;* but for anything to the contrary that appears in the rules of St. Benedict, she might have been his wife, for the *Anachorets*, or solitaries; the *Sarabaites*, who lived two or three together in a cell; and the *Gyrovagi*, who removed from one monastery to another without fixing on any, were expressly excluded from those rules.—There is much contradiction respecting her, and the historians seem willing to provide her with a residence at *Peakirk*, from a sense, perhaps, of the oddity of their living together so retiredly.—They agree, however, that Guthlac was buried in her cell near the oratory,—and that *Pega* continued there a whole year after his death,—that is, until his body was removed to the Abbey,

which was then building. She then removed to her cell at Peakirk, where she continued three years and a half, —and at last retired to Rome, where she died.

Upon the whole, Guthlac might be no more than an enthusiast, whose mind was borne away by the prevailing influence of example, and the powerful emotions of individual determination to surpass all his precursors in devotion and self-denial. This disposition, however, did not hold long, for having raised wonder and acquired fame, he courted popularity; and his bargain with Ethelbald will shew that he began, when he grew older, (like other men,) to look to wealth and power as his ultimate object. Whether piety or imposture had the larger share in his character, it would be difficult to determine; those who think that his battles with the evil spirits were all pretended will incline to the latter; but, perhaps, these embellishments were chiefly invented afterwards.

CHAP. III.

Of the Number and Order of the Abbots.

Before we proceed to the history of the Abbey, it may be proper to insert the list of the abbots as they are registered by Gough; and from thence take occasion to consider a little of what is said concerning the credibility of *Ingulphus*, the principal historian. The

abbots were in number 38, from the foundation in 716, to the dissolution in 1539, a period of 823 years,—which, if equally divided, gives to each abbot a continuance of twenty-one years and eight months nearly. Their names were Kenulph; Patrick; Siward; Theodore; (who was murdered by the Danes in 870, when the Abbey was, for the first time, burnt;) Godric; TURKETYL; (who restored and rebuilt the Abbey about 942, to 952;) Egelric; Egelric 2nd; Osketul; Godric 2nd; Brithmer; Wulgate; (deposed;) INGULPHUS; (the historian, in whose time the Abbey was burnt a second time, 1091;) Joffrid; Waldeve; Godfrid; Edward; (in whose time the Abbey was burnt a third time, about 1145;) Robert de Redinges; Henry Longchamp; Richard Bardeney; Thomas Welles; Ralph Mercke; Richard Croyland; (resigned;) Simon de Luffenham; (resigned;) Henry de Caswick; Thomas de Bernack; John de Ashby; Thomas Overton; Richard Upton; John Littleton; John Wisbech; Richard Croyland 2nd; Lambert Fosdike; Edmond Thorpe; Phillip Everedge; William Gedyng; Richard Berdeny; and John Wells, who was abbot in the time of Henry 8th, being the last abbot of Croyland. —There is some little doubt whether this list be quite correct, but it is certainly of no importance.

When Henry 8th had completed his quarrel with the Pope, he required that the monks and the clergy should subscribe to his supremacy. Many did so; but many demurred, and, perhaps, the majority refused: it was a matter of difficult decision. The violence of the measure on the part of the king; the power and the rage of the Pope, and the nature of their connec-

tion with him; his excommunication of the king and all his adherents; these were terrifying circumstances. They would naturally consider that the king's life was mortal, and that such a violent measure was likely to be rescinded by his successor; and especially that the Pope would remember those who sided with Henry, and visit them afterwards with his vengeance. Had it been only a common case of temporising with the civil power, they would have made no hesitation; but they saw, with great dismay, in this quarrel, a sort of prelude to the downful of their own power, their wealth, and privileges.

The secular clergy were more manageable than the monks, who considered themselves as being independent of the king's patronage, and had long been in a particular manner attached to the see of Rome. Henry, on his part, was perfectly sensible of the difficulty that environed them in this case; doubting the cordiality of those who subscribed, and finding them very tardy in compliance, he appointed at length a commission to enquire into the government of the religious houses. The commissioners, who knew the king's humour, reported them so bad that he forthwith ordered them to be suppressed, and their revenues confiscated. A full account of this prodigious stretch of power may be seen in Ashburton's History of England, who informs us that there were suppressed, in all, 645 monasteries, of which 28 had abbots that enjoyed seats in parliament. Besides these, 90 colleges were demolished, in several counties; 2374 chantries and free chapels; and 110 hospitals. The whole revenues of which amounted to £161,100. per annum.

Our business being no farther with this affair, we need only observe that the *Abbot of Croyland* was among those who subscribed to the king's supremacy in 1534, and continued abbot until the dissolution, when, making a voluntary surrender of the convent, he received a pension for life of £133. 6*s*. 8*d*. per ann. a very handsome income in those days. The whole revenues of the Abbey vere valued at from eleven hundred to twelve hundred a year, or thereabouts.

Gough, in his preface, started a doubt relative to the authenticity of *Ingulphus*, upon which he reasoned very little, and proceeded in his history as if it had never been mentioned. The doubt refers to the genuineness of certain *charters*, which purport to be copies of the originals, verbatim; and which make no other difference in the history than that the dates of certain particulars become thus uncertain; which dates are frequently referred to by Gough as true.

" *Ingulphus* tells us he compiled his history from the most authentic documents he could meet with; the collections of the five senior brethren of the house, [hereafter mentioned,] the life of Abbot Turketyl, their first restorer; and the rest, a period of little more than a century, from contemporary information. He concluded it at the year 1089, [in this date there is an error, as his account of the fire reaches beyond 1091,] and survived it near 20 years."—[*Gough's Preface.*]

Among other particulars in the destructive fire which happened in his time, Ingulphus informs us that —" all the charters and other writings were burnt, [to the amount of near 400,] so that nothing but a few Saxon deeds, of which they had more copies than one,

remained in their hands." Upon this, a note is inserted from the Harleian MSS. which says, "As to Ingulphus, I humbly beg leave to observe that some learned men do not think the history bearing his name, or at least a great part of it, to be his. And many charters recited in that book are vehemently suspected to be spurious. One I can mention particularly, *the foundation charter of Croyland Abbey*, which was, or seems to have been, taken from one now in being, and not much older, if anything at all, than Henry 2nd's time."

Upon this objection Gough makes no other observation than what follows: "The objection to the charters can be none to Ingulphus, unless we were certain he had copied them all before they were destroyed in that calamitous fire, &c."—He certainly could not have copied them afterwards, but it may be allowed that he might have borne the principal parts of them sufficiently in mind to set down their contents as we see; they run in a form which assists the memory, and their separate particulars are few. A very small number is given, and they purport to be the oldest; and it required but little exertion either of memory or ingenuity to produce them: there is the foundation charter of *Ethelbald*, the charters of *Beornred*, *Witlaff*, *Bertulph*, *Egbert*, *Ethelwulph*, *Ethelred*, *Edmund*, *Edward*, *Edred*, and *Edgar;* these are the principal, and they are short. These charters having a phraseology introduced in them which was not in use until the time of *William the Conqueror*, it is manifest that they cannot be true copies of the originals; but it by no means follows that they are not the oldest that are extant,—that is to say, it does not follow, because the charters are spurious,

that Ingulphus is not the author of the history; the charter mentioned as being *not older than Henry the 2nd's* time, might be made from this, as well as this from that. Copies of these charters were made under the direction of Ingulphus, and replaced in their archives; even these might be afterwards destroyed when the Abbey was burnt again, (which was not quite 60 years afterwards,) and they might be reproduced in a similar manner.

There were violent disputes in the time of Ingulphus, and vexatious lawsuits between him and *Tailbois*, a relation of the conqueror's, who was lord of Hoyland, (Holland,) and resident at Spalding; and it was feared that the burning of the charters would be fatal to the issue of these suits on the part of the Croylanders. On this account Ingulphus made haste to replace them, but it is evident, from the manner in which he tells the tale, that, when these suits were renewed, after the fire, he had not such charters as he thought fit to produce.

But although Gough seems all along to consider the charters as authentic, he allows expressly "that Ingulphus probably did forge charters,"—for he says that "he (Ingulphus) does not hesitate to tell us what artifice he used in return of the property of this house to the surveyors for Domesday;" and from this concludes "that he, like many others of his rank, produced *forged charters* to support his claims."

This seeming candour is very unfortunate, for the charters were not burnt until after William's death, which happened in 1087; there was, therefore, no

need of what is here called *forgery*. It is expressly said that he (Ingulphus) *carried all the original charters with him to London*, when the affairs of the Abbey were settled under his authority, and long before the Domesday record was made out. But of what use could forged charters have been, or any charters, to sustain claims before *William the Conqueror?* Ingulphus possessed a power much more likely to succeed, that is—*favouritism*. He was of his privy council, according to Sir John Harrington's MS. "And very inward with him; and though he was an Englishman, yet he did long before serve King William, then Earl of Normandy, and was become his secretary."

That there was as much artifice used to elude the surveyors for Domesday, as there has been in our times to deceive the surveyors for the *property tax*, is perfectly probable. "There was not in all England (says Sir John) the hide of land of which the king did not know both the value and the owner;" but if the king could not have been imposed on a little in this respect, by his most intimate friends, those times were very different from the present.

Neither were charters of any use, excepting as a reference, or a pile of honorary records; they required renewing, and might be annulled: if a charter were granted by William, it would be tantamount to all that preceded it. They could only be produced to shew what the Abbey had enjoyed, and to beg that the same privileges might be continued; it was a kind of evidence, not authority, that they possessed; they were good in a court of law, but had no power over a suc-

ceeding monarch: for if this were otherwise why should they seek so anxiously to have them so many times renewed?

In a word, the charters, as they are printed by Gough from Ingulphus, contain internal evidence of their modern date; and it is even probable that some of them have been *made out* in times still later, which revives the doubt whether the book bearing the name of *Ingulphus* be altogether his.—Two or three particulars deserve to be mentioned: Sir John Harrington, in his chronicle, gives us this caution—"If that in Ingulphus his work you find mention of a *league*, you must understand thereby only the space of a *mile*, for so he himself hath expounded it." Now it happens that *leucas* (in compliment to *William*, with whom French customs were prevalent) and not *miliares*, are used in all the measures of these instruments; and it is evident, from the known distances, that *miles* are meant.—Again, in Edred's charter, mention is made of "the triangular bridge at Croyland," from which Gough directly concludes that the bridge is as old as 943; as if it were not easier to suppose that the wording of this charter has been subsequently altered, (and that, probably, after the time of Ingulphus,) as that the triangular bridge should have been built before the pointed arch was in use? He is also made to call himself "King of Great Britain," in the same charter, a title which is elsewhere never heard of until the time of James the 1st.—Besides this, in the foundation charter, a common (of late years inclosed) is set out by measure; which could not be done before any part of the country was inclosed or fenced. It was only from ten to fifteen

years before, that Guthlac found it "a most horrid and uninhabited country,"—and immediately after the country is parcelled out as if it were populous, insomuch that only a certain small part is *commonable*:—certainly, therefore, these charters were made out afterwards, and such particulars were added to them as had been subsequently acquired; and yet with all this evidence before him, Gough says "the original charter in Saxon characters, the initial letters and crosses gilt, was in the possession of Robert Hunter, Esq. lord of the site in 1734, when Mr. Lethiueller shewed it to the society of antiquaries."—If this be true, it must have been a hoax on the society.

We shall here dismiss this grave question. It is of no importance to the following history whether *Ingulphus* wrote the work ascribed to him or not; for there is so little said any where in it *of the building*, (which is our principal object,) that we are obliged to gather partly from conjecture, but principally from other authority, what we are most interested to know.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Building of the Abbey, to its Destruction by the Danes.

In Sir Thomas Cave's MSS. it is said that Guthlac died in 714, and "no sooner did King Ethelbald hear of his death, but he hastened with all possible speed to the place of his interment; and requiring the attend-

ance of one *Kenulph*, an eminent monk of Evesham, founded and endowed an Abbey or Monastery of Black Monks [Benedictins] at Croyland, &c."—The verbal pleonasm here used of *hastening* with *speed*, is a greater proof of the writer's haste than of Ethelbald's.

Sir John Harrington, in his chronicle, relates this matter somewhat differently; after observing that Meadshamstead (Peterborough) Abbey was founded in 664, he says " immediately after, Ethelbald, a great warrior, but of a proud heart, endured many dangers, and, almost brought to utter extremities and driven out of his kingdom, repaired to Guthlac, the man of God, confessed his sins, and did penance, and determined to forsake the world; but Guthlac comforted him, and foretold him that the kingdom would fall into his hands *again*. Afterwards Guthlac died; and Ethelbald, *yet living in corners*, mourned his death, &c."—This account is no better entitled to implicit credit—for Guthlac was not born until 673, nine years after the founding of Peterborough Abbey; and he did not live at Croyland until about the year 702; after this it must have been some time before Ethelbald *repaired to him*, for he was neither famous at first, nor had he accommodations. Here is a period of about 35 years compressed into nothing; Ceolred or Ceured, who preceded him, did not reign more than seven years, and it is very probable that Ethelbald was not born so early as 664. There was some contention for the throne, it seems, between him and Ceured, and the latter getting the better, the other was outlawed and treated as a conspirator; in these circumstances he *repaired to Guthlac*, to hide himself, and remain con-

cealed. Guthlac knowing him to be *heir to the succession*, found this a promising opportunity to lay the foundations of future grandeur, and therefore he gave him those assurances, and took those steps, which we have noticed before.

Still it remains uncertain whether he came to the crown at or before Guthlac's death.—Ceured was king from 709 to 716, as Gough relates, nothing doubting; and Guthlac died in 714; Ethelbald might therefore *live in corners* and *mourn his death* for two years; but we are told more than once that the body of the saint was translated to the Abbey *a year* after his decease, which must have been 715. The testimonies are lame and disjointed; Gough gives no date, himself, to the death of Guthlac, but simply observes that "he did not live to see the advancement of Ethelbald;" and then goes on, "Ethelbald being *now* seated on the throne, set about the performance of his vows, &c." This we must believe to be the case, for otherwise it would seem strange that he did not commence the building while the saint was living.

Even before the foundation of the Abbey is mentioned they lay claim to a *martyr*, who was buried here. "The noble Earl Waltheof, son of Duke Siward, who is said (we wish it may not be true) to have suffered innocently on suspicion of conspiring against King William the elder. [Conqueror.]"—[*History of Croyland, p. 2.*]

Here is a martyr, who they wish may have been a traitor that he might not have *suffered innocently*, and consequently have been no martyr. But notwithstanding this pious wish, the history mentions that many

miracles were wrought at his tomb in confirmation of his innocence: the story is told more at length in its proper place.

It is agreed on all hands that the Abbey was founded in 716, and that Ethelbald set about the performance of his vow as soon as he came to the throne, "He sent for Kenulph, a monk of Evesham, (which Abbey was then in high reputation,) and made him a grant of the island of Croyland; confirmed it by charter, and exempted it *for ever** from all secular payments and services. This charter was confirmed in the presence of all the prelates and nobles of his realm."—[*Gough, p. 4.*]

"Ethelbald gave £300. in silver, and £100. a year for ten years to come, towards the building; with directions to invite monks of good reputation to form a society there; leave to build a town, and *right of common* and *fisheries* for themselves and their servants, &c."—This *right of common* is here again interpolated; it was superfluous to give *right of common* before there was any competition for the waste fens.

Unless some inhabitants were drawn about them the monks could hardly subsist; it is, therefore, to be supposed that they invited persons to settle there; to cultivate what land was dry in summer, at least the best of it, and what lay nearest to the Abbey; to fish and catch wildfowl; to bring a few pigs and cows, and so on;—that the Abbot might draw from them a share of these articles of subsistence, in the shape of *fee* or *rent-charge*, or other commutation, (for the word *tithe*

* A good instance of the tumid stile adopted by men "dressed in a little brief authority."

is not yet mentioned,) such as would, at first, rather encourage than oppress the new inhabitants.

There is no mention made of the plan of the original building, nor of its dimensions; the time it took in building, nor of the expence; nor shall we, in this place, attempt to supply this deficiency. The building was of stone, and the masons of those days knew very well how to make good foundations; on this subject, respecting this Abbey, there is some contradiction and improbability, as we have seen; but since we should be much more interested to have a credible description of the superstructure, we will leave that which is of much less consequence, without further dispute. It is by no means certain that any part of this original building is now standing.

From the building of the Abbey, for a period of 126 years, the history is a history of *Mercia* rather than of the Abbey,—and only incidentally mentions the *charters* granted by each king. We have therefore only to suppose that their affairs went on prosperously, and that the monks (as they did in all other monasteries) applied themselves to amass wealth, and collect valuables, as reliques, for shew and superstitious purposes. They procured continual visits from the surrounding highland inhabitants, especially the rich, and extorted offerings and presents by sham miracles; and thus exciting among the ignorant people a prodigious veneration for their sanctity, they enriched their house with the spoils of credulity.

About 169 years after the foundation, Bertulph, King of Mercia, " plundered this house (says the history) of all its wealth, to carry on the war against

the Danes. He made them, however, some amends by a charter, in which he chose to quality his extortion by the name of their *free gifts.*" This piece of government chicanery is very ancient, we find, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer speaks much the same language at the present day.

" A council of the nation being assembled on this occasion, a great miracle was wrought by Guthlac, in the recovery of several prelates, and *innumerable other persons*, afflicted with a kind of epidemical paralytic affection. This brought a sudden and great afflux to the shrine."—The house was plundered and reduced to poverty, and no method of recruiting their finances was so operative as a miracle; but the story is strangely related, and the disease seems to have been contrived on purpose for the saint to cure. How the farce was acted, or whether it be not merely a tale, we need not be curious to enquire.

" This brought a sudden and great afflux to the shrine; and Ethelwulph, King of Wessex, with his son Alfred, taking it in his way on his return from Rome, granted to the Abbey the charter of tithes of all England."

This may serve as a happy specimen of monkish history: here are *tithes of all England* granted to the Abbey of Croyland by a King of Wessex, who arrived very opportunely by a round-about road, and granted them what he had not the power to give, nor they the power to collect. This absurdity is occasioned merely by the over-weening phraseology of the historian of Croyland, for *tithes* were about that time granted *to the church* by Ethelwolf.

The history is so rapid, that the first period of the building is now drawing to a close. "Earl Algar, during the reign of Beorred, [Burtred,] gave his manor of Spalding to this Abbey for his father's soul, and the grant was confirmed by the king in 868, while he lay before Nottingham, [with Ethelred,] besieging the Danes. The Danes were at that time defeated, but they immediately made head again, and two years after they overran Kesteven. The Earl of Algar, assembling an army in these parts, routed them in a great battle, and slew three of their chiefs at Laundon, from whence that place was afterwards called Trekingham, or Threkingham. But shortly after the earl's forces were defeated by a stratagem, and almost all, with their leader, slain. The victorious Danes pursued the survivors, and ravaged the country, burning and plundering wherever they came; among other places which suffered under their depredations was Croyland Abbey. There was no hope of resistance, and no defence being at hand, "nothing was left (says the history) for the abbot and his brethren but to retire as fast as they could with the body of St. Guthlac, his psalter and whip, and other reliques, their principal jewels and charters; with these they loaded a boat, and buried their altar-piece and plate in the well in the cloister. The load in the boat was sent away to be hid in Ancarig wood, * where they had a hermitage." Nevertheless, it appears that the Danes broke in before the monks could escape, who were at that moment performing mass. "Osketul, their king, with his own hand, murdered the abbot; the rest were slaughtered after suffer-

* Otherwise Anchor-ig—that is—a place of Anchorets: it was *Thorney*.

ing the most cruel torments to make them discover the treasure. Asker, the prior, was slain in the vestry; Lethwin, the sub-prior, in the refectory; Turgar, then a monk, though only 10 years of age, was the only person spared. The Danes broke open all the tombs in hopes of plunder; being disappointed, they laid the dead bodies all on a heap and burnt them, together with the church and convent, all together. They afterwards destroyed Meadshamstead Abbey, and ravaged the country in their retreat; but two of their carriages, heavily laden, being lost in the river Nene, Turgar availed himself of the confusion to escape back to Croyland, where he found several of the monks already arrived from the hermitage at Ancarig, endeavouring to extinguish the fire; and searching for their slaughtered companions."

Their first care was to choose an abbot, and their choice fell on *Godric;* they addressed themselves to clear away the rubbish, and undoubtedly replaced at least part of the buildings in a state of habitable repair, but the history says nothing of this. The building being of stone it probably suffered but little by the fire; the offices were of wood, and might be, in part, soon rebuilt; the monks had saved their valuables, and others would join them. But they fell immediately after into hands more mischievous and powerful, for their own king, in order to raise money for the defence of the kingdom, seized on the treasures of many of the religious houses, and, among the rest, of Croyland; but the Danes defeated him, and he retired in despair to Rome, where he died: this was *Burtred.* The Danes placed a servant of his on the throne of Mercia, on

condition of his swearing allegiance to them; and agreeably to the old proverb, "set a beggar on horseback, &c." this servant king miserably fleeced his subjects, and completed the ruin of Croyland Abbey, by the most severe exactions; they were obliged to sell all their plate excepting some reliques,—"and nobody would enter himself of this house on account of its impoverished state," says the history—without wealth and splendour there was no temptation to monks. This servant king was the last king of Mercia, which kingdom ended in 874; his name was Ceolwulph, and he was contemporary with Alfred the great.

At the death of Abbot Godric, 941, (says our author,) this house was reduced to so low a state that there were only five old monks in it, namely,—Clarenbauld, Swarting, [or Swarling,] Thurgar, Brun, and Aio."—I must own there seems to be here a chasm in the chronology, for it is no less than 71 years from the election of this same *Godric.*—These five monks were the *Sempectæ*, the first of that order, concerning which some controversy was held in the Gentleman's Magazine in 1795.—The first period of the history here concludes with the death of Godric the 5th abbot, leaving it uncertain what was the state of the Abbey, as to repair, &c. since its destruction by the Danes.

CHAP. V.

Of the Restoration and Rebuilding of the Abbey.

THE loose manner in which those facts are stated which we are the most desirous to know, is very much to be regretted; the hope of knowledge with which the reader begins, and the ardour of curiosity with which the visitor sets out to view these splendid ruins, are alike destined to disappointment. The quarto history, with all the authorities at hand, and every testimony which its author could collect, gives us no manner of satisfaction with respect to the building; but hastens along the thread of the narrative, leaving the ill-digested and ill-chosen particulars frequently at odds with chronology and common sense.

It is not the present intention to dwell on the facts of English history which passed during the period last mentioned, for the purpose of illustration. *Alfred the Great*, who succeeded to the throne in 872, reigned nearly 30 years; after he had subdued the Danes, the kingdom remained in profound peace during the rest of his glorious and useful life, which was spent in erecting monuments of fame more durable and less equivocal than building monasteries. But in the following reign, (that of *Edward the elder*,) which lasted 24 years, there were almost continual wars with the Danes, who had been settled in England by *Alfred* as a part of his subjects. *Mercia* lying between *Wessex* and *Northumberland*, was often the seat of war, and was much ravaged by the Danes, who, however, were

always worsted; and, at last, wholly subdued. There is no mention made of any of these events in connection with the *History of Croyland.*

In the succeeding reign, which was that of *Athelstan*, we find the first mention of TURKETYL or TURKETUL, who afterwards became the restorer of *Croyland Abbey.* He was nearly related to *Edward the elder*, and was a person of great consideration during the latter part of that reign, both by his abilities and employments. The reign of *Athelstan* began by the conspiracy of part of his subjects to set up a younger brother, who was legitimate, (which the other was not,) in his stead; and as the Danes were always ready to fight against the English crown and sceptre, they rose with the adverse party. Scotland also, and Wales, though wholly subdued before, made head again, in conjunction with the conspirators, and *Athelstan* had many enemies to contend with. During all this reign, *Turketyl* was a warrior as well as a statesman, and his services were extremely important to his sovereign; the warfare continued with little intermission the whole reign of Athelstan, (about 16 years,) and ended with the battle of *Brunanburg*, which was chiefly gained by the valour and good conduct of *Turketyl.* This was fought in 941, the year in which *Godric* the fifth abbot is said to have died; and in this year *Athelstan* died also, and was succeeded by *Edmund,* his eldest legitimate brother.

During this reign, also, the Danes renewed their hostilities, and *Turketyl* was undoubtedly not idle, although his name is not mentioned. Edmund was

young, and some advantage was gained at first over his inexperience; but he came off the victor, and was likely to become a shining prince, when he was stabbed at an entertainment by *Leolf* the robber, having reigned but five years, or thereabouts.

Edred, his brother, succeeded him, and the Danes again revolted. The services of *Turketyl* were again in requisition, and here we find him in the *History of Croyland, going to York to quell an insurrection in Northumberland.* We have run over these particulars chiefly with a view to introduce the character of *Turketyl* with a deserved respect, as he was one of the greatest men of his time, and certainly the greatest benefactor and the most considerable personage known at Croyland. He was cousin and chancellor to Edred, and was about 40 years of age when *Edred* ascended the throne; having been a faithful and loyal subject to the three preceding kings.

It was, probably, after Edred had finally subdued the Danes in Northumberland, and reduced that country to a province, that Turketyl found himself sufficiently at leisure to embrace a monastic life. After the event just mentioned, Edred lived in profound peace, and turned his attention to religious affairs, which, undoubtedly, favoured the intentions of his minister.

Edred came to the throne in 946, and it was probably in 947 that Turketyl, "going to quell an insurrection in Northumberland, took Croyland in his way." [*Quarto History*.] Thus it appears to be about six years that the Abbey remained in a neglected state, inhabited only by the five old monks, of whom *Turgar* was one, who escaped from the Danes by their misfor-

tune in the river *Nen* in 870; but, of the five, three only were left at the visit of Turketyl, *Brun* and *Aio* having retired to Malmsbury and Winchester.

Turketyl, "with his numerous attendants, was received by the three old monks in the little oratory and cell which they had fitted up; and they so wrought on his compassion,"——that he determined to be their friend from that time. He left them with a supply of provisions, and a present in money; and revisited them in his way back with greater presents and larger promises.

There is not a word said here about the state of the Abbey-building; and though a period of 77 years has now elapsed since it was burnt by the Danes, it does not appear to have undergone any considerable repair, and it is manifest that no wealth had been here amassed since the time of Ceolwulph. Their lands and possessions, which were seized on by *Burtred*, had not been restored; and they had, consequently, no funds wherewith to build or maintain a convent: whether application was made to Alfred, or his successors down to Edred, for restitution of their property, we know not; but, if so, it must have been unsuccessful.

But for some years before the reign of Edred, the affairs of the monasteries had acquired great strength, and excited an unusual attention, by the prodigious art and power of *Dunstan*. This celebrated saint, whose career began in religious fanaticism and ended in consummate hypocrisy, had acquired an unbounded power over Edred; who, not content with being governed in all things by his direction, and making him his treasurer, even submitted sometimes to receive dicipline

from his hands.* Dunstan was, at this time, abbot of Glastonbury, and, to gratify his favourite, Edred undertook to rebuild that church and monastery in the most sumptuous and magnificent manner; in a word, he obtained entire possession of the king's conscience, and made use of his power for his own ends and the aggrandisement of his order.

Turketyl probably observed this blind confidence of the king with some degree of disgust; the important services which he had rendered to Edred and his ancestors, were thus thrown aside, and himself supplanted by an upstart, whom he, indeed, had helped into favour. The kingdom being now in profound peace, Turketyl's abilities were not wanted as formerly, and he had no means of opposing the influence that Dunstan had gained at court: he acted in this exigency like a wise man; he fell in with the stream which it was out of his power to turn. He saw that the arts of Dunstan were directed to the advantage of the monasteries, and he remembered that *Croyland* was then in a state of dilapidation, and without an abbot. Idleness was no part of his character, and he rightly judged that the only road to Edred's favour was to adopt his humour, and imitate his zeal: thus, instead of opposing Dunstan with hopeless animosity, he rivalled him in his pursuits; and to the glory which he had acquired as a soldier and statesman, he added the renown of sanctity, and the applause which persons draw after them who retire from a life of magnificence and worldly grandeur to voluntary seclusion.

* Ashburton's History of England, p. 46.

"Accordingly (says the history) he arranged his worldly affairs, and, having discharged all his debts, made over sixty manors to the king, reserving only every tenth for the Abbey. These lay near to Croyland, and were *Wendlingburg, Elmyngton, Worthorp, Kotenham, Hokinton, and Beby.*"

The former historians of Crowland have not failed to ascribe this resolution of Turketyl entirely to religious zeal; and to support their opinion they observe certain traits of enthusiasm, or of an amiable superstition, in his conduct while a soldier. To dive into the secret recesses of the human breast, and, amidst the war of passions and emotions there, to select, with unerring hand, the ruling principle of action on such an important occasion, seems a task too great for human penetration: it is enough that the motive ascribed to him was ostensible, as it certainly was obvious.

During the former part of his life he had been in foreign courts; and, as a person of high character, and entrusted with important diplomatic functions, he had a number of presents made him by the potentates of Europe. Among the rest, the Emperor gave him the *thumb of St. Bartholomew*, and, "this he ever after regarded (says the history) as a very precious relique; he constantly wore it about him, and always crossed himself with it on going into battle."

That either the Emperor or Turketyl believed this to be the identical *thumb* of the saint, may be reasonably doubted; but it might add greatly to the success and prowess of Turketyl *to be thought* to be in possession of such a treasure; his soldiers would follow him as an invincible leader who was crossed in all onsets

and enterprizes with *the thumb of St. Bartholomew:* and this I take to be the true explication of this seeming superstition: many such like facts may be traced in the lives of great personages, and in superstitious times their influence was important.

But leaving this to opinion, we will now pursue the thread of the narrative: there were motives sufficient in the growing splendour of the monasteries, and in the leaning of Edred at that time, to make his chiefest courtiers turn monks; it was the fashion; and no flattery could be more welcome to the king. Turketyl had been many years exposed to continual dangers; had been often wounded, and his bodily strength was considerably impaired by the exertions and hardships he had undergone; but his mind was still in its vigour, and this fresh enterprize found him employment and gave him a new interest in life. Like *Guthlac,* he probably *reflected on the lamentable end of many heroes of this world,* and finally determined to leave a *sea of troubles,* and take harbour in a monastery.

The king was highly delighted with his cousin's resolution; visited Croyland with him; granted him what privileges he asked; confirmed them by charter; ordered him workmen, with leave to draw upon his exchequer for what sums were wanted, and "ordered him an ample supply of stone and wood from his royal manor of Caistor adjoining." *—[*Gough.*]

"In a short time (says the history) the church and cloister, with every building, were completed." This is all that is said of the building and the workmanship;

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* In bringing materials from Caistor, the boats must have gone from Peterborough, by the *Cardyke,* to Peakirk.

the plan, the time, and the expense, are thus hastily passed over, and what was done is left entirely to conjecture.—(*Vide Appendix.*)

Of the manors alienated by *Burtred*, Turketyl redeemed some by purchase, and obtained others by intercession; and in a short time their lands formerly held in *Spalding*, *Whaplode*, *Sutterton*, *Drayton*, *Standen*, *Badley*, *Morburn*, *Bokenhale*, *Halyngton*, *Langtoft*, and *Baston*, were restored. He also recovered *Clapthorn*, *Thirning*, *Laythorp*, *Kirby*, *Peakirk*, both *Addingtons*, *Repingale*, *Sutton*, and *Stapleton*. But their rights in *Deeping*, *Kirkton*, *Kymerby*, and *Croxton*, were not restored.

It is not to be supposed that all these places were owned, in *fee-simple*, by Crowland Abbey; but only certain allotments, or parts of them. Where they owned the *manors* they had the *fee*, or *rent-charge*, of those manors; but, in multitudes of instances, certain pieces or parcels of land were given to them *in mortmain*, which they let as well as they could. We have seen before that an earl gave his *manor of Spalding for his father's soul;* by which, probably, was not meant all Spalding parish and township, but only so much as the earl owned there. By such means were the abbies enriched; and it may be observed, by the list just mentioned, that the abbots of Croyland, during the first period of its history, had not been idle.

The first care of Turketyl was to set up and restore the boundary stones; two, which he then placed, are still remaining; one near the Southeau, (*Southee,*) at the upper end of it, near the *Black-horse sluice*, south from the Abbey; the other north, or rather north east,

stands at *Brother-house*, near to *Asyndyke*, having this inscription, according to *Camden*:

"Aio hanc petram Guthlacus habet sibi metam."

which he thus translates:

"This rock, I say, is Guthlac's utmost bound."

In fact, the boundaries of Crowland parish are truly set out in the charters of those times; and the land claimed in those charters, which was properly the Abbey land, comprises the estate of *Thomas Orby Hunter, Esq.* known by the name of *Great Postland*, at this day.—The charter which Edred granted them is dated 948; in which year the building under Turketyl was begun. It will be seen in the appendix that the Abbey was, probably, very much enlarged at this time; and that Turketyl built the *transept* and *tower* which were not there originally: if this be so, the *Saxon arch* at the east end, now standing as the oldest part of the ruin, was built by Turketyl, and not under *Ethelbald*.

It appears that Turketyl not only completed the Abbey, but built many conveniences and additions for the use and comfort of the convent; and employed himself very earnestly in collecting the historical particulars of the house; these he obtained principally from the three old monks, who, perhaps, could tell him little more than they remembered; and, perhaps, only one of them (Turgar) had been there during all the blank period of its history, in which there was nothing to relate. He was 10 years old in 870, and was now about fourscore. But whatever information Turketyl obtained, and from whatever sources, it seems he made a

narrative of it, which has been called *his life*, and which was the principal authority referred to by Ingulphus.

Having completed the buildings, he revived the rules and ordinances of the house, and enacted several new ones. With a man of such importance at its head, Crowland Abbey became highly celebrated; and the wisdom and propriety of the regulations, and the abilities and power of the abbot, brought monks from all parts, who sought to be admitted into the convent. Turketyl established a sort of probationary house at Peakirk, where all claimants were appointed to reside, and, according to the report of them from thence, they were admitted or rejected. This afterwards became a sort of school, or college, where many of the sons of noblemen were sent for instruction; as well as to be placed in the way of religious preferment. Turketyl visited them there, and used to carry them presents for their encouragement; and, as it was one of the original duties of the monks *to educate youth*, so Turketyl preserved this part of the character of a conscientious and good man, with exemplary attention.

Of the rules and ordinances established by Turketyl the *History of Croyland* speaks as follows:—

"He divided the whole society into three ranks: the juniors, from their first admission into the house to their 24th year, were to take upon them all the offices of the choir, cloister, and refectory, in singing, reading, and serving. The middle rank was composed of those who had been in the house 16 years longer, and who, having gone through the different duties before mentioned, now performed them only as superintendants,

in turn. The third rank comprehended those from 40 to 50 years of age, who were called seniors, and only celebrated mass with chaunting. These were exempted from all the offices of the house except by particular appointment of the abbot."—[*Gough's History.*]

From the manner in which this is worded, it is left doubtful whether *years of age*, or *years of residence*, be designated; it must, however, be restricted to the former. The juniors were sometimes entered very young, and they continued *singing-boys* till they were 24; from 24 to 36 they were superintendants, and an appointed number, by turns, assisted at the service. At 40 they were reckoned seniors, and only assisted at mass.

"Whoever arrived at his 50th year was called *Sempecta*, and had assigned him a fair chamber in the infirmary, with one to wait on him; he had, besides, a junior brother in commons with him. The Sempecta had free ingress and egress, and liberty of walking about the house, with or without his frock, without being troubled with any business. The prior was to enjoin penances daily in the chapter-house, and to augment or mitigate them as he saw fit. The management of the refectory and the infirmary were left entirely to him, [the prior,] and his allowance always went on; and unless he was convicted of some great crime, for which he was to receive three admonitions, he was to continue prior to his death."

It may be thought that *priors* should have preceded *abbots*, but the latter, from *Ethelred's* time, were appointed by the king pretty much as our bishops are now.

"Turketyl annexed to the office of sacrist that of archdeacon over the whole parish of Croyland. He also settled on the chamber of the monks (the Sempectæ) his manor of Beby, &c.—When these several ordinances had been agreed to he caused them to be read in the chapter, and fairly written down at the end of the rule of St. Benedict."

These rules appear of admirable utility for managing the convent, and breathe a spirit of distributive justice which must have given satisfaction to all. Thus did Turketyl, by his wisdom as well as his munificence, prove himself the greatest benefactor of Crowland Abbey, and lay the foundations of its future eminence in morals not less than in wealth; the place being highly esteemed on account of the urbanity of its inhabitants for many ages afterwards.

The death of the three old monks is particularly noticed, and the attention that was paid them by the good abbot was highly honourable to his feelings; they died within two or three years of each other, from about 970, to 974. Clarenbald first, aged 168; Swarting 142; and Turgar 115.—These were the first of the order of the *Sempectæ*, concerning which some controversy, relative to the etymology of the word, was held in the Gentleman's Magazine in 1795. The great ages of these men, which is not the least of the wonders recorded, draws no remark from the historian; it is a fact, however, of three men contemporary, which, if true, cannot be paralleled since the deluge.

Turketyl spent the latter part of his time chiefly in visiting his pupils at Peakirk, (then called *Pegeland*, from St. Pega, the sister of Guthlac, who had a

cell there,) whom he attended with the affection of a father; he, probably, there met their parents sometimes, and conversed on the affairs of the world; for he lived at Crowland through two king's reigns after Edred, and all the time that *Dunstan* fomented such religious commotions to maintain his superiority. This was the period in which so many monasteries were built, and from the power of Dunstan and the munificence of Edgar, whom the monks flattered and cajoled, it was the most brilliant period of their history. Hence the number of noblemen's children that were sent to Peakirk; for the whole nation was monastery mad, and all court favour and enviable preferment were likely to be drawn into this channel. But the tide was turned shortly after by the invasion of the Danes, who found that the rust of idleness had eaten away the warlike spirit of the English; a nation of monks was but ill-prepared for its defence, and the miseries which followed might have proved a lesson to all succeeding times, if nations could learn wisdom in the school of history.

But we must now part with Turketyl, the great and good man; he who had so often beat the Danes did not live to see them overrun and ravage his country. He died in 975, (the same year in which King Edgar died,) in the 68th year of his age, leaving a treasure in the monastery amounting to no less than £10,000. This was a mighty sum in those days, and serves to shew the great sources of wealth which the monasteries had at command. He left besides, as the history informs us, " many precious reliques, presents to him, when chancellor, from different sovereigns of Europe."

Among these are mentioned the *thumb* before spoken of; some of the *Virgin Mary's hair*, and a *bone of St. Leodegaire*. The rest, perhaps, were not altogether so *precious*, and are therefore not enumerated.

Turketyl was abbot 27 years, and lived but one year after he had buried the three old monks; it must be confessed that his decline makes but a pitiable figure in the history, being placed immediately after the others;—he *began to sink under the weight of years*, as the history expresses it, and died at 68, which is less by a hundred years than the age of *Clarenbald*, and is not half the age of *Swarting*.

CHAP. VI.

From the Restoration under Turketyl, to the Destruction of the Abbey by Fire, under Ingulphus.

There is so little to relate of any of the abbots, from this time to the time of Ingulphus, that it seems hardly worth the while to place them in series in the history: indeed, the lives of the abbots must have been so uniform, and barren of incident, that it is no wise surprising there should be but little preserved; and we can scarcely conceive how, if there had been much, it could have been rendered interesting. We are told of *Egelric*, (who succeeded *Turketyl*,) that he added some necessary offices and finished others; that, by his relationship to *Alfer*,* (Duke of Mercia,) he warded off the

* Alias *Elfere*.

troubles in which many other religious houses were involved during the reign of Edward, son of Edgar; and that he obtained leave to take from certain forfeited woods a supply of timber, with which he built those offices, &c. mentioned before. It appears that he was an active and useful abbot; for particular mention is made that he *tilled the fens*, in certain parts, which belonged to the monastery; which was, in his time, so well supplied that it yielded relief to the inhabitants round about, " and, by the vast concourse of strangers, (says the history,) Croyland became a considerable town."

It was during the time of this abbot (that is, in 981) that the piratical Danes first landed, who overran and pillaged the country so unmercifully during the reign of *Ethelred;* and from this time Crowland became more populous from its local security. A considerable part of the town was, perhaps, now first built; and those who sought a permanent residence, and had the means to build conveniences, would undoubtedly be welcome. But we shall see presently that great numbers sought refuge here in circumstances much more pitiable.

It is said of this abbot, who died in 984, " that he made two large bells, which he named *Bartholomew* and *Bettelin;* two middle ones named *Turketyl* and *Tatwin;* and two lesser named *Pega* and *Bega;* (Turketyl having made a larger called *Guthlac;*) all which together formed a ring of bells not equalled in England."

This seems to be the origin of the assertion in chronology, " that the first set of tuneable bells in England

was hung in Croyland Abbey;" but this is not the description of a tuneable set; *seven* bells cannot be rung together in harmony, and two *large* bells, two *middle* ones, and two *lesser*, does not describe a regular gradation. It was about this time that bells began to be used in churches, and it may be true that no church at that time had so many; but it does not follow that the first *tuneable* or melodious bells were hung at Crowland; still less is it probable (as it is unfortunately asserted in the inscription under the superb engraving lately published) that the *first bells used in England* were hung in this Abbey.*

Egelric was succeeded by another of that name, called *the younger*, of whom it is remarked, "that he was more versed in books and sacred literature than in temporal matters, yet he managed his monastery extremely well." There have been some men of superior genius for literature who have been remarkably unsuccessful in worldly affairs; and others of great talents, or mental powers, who have degraded and

* Mr. Bentham observes* that the æra of the invention of bells is somewhat obscure; but that some traces of them may be discovered in our monasteries as early as the eighth century. These, however, were small, and it was not till near the middle of the tenth century that they were so large as to require distinct buildings to contain them. Bells were given to monasteries in 935 and 946, by *Ethelstan* and *Edred*, but not to Croyland; and in 974 two bells were given to the Abbey at Ramsey by *Edgar*, but still there is no mention made of Croyland; Turketyl made but one, and the date is not set down, but it probably was not until the latter end of his life, and he died in 975.

But these bells were probably all small ones compared with those which are now in use; for it is mentioned among the splendid gifts of Dunstan to Glastonbury, (the monastery which he most highly honoured,) that he hung a *bell in the refectory*, as if it was intended to summon the monks to dinner. It is true that these bells are sometimes called *large*, as those given by Ethelstan to the monastery of St. Guthbert mentioned above, "*four large bells;*" and those given by Dunstan to Malmsbury; but they might be *large* only when compared with those which were little.—There is no proof that they were *melodious* in any instance, and they were probably rung in pairs, only, for separate services.

* History of Ely.

destroyed themselves by intemperance and dissipation. From hence it seems to have been decided that an uncommon turn for study indicates a mind unfitted for business; but a general taste for the sciences and polite literature is not proscribed by this absolute dictum, (since they are surely not incompatible with common-sense,) and it required no extraordinary talents to conduct the affairs of a monastery. Egelric 2d gave many books to the library, and many articles of shew and ceremony to the choir, in order to render the service more pompous; these are enumerated in the quarto volume with the minuteness of a catalogue, but as Roman catholic parade and spectacle have disappeared, with its impostures and superstitions, it does not seem necessary to be particular in the description of either.

After the death of this abbot the Abbey began to decline from the wealthy and prosperous state in which it was left by Turketyl, and which it had enjoyed but the short period of about 50 years. That striking passage of scripture, "he heapeth up riches but knoweth not who shall gather them," was never more forcibly exemplified than in this case.

From the year 990, the kingdom was overrun and ravaged by the Danes, (who had pillaged the coasts for 10 years before,) and the monasteries were laid under heavy contributions to pay the tribute which was many times collected to purchase their departure; history furnishes no instance of tameness and incorrigible pusillanimity equal to the conduct of Ethelred; at length he raised money to build ships, which did no good, and the measure served only to extort further

sums from those who were not yet entirely ruined. The abbot of Crowland during this period of horror and dismay was *Godric 2d,* who succeeded to the chair in 992, and who had the misfortune, during 20 years of unexampled depredations, to see the entire ruin of his convent; the payment of one demand occasioned a greater, and it verily appears that Ethelred and the Danes vied with each other in extorting money from this Abbey.

It does not clearly appear at what date the villages adjacent to Crowland were destroyed by those marauders; the quarto history says that *Turhill,* a Danish earl, levied a contribution on Crowland abbey in the 4th year of Godric, which was 996, and then immediately subjoins the other devastations. This statement seems to be altogether erroneous in point of time, for *Turhill,* or *Turkil,* did not land in England until 13 years after this date—and it was not until 1010 (or later) that Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, &c. were overrun by *Turkil* and *Anlaf,* who burnt the manors of *Drayton, Cotenham,* and *Hopeton,* belonging to Crowland. In 1012 *Sweyn* arrived with a fresh fleet, with which he entered the Humber, and made himself master of all the countries north of *Watling-street,* (which passed from Dover through London to Westchester,) and it was during this last expedition that the manor-houses and villages near Crowland were plundered and burnt, the account of which is well preserved in the quarto history as follows:—

" It had now been a custom to pay 400 marks a year, when *Suene* arrived with a fresh fleet, and overrun Lindsey, burning the villages, slaughtering the

peasants, and torturing the religious to death. He burnt Baston and Langtoft; the monastery of St. Pega, and all its adjacent manors, Glinton, Northburch, [Northborough,] Makesey, Etton, Badington, [Bainton,] and Bernack. The abbot escaped by night in a boat to Croyland. A very fortunate rain had that year laid the whole country under water, so that this Abbey was a secure resort to multitudes. The choir was filled with monks; the rest of the church with priests and clerks; the whole Abbey with the laity; and the church-yard, day and night, with women and children. The strongest of the men watched among the reeds and elders along the rivers. *Suene* sent and demanded 1000 marks to be paid, in a set time, at Lincoln, under pain of burning the monastery, which was paid in three months. King Ethelred supposed Godric was worth mountains of money, and Suene was perpetually theatening him for affording protection to so many persons. By expences at home, and exactions from abroad, Turketyl's whole treasure was drained."

We have here a very lively picture of the ravages of the Danes, and of the kind of security which the Abbey owed to its situation; and also of the shelter it afforded to the miserable inhabitants adjoining. The monastery was not sacked and plundered at this time; and Godric lived to see the end of these troubles, dying in 1019.

Brithmer succeeded him, and *Canute* being now king, and plundering suspended for a while, he addressed himself to repair the mischiefs done by the Danes; rebuilding several manor-houses, barns, stables,

&c. at the places which had been burnt by those insatiable freebooters. Brithmer was abbot 28 years, and was succeeded by Wulgate, or *Wulfgate*.*

"The year 1051 (says the history) was remarkable for a dreadful famine; to relieve the monastery of Croyland, Thorold bestowed on them his whole manor of Spalding with all its rents and profits for ever." Their property in Spalding had probably been alienated since the time of *Burtred*, king of Mercia, but it does not appear that this manor given by Thorold was the same as that given formerly by Algar. It is here added that "Algar, earl of Leicester, confirmed the grants of his ancestors," &c. So that the property in

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* There is here a piece of history, placed in the text in the quarto, which has no relation to Crowland, and which, besides, seems not entitled to much credibility. It is said that "Egelric, abbot of Peterborough, was advanced to the see of Durham; after which promotion he applied his immense wealth to raise a noble causeway of piles and gravel through the middle of the waste forest and deep fens of Deeping to Spalding, (which, in Ingulphus's time, was known by the name of *Alrichrode*,) after which he resigned his bishopric and resumed his abbey, in which he died."

The history of Peterborough cathedral informs us that it was the bank called *Deeping-bank* that was at this time made by Egelric; but the words above, *through the middle of the waste forest*, does not describe the situation of this bank. It is by no means in a near direction from Deeping to Spalding, and it could only be made here because materials might be brought by water; but still the *quomodo* appears to be entirely wanting. Had the abbots of Crowland assisted in constructing a road by the shortest way from Spalding to Deeping, it might be supposed that they had done it to lead the Danish plunderers from *Holland* into *Kesteven*, without coming near Crowland; a firm path to march on, might save the Abbey, to which it is no where observed that they ever attempted to make a good road; but why a bishop of Lincoln should make a road where he had no occasion to travel, or erect a bank against waters where he had no property to defend, seems hard to explain: the truth probably is, that a firm *pathway* was first made here *for horses to walk upon in haling boats*; and it thus came to be a road for horse and foot people, until the embankment and drainage of the adjacent fens, when it was no longer needed as such.

This *Egelric* was never abbot, but only a *monk* of Peterborough, and it seems that he went to be bishop of Lincoln that he might have *immense wealth* to lay out in this work, which being done, he came back to be a monk again at Peterborough. That this *causeway* should be known by the name of *Elrichrode* in Ingulphus's time, seems no better than the affectation of testimony, for the name is already corrupted, and Ingulphus came to be abbot only about 25 to 28 years after the road was said to be made.

Spalding belonging to this Abbey must at this time have been very considerable. Wulgate sent certain monks to take possession of it, and a chapel was fitted up, in which divine service might be performed.

Wulgate died, says the history, in 1052, but this is different from the account given in the list of the abbots, (already copied,) where it is said that *Wulgate was deposed.* It is now said that he was succeeded by Ulketul, monk and sacrist of Peterborough. But, according to the history of Peterborough, one *Leofric*, who succeeded to that monastery in 1057, had the government of *four others* bestowed upon him (of which Crowland was one) by the partiality of Edward the confessor, then king. Whether this was so we cannot determine, but there is no mention of Leofric in our history.

The particulars which are related of *Ulketul* must be held as doubtful, and especially his building a new church. "In 1061, (says Gough,) the abbot began to build a new church at Croyland, the old one built by Thorold being in a state of decay."

This passage has puzzled all the historians except Gough, who had too much reverence for antiquity to attempt explanation. Essex remarks that the Abbey built by Turketyl could not be in a *decayed state* so soon, and endeavours to surmount the difficulty by supposing that the Abbey and the *church* were not one and the same building; and this conjecture may seem to derive some support from the passage just quoted, where it is said "*the choir and the cloister were filled with monks; the rest of the* CHURCH *with priests; and the* WHOLE ABBEY with the laity."

But this is only getting rid of one difficulty by setting up another; for, if this be so, we have no account of the building of the church at all. The words above are loosely used; the choir with the cloisters were kept for the monks; the *rest of the church* (i. e. the *nave and its aisles*) was filled with priests; and the whole Abbey (i. e. the Abbey precincts,—all the buildings belonging to the monastery) were occupied by the laity.*

There is no mention made of *Thorold* before, and if he had anything to do with Turketyl's building, it could only be as architect; but this makes the probability of its being now in a state of decay nothing better. In a word, it seems that the old church which was never built by Thorold, was rebuilt by Ulketul, who was never abbot.

Nevertheless, there are several other particulars referred to Ulketul, which, according to other authority, all belong to his predecessor. The account of the building done at this time is yet more particular, for it is observed that "*Earl Waltheof* (the martyr mentioned at first) gave his manor of Bernack, with a fine quarry of stone, and was very active in the building." So that, as it appears some part of the church was now built, or added, it is not improbable but that they might at this time build *the cross aisles*, and erect a *tower of stone*, which, Mr. Essex thinks, was built

* There is no ground to suppose that there ever was a *church* distinct from *the Abbey*, excepting in the customary language of the times. When they spoke of *Crowland Abbey*, they did not definitively mean *the place of worship*, but the *collective precincts*; so also when they spoke of *the monastery*; the *convent* meant all the *monkish inhabitants*. In this way of speaking they must have said the *Abbey church* to designate the place of worship; but now that there has been nothing left for many centuries *but the Abbey church*, it has been customary to call it *Crowland Abbey*.

of wood by Turketyl; and which might therefore be *in a state of decay*. With this conjecture we must leave it: Turketyl's church was but about fourscore years old at this time, and to suppose that it wanted rebuilding through decay, is manifestly absurd.

About this period also it was that a feud was kindled between *Ivo Tailbois*, lord of Hoyland, [Holland,] and the abbot of Croyland. *Ivo* particularly invaded their property in Spalding, and, by many vexatious proceedings, banished the monks of Crowland from their chapel there. In addition to their misfortunes, "Earl Waltheof (says the history) was, at the instigation of his wife, (who wanted another husband,) charged with a conspiracy, and beheaded at Winchester, though perfectly innocent, and buried in an humble turf grave."

We have here skipped into the middle of the reign of *William the Conquerer*, without any notice being taken of the lapse of time by our historian, it being nearly 20 years from the death of *Leofric* to the beheading of *Waltheof*; and *Ivo Tailbois*, just mentioned, was a creature of William's, and one to whom he had given the estate of Spalding, with the country adjoining. Crowland Abbey still remaining without any infringement on the part of William, this *Ivo*, on the presumption of his master's favour, strove to eject the Crowlanders from their rights in Spalding, in which he easily succeeded; the others fearing that much resistance might bring greater evil upon their heads.

But upon the death of *Waltheof*, they did not preserve their usual prudence; he had been a very great friend to Crowland, and being pitied and lamented by all Englishmen, the Crowlanders, partly out of

gratitude, (and that sort of cunning by which they often turned superstition to a property,) obtained possession of the body, and buried it, with becoming ceremony, in their church :—" miracles were presently wrought at it," says the history. The abbot did not reflect that these miracles in testimony of the earl's innocence, were a reflection upon the *conqueror's* judicature. *Ivo Tailbois* was rejoiced at this opportunity of ruining a person towards whom he had long cherished an inveterate hatred; he preferred a charge of idolatry against the abbot, who was summoned before a council at London, and formally deposed, and the whole revenue of the Abbey confiscated.—This was very probably *Wulgate*, since it is but little more than 30 years from the time of his becoming abbot; it is recorded that *Wulgate* was deposed, but not *Ulketul*, and the abbot who immediately preceded Ingulphus was certainly deposed as we have seen.

The affairs of the Abbey suffered no injury by this change, only a friend and partizan of *William's* was gratified by being placed over it, as the general case had already been in almost all other places. Ingulphus was installed abbot in 1076, and immediately set about securing the rights of the Abbey; he had nearly as much power with the king as *Tailbois*, and disputed with him every legal claim with great address and perseverance; so that the latter had reason to regret his recent triumph over a neighbour whom he could injure with impunity. He, of course, discontinued the miracles at the tomb of the martyr,* some further particulars of whose history are subjoined in a note, as being

* The miracles said to be *wrought by the bodies* of the saints, or *wrought at their tombs*, were a sort of juggling tricks contrived by the monks to impose on the ignorant and superstitious people.

thought proper in order to make the reader better acquainted with so great a friend to Crowland.*

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* Waltheof, earl of Huntingdon, was the son of Siward, earl of Northumberland; there was not a family before the conquest more powerful, nor more nobly allied. Siward's origin was lineal, and not far remote, from a noble Danish lady who (according to a legend of those times) had been met in a wood and caressed by a bear. The family, for some generations, were proud of this singular ancestry, and boasted of it; one of them assumed a name which alluded to his gristly grandfather, and it was said that his children had *the ears of a bear*.

We may reasonably hope that this beastly genealogy was neither enviable nor credible in the time of Waltheof, who was honoured for his noble qualities as much as for his great wealth and powerful connections; there was scarcely another English lord left in his possessions by the conqueror, and certainly not one so much honoured and trusted. He was, notwithstanding, among those who joined with the Danish forces in 1069, and, after the Danes had retired from York, he defended the citadel with so much bravery and good conduct against William, that the latter, when want of provisions obliged Waltheof to capitulate, not only granted him honourable terms, but gave him his neice in marriage: this could be for no other reason but to attach so brave and skilful a soldier to his person and government.

During the early part of William's reign it was the ill fortune of Waltheof to be drawn into one of those conspiracies to dethrone him, which were frequently on foot. A marriage was concerted between the son and daughter of the earl of Suffolk and the earl of Hereford, which the king, for unknown reasons, prevented; but upon the king's journey to Normandy soon after, [1074,] they resolved to consummate the wedding. Hereupon they invited a number of guests of quality, (and, among the rest, earl Waltheof,) and, not expecting to escape the king's wrath on this account, they had formed a design to depose him. This design they gradually unfolded as they found their guests disposed to listen, who, being heated with wine, and at the table of hospitality, were not likely to oppose the conversation led by their hosts with unmannerly vehemence. In conclusion, they resolved to take up arms to dethrone William, and Waltheof gave his assent, and promised his assistance. But, the next day, being sober, he reflected on the past, and found that he was guilty of treason and ingratitude, (in meditation,) and had committed himself only to cover the transgression of the two earls, with which he was not necessarily involved. He applied, in this repentant condition, to Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, and unfolded to him the whole affair as it fell out; Lanfranc advised him immediately to disclose it to William, and wrote a letter with his own hand, expressive of the good disposition of Waltheof. With this he set out to Normandy, and threw himself at the king's feet, who received him graciously, and pardoned his imprudence. William immediately returned to England, but the conspiracy was already suppressed by the vigilance of the regent, the bishop of Bayeux. He, however, finding some remains of it in the west, took a most severe and signal revenge of all who were suspected; the frequent conspiracies formed against him rankled in his mind, and, from being naturally fierce, he was now grown savage; heated with revenge, and infuriate with blood, he determined to leave none alive that had offended him; the pardon which he had granted to Earl Waltheof went for nothing; the earl was apprehended, carried to Winchester, publicly beheaded, and buried under the scaffold.

This ignominious end of a man so respected has caused many conjectures as to the real motive of William; some say his great riches were the temptation; others blame his wife, (Judith,) who, they say, did all in her

Ingulphus pursued his interest, and that of his convent, wherever it was attacked, and he scrupled not to bring miracles to his aid where law and evidence were likely to fail. He established his right to Heliestone, [probably *Helpstone*,] concerning which he had a dispute with one *Asford*, in this manner: a day of trial was appointed at Stamford, to which place as *Asford* was going his horse fell and broke his neck. A new day of trial was appointed, to meet the heir or successor of Asford, but in the mean time Ingulphus had contrived a trick, and suborned some persons to assist in it, which should give a supernatural force to his claim; for as they were carrying him to be buried at Peterborough, (according to his will,) "passing over ten acres which he had claimed in his life, the bier fell down, and the corpse was rolled out in the dirt." This was laid hold of as an evident miracle in favour of the Crowlanders, *who not only recovered their rights in this instance*, as the history testifies, *but held their property in others more securely*.

It is said that a *sudden darkness* and *rain* came on, at that juncture, which, by good luck, might happen; but we shall not waste our time in digesting these flimflams; the *ten acres* could not well be in any direct road from Helpstone to Peterborough, and, therefore,

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power to exasperate the king against him; but there seems to be reason enough in the king's natural fury at the time, which was likely to involve in its effects a man who had once before been pardoned when in arms against him.

Every one thought he was too severely dealt with for so slight a crime, and some pretend he only *feigned* acquiescence in the plot that he might disclose it: this was dictated by the gratitude of the monks of Crowland, who, having obtained the body, would needs prove him to be a true martyr: accordingly they wrought miracles at his tomb; and his wife Judith hearing of them, "came and offered a *silken pall* (says the history of Croyland) in presence of the whole convent, *who beheld it pushed off as if by hands*:" this seems to be the chief evidence of his wife's guilt, who would hardly wish to destroy the life of so noble a husband.

it should seem that the *bier* was carried by persons on foot, who were instructed what to do: by these contrivances the monks endeavoured to give a sort of supernatural force to their claims, and, accordingly, *Richard de Rulos*, who made a large inclosure about Peakirk soon after, propitiated the Abbey by a present of twenty marks. "He inclosed (says the history) from St. Guthlac's chapel there, east to Cardyke, and cross Cardyke to Cleylake, beyond Crammor, keeping out the Welland by a stout dyke."

On the alarm of the Danish invasion, William quartered his soldiers in the monasteries; although the Saxon kings had granted to several bishops and abbots, fees exempted from all military service. Croyland Abbey was one of the places so privileged; but William was not among the number of those princes who look upon what their predecessors have done as irrevocable; he, accordingly, cancelled those immunities, obliging church-lands, as well as the rest, to support troops in time of war. Such of the clergy as refused, only gave the king a pretence to turn them out and place others in their room; the vacant places were generally supplied by foreigners, or people directly in his interest, so that he had spies in all religious houses, and an eye over the actions of all the monks: had it not been that, when men are put in authority, they act more to their own views and advantage than to the interest of their masters, the king would have had unlimited power over the monasteries.

"Croyland had, at this time, 6 *soldiers and* 28 *archers*," (says the history,) that is—*six horsemen*. This was in 1069, before *Ingulphus* was made abbot.

He procured from the king a copy, from the Domesday survey, of the possessions of the Abbey; including not only their liberties of Crowland, but all other lands which they held in mortmain, and by various other means obtained, wheresoever; and, to shew how industriously these were accumulated, they had lands, more or less, in five counties, and in more than fifty parishes.

"The winter of 1072 (says the history) was uncommonly severe. When the provisions of the convent began to fail, and the ice in the fens prevented them from receiving a supply, the prayers of the abbot obtained them a miraculous recruit. A voice was heard from the north corner of the monastery, and two great sacks of wheat with two others of the finest flour were suddenly seen in the church yard."

Why the ice, in a hard winter, should prevent access to the Abbey, we cannot tell; the miracle might be easily contrived and easily executed; but this, also, was in the time of the historian's predecessor, and Ingulphus, who, perhaps, did not intend that the history should be read in his life time, made no scruple of setting down such traditionary marvels as he could collect; he was in every thing a true monk, and as well convinced of the sterling value of miracles as any of his brethren.

Their old adversary, *Tailbois*, could not be at rest without dispossessing the Crowlanders of their property at Spalding; the suit was carried to London, where Ingulphus appeared armed with the whole body of their charters. It appears that Tailbois expected to succeed at this time, by reason that William the Con-

queror, with whom Ingulphus was so much in favour, was recently dead; but the latter made good his rights, the charters being laid before *William Rufus* by Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury. William was, at first, guided by the good archbishop's advice, who had been his tutor. In fine, Tailbois was worsted, and obliged to nurse his chagrin a little longer.

It was but four years after that the dreadful calamity happened to the Abbey, the fire of 1091, the account of which, at great length, is literally translated from Ingulphus by Gough. It is, however, not very intelligible in the particulars we are most desirous to understand, for we cannot learn by it *how much of the Abbey was destroyed.*

"The plumber had been at work all day in preparing lead on the roof of the tower, and when he left off for the night he incautiously left his embers covered up to be in readiness for the next day." [*Quarto History.*] Whether he was examined, and confessed so much, we know not; but if he left a fire [embers] on the top of the church, it was most likely in a *chaffing-dish*, or some suitable vehicle. The north wind rose in the night, and, as it was thought, blew the fire into the roof of the south transept, which was partly exposed, being undergoing repair. Since no one saw the fire until it was considerably spread, it is not possible to say exactly how it originated: there is, however, a piece of evidence, incidentally related, which proves that the tower was on fire first, for some of the town's people "*saw a great light in the steeple* sometime before the alarm in the convent, but thought that the plumber was continuing his work by candle-light."

The mischief was very great, for the fire had made such progress before the alarm, that it could not be suppressed. Ingulphus, who arrived first at the church door, could not enter with safety, even to save their writings. The bells were partly melted, and the streams of scalding lead that poured off the roof, kept the monks at a distance, distracted spectators of the dreadful calamity. The falling rafters had already set fire to the inside of the choir, which was entirely *gutted;* all its seats, stalls, organ, and ornaments, being burnt. All the timbers about the tower being consumed, the tower fell upon the south transept, the roof of which being already burnt, the stone work of this part was probably much injured. The roof of the whole church was destroyed excepting the north transept only, which was saved by the wind blowing from that quarter. All the buildings belonging to the Abbey were demolished, excepting a few alms-houses and sheds for cattle. The chapter house was burnt; the dormitory; the refectory; and the infirmary, with its offices; the stranger's and convert's halls; the abbot's hall and chamber; the granary with its contents; the cellar and the casks of ale,—all were consumed. They lost their library, their charters, their beds and furniture; their records, jewels, habits, and provision.

We may suppose, with great probability, that not much damage was done to the stone work of the church excepting the tower, and the mischief which that did in falling upon the south transept: the tower, perhaps, was not very lofty, and, though the bells were hung in it, it might not be large; for if any will suppose that the bells were hung by the same contrivance, and

rung in the same manner that bells are now, the ropes must have come down upon the floor, just before the screen of the choir: or otherwise they must have had a stage erected, or scaffolding laid above the heads of persons walking in the transept, which would have shut out the light from this part of the church, and proved a great inconvenience: the bells were more likely stricken with hammers, or rung with strings fastened to their clappers.

This destructive calamity being soon noised about, all the neighbouring monasteries, and all wealthy persons living near, or having any connection with, the Abbey at Crowland, contributed largely to the relief of the monks. Many persons sent money; and many others sent wheat; some sent both; some sent malt, and others cloathing. The history gives the names of those who contributed, with the amount of their several benefactions; just as we should set down, by way of compliment, the names of the gentry of a parish or two, who had subscribed to the *Waterloo* fund; names which, a hundred years afterwards, are no where else to be found,—history disowns them.

The assistance which they received enabled them to set about restoring their church and other edifices; and we may now expect a satisfactory account of the progress of the repairs, and the state in which the church was left. Here is the historian himself (Ingulphus) present, directing the workmen, and ready to perpetuate his own transactions. The reader is entitled to all the information which the history affords, and more he cannot have:—" They were enabled (says the quarto) to set about *rebuilding* the church, by putting

on *a temporary roof*." This is the sum total of our information concerning the restoration of the Abbey; and the translator adds another piece of instruction, equally satisfactory and important; "they supplied the loss of their bells, *and tower, by two skillets*." Such are the materials from which we must write our history.

From this disjointed and incongruous relation the author turns to treat us with a preparation more to his own taste: "The next object was to translate the body of *Waltheof*, which lay in the chapter house open and exposed to the weather. Upon opening the tomb, the body was found entire * and incorrupt, and the head joined to it, and something like a scarlet thread round the neck. Ingulphus looking in the face, immediately recollected the person he had seen in his dream at *Fontanelle*; † and after confession and absolution of the whole society, crept to it, and kissed it, and handled it, and declares that he perceived a most fragrant smell issue from it. He gave out the response *Ecce odor fillii mei*, which was followed by the whole choir, and shutting up the tomb, conveyed the body to the church, where it was deposited on the side of St. Guthlac, under an arch of stone, in a place prepared on purpose. Miracles were presently wrought at it, and the concourse of people flocking to see them, proved of signal benefit to the convent."

William the Conqueror being dead, Ingulphus made no scruple of testifying to the innocence of *Waltheof*, especially when he had so much occasion for

* He had been buried about 17 years.

† Ingulphus was a monk at Fontanelle, and while he resided there he dreamed that several bishops and saints appeared before him *leading a person in a gold chain*; this was *Waltheof*, whose face he now remembered.

miraculous help to reinstate his convent. It does not appear that *Tailbois* interfered at this time with this matter; but, presuming that their charters were burnt, he once more disputed their title to their lands in Spalding. Ingulphus again appealed to the king, but the account of the proceeding is lame and disjointed. It should seem that the cause was heard at Spalding, for it is observed that "his clerk, after carrying home the records, returned to Spalding to hear how Tailbois would proceed. In his way home, three of Tailbois's servants set on him, pulled him from his horse, and began to search for the records, but not finding them, beat and wounded him sorely."

Some of these records had been copied, and the copies were in the hands of the junior monks, to teach them the Saxon characters; these were probably collected and carried to Spalding on this occasion, and reference being made to the former decision before the king, the records were pronounced to be *ready in court*, but not now examined. The cause was dismissed as vexatious, and Tailbois was worsted, which is the only way of accounting for the violence done by his servants. "From this time, (says the history,) Ingulphus carefully hid the charters."—This is all the authority that Gough had for doubting whether the charters were burnt; and this *careful hiding* makes it clear that they were not fit to be produced; but supposing that some future occasion might force him to shew them, he now set about replacing as many as he had copies for, or could well remember. They were never afterwards called for, or, at least, never used in evidence, and so

the doubt remained, and the charters are given as original in the quarto history.

There is no more related of Ingulphus but a few unimportant regulations for the management of the convent; but it is mentioned that he strove to obtain the king's pardon for *Ulketul*, who was deposed for making a martyr of Waltheof: he obtained permission for him to return to Peterborough, but never to Crowland, and consulted him occasionally on the affairs of the Abbey. It seems, therefore, that there was such a person abbot, but the fact is not material.

Ingulphus died in 1109, and the history was resumed by *Peter de Blois*, archdeacon of Bath, and vice chancellor to Henry 2nd, at the desire of *Henry de Longchamp*. We shall here conclude the second period of the Abbey building. It was restored and re-furnished by Ingulphus, who survived the fire 18 years; but there is no mention made of what was done at the offices, nor, indeed, at the Abbey, (excepting what is already quoted,) and we cannot but notice here, once again, that we have never yet had the smallest description of it,—neither its height, length, nor form, have ever been mentioned; and there is no possibility now of recovering, with respect to the two periods of the building up to this date, either its size or its proportions. Conjecture has, indeed, supplied this deficiency, but we shall see, hereafter, that no manner of probability is attached to the notion that the original Abbey was *of the same length and form which the present ruins indicate*, and that *the east end, as it now stands, was part of the original building*.

CHAP. VII.

Of the third Period of the Building.

If all our difficulties vanished with Ingulphus, we should follow his successor with alacrity and satisfaction; but *Peter de Blois* (who took up the history from about 1089) wrote his portion of the narrative more than 100 years after the facts happened. The account of the fire, in the words of the late abbot, he might find among his papers, and, excepting this, he found but little to record of the remainder of the life of Ingulphus. The history is so abrupt, that no sooner is he succeeded by Joffrid, than "*the church and monastery are rebuilt with stone.*" It seemed, just before, that we had left the place in pretty good repair; the church was not much damaged, and, of the other buildings, what had been put up were nearly new; but immediately upon the installation of Joffrid, *the church* and *offices* are entirely rebuilt.

The author of the quarto never stopped at trifles of this kind; he translated from the collections of *Dr. Gale*, and proceeded with a truly plodding and quiet spirit; publishing, in fact, *the historical records of the affairs of the monastery;* but our business is with *the building*, of which the ruins now standing invite the visitor to inquire when the several parts were put together, and through what vicissitude of fortune they have passed to their present state.

In this inquiry we meet with no direct assistance in the records before us; the building is always mentioned in a few words, and is hurried over, to pass to

other particulars much less interesting to posterity; so that, as to the object in question, the historians have left nothing but darkness behind them. In this dilemma we must gather what we can from other testimony, and from contemporary facts in the *history of the architecture of the middle ages*, leaving the present, and all future difficulties of the same kind, as they are set down, and making one general reference to the appendix.

It is proper, however, here to observe, that about this period a considerable part (that is, all the older) of the cathedral churches, as they are now found, were built; some of them a little before this date, and others a little after it; this was the period when what is called the *Norman manner of building* began to prevail, and all abbey churches (which they all were then) that had funds sufficient, gradually underwent entire re-edification. Peterborough cathedral, as it now stands, was began to be built in 1117; first the choir and altar; afterwards, the cross aisles; and, lastly, the whole nave was added; the work was carried on, perhaps with some short intervals, for about 76 years; but the front was not completed until near fifty years afterwards.

Joffrid took some preliminary steps, in order to raise money for the commencement of his design at Crowland. Monks were sent to many parts of England and Scotland, (and some to foreign countries,) having the archbishop of Canterbury's indulgence for remitting one third part of the penance enjoined on any one who would contribute. Their success at Cambridge is particularly noticed, and by the assistance of some monks from abroad, who were better versed in polite

learning; lectures were given in a barn; and this is said to have been the germ from whence sprung the now famous university of Cambridge.

He likewise solicited the assistance of all the neighbouring nobles, and of all the heads of the church in the counties lying contiguous; having been very successful he appointed a day for laying the foundation, and invited all the help he could collect, for use as well as ceremony. A great concourse of persons and many nobility were present, and the first stones were laid, with offerings, by prelates and nobles; and others adjoining, by considerable persons of the surrounding villages, giving what they could afford;—and the greater part, who had nothing else to bestow, gave their bodily labour, by twenties and forties, for a stated time.

All this renders it sufficiently clear that the choir, or east end, was now begun upon a larger scale than that of the former building, (as the case undoubtedly was at Peterborough and elsewhere,) and that the additions which we shall hereafter have occasion to notice, were the necessary progressions, upon the same scale of magnitude, in order to complete the design. It was, perhaps, about the year 1112 that Joffrid began his building, and, as he attempted no more than the choir, he might live to finish it, (though the history does not say so,) as he continued abbot 12 years afterwards.

The history next informs us of the death of *Wlsin*, (or Wulsin,) a hermit, who had been shut up 75 years in St. Kenelm's chapel—he was formerly a monk of Croyland, and from his papers *Peter de Blois* obtained

some materials for his continuation. Also about this time died *Ivo Tailbois*, their old adversay, of a paralytic stroke, "and within a month after his decease (says the history) his wife married Roger de Romara."

I would willingly rescue the sex from the reproach that is cast on them in the *History of Croyland;* the affair of *Waltheof's lady* is by no means substantiated, and this of Ivo's wife, I hope, will admit of some apology. It is now more than 50 years from the first mention of Ivo, who was then a man, and, at his death, might be fourscore, at least: this, therefore, could not be his first wife, supposing him to be married young, and we may conclude that he had taken a damsel in his latter days, who was poor and ignorant.

In the year 1114 Joffrid established a general flagellation in his convent on Good Friday,—beginning with himself, stripped naked to his girdle, and receiving a handsome portion of stripes for his offences. It seems to have been a very ancient opinion, that voluntary castigation is highly meritorious in the sight of God; and we may easily imagine that this flogging was not done in sport, but that the monks would vie with each other in suffering, and feel a pride in shedding blood upon these occasions. As in large societies of men there must be irregularities, we may suppose that the penances injoined through the year were referred to this anniversary, that those who were the least likely to take it meritoriously might receive it as a debt incurred by their transgressions. Other historians, however, observe that he caused HIMSELF, only, to be whipped, in commemoration of our Saviour's sufferings.

We have very little further information from *Peter de Blois*, whose history does not continue to the end of Joffrid's life; it was resumed by another hand, but the narratives were not made to join, and various authorities have been searched for the names and dates of the abbots who sat from 1124 (the death of Joffrid) to 1170. This interval could not be satisfactorily filled, for the next abbot that could be traced was *Edward*, (monk and prior of Ramsey,) who was appointed in 1142 or 3, so that there is a period of about 20 years lost in the history.

During this time, it is probable that some further progress was made in the building of the *Norman pile* at Crowland, (as they were now doing at Peterborough,) though we can find no account of it; and Edward, when he became abbot, was likely to continue the works; but soon after the appointment of Edward, the history informs us that "*the church, with the offices, &c. were again destroyed by fire.*"

While we complain, with reason, that we cannot precisely discover how and when the church was built, it is some advantage to us that, when it is burnt, we dont know exactly how much is destroyed. The *History of Croyland* is not a history of the building at all; there is a tendency to amplification in the particulars that are mentioned of it, but no particularity of any sort. So great is the want in this case, that it must be evident the historians set down what we find upon very dubious authority; and we are fully justified in doubting part of their assertions, or, at least, in believing them only upon such an interpretation as seems to be reasonable and probable. When they tell us *the church*

was destroyed by fire, they never mean the *whole* church; and, correctly speaking, they should have said that such, or such, a part, was *damaged by fire*. When we speak of a house being burnt, we very naturally say that it was *burnt down;* because when its floors, and beams, and roof are gone, the walls will generally fall; but a church that has vaulted aisles, and is built entirely with stone to the very roof, cannot be said to be *destroyed by fire* in this sense. The same reasoning may be extended to the *offices* in the foregoing sentence; part of them were burnt, and part damaged, perhaps, but there is no qualification to the assertion in the history: "*the church, with the offices, were destroyed by fire;*" one would suppose they had been destroyed by fire from heaven, for such devouring flames are scarcely less than miraculous; but the buildings rise again with equal facility, for, in one sentence, with a single dash of ink, they are restored—"*he, however, almost immediately rebuilt the greatest part in a magnificent manner.*"—[*Gough, p.* 50.]

The loose and general terms in which the fire is mentioned, give us leave to suppose that the choir, as it was lately enlarged and finished by Joffrid, escaped the present calamity; and if the nave, only, was in part destroyed, it would rather forward, than retard, the progress of the Norman building; what they had in contemplation to do, would now immediately take place. But we have something besides mere conjecture to offer in this instance, for, in the front of this building, part of which still remains, there are *interlaced arches*, (a species of ornament which is not very ancient,) and, in the inside of Peterborough cathedral,

there are *interlaced arches* in both the side aisles, all the length of the nave:—these *interlaced* arches, it is thought, gave rise to the *pointed* ones, and did not long precede them.

Thus the abbot Edward *rebuilt the greater part of* that which the fire had now damaged, in a manner which, compared with the original Abbey, is stiled *magnificent;* and, by way of corroboration, it will be seen hereafter, that the principal difference between the Saxon and Norman stiles of building, consisted in the *magnitude* of the latter, and the *arcades*, (or successions of arches,) variously turned, with which its stories were ornamented; the semi-circular arch, with all its mouldings, being common to both.

Edward was abbot about 27 years, but did not live to finish the church, which was *completed* (as the history expressly says) by his successor, *Robert de Redinges*. How much of it was left to Robert, and at what time finished, is not material; this was the pile, of which all that is now standing, that is not in the *pointed stile*, is part: namely, the east end, and the south-west corner of the front, with a small part between the present steeple and the pointed window, which is partly blocked up behind the centre buttress.

From hence there is, if possible, less in the history of the affairs of the Abbey which is worth preserving; we find scarcely anything recorded but continual quarrels and lawsuits, attacks, insults, encroachments, and cudgellings between the Crowlanders and their neighbours. The people of the surrounding countries appear to have been invariably the aggressors; and there can be no solution to their perpetual hostility but this:

the Abbey of Crowland was envied for its wealth and privileges, and, by its power, was severe in its exactions. It held rights over so many lands, and, by craft, disappointed so many heirs, that it was no wonder the convent should be gradually considered as a society of idle impostors, who lived luxuriously upon the labour of others. At any rate it is certain that there grew up continual feuds, and the people of the parts adjacent disputed their claims, and took a pleasure in thwarting their power as much as possible. The monks had been, in earlier times, favourites with the people; but it must be remembered that they were then *active and useful* members of society;—they earned their own bread;—they taught letters,—and they mixed with mankind; giving them examples of piety, humility, and industry. But in these later times the case was different; their character was changed; their pursuits were altered; and, by their ingenuity in devising new objects of tithe, they stirred up the people to an acrimonious resistance.

We find, from this time, but little mention of miracles; the monasteries had become so rich and powerful, that they began to find law a better safeguard than superstition. The people, besides, had long before began to doubt the truth of those juggling contrivances; for they could not but perceive, notwithstanding all the pretensions of the monks to superior sanctity, that wealth was their chief aim. Their splendour and their idleness were obvious, and their luxury was very plausibly inferred; and many tales of their scandalous irregularities (which at length overwhelmed them) were propagated, (perhaps with abundant aggrava-

tion,) and would find certain credit among those whom their conduct provoked, and who hated them for their exactions, and their vexatious encroachments.

The monks, on their part, were grown proud of their wealth, and conscious of their power; their conduct was by no means conciliatory, nor calculated to perpetuate their system; and as it is the property of riches, for the most part, to generate covetousness, so, the more they got, the more greedy they became; until their devouring cupidity of wealth degenerated into a systematic avarice, by which it was seriously feared, on the part of the state, that all the lands of the kingdom would fall into their hands. The lands of the monasteries not being held of the crown, were entirely unproductive to the state, and, consequently, in proportion as the monasteries were enriched, the government was impoverished; this situation of things was the occasion of the *statute of mortmain,* * which, after due deliberation, was enacted in 1279, in the fifth year of Edward the first.

There is no mention, in the History of Croyland, of a measure so ungrateful to the monks; who had been as industrious in adding manor to manor, as any of their brethren; the history, from hence, is more than half made up of their quarrels and their law-suits, and seems to have been compiled, principally to register their claims, and to record their triumphs:—all the interest which these things possessed having been long since buried in oblivion, we shall pass them over, and pursue our main purpose, the *history of the building.*

* That is, to prevent estates from falling into *dead hands,* or into *hands of no use to the state.*

We can no longer follow the abbots in their regular succession, but shall only observe that after the church was completed, they set about rebuilding and improving the offices, which were very much enlarged and brought into a state, which, for spaciousness and conveniency, had never been seen before at Crowland. The whole Abbey-precincts was a quadrangle, but probably not exactly square: the church formed the greater part of the north side; the west side was composed of the brew-house, bake-house, and a large granary; the south side was closed with the stranger's hall and its apartments; on the east side were the shoemaker's workshop, and hall of new converts, which latter was connected with the north east corner of the church, by a cloister, taking, in the way, the *chapter-house*. The west side being next the town, the brew-house, &c. were judiciously placed, on account of carriage and communication with the river; these projecting somewhat further west than the front of the church, the *great gate* (the only entrance into the Abbey-precincts) was at this corner, and eastward of it was the *almonry*, which joined again to the south-west corner of the front of the church. Within this area was the *abbot's hall*, the *infirmary*, the *refectory*, and dormitory; which were conveniently joined to the church, and to each other, by cloisters; that is to say, there was probably a *private space* (of which the church was the north side) within the area; a cloister running round the other three sides, and having entrances into these several offices.—All these buildings occupied a long time in completing, and were finished (as the history says) by *Henry de Longchamp*, who

succeeded Robert de Redinges, and who died in 1236, having been abbot 46 years: the church, of course, was finished before 1190, or about the time that Richard the 1st engaged in the holy war. We shall here close the third period of the *building*, leaving it now a *Norman pile*, greatly enlarged, and highly beautified; and all the offices in complete repair, (the greater part being new,) forming an enclosure both safe and convenient.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Fourth Period of the Building.

It is very clear that this Abbey was rebuilt oftener than it was thrown down, either by time or accident; and it is equally certain that the progress of architecture, and emulation of ornament, were the true reasons for many considerable and expensive alterations. This will be sufficiently confirmed if the spectator observes how many old arches are intersected by others of later date, (both now equally sound,) and how the various portions are stuck and huddled together in the parts which were not visible from without: they took down, at one time, what they intended to rebuild and alter; and they made the new part exactly to fill up the vacancy, and to support the old. This, however, is intended only of this *fourth period* of the building, during which the Abbey was gradually changed into the

gothic stile, (improperly so called,) which, from about the year 1200, (or somewhat later,) became the prevalent mode of building in all our religious edifices.

It has been many times asserted, that the gothic, or pointed stile of building was the prevalent mode in the time of Henry the 2nd,—an assertion which appears to be wholly destitute of fact. Sir Christopher Wren, whose authority has been very generally followed, derives it from the time of the first crusade, under Richard the 1st, and believing it (or rather the rudiments of it) to be brought from the eastern countries, he called it the *Saracenic* stile; even this, if it were true, would not place the time of its commencement in England earlier than about 1195.—In the appendix we shall find competent authority to settle this point; and with respect to the above assertion, (considering how writers copy from one another,) it has probably proceeded from a typographical error: the truth is, it was in the time of Henry the third that this mode was prevalent.

We have now entered into this period of English history; abbot Longchamp died in 1236, which was about the time that the front of Peterborough cathedral was built. The present abbey of Westminster, (which is wholly in the pointed stile,) was begun in 1220; and the cathedral church at Salisbury, was finished in 1258; these are the oldest buildings which are wholly of pointed architecture, and this stile can with no propriety be said to be prevalent before any building of this sort could be found.

Whatever changes the Abbey of Croyland had undergone before this age, in stile or ornament; whether it

was enlarged in the building, or only beautified, it is certain, from unquestionable testimony, that, now, all the principal edifices of this kind in the kingdom were gradually undergoing a great change in architecture; not for repair, but ornament; not from necessity, but for improvement; for superior elegance and convenience, light and ventilation.——We shall now resume our history, and endeavour to explain the progress of the building, by adverting to these parallel facts as occasion may require.

Mr. Essex thinks that the west front, which is now so much admired, was built by abbot Longchamp; and this is at least probable, because they were building the front of Peterborough at the same time, and the two buildings had proceeded pretty nearly together; but, in examining this front, it is evident that the Norman masonry has been displaced to make room for it, part of the latter being yet remaining on each side.—However, if it was not built by him, it must have been done very soon after, and the distance in point of time will make but a slight consideration; the Norman masonry would no more require removing from want of repair, forty or fifty years afterwards, than then. Besides, although the Abbey were *completed* by *Robert* about 1190, yet Longchamp was abbot here more than fifty years after that date; Peterborough cathedral being larger, it was longer in hand, and Longchamp being abbot at Crowland during the latter part of the building at Peterborough, he was probably grieved to see the unadorned front of his own Abbey, while the other was putting on its modern and gorgeous face. After Turketyl, Longchamp was

the most considerable personage who ever sat at Crowland; emulous of neighbouring grandeur, and fascinated by novelty of ornament; and, perhaps, desirous of erecting a monument to his own memory, (though time has already rendered his honours doubtful,) he took down so much of the front as occupied the middle aisle, and put in its place this window and door; which, because they occupied but little space, he most laboriously ornamented.

Proceeding with our remarks in chronological order, Mr. Essex makes this same west front, [the top of it,] to be blown down when *Ralph Merske* was abbot; but this is not probable; for though the upper part, from the springing of the arch of the window, has certainly been rebuilt, it has been rebuilt at a much later date; statues in gothic nich-work, enriched with canopies, &c. belong to the later periods of the pointed architecture, and were not used, perhaps, before the time of Henry the 6th: Merske was abbot in 1260, and died 1281.

Richard Croyland succeeded Ralph Merske, and the history immediately says, "*he began to rebuild the east end of the church at a great expence, with a beauty and elegance superior to all the churches of the province.*" This is all that is said about it in Gough's arrangement. Turning to the observations of Mr. Essex, we find nothing that bears upon the point; for he makes that (whatever it was) that was now done, to be done at the *west* end: having blown the west end down just before, he took this opportunity of rebuilding it.—No other conjectures have been offered by way of explanation.

The truth is, that *Richard Croyland* began the change, or transmutation, of the building into the *pointed stile;* he took out the *circular windows* of the choir, which were narrow and low, and put in *pointed ones*, with *mullions* and *tracery* in their tops, as high as the first story of the architecture would allow: this was done at Peterborough also, and probably about the same time.

Besides putting in these windows, he might also finish the columns at top, with pointed turrets (or spires) and other appropriate ornaments; and the early historians, in their amplification of phraseology, have called this a *rebuilding*. Richard Croyland was abbot from 1281 to 1303, and it was during this period that the pointed stile was making a rapid progress in our religious edifices; the abbey of Westminster and the cathedral at Salisbury had excited the admiration of the age; and the stile and ornaments, the advantage of greater light &c., were desired in every other similar building: but the greater part of these being large, and few of them old, they could not think of taking them down for the purpose of entirely changing the architecture. In this dilemma, they had recourse to the expedient which has just been noticed at Croyland; they put *pointed windows* in the lower stories, making them always as large as the compartments would allow, and, sometimes with very obtuse heads, for want of elevation in proportion to their width.

Their next step was to alter the heavy columns and round arches of the nave to the lighter columns and aspiring arches of the new method of building; and this difficult operation was performed in many of

our present cathedral churches, *without taking them down.* The nave of York minster was thus transmuted between 1290 and 1330; and the munificent *William of Wykeham* accomplished the same alteration at Winchester about 1319; many other places had undergone similar changes during the interval here included; and we may, therefore, suppose that *the east end of Crowland Abbey* was thus altered, without being rebuilt.

There are no other alterations or *rebuildings* mentioned in the history until the time of *Thomas Overton,* who was appointed abbot in 1382. "He passed 14 years in great tranquillity, *encreasing the revenues of his monastery.* He gave new forms to the choir, and four *melodious* bells to the tower, &c."—There was a tower (*campanile,* or bell-tower) erected about this time at the east end of the Abbey, and detached from it, large enough to hold these four bells; which, as they are called *melodious,* renders it still more probable that the former bells were not so.—This abbot falling blind, committed the care of the convent to *Richard Upton,* under whose direction *William de Croyland,* a skilful architect, proceeded with the transmutation which was begun by *Richard de Croyland,* or, rather, by *Longchamp,* if he built the west front.

But there is another difficulty here to be considered; for, as the nave of this Abbey was not *transmuted* in the sense already used, but *wholly taken down,* it may be inferred that the form of it was different from that of our cathedral churches of the *Norman age;* that is to say, the nave of this was carried upwards two stories of windows, *only in the middle aisle;* the upper part of which was a *clear story.* This is

rendered still more probable, if the west front be at this time accurately inspected; for it is evident that the remains of the Norman masonry, on both sides of the *pointed window*, are little more than two thirds of the height of the centre; nor is there any appearance that they were higher at first, for there is (on the contrary) the appearance of a *finishing* in the top, which is a kind of *embattled frette*, a species of ornament often used at that time, and before. This seems to furnish a sufficient reason why, if they would have the nave changed to the pointed style, they must needs *take it down;* for they could not, without great danger, remove the columns of the nave (two at a time) to build lighter ones, and run up a pointed arch between them, there being nothing to support the *clear story* above; neither could they, perhaps, obtain the elevation in the arch to which they aspired.

Hence they begun their work by building a *stone skreen* to strengthen the centre, (which now connects the two Saxon or Norman pillars of the east end,) and erecting the clumsy buttresses which stand now within this aisle and push towards the east; having done this, they took down the *cross aisles* (one at a time) and rebuilt them in the *pointed stile;* they then proceeded in the same manner with the *nave*, but fearing that the west front should come down if they pulled down the Norman wings of it, they wisely let them remain; finishing the whole the same height that it was before; with a *clear story*, as we now see; and having the side aisles no higher than the first vaulted roof.

The words in the history which refer to this erection, are thus given by Gough,—" William de Croy-

land, master of the works, built the aforesaid part of the cloister from the ground; the north and south cross aisles of the choir, with their arches and glass windows, and the lady chapel at a great expence, and the lower part of the nave of the church to the west, and both its aisles, with their chapels, from the ground to the roof."

It is manifest that, from this way of writing, nothing can be distinctly understood; how could he build *the north and south cross aisles*, without *their arches?* To *build glass windows* is a solecism; and the *lower part of the nave* it is impossible to understand: he built the whole nave.

There is one very material particular wholly omitted in *the history*, and that is, the *western tower*, the present steeple. We learn nothing at all about it; there is not so much as a hint of its date, or of its architect. Nevertheless, it was certainly built at this time, and carried up with the west end of the nave; as the remains of the arches of the latter, in the south side of the former, very plainly testify.

Whoever observes this steeple within side, will find it to consist of four very lofty pointed arches; supporting a *campanile*, or bell-tower. [The present blunt spire is modern; originally it had none.] These arches were secured by the north aisle of the Abbey to the east; by the nave to the south; by two buttresses to the west, and two similar ones to the north. In this state it was a very lofty vestibule, forming an entrance to the nave, south—and to the north aisle, east; the north and west arches (entrances to the vestibule) were probably unclosed, or closed only with folding doors which were not high. The *east* and west *arches* had

larger arches above them, which were *windows*, divided by mullions and ornamented with tracery; of the arches below these windows, one was a door into the vestibule, and the other was the entrance into the *lower church*.

But whether the foundation was insecure, or the vibration from the bells rendered the structure unsafe, it was afterwards found necessary to fill up these arches. The tower inclined to the north, as may be seen by the mullions of the window in the west of it; and they, therefore, placed two other buttresses there, at the same time that they filled up the north arch, leaving only a narrow and low door to enter that way. The arch towards the front was filled up with the present *porch*, which helps to take off the defect of the first contrivance. The eastern arch was filled up at the same time; for it was then that the north aisle was altered; but we have here got rather too forward with our history, for though this workmanship was done by the same architect, it was not done until more than twenty years afterwards, under abbot *Upton*.

In proceeding with the building of the nave, and the western tower, in the first instance, the spectator cannot but observe, that the two buttresses in front of the ornamented west window, were built before the old adjoining part of the nave was removed, for security sake; and, also, before the lower Norman front of the north aisle was taken down to make room for the tower; this latter is self-evident, for in building the northernmost of these buttresses, they blocked up a part of the Norman masonry, which they could not afterwards conveniently remove; of course, as we now see, they built the south-west corner of the tower leaning upon

it. In all this taking down, and rebuilding, it is very plain that the great object was to prevent the cracking of the beautiful pointed arch in front of the centre aisle.

In 1417, *Upton* became abbot, and, in his time, the north aisle was altered, and the tower strengthened, by filling up the arches, as before mentioned. The history gives the account in the usual summary and inexplicit manner. "William de Croyland before mentioned, built from the ground the new work of the lower church,"—this is all. There was no other *new work*, nor any other *church*; and this aisle being altered in a manner so different from the other, it was afterwards called the *lower church*, to distinguish it from the *choir*, or *higher part*. They probably used this lower church afterwards, for ordinary service; the other being rendered more private by the stone skreen, it was used only on particular occasions, when *processions*, &c. were included in the service, and high mass was said.

One reason for altering the north aisle might be, that they thought the tower insecure in that direction; and, therefore, conceived it proper to build a larger and higher building to the east of it:—but it has never yet been proved that this aisle was altered from the *Norman stile* to the pointed, before this time. It was little more than twenty years before, that they were building the other part, the nave, &c. and this aisle might then be left alone. Some of those who have made historical remarks on this building, have made them without much thought, or any very attentive observation; and, finding this aisle too wide for that on

the south, they have first confidently pronounced *that it was altered*, and then took occasion to wonder *why they should alter it so as to destroy the uniformity of the building!* In this they entirely forgot *the tower*, which is as wide as the aisle, and seems to have given occasion for building it as we now see; not only for security to the steeple, but for public and ordinary service; and because, otherwise, this lofty vestibule, in that direction, led to nothing. This lower church was not finished by *Upton*, but remained suspended (if the history be correct) about forty years, and was completed by *Lyttleton;* some other architect was, of course, employed. The history informs us that " abbot Lyttleton, before his death, made the ceiling in the lower part of the church, glazed all the windows, and vaulted all the aisles of the same with stone," as they now remain.

The same abbot sent some old bells to London to be re-cast; the history says " *the three old bells;*" but they had four bells in the detached tower; they might have some old bells besides, and these might be sent, with instructions to add what metal was necessary to make them into *five*, (the number which he received back,) and these five bells were hung in this new tower. * But they had no sooner got them in size, and in other respects, suitable to be rung in the present manner, but they found that this bell-tower wanted a belfry; † and they were reduced to the woeful necessity of erecting a *wooden scaffold* for the ringers to stand at a proper

* They were previously consecrated, and named *Guthlac*, *Bartholomew*, *Michael*, *Mary*, and *Trinity*.

† *Belfry* in former times meant *the place where the bells hung;* but at present it generally means *the place where the ringers stand.*

distance below the bells. This scaffolding, intercepting the light from the windows above, rendered them useless;—one of them is blocked up for the comfort of the ringers, and the other is partly shattered, and entirely without glass; thus this once lofty vestibule is changed into a dark, damp, and disgusting passage.

We have thus completed the history of the building of the Abbey, as such, for what has been done since the dissolution of the monasteries, does not belong to our subject; such little alterations as are known, will be mentioned in the next chapter; where also some erroneous opinions respecting the period just treated of, will be noticed; and some particularities in the present ruins, which are now purposely omitted.

A few notices, which have been omitted in their respective places, will bring the affairs of the Abbey to the dissolution. These we shall present in the words of the quarto history, where they have been preserved as circumstances honourable to the monastery.

" Amidst the confusion of the civil war, Henry 6th came hither, (1460,) to pay his devotions to St. Guthlac, and staid three days and three nights; and, upon the defeat and death of the Duke of York the same year, the northern men rose and committed the most dreadful ravages. The inhabitants of Croyland were so alarmed, that they brought their effects to the Abbey; the convent concealed all their valuables, and performed continual processions round the tomb of St. Guthlac. They likewise fortified themselves in the best manner they were able; stopping the mouths of their water courses with stakes, and breaking up their causeways, &c."

It was a good dash in those times to plunder a convent; and these were always in great trepidation (on account of their known wealth) in turbulent times. The convents, besides, rendered themselves objects of revenge to the populace, by the manner in which their wealth was acquired, and, therefore, whenever king mob came in turn to reign, he laid his majesty's hands heavily on them. One would think that all systems of power, ought to derive lessons from experience, and endeavour to make those faithful servants, who are intolerable as masters.

" In the year 1467, a great flood overflowed the district of Holland, and among the many prognostics of calamity, such as *showers of blood,* &c. there appeared in the air, armies of both foot and horse, conducted by St. George with his red cross. About this time the king quarrelled with the earl of Warwick, and forbid him, and the rest of his faithful lords, his presence. The northern men also rose under *Robin of Redysdale,* and marched to support the earl. The king on this alarm went on a pilgrimage to St. Edmund to Norwich, and returning by Wisbeach and Dovesdale, came, with a suite of 400 horse, to Croyland, where he staid a night, &c."—*(Quarto History.)*

This was Edward 4th, of whom it may be much doubted whether he ever went on a pilgrimage in his life. The history of the civil wars during that reign, is very obscure; and it does not certainly appear that the king quarrelled with *Warwick;* or, if he did, why the ancient author of the History of Croyland should pronounce them *faithful lords?* These particulars may

be better guessed at, by those who will look into the History of England under Edward 4th.

It is surprising that *Gough*, whose phlegm in other instances we have noticed, did not, however, undertake to disperse these *armies of horse and foot*, whose airy battles must have occasioned that bloodshed which fell in *showers* just before. It does not appear that the principles of good sense and sound faith, must necessarily dictate an acquiescence in the superstitions of former ages, or lead us reverendly to propagate their fallacies for the benefit of posterity. If it be not yet settled whether ignorance or knowledge is preferable in a state, it is at least certain that, where the latter is much diffused, falsehood and affectation can be of but little service.

In the year 1469, with the death of Lyttleton, the third continuator ends his history; but it is resumed by a fourth hand, the same year. This last, however, had very little to say, or there was very little worth the translating, since it occupies but two or three quarto pages. The most material fact is, that *John de Wisbech*, who succeeded *Lyttleton*, built convenient apartments in *Buckingham College*, Cambridge, for the scholars of this house to sleep and study in.

This abbot died 1476, and was succeeded by the second *Richard Croyland*, in whose time a great deal of violent quarreling happened between the monks and their neighbours, which it is not needful to particularize. This abbot was succeeded by *Lambert Fosdyke*, who was succeeded by *Edmund Thorp*, and here the fourth historifier concludes, 1486.

After this the reader will naturally look for the particulars which happened till the period of the dissolution, but he will look in vain; he will desire to be informed what consternation it spread within the walls of this convent, when the commission arrived, armed with power to enquire into their privacies, and sit in judgment upon their conduct. These things it did not suit the monkish historians to tell; accordingly, the affair is huddled up, and the history is hurried to a conclusion, without one ray of intelligence to satisfy our longing, or a single consoling remark to qualify our disappointment.

There were four other abbots (as the reader will see by referring to the list) reaching to 1539, the date of the dissolution; but not a single sentence is inserted respecting the Abbey all this time. I have heard it said that *the choir was in ruins before the dissolution;* on what authority this is advanced I know not; if we consider the solidity of the choir of Peterborough cathedral, which was built about the same time, it will not seem likely that this should be a ruin in 1539, not much above 400 years after it was built. Besides, we have no evidence that the revenues of this monastery suffered any loss, nor the zeal and emulation of its abbots any diminution, and it therefore does not seem reasonable that so material a part of the building should be so long neglected as to fall into ruin prematurely.

On this subject I can say no more, having access to no authorities but those which Gough collected; more were certainly desirable, but not easily obtained, and I could not even procure a copy of *Willis's Mitred Abbeys.* This of Crowland was one of those, but at

what date so honourable a distinction was conferred on it I cannot tell. In the history of Peterborough we read that *William Genge was the first mitred abbot of that monastery, in* 1397; which answers to the time of *Thomas Overton* at Crowland. But it seems that all those were *mitred abbots* who were called to parliament, the number of whom, at the dissolution of the monasteries, was twenty eight.

It is not uninstructive to consider for a moment one feature of popular superstition under the Roman catholic impostures: *a new saint* that was highly recommended and honoured by the priest, was more worshipped by the people than God himself. *Thomas a Becket* (who owed his canonization to his zealous defence of the privileges of the clergy) was the most remarkable idol of this sort; the monks vehemently encouraged the devotion of pilgrimages to his tomb, and numberless were the miracles which were wrought by his reliques. The concourse of persons was on particular occasions so great, that a hundred thousand pilgrims have been registered at a time at Canterbury. The devotion towards him (says Ashburton) had quite effaced the adoration of the deity, nay even *that of the virgin!* At God's altar there were offered in one year three pounds two shillings and sixpence; at the Virgin Mary's sixty-three pounds five shillings and sixpence; at St. Thomas a Becket's eight hundred and thirty-two pounds twelve shillings and threepence. But the next year the disproportion was still greater, for the saint gained above nine hundred pounds—the virgin about four pounds only, while on God's altar they did not offer a penny.

The inference to be drawn from hence, is, that a credulous and ignorant population require something like sensible objects of devotion. Pure theism is too elevated and abstract for common minds, which, since the calendar of saints has been wanting, have endeavoured to find objects of *brotherly love* in the New Testament; and the devotees of our time have addressed Jesus Christ as an earthly sweetheart, with all the warmth and yearning of sensible love.—This sort of temperament is considerably extended in the human constitution, and is the true ground of the growth of methodism; those who are methodists would have made, under the monkish superstitions, excellent worshippers at the shrine of St. Thomas a Becket; though perhaps some of the more thinking and sincere of them would feel hurt at the suggestion. Taking this view of the sectaries, nothing is so likely as the education, now so happily adopted, to bring them back, or raise their ideas to right notions of true piety; the ritual and and liturgy of the church, are too chaste and sublime for the vulgar, who are evermore inclined to follow something novel and striking; the church of England practices no impostures, and the ignorant, who cannot relish its pure precepts and its elegant language, sink into supineness for want of excitement.—But leaving this to wiser men, I shall now accompany the reader to view the ruins of *Crowland Abbey*, as they at present remain, which is the principal thing we had to do,

CHAP. IX.

Of the Present State of the Ruins.

TRADITION has magnified this building beyond all reasonable bounds; it is even said that the Abbey reached as far as a certain *mound*, in a place called *Anchorige Field*, about half a mile eastward of it. Those who cannot think that it was quite so big, are not willing to circumscribe its bounds within any credible compass; and many of the inhabitants believe it to have been the largest building that ever was in England. Even *Willis*, as Mr. Essex testifies, seems equally desirous of swelling the size of this pile, without any regard either to proportion or probability; for he made it extend 200 feet beyond the tower of the transept. Mr. Essex has, with competent judgment, corrected these errors, and given us the very probable length of the choir according to the usual proportions of such buildings—that is to say—the whole building, when perfect, was a little more than half as long again as the present ruin: something under 280 feet in length.

The *mound* just mentioned, is the place, according to Dr. Stukely, where St. Guthlac's original hermitage was, and where he lived with his sister *Pega;* here, also, it is said, he was buried, and from hence his body was removed to the Abbey when that was built, or partly built. A small chapel was afterwards built here, of which Dr. S. saw the remains in 1708.

The spectator enters the churchyard at the west gate, and on the left is the heavy tower already described: the porch, which was built afterwards, leads to the inside of the tower; a slight inspection will shew the defect of the architect's judgment, which occasioned so much bungling afterwards to keep the work together. In this dark place they shew a statue, which recently fell down from the north side of the west door, and which is the figure thus described by Gough:—"On the north side of the folding doors, sits a defaced figure, setting its right foot on a beast;" if it was then defaced, it is now so broken by its fall that nothing can be made of it.

Passing from hence into the north aisle or *lower church*, the spectator has the satisfaction of seeing the place preserved for divine service, very decently kept; it is in good repair, and has been lately cleaned and painted, in a manner highly creditable to the parish and the present rector. The *ceiling* of this church is the part most deserving of notice; it is handsomely vaulted in the pointed stile, but perfectly plain, having no tracery; from this, its antiquity may be inferred; for, in later times, the ceilings were more enriched. In the key stones of the roof there are various devices, as, *a head; a rose;* ihs; a rebus of a *tree issuing out of a tun*, &c.: this may be supposed to have had, in some way, an allusion to *Lyttleton*, who groined this aisle.

On the right hand side, going in, the spectator is shewn a small *nich* or closet, the roof of which is done, in miniature, like the roof of the church; at the bottom

is a large, cracked stone bason, the dimensions of which are carefully given in the quarto, the author of which falls into a profound speculation on its original use: whether it held *holy water*, or was used as a *baptistery*, is not easily determined, and, if determined, is no matter. There are no ornaments in the church; the walls present a few plain inscriptions, which are scarcely in anything curious; and the pulpit and ballustrade round the communion table are said to be of Norway oak. The skreen that divides the chancel from the body of the church, is very ancient, and was once highly gilded and curiously painted.*

There being so little to detain the visitor within, he may pass through a door in the south side of the steeple into the ruined nave, where he will be shewn a frightful wooden figure called *the devil with a dark lantern*. Here he will observe that the south side of the parish church is made by building between the columns of the nave, and filling up the arches to the top:—this was done after the reformation, when the nave was no longer serviceable. This nave is only 144 feet long by 28 feet wide, and consequently bears no proportion in size to the naves of many of our cathedral churches. There is nothing else to be seen here, excepting the *two buttresses*, which were built by *William de Croyland* before he could alter the nave. The first arches, in which these buttresses are built, are thus cut in half, on the east side part of the Norman *round*

* This north aisle is 90 feet long and 27 feet broad. It is asserted, from Willis's Mitred Abbies, that it was built by abbot *Bardeny*, before 1247—which the reader will hardly believe. Essex makes it much older; according to his authority it was built in Henry 2nd's time.

arch remains, and which shews that the arches had, before, the same span, but the columns being larger, there might not be so many.

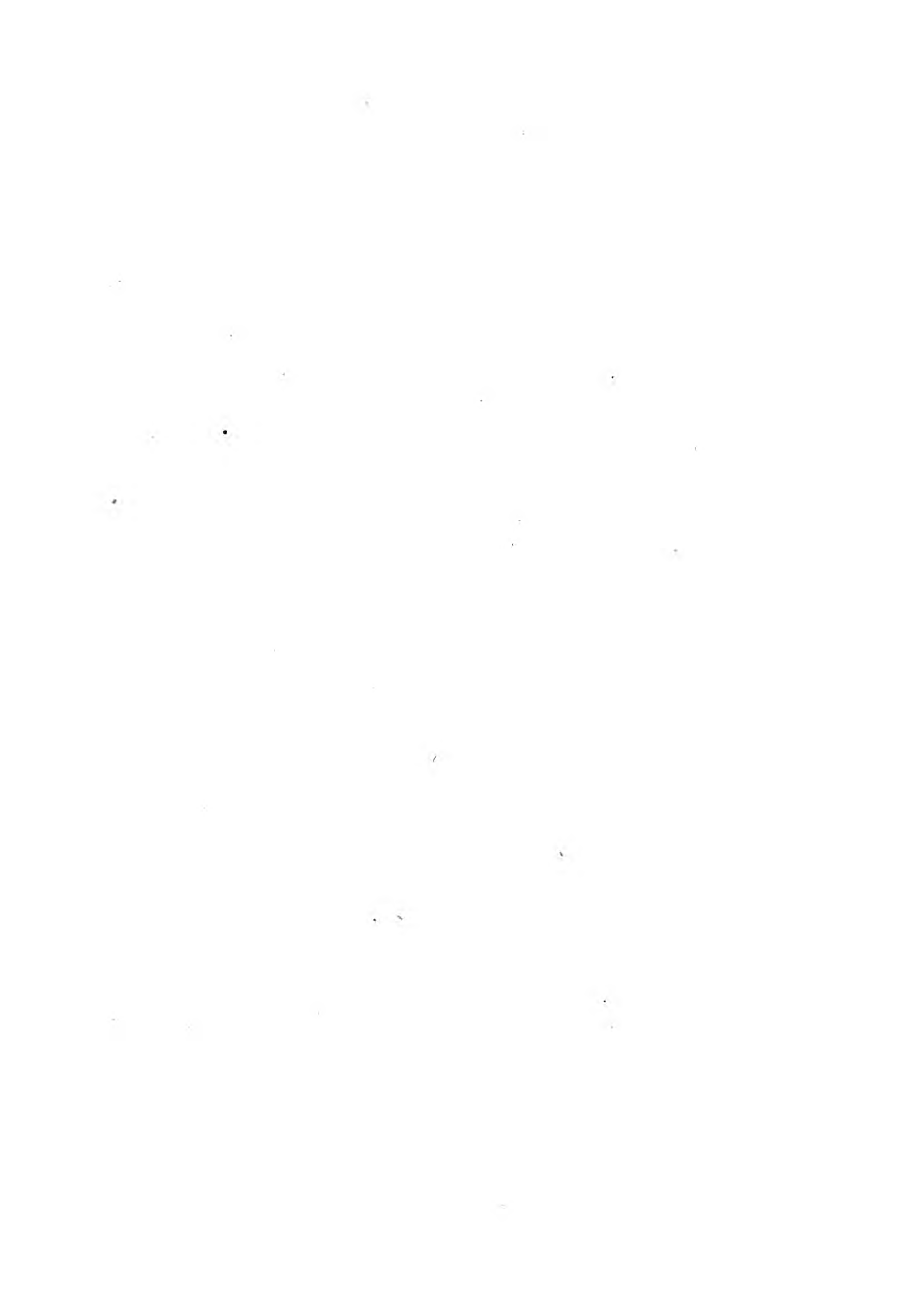
Passing out again the same way we entered, we will take a general view of the ruins: on the west side of the steeple are two huge buttresses, terminating in small pillars, which were originally surmounted with figures of beasts, very well carved; there is another like buttress in front of the west window; but the figures are all down but the center one, which some think resembles a *dog;* others will have it to be a *lion;* in truth, it is neither, but an *ens rationis*, as most of the carved figures on churches were.

This west window and door, it is thought, were built by abbot *Longchamp* about 1230 to 36; and were the first pointed arches at Crowland; but the spectator may see that, from the springing of the arch to the top, the workmanship is of much later date. The brickwork above, which fills what was, before, a very ornamental dilapidation for a ruin, has been too hastily censured; for certainly it may prolong the date of this curious front for many years. A considerable part of the *Norman front* to the south of this arch, had been taken away injudiciously, which occasioned the arch to part; which shews that the fears of the architect when he built the steeple, were not without reason. Standing at the distance of 20 yards, to the south-west, the spectator will see the height of the *Norman* wings of this front, before the steeple was built—what remains on the north side being partly hidden by the center buttress.—Here, also, will be observed, the *interlaced arches* which ornamented the

front of the south wing; just below which, is a hole in the wall, by some called *little ease*, and a story is trumped up of the monks being sometimes put in it as a penance; because, it is added, they could neither *sit* nor *stand* in it, nor *lie at length*. This would serve to shew, if we had not known it before, what nonsense is propagated by the dealers in marvels: a man may *sit* in it, at perfect ease;—and he might *lie* with his knees raised, or his feet hanging out, so as to get a very comfortable sleep if he were weary. There is an old door blocked up, immediately behind this hole, which door probably led to a stair, which, after passing by this hole, might lead to the *spiral stair* above; and this hole might be a receptacle for *letters*, *communications*, *small parcels*, &c. when the doors of the convent were shut.

In this thick wall, to the south, may be observed perpendicular and rectangular corners in the masonry, discovered by the dilapidations; this seems to indicate that the front has been only *cased*, at least *once*, when the stile and ornaments were altered: this might be the last time (i. e.) as the church was *completed* by *Robert de Redinges*, (A. D. 1190,) and, if so, the building was the same length, or, at least, the front terminated in the same place, (namely) before *Turketyl's church*. But *Joffrid* might take more ground *to the east;* and it is highly probable that he built the *choir* larger, whether the nave was enlarged or not.

Going along the south wall, it is surprising that there are no traces of any windows having been in it: we see the door ways that led to the cloisters, (now blocked up,) but no appearance that there were win-



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East View of CROWLAND ABBEY *Lincolnshire.*

dows. This side of the church, directly faced the buildings occupied by the monks, and not a window looked into the church, unless they were much higher than a man's head. This is a singularity which I can by no means explain.

On each side of the middle aisle of the nave, there were nine pointed arches, with fluted columns; but the side aisles were raised only one story, the center aisle being a *clear story* above, which is demonstrated by the windows which remain. The whole height of the nave was but 75 feet, so that, notwithstanding the magnificent dimensions ascribed to it, the building was neither lofty nor long.

The minuteness used in the quarto renders the description obscure, and therefore we will omit the old doors that have been blocked up, and other trivial notices, and direct our attention to the east end.—*(Vide plate annexed.)*

This Saxon, or Norman arch, supported by two massy columns, was highly ornamented with the various mouldings then in use; what remains of the arch, has only the *zigzag*, or *chevron work*, which formed the lowermost moulding; but if the spectator observes the springing of the arches near the capitals of the columns, he will see that several other mouldings rose above this, and formed the substance of the arch.—The springing of these arches, *eastward* also, proves that two other columns, equidistant, supported another like arch to the east, which were connected by others *north* and *south*;—this being *a square*, and the centre of the trancept, over which the tower was built.

It is here to be observed, that, from the capitals of these columns, and several of the mouldings above, (as the *cable* and *billet* mouldings,) which belong to the more ancient ornaments of the Saxon architecture, this square of columns and arches was, perhaps, built by *Turketyl*, who first introduced something like *cross aisles* in this Abbey; and, from its singular beauty, and the simplicity of the design, it was solicitously preserved in all the succeeding alterations: Joffrid, when he rebuilt the choir, supported it towards the east; and, in what his successors did at the nave, they left it standing as before: for, by its ornaments, it appears to be more ancient than any part of Peterborough cathedral that is now standing.

When *Richard de Croyland* began to beautify the *choir* with *pointed windows*, &c. it is obvious that he had no occasion to meddle with these columns and arches; and the *cross aisles* might be altered, as, in fact, they were, without disturbing them. *William de Croyland* propped them up, as we have seen, before he altered the nave; though perhaps he might take down the tower first, to lighten the pressure, having the present steeple, or bell tower, then in contemplation. But however carefully he preserved the arches, he most horribly deformed the design, by the *stone skreen*, which we will now turn to and examine.

" This (says Gough) was a skreen separating the nave and the choir, and, by the stile of the ornaments, appears to be of the reign of Henry 6th; but, contrary to the usual mode, it was under the *west* arch of the tower."

"The monk's choir (says Mr. Essex) was separated from the nave by a stone skreen of convenient height, finished at the top with a double row of quatrefoils. In it were two doors, and *between them two altars*, one towards the nave for public service, the other for the monks only; the doors were made for the convenience of those who officiated at the altar in the nave, and for the monks when they came out of the choir in procession."

The doors are now blocked up, and the *altars* are supposititious; public service is now performed in the *lower church*, and the high altar of the monks was undoubtedly at *the east end of the choir*.

There is no telling how high this skreen was—and, therefore, it is in vain to say *how it was finished*. As a skreen, it was the clumsiest thing that could be found; but, perhaps, it was *finished* with pointed ornaments, which were necessarily removed before the masons could build upon it to the top, as they did, after the reformation, when the nave was converted into a parish church.

Nobody ever saw a *skreen*, merely as such, built with the solidity which this possesses; it may, therefore, be supposed that it was built, principally, to strengthen the centre, before the aisles of the transept were altered. Doors were made in it because it must necessarily be practicable: thus they made a convenience of a blemish, and, by the stile of the ornaments, they formed *a skreen* where they could not avoid building *a wall*.

Much has been said of the uniformity of this building being destroyed by the *north aisle* (the present

parish church) *being so much wider than the south aisle* of the ruined nave; and abundance of conjectures have been wasted respecting the reasons of such a deviation when the nave was built in the pointed stile. But the truth is, that the building was never uniform; the *two aisles of the transept* were not alike, as may be plainly seen now, by the height and turning of the parts of the arches which sprung from these centre columns to the north and south; and the *two sides of the centre aisle of the nave* (in the Norman building) were not uniform, as may be seen by the arches of that date, which sprung from these centre columns to the west.

The east end of the parish church, which the spectator now sees, was built also after the reformation, when the aisle was wanted for its present purpose; the wooden lintel over the window, and other particulars, shew its modern date. It terminated, originally, in the north transept, and part of the ribs of the continued roof, are now left naked: thus the monks shut out the populace entirely from the transept and choir, there being, probably, an altar and skreen at the east end of this aisle, next to the transept: here the monks performed their service on common occasions, and retired by way of the transept.

There is nothing worthy of note along the north side, and the spectator again comes round to the front, which he may now examine more minutely. It is plain that uniformity was never in contemplation, when this building was altered, for the front itself presented the oddest compound of stiles in architecture; of beauty and deformity, (the patchwork of ages,) that could be found in Britain.

We shall not waste our time in conjecturing what might be the original form of this front; Turketyl undoubtedly altered and improved it, if he did not much enlarge the building in this direction; but of Turketyl's front there is no part remaining, unless it might be discovered by taking down the last *casing*. As the front was finished by *Robert de Redinges*, (1190,) it consisted of the *centre door;* and, probably, a smaller window over it, (where the pointed ones now are,) and two wings, in front of the two aisles, (relatively, lower than the centre,) which were ornamented with stories of arcades, as may be still seen on the south-west part, before observed.

The centre of this front, as it was altered by Longchamp, was highly enriched with sculpture; but it having been again rebuilt, from the springing of the arch, we must describe it as it stands. The statues above are in niches, with canopies; those below are placed on pedestals, in *alto relievo.* The following description is nearly verbatim from Gough, whose knowledge as an antiquary deserves here to be acknowledged.

" Almost over the point of the window, sits St. Peter with his keys, and at his left hand was St. Paul with his sword (now gone). There was also a standing and a sitting figure at the left hand of the latter, corresponding with a like pair at the right hand of the former; the sitting figure of these holds a book and knife (probably St. Matthias) and the standing figure holds a lance (perhaps St. Thomas). To the right of this last, are two more whole-length statues, one holding a

cross, the other having its hands joined, holding loaves: called by Dr. Stukely, St. Andrew and St. Phillip."

" Under these are two other whole-length figures —one a king, with a radiated crown, holding in his right hand a sword (the hilt only remaining), in his left a globe (probably Ethelbald); the other a gowned figure, holding in its right hand a broken cross, and in its left a book. Under these a headless figure holds a broken staff, perhaps a crosier, and the right hand on the breast; by him is a knight in armour, having a mantle over his shoulders, his pointed helmet is encircled with a coronet, and he holds a sword in his right hand, and his left on his breast."

The first of these Dr. Stukely believed to be *Abbot Turketyl*, and the other *William the Conqueror;* but Gough refers the last to *Waltheof*, who was so much honoured in this Abbey.

" Under these is a young bishop, pontifically habited, holding in his left hand a crosier, and lifting up his right to bless; and by him a figure in a mantle, and on its head a coronet, on the breast a fibula, and its hands support a fringed robe."—These are the lowest figures on the north side the window.

" On the south side the window, beginning at top, are two figures with books; one of them holding a club reversed, the other a crosier. Under them, a shaven religious, holding in his right hand a whip, his left blessing."

This figure represents St. Guthlac, having the whip of St. Bartholomew, which was preserved as a relique in the house.

" At the feet of this figure is a dæmon prostrate, which plainly alludes to the legend. A figure at his left hand, holds the hilt of a sword, or knife, which may be intended for St. Bartholomew."

Dr. Stukely makes it to be *a king, holding a scepter:* there is no telling what it holds, and therefore we cannot decide what it represents.

" Under these is a female figure, with something like a coronet, holding a cross in her left hand, her right on her breast: this is supposed to be St. Pega. The figure standing by her, habited in pontificals, is referred to Turketyl; he has a crosier and book."

" Under the female figure is a knight in complete armour, with a coronet round his pointed helmet, and resting both his hands on a battle ax." This Mr. Gough took to be Duke Siward, father of Waltheof; and the animal between his legs to be the dragon, which his legend says he vanquished: it appears to be a dog.

" At his left hand is a bishop with a crosier, his right hand blessing: this may be Ingulphus, or Joffrid, his successor. In the spandrils of this window, angels held shields of arms, which are now defaced."

" On the north side of the folding doors sits a defaced figure, setting its right foot on a beast, [now down, and removed as before related,] and by it a headless whole-length figure of a monk girt with a cord, and standing on a headless beast; on the pedestal is Adam and Eve, with the tree of life, and the serpent, finely carved; and on a pedestal near it is a small figure of an angel, headless."

The knot of the cord round the standing figure,

and the drapery of this headless angel, are exquisitely carved.

A corresponding group was on the south side of the door, now much mutilated: the standing figure was the Virgin Mary, and her pedestal represented a sitting figure of an angel (now headless) with a book open on its knee; the foot of the pedestal is a figure of which Gough has taken no notice; it seems to be *crushed* by the angel above, and its countenance expresses *satanic agony:* there is no piece of workmanship in the front better worth looking at.

As none of the former historians have attempted any explanation of these groups, we may venture here to imagine, that the *north group* refers to man in his lost state; attacked by dæmons, subject to miseries, and beset with temptations, but not entirely deserted by divine grace: at the bottom of this group, was a half figure, holding in its right hand *a lamb*, representing Christ. The *south group* might be supposed to represent the coming of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel; the *crushed* figure, at the foot of the pedestal, is SIN, overthrown by divine grace.

In the arch above the door the history of St. Guthlac is represented in a quatre-foil of *bas reliefs*, the centre containing a fifth subject. In the first leaf at bottom, is a boat bringing three persons to the island, (probably Guthlac, Beccelin, and Tatwin,) their arrival at which, is indicated by a tree, having a sow and pigs lying under it.

In the centre is a man, and a dæmon of monstrous shape: this signifies the temptation and assaults which the saint sustained at first.

In the right hand leaf is a figure coming to one sitting, *behind whom* (says Gough) *is a flaggon, and at his feet a ball;* these are effaced by time, but this *ball* might be intended for a *loaf*, and the sculpture be designed to represent the *consecration* of Guthlac, by the bishop who visited him.

In the left leaf is the saint dying, or dead; with one attendant, and an angel descending.

In the uppermost leaf he is carried by angels to heaven; and the sculpture, in few, represents his *arrival* at Croyland; his *temptation;* his *consecration;* his *death*, and *apotheosis*.

It is said that all the statues of this front were highly *gilded* and *painted*, but this could be no great commendation of the taste of the artist; the whole front is of *Bernack rag*, a brown coarse stone, but very durable; the small columns on each side the door are said to be of *Purbeck* marble: if this front was done about the same time with Peterborough front, they perhaps obtained these shafts from the same place where those were procured—that is to say (if the history says true) at *Alwalton*, near Peterborough.

Many of the figures of this front are much more decayed than they were when Gough described them, and though I have endeavoured to accommodate the foregoing account of them nearly to their present state, yet another half century may render this description unintelligible. The groups on each side the door have suffered most, and this is the more to be lamented because they were the most finely carved.

We have now minutely viewed the ruins, and shall close our history with a few general remarks on

their character, and such notices as others have furnished respecting the decay of the building, and its fate in the turbulent times under Cromwell.

There seems to be a perpetual attempt, in all the accounts we have, to exalt and dignify this Abbey; the description is evermore in swelling words, and inflated sentences; the parts are *lofty*, *noble*, *grand*, *magnificent*, *splendid;* the front is *the most beautiful specimen of gothic architecture;* and the statues are *almost Grecian*. To what purpose all this profusion of compliment is heaped upon Crowland Abbey, the spectator must judge, when he finds the place a disjointed and incongruous mass of ruins; built at different ages, and propped up with unweildy buttresses; irregular in its plan, and inconsiderable in size. The *beautiful* and *splendid* west front, he finds to consist of one large window; and a pair of folding doors, disproportionally low and little.

Mr. Essex gives the following account of the demolition of this church, which, by the affectation just mentioned, is rendered somewhat obscure:—

" * * * At its dissolution, which happened in 1539, this fine church, and buildings belonging to it, which, in the course of 800 years, had undergone such variety of changes, and on which such vast sums of money had been expended, by the assistance of many munificent and pious benefactors, in building and adorning them, were entirely demolished, except the *lower nave* of the church *and its aisles;* which being of little use after the reformation, *was* soon stripped of every decent as well as superstitious ornament, and left to the inhabitants *for a parish church*. Great

part of that was demolished by the zealous reformers of church and state, in the middle of the last century, [meaning the 17th century,] who left only one aisle of that once noble fabric, which still remains as a monument of their ignorance and barbarity, as the venerable ruins do of the piety of those who erected them."

These bye blows at the reformers deserve some serious notice, which we reserve to the appendix. This term, *lower nave*, again occurs in this account, without any idea being affixed to it; the best of this intelligence is, that the place being of *little use* after the reformation, was left to the inhabitants for a *parish church:* the writer was a papist, it should seem; or his reverence for antiquity must have impaired his understanding.

" The painted glass (says Dr. Stukely) was broken by the soldiers in the rebellion, for they made a garrison of the place." The town of Crowland was garrisoned for the king, and, in the year 1643, the parliament forces came to Peterborough, in order to the besieging of it. " Cromwell, himself, lay at Peterborough (says the history) with a regiment of horse, to carry on the seige, and the town was taken on the 9th of May, 1764, and Cromwell and his forces marched off to Stamford." This date of the year is so wrong, that the figures will not come near it by transposing them; it might be 1644, but the affair was too minute to be particularized in the history of those wars: it was in 1643, that Cromwell first began to distinguish himself, by obtaining a victory over the gallant *Cavendish*, at Gainsborough, on the 31st of July.—On what authority the foregoing minutiæ are stated, I

know not; but it is a part of tradition, that *Crowland Abbey was knocked down by Oliver Cromwell*, which thus obtains some support from written testimony.

This is all that we can learn of the demolition and decay of this once famous pile, (excepting only what has been effected by time,) since the dissolution of the monasteries, so many times mentioned, in 1539. Allowing that *then* the whole church was standing in tolerable repair, with all the offices and cloisters, it is difficult to conceive how the greater part should be so entirely gone, and yet, what is left, be so sound and substantial. The account we have given might be supposed to shew how part of them were thrown down, but would not satisfy us as to the removal of the materials. The whole of the monks' buildings, with the cloisters, and all the offices, &c. are entirely gone; and of the church, all the choir and transept, and a considerable part of the south aisle of the nave, are not only down, but the stone with which they were built is completely cleared away. The roofs, undoubtedly, first decayed; and, for want of repair, would at length fall in: the roof of the *nave* (according to Dr. Stukely) fell down about 1720. But certainly something besides time has assisted in the dilapidation of the walls; for the ruins have now stood nearly 300 years neglected; a considerable part of that time nearly naked; and, for aught that appears to the contrary, they may, in part, continue 300 years more, and yet, that which is gone is vanished as if it had never been. In a country so scarce of building materials, they would remove the stone which composed the abbot's buildings, to build houses in the town; and accordingly, some of

the oldest houses are built of such stone; but this would take but a small part of that which is gone, and the rest we must leave to conjecture, involved in doubt and hopeless obscurity.

We shall here take leave of this interesting ruin: —I have endeavoured to render the history of its various parts more in series; and, I hope, with more probability as to the order of time and the progress of architecture, than had been done before. In what I have differed from *Ray, Stukely, Essex, and Gough*, I might hope to be excused, even by them, if they were living; for they have very often contradicted themselves, and have all differed from one another.

But whatever information the reader may receive from the work, he will be, at least, gratified with the plates, which are very faithfully delineated, and represent the present appearance of the *ruin* very correctly. It is with pleasure that I pay a deserved compliment to the talents and industry of the artist; and I cannot omit to notice that the drawing of the east end (the most interesting view of the ruins) was added at the suggestion of *Mr. Wyche,* to whose good taste and commendable attachment to his native place, the public is indebted for a plate which throws a great light on the history, and may happily perpetuate the *Saxon remains* of the pile, when time shall have entirely obliterated the original.

END OF THE HISTORY.

OF THE BRIDGE.

AMONG the antiquities of Crowland, is a bridge of singular construction, which cannot be wholly omitted in our history, although it is difficult to say anything that is satisfactory about it.—To preserve what is said in the quarto, without any comment, would be to convey little useful information to the reader; and to contradict the particulars which are given, without substituting anything in their stead, would be to deprive curiosity and conjecture of the little assistance that has been afforded.—In this dilemma, I think it necessary to give the substance of what Gough (who was an antiquary) has written, with such objections as I cannot avoid forming; and endeavouring to derive all the assistance possible from Mr. Essex, to supply the deficiencies of both.

"The famous bridge at Croyland (says Gough) is the greatest curiosity in Britain, if not in Europe. It is of a triangular form, rising from three segments of a circle, and meeting in a point at top. It seems to have been built under the direction of the abbots,

rather to excite admiration, and furnish a pretext for granting indulgences, and collecting money, than for any real use; for though it stands in a bog, and must have cost a vast sum, yet it is so steep in its ascent and descent, that neither carriages nor horsemen can get over it."

What denominates a thing a great curiosity, I apprehend, is *scarcity;* and, consequently, the greatest curiosity, of whatever kind, must be an *unique.* We have here a further evidence of the fondness for *wonders* which we have frequently remarked in our historian; for, at the time when he wrote this account, there was *another bridge* of the same form and materials (but smaller) at Ramsey, in Huntingdonshire. Neither was the structure erected in a bog, nor did it, probably, cost *a vast sum;* whether the abbot (whoever he was) built it for the above purposes, we cannot tell, but the author has given no reason for thinking so.

"The rivers *Nyne, Welland,* and a stream called *Catt-water,* (on the sides whereof the streets of the town are built,) all meet under the great arch; and there forming one river, flow from thence, through Spalding, into the sea."

To describe this place as it really is, seems hardly to deserve the pen of an historian; accordingly, our author, availing himself of his right as a translator, has thought proper to luxuriate in remote description, and swell his imagination by the account given in ancient records. To this we could have no objection, had he qualified his information with a *said to have been,* or some equivalent of that kind; for want of which the visitor's confusion and disappointment may be easily

imagined, supposing him to have read the quarto, and believing the author to have described what he saw. These deficiencies it is our duty to supply by such means as the subject affords; keeping our narrative within the bounds of probability, and guided by rational conjecture.

Before these fen countries were embanked, it is likely that the rivers which ran through them divided themselves into smaller streams; in other words, *rivulets* might be diverted from them by accidental declivities. In summer, the smaller *runs* would probably be dry; —but, in winter, the whole country was overflowed for many miles. Of these rivers (which have been formerly enumerated) the *Welland* ran anciently *near to* Crowland; the (*Nyne* as it is here called) *Nene* or *Nen* ran by Peterborough; and thence easterly, discharging itself into the *Ouse*. *Catt-water* might be a branch of the Nen, which found its way, by a winding course, to Crowland; or it might be a stream diverted from the *Carr-dyke* cut, which being swelled by the winter's downfall, might find its way across Borough-fen common, towards the present sewer, (the *Southeau*,) and be turned artificially, so as to discharge its summer waters through Crowland bridge. From hence it is obvious, that *three* rivers never met at Crowland: there being but *three water courses*, it is naturally impossible; for *one* of these must carry the water away from the other two. This being perceived by the ancient historian, he invented "*a deep pit under the centre of the bridge, to receive the influx of these three rivers*:"—Here Mr. Gough begs leave to doubt his authority:—and, in a farrago where such a fable was

found, he might, with good reason, have oftener suspected the facts.

The *Welland*, we admit, ran naturally *near to* the island of Crowland—but not *through it*. It would not leave its bed, having an unlimited extent of flat country to the north-west, to break its way through the firm land towards the Abbey. To make this matter familiar to the readers it would be necessary to introduce a drawing of the scite of the town; which, as the subject has nothing to do with the Abbey itself, is not worth the trouble: I shall therefore only add, that if a stream called *Catt-water* originally discharged itself into the Welland, it must have cut off part of the high land to the west, the sides of which high land were washed by the Welland waters, especially when much swollen. Now, therefore, the scite of the town, if carefully inspected, will shew (very probably) that both the rivulets were excavated upon a plan which, by throwing all the earth on the lower side, enabled the inhabitants to build the north side of the west street, and the west side of the north street; and this excavation completed the present plan of the town, and produced the situation for the triangular bridge. The present low state of the ground on the back of these streets, gives still greater probability to this statement.

It may be gathered from the history, that this work was proceeded in by Turketyl when he had finished the Abbey, and might be continued by his successors as the inhabitants increased.

There might be a triangular bridge built here at this time, of wood, and put in the place of the original bridge, which could not be triangular because it

had but one stream to cross: but we forget every moment that *the charters were burnt*, and when they were restored they would (as in other particulars we certainly see) advert to the marks as boundaries which had in the interim became popular. Nevertheless Mr. Gough confidently refers to Edred's charter 943, and gives the present bridge this date. His words are as follows:— "This passage [in the charter] plainly proves this bridge to be a religious boundary at least as ancient as St. Guthlac's cross, and known so early as 943, and it is highly probable it was built some years before that period."

This is a most sagacious and careful conjecture, and no one will doubt but that the bridge must have been built before it could be known. He then proceeds,—"it is thought to have been erected by the abbots some time in the reign of King Ethelbald, who was upon the throne only from 856 to 960, and this opinion is strengthened by the antique image of that king being placed upon the bridge, &c."

In this passage Ethelbald, king of Mercia, who founded the Abbey, is changed into Ethelbald, king of Britain, who founded nothing. There is no specimen of the *pointed arch* so old by more than a hundred years as this must be, if built in 943.

"The image at the foot of the bridge (continues our author) was thought by the late Mr. Hunter to have represented Henry the 2d. Mr. Willis calls it St. Guthlac. One would rather suppose the royal founder of the Abbey to be a primary object with the builders of this extraordinary bridge. This figure is

vulgarly called *Oliver Cromwell, with a penny loaf in his hand;* the ravages of that usurper being remembered longer than the benefactions of the Mercian monarch."

Here is the true founder re-instated; but the conjectures above mentioned have no probabililty. The bridge was not built so early as Henry the 2nd's time; and the image has none of the insignia of a religious. That it was intended for the founder of the Abbey is generally admitted; but if it were not admitted it could not be proved, for it was never pretended that the features of any real person were preserved in the statue. The period guessed at by Gough for the erection of this bridge, is precisely that in which such an erection was least likely. The abbot *Theodore* was murdered by the Danes in 870, and from that time to the restoration by *Turketyl*, (941,) the Abbey was ruined and almost deserted.

We will now attend to the account given by Mr. Essex, which is much better digested, but not without a tinge of the romantic; a colour which those who paint antiques seem much to delight in.

" The triangular bridge at Croyland (says Mr. Essex) is a curiosity worthy notice for the singularity of its form, more than its extent, [size,] or any difficulty in the construction. The plan of it is formed by three squares, and an equilateral triangle about which they are placed. The bridge has three fronts; three ways over it and three under it."

" The abutments are separated by three streams, and are supposed to stand in three different counties.

It is in reality but one arch, composed of three half arches formed of three ribs, which are segments of a circle inscribed within three abutments, and, springing from low water mark, form three pointed arches, which unite in the triangle at the crown of the arch."

This is not mathematically described, and, if it were, it might not much assist the reader's imagination; let us try if less pomp, and fewer words, will not make the matter plainer:—the bridge has three abutments at equal distances, from which rise three half arches, (each arch composed of three ribs,) which meet in the centre at top; so that whichever way you view it, you see a pointed arch in front, and the ribs of the opposite arch behind it. The arches spring nearly from the bottom of the abutments, which are each 10 feet wide, 17 feet 6 inches distant, and the arch is 12 feet 6 inches high.

The abutments do not stand in *three counties*, nor in two counties; neither can we imagine why such a thing should be supposed; the streams and *low water mark*, must refer to ancient times. Since the embankment and drainage of the fens, water is occasionally let *into these rivulets* from the Welland, but it never runs back. Here are, now, no rivers that *flow from the bridge through Spalding to the sea;* indeed so little use is made of these water courses, that they are kept with no manner of care and decency, and that which might be made a comfort and convenience to the inhabitants, is changed into a most disgusting nuisance, fit only to wash mops in; and in summer being often without any water at all, it is no better than a noisome sink hole full of putrid filth: I know not who, nor whether any

body, is to be blamed on this account; I speak only of the thing as it is.* But to proceed with the bridge.

"About the year 1752, (continues Mr. Essex,) a bridge of this kind was built in France, on the road between St. Omers and Calais. It is a magnificent dome, pierced with *four* large arches upon a circular plan, and supported by four abutments. Four fine canals meet under it, and as many roads cross each other on the top of it. It is called the *Pont sans pareil* with great propriety, being excellently well contrived to answer all the purposes of travelling by land or water: the design is plain, but not inelegant; and it is an admirable piece of masonry."

One would think that Mr. Essex had been infected with a little of the *fanfaronade* of the French character in describing this bridge; these roads and canals undoubtedly must form eight radii of a circle, but whether there be *four* canals that cross each other, or only *two*, (and so of the *roads*,) admits, at least, of two opinions; I own I incline to the latter, but the reader must determine for himself. In this I think we shall agree, that if the bridge *answers all the purposes of travelling by land or water*, it is indeed a *Pont sans pareil*.

* At the time of the embankment and drainage of the fens, all sewers fell naturally into the hands of the commissioners under the act; and certain *inlets* for fresh water were directed to be made for the benefit of the adjoining districts. Accordingly, the inhabitants of Croyland, it may be inferred, would have a right to receive this benefit, for their comfort and convenience, and for the cleanliness and salubrity of the town. But it unfortunately happened, that a tract of land was, also, to be watered from the Welland, which lay beyond the town, and which could receive water only by passing through it:—hence arose occasion of quarrel and dispute; for, though the inhabitants had the right of letting water in, another interest had the power of letting it out, and the matter soon came to be regulated by caprice instead of justice. It cannot but happen, when once this machinery is put in motion, that there will be perpetual occasions of mutual vexation; there was no possibility of managing the matter for the common benefit of the parties, but by their mutual moderation and good will,—whether this will hereafter be better cultivated, time must shew.

"These properties (continues our author) are wanting in the bridge at Croyland, where the ascents and descents are so steep that neither carriages nor horses can pass over it, and foot passengers use it with difficulty. In short it seems to have been built rather to be admired for the singularity of its form than for its utility as a bridge. Hence it has been supposed that it was built under the direction of the abbots, to furnish a pretence for granting indulgences and collecting money, rather than for any real use; but I cannot agree with this conjecture, (though it was built in a superstitious age, when every artifice was employed to impose upon the ignorant for the purpose of collecting money,) because there is nothing so wonderful in its construction as to excite either admiration or devotion; unless the plan of it was intended as an emblem of the *trinity*, &c. but I cannot believe the builder had any such intention, because the singular situation naturally required the form he gave it, &c."

But Mr. Gough inclines to the contrary opinion: —"It is not improbable (says he) that, according to the superstitions of the age in which this bridge was built, it was intended as an emblem or representation of the trinity; for though it has three arches, yet is properly but one groined arch; and it may with equal propriety be termed a bridge of one or of three arches."

We must remark that our authors speak of *the superstitious age in which this bridge was built*, as if they both admitted it to have been built in the *same age;* but *Gough* says it was built between 860 and 943, (or thereabouts,) and *Essex* proves afterwards that it was not built before the time of Edward the 1st

or 2nd. We have already allowed that *a* triangular bridge was probably built here before this bridge of which we are now speaking, which is necessary to clear Mr. Essex of the absurdity, throughout the next paragraph, of speaking of *this bridge* as being built and not built.

"That it was built for a religious boundary is the most reasonable conjecture; though, strictly speaking, it cannot be a *boundary*, it being in the centre of their possessions; that is,—it must be considered as the place from whence their bounds were measured. It was used for that purpose by Ethelbald, when he first settled their bounds, as appears by his charter; and it was used for the same purpose in succeeding times, as appears by the charters of *Witlaf, Bertulph*, and Edred. Hence it has been supposed that it was built in the time of Ethelbald; and this opinion seems to be strengthened by his statue being placed upon it. In the charter of Edred, dated in the year of Christ 943, it is called the *triangular* bridge at Croyland; but in all the preceding charters, it is the *bridge* at Croyland without the appellation of *triangular;* and from thence I should conclude that it was not built long before the charter of Edred was granted. But the present bridge is not older than the time of Edward the first or second; consequently it must have been rebuilt since the time of Edred, if there was a *stone* bridge there in his time, which may be doubted."

If this bridge were built in the time of Edward 1st, it was built by the abbot *Richard de Croyland*, who resigned in 1303, and who, (as we have seen,) *began to rebuild the east end of the church, with a*

beauty and elegance superior to all the churches of the province; that is, who first introduced the *pointed architecture* at Crowland. (The west front excepted.) This is sufficiently probable; but as there is no evidence besides what is afforded by the bridge itself, I rather suppose it to have been built by *William de Croyland, master of the works,* under the abbot *Upton,* in the interval which there appears to be in the history of his building the *nave and steeple*, and the *north aisle* of the Abbey,—anno domini 1400, to 1420. My reasons for thinking so, the reader has a right to demand, and I wish they were more satisfactory:—in the first place,—William was an indefatigable builder here, and produced many clumsy specimens of his art; and if the absurdity of the *bell tower* be considered, (raised upon four tall pointed arches,) another such absurdity as this bridge may very well appear to be the work of the same hand. Secondly,—it does not appear to have much antiquity, for the masonry is not very good; and this is the case with the latter part of the building which he did at the Abbey; he grew old, and hurried his business to a conclusion, that he might see his designs matured, and enjoy the fame of his inventions, nevertheless, he left the groining of the *north aisle* to another hand. I can furnish no better reasons than such as these:—In proportion as the masonry is indifferent, so is the probability of its later date; William built every thing very plain, and this bridge is entirely without ornament, the statue excepted, which Mr. Gough calls a *stately image,* but which, in reality, is as rude as an image can well be. It is agreed on all hands that the bridge was built for no manner of use,

but to render that mark in the charters permanent, which had been so often referred to; and no person appears to have been better qualified than William, to contrive a thing under the denomination of *a bridge*, which should merely be an object of wonder, and that is all.

In the two next paragraphs, the conjectures of Mr. Essex appear to be much less satisfactory:—— "When this island was a solitary desart, inaccessible on all sides but by water, a bridge was useless; and when it was inhabited by Guthlac, and three or four hermits only, their cells were less exposed to the sudden attacks of the barbarians without a bridge than with one. But when Ethelbald, according to his vow, had *resolved* to build a monastery there, accommodations of every kind were wanting, not only for those who were to be employed in the building, but for the monks who were to inhabit it, for whose use he gave leave to build a town, with right of common for themselves and servants."

In the first place, this supposes, what has never been proved, that *a stream of water ran naturally through part of the island;* but, if the place was *inaccessible on all sides but by water*, why should the barbarians land on the west side of the stream, merely to be stopped for want of a bridge? In the next place, it seems to infer that the town was built before the Abbey, which is very far from the truth; but granting that they must build huts for the convenience of the workmen, they would surely not go beyond the stream to build them, on purpose that they might have to build a bridge to pass over? Better and drier ground lay

between the Abbey and this stream, (if a stream there must be,) and, indeed, the greater part of the island lay to the *eastward* of the Abbey.

It is the spurious charter of Ethelbald which has occasioned all this absurdity, and accordingly Mr. Essex proceeds upon the supposition that a town sprang up with the Abbey, (or before it,) and the inhabitants built a bridge to go to church; and had *right of common* in Goggishland, I suppose, and leave to keep geese in the wash! If all the lands for 5 miles, or 10 miles, in diameter (for it is not determined which) were given in fee simple to the monastery, what need of this superfluous *right of common?* The truth seems to be, that, when the surrounding lands came to be divided and cultivated, their *right of common* upon a certain unoccupied part was disputed, and therefore *Ingulphus* put it into all the charters. It was not until the time of *Egelric*, who succeeded *Turketyl*, that *Crowland became a considerable town*, (as we have noticed already,) which was 264 years after the founding of the monastery; but Mr. Essex goes on, with this charter in view, as follows:—

"A bridge must have been built for the convenience of those who lived on the opposite side of the river; this we may conclude was a wooden one, being easier and sooner built than one of stone. This bridge is mentioned in the several charters of Ethelbald, Witlaf, and Bertulph, by the name of *Croyland bridge;* the *triangular* bridge was not built then; and it is probable the inhabitants had no access to the monastery, while it was building, but by boats; [that is—while the monastery was building;] and after it [the monas-

tery] was inhabited, any other communication would have been inconsistent with the safety of the place. For in those days it was as necessary to fortify monasteries as castles, with walls, gates, moats, and draw bridges; they being as much in danger of sudden attacks from their powerful neighbours, as from the incursions of the Danes, when no man was safe in his own house unless that house was a castle. For these reasons I apprehend the only approach to the Abbey during the first 200 years after it was built was by water."

And certainly, according to this method of reasoning, the *only approach* to the island must be to land first upon the small part of it which lay beyond this stream. If there were no approach but by *water*, there was no approach but by boats; and what should prevent boats from landing men on the east side, as well as upon the west side of this stream?—Mr. Essex then goes on:——" The triangular bridge mentioned in Edred's charter was probably built by Turketyl when he restored the boundary stones; but if it had been built with stone, it would have been guarded by a strong gate, with portcullisses and other works, agreeably to the custom of those times; but as there are no traces of any such works, I conclude that *that bridge* was made of wood, and that the branch leading to the monastery was guarded by a draw bridge; or so put together that it might be totally removed upon any emergency. As the present bridge cannot be older than Edward 1st, I see no reason why it might not be built in the beginning of his reign; for the causes which before prevented their building a *stone bridge*

existed no longer. They had nothing to fear from the incursion of foreigners; the oppressive feudal lords were no longer so formidable as they had been, and a bridge might at that time be built without danger to the monks, who were sufficiently safe within the walls of the Abbey."

Whoever has been at Crowland, and has seen this *sewer*, (mis-named a *river*,) cannot but smile at this laborious attempt to explain the architecture and use of the bridge. It is the oddest whimsey to build a fortification at the crossing of such a *ditch* as this, that ever infested the brain of an antiquary. Here is a *river*, over which a man might almost have leaped; or, in summer, have passed dryshod in a moderate pair of boots, and, if a bridge be laid over it, it must be a *draw bridge*, or something more secure; although, on the side of the stream next to the church, there was neither stockade, nor barrier of any kind, to prevent an enemy crossing. To suppose an enemy to come from the nearest highlands; to pass the natural obstructions of bogs and morasses, and arrive at the island, and then to be stopped at a canal about 15 feet wide, which, in winter was boatable, but, in summer, was easily fordable, is perfectly ridiculous. But an enemy might come from the Spalding, or Moulton side, and then they would land on the *church side of the river*, and of course would not have this famous fortification to surmount: the whole supposition is utterly nonsensical.

The monastery was a fortification in itself, much stronger, and more secure, than it could be rendered by anything which could have been done at this bridge;

the whole precincts were shut in by strong stone buildings, and only one gate, or entrance, led to them; how, otherwise, was it possible to fortify themselves? Accordingly, on any great alarm, the inhabitants of the town carried their property within the Abbey, and assisted in defending it. In the time of the Danish plunderers it was probably not so secure, or their devastations might not have been so easily effected.

To what follows concerning the bridge, I do not think it necessary to offer any objection; it is verbatim from Mr. Essex, and seems sufficiently probable to answer every reasonable expectation: with it I shall, therefore, conclude the narrative.

"Why they should build a bridge which no carriage or horse could pass over, nor any foot passengers conveniently *walk over*, is somewhat difficult to account for. Had they intended it for *common uses*, without doubt those who built it would have built one convenient for *every purpose;* but I am inclined to think it was *not intended* for such uses, but for the support of a triangular stone cross, on a pedestal of the same form, set up at that time to answer two purposes: first to mark the spot from which, in all their charters, was the place from whence their bounds were measured, and [secondly] for a market cross. That it was used for the first of these purposes is very probable; and that statue of Ethelbald, now awkwardly placed on one side, was set upon the pedestal at the foot of the pyramid or cross, to commemorate their founder and benefactor, who first settled their bounds, and made that spot the centre of them. It was no uncommon thing at that time to set crosses upon bridges in recesses over

the piers, either to mark the divisions of counties, or the bounds of parishes, and sometimes for religious uses, as those were which stood on the sides of public roads. For this purpose chapels were sometimes built upon large bridges, and by the sides of great roads. As no people were more tenacious of their privileges and property than the monks, without doubt they made the perambulation of their bounds as often as the state of the country permitted. These perambulations were made with solemn processions from the church to the high cross, where the host was exposed with much solemnity to the people, who there received the benediction; and joining the procession from thence, with banners displayed, chanting litanies and psalms to solemn music *as* they marched to the several places where their bounds were marked by stones or crosses. ——[The *as* is redundant.] And if any of them had been thrown down by storms or floods, they were set up again; or if any were lost, they were set up again with the usual ceremonies. For this, and other purposes of the same nature, no bridge was better situated or contrived. It served likewise for a market cross. A market and fair were granted in the reign preceding that in which we suppose this bridge was built. (i. e. by Henry 3d.) Market crosses were generally raised on high steps; the lowermost serving as a bench to those who served the market with the produce of the neighbouring towns; but the space about this cross would not admit such steps, had the situation required them; therefore they made stone seats against the walls of the wings to answer the same purpose. After the dissolution of the Abbey, the bridge could not be used for

any religious purpose, and the cross being no longer esteemed, it is probable they removed it to make a clear passage over the bridge, and that the statue of Ethelbald (who was no saint) was then placed on the stone seat where it still remains.

FINIS.

APPENDIX:

CONCERNING

THE HISTORY OF THE BUILDING OF OUR MORE ANCIENT

Abbey Churches,

AND THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE

POINTED

OR

ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE;

DIGESTED FROM

THE ESSAYS PUBLISHED BY J. TAYLOR,

ON THE

ARCHITECTURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES,

BY THE

REV. T. WARTON, J. BENTHAM, AND J. MILNER,
AND CAPTAIN GROSE;

AND

APPLIED TO THE PERIODS AND PROGRESS OF THE BUILDING

OF

CROWLAND ABBEY.

NOTICE.

In the appendix I have not thought it necessary to preserve the numerous authorities referred to by the learned authors I have quoted; the facts may here be allowed to rest upon them. The passages taken directly from the Essays are marked with inverted commas, and sometimes interrupted with words included in hooks, where I have interposed something for the sake of compression, or explanation; or to draw out the inference more clearly. For this last reason I have rendered the quotations in a narrative, the object of which is previously stated, and pursued to the end in consecutive series.

APPENDIX.

THE principal intention of this appendix is to inquire concerning the original Abbey at Crowland, as it was built by Ethelbald, of which, as we have already observed, there is no account or description in the history. It appears, upon reflection, very natural that such a description should be wanting in ancient records; for those who saw the building as it stood, never imagined it would come down, and thought it impertinent to describe what any body might see. At length, when an historian * rose up who might have perpetuated its form and ornaments, it was gone:—but it does not seem that he was much affected by his disappointment, for he committed the very same fault in respect to the Abbey that was built by Turketyl, and probably for the same reason.

We are principally indebted to the labours of the learned Mr. Bentham, in his History of Ely, for being enabled, with some probability, to supply this *desideratum;* the historians of Crowland have entirely omitted it; but, not being willing to remain wholly silent, they have supposed the east end of the Abbey, now standing, to be part of the original building; and

* Ingulphus.

Mr. Essex, assuming this fact, has made out the rest of the building in due proportion, and positively asserted that the original Abbey was of the same length, height, and form, which the ruins now indicate:— that is—that the original Abbey was built in the form of a cross, having *a choir*, and *cross aisles*, such as we now find in cathedral churches. This assumption, and this procedure, are wholly destitute of support from historical records.

But before we proceed to the subject proposed, we shall take occasion to consider the conduct of the *reformers of religion*, which has been roughly handled by the historians of Crowland; nor has it entirely escaped the censure of the reverend and learned authors of the essays before us. It may be very natural when a pious mind, refined by taste and learning, and feeling a reverence for antiquity, considers the mischiefs committed in turbulent times, that emotions of indignation should arise against the *ignorance* and *barbarity* of those hands, which, out of intemperate zeal, destroyed some of the finest monuments of the christian church. But, surely, it would equally well become a member of the *reformed* church, to plead that which may be very well urged in their favour, as to fix a general stigma on their actions, without so much as hinting at the tyranny which they overthrew.

This inconsiderate, and, I think, ill-directed censure, might furnish just occasion of some severe animadversions to the critical pen; but our reflections on the subject shall, here, be more general and popular, taking a more extensive view of *causes* and *consequences*, than are to be gathered from the mere fact of

a mob of ignorant soldiers sacking a monastery, defacing its images and burning its reliques.

It is hardly to be hoped that governments in *church and state* ever will (as they never have) secure their own perpetuity by the exercise of a wise economy, and by gradually adapting their institutions to the progress of society; this is the more to be lamented, because it does not appear to be founded in necessity. But there is, on the other hand, a physical power which certainly will (as it always did) break out at last, and overwhelm them. Insulted and long-suffering humanity; artfully kept ignorant; goaded by the engines of power; disgraced with slavery, and starved by taxation; is not likely to be very mild and merciful in its revenge: contest inflames the parties, and mutual rancours accumulate by reciprocal violence. But these *reformations*, which are so greatly to be deprecated, are, undeniably, as much the work of *providence*, as those institutions, the corruptions of which have thus provoked their downfall: if any one understands these remarks in a jacobinical sense, he entirely misapprehends the writer; who only means to observe, that the tendency of the *abuse* of civil and religious institutions, is perfectly clear to numberless persons, who must suffer for the errors which they neither had any share in producing, nor have any power to prevent. I shall not descend to the invidious task of pointing out in what particulars these observations might be applied to our times, and to our own country; all history is eloquent on this subject, and, because the facts are of a nature to be seen more clearly at a distance, we need but turn

our eyes to modern Europe to see and confess some striking examples.

The horrors and miseries that happen to nations in the individual, during those storms and commotions which are destined to sweep the pestiferous vapours of accumulated oppression from the moral horizon of society, are dreadful but to witness; appalling even in recollection; in society, a terror; but, to nations, an example; in history, a lesson of perpetual instruction. To reformation in religion, mankind have waded through rivers of blood; and to improvement in political freedom, the same sad necessity is enforced by the pertinacious adherence of progressive corruption to the food which produces and nourishes its distemperature. When the day of retribution is past, flatterers and court sycophants vent their indignation against the revolters, and can see no error nor shadow of provocation in the system of oppression which could be no longer borne: this is so far from being beneficial or wholesome to a state, that it lulls the system which succeeds into similar confidence and supineness, and, finally, plunges it into the same abyss which had swallowed up its predecessor.

Considering the picture from this elevated point of view, the partial evils which accompany resistance to intolerable tyranny recede from the eye, or dwindle into mere spots on the canvass. Lamentations over ruined abbies, which time would, ere now, have defaced if violence had not, are little better than childish; and the piddling censures directed against the excesses committed by an illiterate soldiery, are too

puerile to mislead, although they designedly point to consequences without developing causes. But we may very well allow the historians of Crowland all the reputation they can claim on the side of political and religious tyranny, who have found nothing worse with which to upbraid *the reformers of church and state* (at whom they sneer so much) than the tumbling down of saints, and the demolition of monkish pageantry. They were not likely to be very discriminate in their indignation; not content with the overthrow of the hierarchy, they waged war with costly edifices and senseless images, because they coupled them in their minds with oppression and imposture.

Physical power, whatever be the cause in which it is employed, cannot be restrained from excesses; neither does it follow that all those who directed this force were men of superior wisdom and piety. It pleased God that the abominations of the popish priesthood should be swept from this island, and this was effected by human agents; some of these were fanatics, and some might be hypocrites,—alas! if there had been none such among their opponents, how should this contest ever have arisen?—It is not the motives of the reformers, their zeal, nor their piety, which we have to defend; we consider only their provocation,——and, while we see and feel the beneficial consequences of their exertions, it is reasonable and just that we should rejoice in their success, and thank God always. Let us put out of view the *carved skreens* and the *painted altar pieces* which they demolished, and remember only that their implacable resentment against the vices of the Romish church, has propagated light

and freedom; while the *learning and taste*, with which the others are complimented, would have perpetuated darkness and slavery.

Whether those who sneer at the reformers, and sing the praises of the Roman catholic priesthood, ever asked themselves if, *therefore, it ought to be wished that the condition of society, under the latter, had continued?* does not appear; but the affirmative seems to be implied, and a more diabolical wish cannot enter into the heart of an Englishman. On the contrary, the reformation in religion ought to be regarded by every thinking man as the very origin and foundation of all the blessings and freedom we enjoy; and to whine over the sufferings of those from whom the power was wrested, and who did all that men could do to perpetuate the shackles of superstition, and to bury all future generations in ignorance and servitude, is but an ill use to make of the knowledge we have acquired, and the opportunity which is given us of comparing what we are with what we might have been:—one side of the picture may be seen in Spain.

The observations of the Rev. Mr. Bentham, in regard to this matter, are of a different character from those which I found in the *History of Croyland;* he laments, only, the mis-governed conduct of the *commissioners*, who were, at different times, appointed to remove *superstitious relics*, &c. and, by consequence, the unnecessary demolition of some of the elegancies of architecture, and the removal of some of the toys and trinkets of monkish pride and splendour.

" Unhappily (he observes) the orders and injunctions given to the several commissioners under Henry

the 8th, and in the following reign during the minority of Edward the 6th, and likewise in Queen Elizabeth's time, for removing and taking away all shrines and superstitious relics, and seizing all superfluous jewels and plate, were often misapplied, carried to excess, and executed in such a manner as to have, at least in some instances, the appearance of sacrilegious avarice rather than true zeal for the glory of God and the advancement of religion."

The reverend author has, here, joined the commissions during the progress of the reformation, with those under Henry the 8th for the suppression of the monasteries; which had not the same reasons, though they might be executed with about equal moderation. The commissioners under Henry, while they exercised a plenary power, filled the king's pockets, and, perhaps, gratified their own spite; they were but men, and they delighted to despoil the orders in whose splendour they did not participate, and which had become excessively rich and vain-glorious. But whatever wrong they did, it has nothing to do with the *reformation*, and the odium of their conduct must not be transferred to the *reformers*. How much Henry the 8th studied to promote the *glory of God*, God only knows; the *advancement of religion*, meaning thereby *the true knowledge of God's word; the increase of piety; the practice of humility and charity; the virtues of self-denial, temperance, contempt of wealth, and disregard of worldly interests; the continual reciprocation of brotherly love, and all the religion of the heart and the affections*; this, it is pretty clear, was never in his thoughts; the conduct of the monks had

nothing to do with anything of this sort; the Roman catholic religion, in short, as it increased in power, splendour, and all sorts of corruptions, preserved nothing of religion but the form; and even that was of their own contriving, a pompous and imposing pageantry; a dissembling eye service; an unintelligible jargon of sounds, united with frippery and holy water; in a word, a series of blasphemy and imposture which we cannot now think of without emotions which it is not decent to express. If clergymen of the church of England lament the loss of *shrines* and *superstitious relics*, it is but fair to infer that it is the overthrow of hierarchy, not religion, which extorts their groans; it is the idols of that power over which their imaginations hang and fondle.

But let us hope better; let the relics of superstition go; let them be swept from the face of the earth, if possible—and, laud be to God, there are great approaches making to this desirable end—the church of England, I hope, is not in danger therefore; nothing can shake the fabric of it so long as its members do their duty. They know the consequences of corruption—of lukewarmness—of idleness—luxury—neglect—pride—ill lives, and bad example; possessing a degree of wealth and splendour, highly necessary to learning, and favourable to solemnity of ceremonial service, but invidious in society when enjoyed with pomp, and exercised with a strict view to self-interest; they can stand in no need of being warned of the gradual sapping of counterfeit humility, and the covert approaches of those who, without privilege or immunity, are likely to obtain the favour of persons whom they never of-

fend. Why should not religious establishments outlive the revolutions of states, but because they partake of the same corruptions, and extend not their empire over the affections of the people?—In *France*, we saw superstition exchanged for atheism, because there had been no religious controversy to enlighten the minds of the people, and to shew them that christianity has nothing to do with the tyranny, the hypocrisy, the impositions, the mummery, by which they were besotted, robbed, enslaved, abused, and intolerably priest-ridden; so that, when they threw off superstition, they believed nothing. They had never been taught the sublime morality of the christian code, and the whole of the mischiefs which followed are fairly chargeable upon the vices of their government in church and state.

The reformation in this kingdom was effected more happily; not, indeed, without tumult and bloodshed, but with a steady and determined purpose to support religion divested of its abuses. Some splendid buildings were destroyed by the fury of conquering armies; some were gutted and defaced; some curious *skreens* were thrown down, and certain *images of saints*, and *altar pieces*, were trodden upon, shot at, or burnt by the soldiers: but many of the finest monuments of religious architecture, are preserved for the dignity of our service.

Our reformation was a work of time, and it came to be completed under a wise and free government; by persons learned and enlightened; hence they put out of the church of Christ, nothing but its abominations; wisely concluding that some degree of shew and ritual solemnity would be necessary (not to make too abrupt

a change) striking the mind, as it always will, (whether serious or simple,) with awe and veneration. Thus we have an establishment which possesses all the advantages of the Romish church, but without its evils; its power and its pollutions; its mummeries and prophanations; its tortures and inquisitions.

In conclusion, while we see so much cause to deprecate these mischief-spreading *reformations*, let us do all in our power to prevent them: that is—by reforming abuses, and extending privileges, to render them unnecessary.—This is the only way to prevent revolutions in all countries; for where the people are overloaded with oppression, the bonds of tyranny must be drawn till they snap. The strongest government is that, which, if it were overthrown to day, the people would set up again of themselves. Some there are who consider the objects for which the people sometimes clamour, as mere toys, of no use to them if granted: if this be so, then certainly no mischief could follow to the *granters*. For my part, I am of this opinion; —and I think, moreover, that he who denies a child a rattle, may prove an enemy to his own repose.——— But it is time to put an end to this digression: may Almighty God preserve to us, and to after ages, our happy institutions in church and state—by putting it in the minds of our rulers in both, to think wisely and to act moderately.

Returning to the Abbey, we have now to collect and arrange the information which we have gleaned

from the essays already enumerated. We have seen it asserted, that this Abbey was originally built *of stone, in the form of a cross*, and of the magnitude and dimensions which it possessed in its most splendid periods. The first thing, therefore, that strikes us in the perusal of the essays, is, *that it is established with considerable labour and difficulty that any of our conventual buildings were of stone, before the Norman conquest; or at any rate, before the time of Edgar.* But, granting this, (for it is sufficiently proved,) it is not so clear that they had *columns and arches*, (i. e.) *side aisles, vaulted with stone, and columns to support the roof.* This, however, is satisfactorily proved in the affirmative by the Rev. Mr. Bentham; but it yet remains to be established that they had *cross aisles*. The last point, the reverend and learned author gives up; or confesses that it does not appear that any of our monasteries were built *in the form of a cross*, before 974. Neither does it appear that before this time (or near it) any of our churches had a steeple (tower, or otherwise) at either end.

But there is no doubt but that the Saxons *had many instances before them, of churches, and other public edifices, erected in the time of the Romans*, which proves the fact that they were well acquainted with the Roman manner of building, (i. e.) *by columns, arches, and vaultings; and the famous Benedict Biscopius, in the year* 675, *went over into France, to engage workmen to build his church* [in the monastery of Wermouth] *after the Roman manner;* but more than a hundred years previous to this, Mr. Bentham finds mention made of three churches which were founded

by *Ethelbert*, king of Kent. [The church in the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul—St. Andrew's at Rochester—and St. Paul's, London.] "These (he observes) "were the earliest churches erected after the conversion "of the Saxons was begun: whether these were built "by the Saxons themselves, or by architects procured "from other countries, is not of any great moment to "determine, since we are only considering the general "state of architecture at that time."—Ethelbert's conversion took place in 561, and he immediately set about building these churches, in regard to which the point is to prove that they were built *of stone*, and had *columns and arches*, and *porticos*, (i. e.) *side aisles*; and, from the arguments and facts which the reverend author adduces, (too long to be here inserted,) this is very probable.

He says afterwards—"we have still more certain "and explicit account of churches built in the northern parts of the kingdom during the seventh century, "in which both pillars and arches are expressly mentioned,"—as the conventual church of Rippon, in Yorkshire, and the cathedral church of Hexham, in Northumberland; which latter is described from ancient authors, at great length, as being *the most sumptuous building*, at that time, *on this side the Alps*.

"In the beginning of the 8th century (continues our author) the same stile of architecture that was used here in England by the Saxons, was making its way into the more northern parts of this island; for Bede tells us, that, in the year 710, Naiton, king of the Picts, wrote to Ceolfrid, abbat of Gyrwi, and informed him that he intended to build a church of stone in hon-

our to "St. Peter; requesting that he would send him "some artificers to build it after the Roman manner." Hence it appears that the stile then in use was called the Roman manner of building; the remains of which has been among us, in modern times, industriously called the *Saxon architecture*—that is—*heavy columns*, and *semi-circular arches*.

"About the same time (continues our author) A. D. 716, Ethelbald, king of Mercia, founded the monastery of Croyland in Lincolnshire;" adding those particulars, from Ingulphus, about the *marshy foundation*, *the piles*, and the *heavy earth*, (which he calls *more solid*,) which we have already treated of.

I have hastily traced this series of building, and placed the Abbey of Crowland in its true situation, that it may appear before the reader with some leading evidence in regard to its stile and date: architecture was all this time in the *Roman manner*, and we shall see presently what that was, more particularly as to the form of the buildings.

The Rev. Mr. Bentham next mentions the rebuilding of St. Peter's at York, about the middle of this 8th century, and concludes, from the description of that building, (including *pillars*, *arches*, *vaulted roofs*, *porticos*, &c.) that architecture must have been carried, in that age, to a considerable degree of perfection.

Soon after this, the Danes began their depredations, and religious architecture was laid aside; many of those buildings being now demolished which had been erected at great expense; the people were almost continually harrassed, and the government had more pressing business. About 940, in the time of Edred, peace

and security returned, and leisure revived the elegant arts.

Mr. Bentham passes by the reign of Edred, and, of course, makes no mention of the restoration of Crowland by *Turketyl;* this is clearly because no description is given of the *form*, and stile of building, in which the Abbey was re-edified. But about this time (he says) by the accounts we have of some monasteries erected under Edgar, it appears that *some new improvements in architecture* had lately been made; and he instances the Abbey (which he stiles *famous*) of Ramsey, in Huntingdonshire.* Fortunately there was some description given of this building in the history of it; which is a circumstance that gives us (as it were) foot hold, and brings us a step forward in our enquiry: the words are thus quoted by our author—"by a de-"scription given of this church, it appears to have had "*two towers* raised above the roof; one of them at the "west end of the church, affording a noble prospect "at a distance to them that approached the island; the "other, which was larger, was supported by *four pil-*"*lars in the middle of the building*, where it divided "into four parts, being connected together by arches, "which extended to other adjoining arches, to keep "them from giving way."—"From hence (continues Mr. B.) one may easily collect that the plan of this new church was *a cross*, with side aisles, and was adorned with two towers, one in the west front, and the other in the intersection of the cross; a mode of building, I apprehend, which had not then been long in use here in England."

* Finished in 974.

In this place we will stop a moment and look back upon Crowland Abbey, which was rebuilt, by Turketyl, almost 30 years before the church at Ramsey. As it seems very probable that the east end, as it now stands, is part of the building erected by Turketyl, so it is very likely that this church was the first building *in the form of a cross* that was erected in England; and that Turketyl, who had been much employed abroad, was the occasion of introducing this form, from the numbers of the like which he had seen in Normandy, where religious architecture was then much superior to what it was in England. Hence this *form of a cross*, came afterwards to be called the *Norman manner of building*, of which we shall speak more in due place. We now return to follow Mr. Bentham in his account of the *Roman manner*, which preceded the other.

"It is obvious to remark (says he) that in the descriptions we have remaining of the more ancient Saxon churches, (particularly those of St. Andrew's at Hexham, and St. Peter's at York, fully enough described,) not a word occurs by which it can be inferred that these, or any other of them, had either *cross buildings* or *high towers* raised above the roofs; but, as far as we can judge, were mostly square, or rather oblong buildings, and generally turned circular at the east end; in form, nearly, if not exactly, resembling the *basilicæ*,* or courts of justice in great cities throughout the Roman

* Among the numerous authorities quoted by the learned author, he inserts one directly to the fact here specified, as follows: "St. Peter's at York, begun by King Edwin A. D. 627, is particularly reported by Bede to have been of this form, "per quadrum cœpit ædificare basilicam."—*From Bede's Ecclesiastical History.*

empire; many which were, in fact, converted into christian churches, on the first establishment of christianity under Constantine the Great; and new erected churches were constructed on the same plan, on account of its manifest utility for the reception of large assemblies. Hence *basilica* was commonly used in that, and several succeeding ages, for *ecclesia*, or *church;* and continued so even after the form of our churches was changed. Now these *basilicæ* differed in their manner of construction from the *templa;* for the pillars of these latter were on the outside of the building, and consequently their porticos exposed to the weather; but the pillars of the former were within, and their porticos open only towards the nave, or main body of the building; their chief entrance, also, was on one end, the other usually terminating in a semi-circle: and this, I conceive, was the general form of our oldest Saxon churches."

These remarks are taken originally from the Rev. Mr. Bentham's History of Ely, and, at this passage, he very happily introduces an engraved plan of the old conventual church at Ely, founded in 673. It was exactly of this form; the circular *east end* resembling what we should now call a *bow window;* but in 1102 this circular end was taken down and enlarged, making it into a building somewhat like the *choir* of our present cathedrals.

The ancient church at Abbendon, built about 675, by Heane, the first abbot of that place, was also of the same form; and, without doubt, Peterborough conventual church, founded in 664, was built in the same manner. From hence we may reasonably conclude

that *Crowland* church (which was built but a little above 40 years after some of these) followed the same plan of architecture: it appears, from all accounts, to have been quickly erected, and it was, therefore, probably much smaller than the plan which its present ruins exhibit.

From this time till about the reign of Edred (as before mentioned) the history of religious architecture is interrupted; there was no progress made, on account of the inroads of the Danes; and the next step which Mr. Bentham makes, is to the æra of the use of bells; which it appears "gave occasion to the first and most considerable alteration that was made in the general plan of our churches, by the necessity it induced of having strong and high raised edifices for their reception." Or, more properly, the use of bells, and of towers to hang them in, were adopted together from our Norman neighbours; for, as the invention of bells probably came from the east, it is likely that they were common in Rome long before they were brought to England, and would arrive here with other contemporary improvements. There has been enough said of bells in our history, since we cannot add anything that is satisfactory; but Mr. Bentham's observations lead to the supposition that they were *invented* here, and that *steeples* were afterwards *invented* to contain them; though he immediately adds that, from the encomiums bestowed on king Alfred as an architect, it is probable that the innovations began in his reign: "perhaps from *models imported from abroad*, by some of the learned foreigners he usually entertained in his court." —He seems, also, to think that some obscure hints of

something like *central towers*, and *cross aisles*, may be traced to his time, as if *these*, too, were *invented* in England. But he observes afterwards that " our historians expressly mention *a new mode of architecture*, brought into use by the Normans; and particularly apply it to the Abbey-church of Westminster, built by king Edward the Confessor about A. D. 1050, in which he was buried; and afterwards speak of it as *the prevailing mode throughout* the kingdom."—That is to say, it *was then*, and *had been* (but they do not say *how long)* the *prevailing mode* of *building churches* in England.

This was the plan already described in the Abbey-church at Ramsey, and in which mode we suppose that Crowland church was built by Turketyl, and which cannot be traced further back than about the middle of the tenth century; it is certain that this stile of building and the *use of bells* came in together; and I wonder that our modern critical enquirers should be at so great a loss " to account for the real difference (as Mr. B. says they are) between the Saxon and Norman modes of building." For though this mode came in a while before the conquest, yet, by far the greater part of our conventual churches, and all the larger of them, were built (and all in this stile) afterwards.

" Some specimens of this kind of building (he says) had been produced a little before the conquest, *owing to our communication with the Normans, &c.*" And the difficulty which the *critical enquirers* find, seems to be of their own making—because they will needs have the architecture, like the kingdom, Saxon till the conquest. " The Saxon churches (says our

learned author) were often elegant fabrics, and well constructed, as has been observed before; but generally of moderate size, frequently begun and finished in five or six years, or less time.* The works of the Normans were large, sumptuous, and magnificent; of great length and breadth, and carried up to a proportionable height, with two, and sometimes three, ranges of pillars one over another, of different dimensions, connected together by various arches; (all of them circular;) forming thereby a lower and upper portico, and over them a gallery: and on the outside three tiers of windows: in the centre was a lofty strong tower, and sometimes one or two more added at the west end, the front of which generally extended beyond the side aisles of the nave or body of the church." To this description may be added, the *arcades* (or successions of arches) of proportionate sizes, which ornament the outsides of the stories, and which seem to be a part of the improved method. The ornaments, what few there were, (especially the mouldings of the arches,) were common to both methods; but there is no manner of reason for supposing that the Saxon churches, properly so called, had either *cross aisles*, or *towers*.

After the fire of London in 1086, St. Paul's church was began to be rebuilt by Mauritius, bishop of that see, (in the time of king William Rufus,) and it was observed, (says Mr. Bentham,) "that the plan was so extensive, and the design so great, that most people who lived at that time censured it as a rash undertaking,

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* It is also a striking difference between the Saxon and Norman churches, that the former had but one story in the aisles of the nave; the middle aisle being a *clear story*; as Crowland Abbey was at first, and so it always continued.

and judged that it never would be accomplished; and this notion seems applicable to most of the churches began by the Normans. Their plan was indeed great and noble, and they laid out their whole design at first, scarcely, we may imagine, with a view of ever living to see it completed in their lifetime. Their way, therefore, was usually to begin at the east end, or the choir part; when that was finished, and covered in, the church was often consecrated; and the remainder was carried on as far as they were able, and then left to their successors to be completed."

It seems, however, by our *History of Croyland*, that Turketyl *began* and *finished* his church; but we must recollect that it was but small compared with many that were built after the conquest. He had, besides, very powerful assistance, and lived many years in it; and, moreover, it is not certain but that he built the *choir* and *cross aisles*, with *a tower* over the centre, *leaving the old nave as it was*, or nearly so. We may, also, remember that Joffrid found it necessary, to rebuild, (that is) to *enlarge* the choir, after the fire in 1091; partly, perhaps, because it was much injured by the fire; but principally because some very desirable improvements in this part, had since been introduced. Thus was the Abbey-church at Crowland completed in the Norman manner; and thus it remained until the *pointed architecture* began to be introduced.

We might here put an end to this appendix, but that the author is willing to convey to his readers some part of the delight and instruction which he has himself derived from *the Essays on Gothic Architecture*,

mentioned in the begining; which cannot, he thinks, be too widely circulated, nor too often printed. With this view, he will first pursue the Rev. Mr. Bentham's account of the Norman churches; and afterwards give a concise account of the rise and progress of the *pointed* or *English architecture*.

"All our cathedrals, and most of our Abbey-churches (besides innumerable parochial churches) were either wholly rebuilt, or greatly improved, within less than a century after the conquest; and all of them by Normans introduced into this kingdom; as will evidently appear by examining the history of their several foundations. Particular accounts may be found in Dugdale's Monasticon; Godwin de Præsulibus Angliæ; Willis's History of Abbies, &c. Thus, Lanfranc, promoted to the see of Canterbury 1070, began the foundation of a new church there. Thomas I. archbishop of York, 1070; Walcher, bishop of Durham, 1071; Walkeline of Winchester, 1071; Rimigius of Lincoln, 1076;—all of them foreigners;—did the like in their several sees; and so of the rest. It was the policy of the first Norman kings, to remove the English or Saxons from all places of trust or profit, and admit none but foreigners; insomuch that Malmesbury, who lived in the reign of Henry the 1st, observes, 'that in his time there was not one Englishman possessed of any post of honour or profit under the government, or of any considerable office in the church.'* The bishoprics, and

* This was the case much earlier. The conqueror was naturally a tyrant, and the English formed so many plots to rid themselves of his government, that he found no other means of safety: he wholly trod them down, and confiscated all their property, giving it to his favourites and partizans: which is the origin of all the nobility, which may now be called *ancient*, in this kingdom.

all the best ecclesiastical preferments were filled by those foreigners, and the estates of the Saxon nobility were divided among them. Thus being enriched and furnished with the means, it must be owned, they spared neither pains nor cost in erecting churches, monasteries, castles, and other edifices, both for public and private use, in the most stately and sumptuous manner. And I think we may venture to say, that the circular arch, round-headed doors and windows, massive pillars, with a kind of regular base and capital, and thick walls, without any very prominent buttresses, were universally used by them to the end of Henry the 1st's reign, A. D. 1134; and are the chief characteristics of their stile of building. Their capitals were generally left plain, though instances occur of *foliage* and animals on them; as those on the east side of the south transept at Ely.—[And, of *foliage*, on the capitals at the east end of Crowland Abbey.] The body or trunk of their vast massive pillars were usually plain cylinders, or set off only with small half columns united with them; but sometimes to adorn them they used the *spiral groove* winding round them; and the *net* or *lozenge work* overspreading them: both of which appear at Durham; and the first, in the undercroft at Canterbury. As to their arches, though they were for the most part plain and simple, yet some of the principal ones, as those at the chief entrances, &c. were abundantly charged with sculpture of a particular kind. [These are the mouldings many times mentioned.] As the *cheveron work*, or *zig-zag* moulding, the most common of any; and various other kinds, rising and falling; jetting out, and receding inwards alternately, in

a waving or undulating manner. The *embattled frette*, a kind of ornament formed by a single round moulding, traversing the face of the arch, making its returns and crossings always at right angles, so forming the intermediate spaces into squares, alternately open above and below: specimens of this kind of ornament appear on the great arches in the middle of the west front at Lincoln; and within the ruinous part of the building adjoining to the great western tower at Ely. The *triangular frette*, where the same kind of moulding at every return forms the side of an equilateral triangle, which gives the intermediate spaces that figure. The *nail head*, resembling the heads of great nails, driven in at regular distances, as in the nave of old St. Paul's, and the great tower at Hereford. [All of them found in the more ancient Saxon buildings also.] The *billeted moulding*, as if a cylinder should be cut into pieces of equal length, and these stuck on [leaving like spaces, or interruptions] round the face of the arches; as in the choir at Peterborough, and at St. Cross, and round the windows of the upper tier on the outside of the nave at Ely. [Also, at the east end of Crowland, remains of this are to be seen.] This ornament was often used (as were also some of the others) as a *facia*, *band*, or *fillet* round the outsides of their buildings. [And, wrought in various ways, it formed a moulding in the arches, called *the cable.*]——To adorn the inside walls below, they had rows of little pillars and arches, [*arcades*,] and applied them, also, to decorate large vacant spaces in the walls without: and another method called the *corbel table*, consisting of a series of small arches without pillars, but with the heads of men or

animals, serving instead of corbels or brackets [imposts] to support them; these they placed often below the parapet, projecting over the upper tier of windows, and sometimes over the middle tier. [A specimen of this is found on the Norman remains of the west front at Crowland, quite at bottom.] Besides these, they used also the *hatched moulding*, both on the faces of the arches, and as a *facia* on the outside:—this consisted of notches, as if cut with the point of an axe, and left rough. [This was, also, used as an ornament upon small columns.] And lastly the *neebule*, a projection terminating by an undulating line, as under the upper range of windows at Peterborough."

To these marks, Mr. B. adds some that are negative; they had no *niches*, seldom any *statues*, nor *escutcheons of arms*, and no *tracery*, in their vaultings.

"It cannot be expected (he continues) that we should be able to enumerate all the decorations they made use of, for they designed variety in the choice of them, [I dont well understand this,] but a judicious antiquarian, who has made the prevailing modes of architecture in distant times his study, will be able to form very probable conjectures concerning the age of most of these ancient structures; the alterations which have been made in them since their erection will often discover themselves to his eye. Perhaps the most usual change he will find in them, is in the form of the [lower] windows; for in many of our older churches, I mean such as were built within the first age after the conquest, the windows, which were originally round headed, have since been altered for others of a more modern

date, with pointed arches. Instances of this kind are numerous, and may often be discovered by examining the courses of the stone work about them, [as in the *choir* and *transept* at Peterborough,] unless the outward face of the building was new cased at the time of their insertion: (as it sometimes happened:) without attending to this we shall be at a loss to account for that mixture of round and pointed arches we often meet with in the same building."

"There is, perhaps, hardly any one of our cathedral churches of this early Norman stile, remaining entire, though they were all originally so built; but specimens of it may still be seen in most of them. The greatest part of the cathedrals of Durham, Carlisle, Chester, Peterborough, Norwich, Rochester, Chichester, Oxford, Worcester, Wells and Hereford; the tower and transept of Winchester, the nave of Glocester, the nave and transept of Ely, the two towers of Exeter, some remains in the middle of the west front at Lincoln, with the lower part of the two towers there; in Canterbury, great part of the choir, formerly called *Conrade's choir*, (more ornamented than usual,) the two towers called St. Gregory's and St. Anselm's, and the north-west tower of the same church; the collegiate church at Southwell, and part of St. Bartholomew's in Smithfield, are all of that stile: and so was the nave and transept of old St. Paul's, London, before the fire in 1666. York and Lichfield have had all their parts so entirely rebuilt at separate times, since the disuse of round arches, that little or nothing of the old Norman work appears in them at this day. The

present cathedral church of Salisbury is the only one that never had any mixture of this early Norman stile in it. It was begun in 1220, and consists entirely of the stile which is now called [improperly] *gothic;* a light, neat, and elegant form of building, in which all the arches are *pointed;* the pillars small and slender, and the outward walls commonly supported with buttresses."

We have here passed through the Norman period, and arrived at the first complete specimen of the English architecture: but we must now go back, and trace the origin of the pointed arch, and its slow and gradual progress to this complete and separate state; which was quickly after followed and adopted, and its stile and ornaments courted by all our prelates and religious architects in the kingdom; insomuch that, not only all additions and repairs were done in this stile, at all our cathedrals, &c. but many of them were altered in a considerable degree, to this stile, without any necessity of repair, and for the mere emulation of ornament.

In tracing the probable etymology of the term *gothic,* the Rev. Mr. Bentham has the following remarks:—"The term *gothic,* applied to architecture, was much used by our ancestors in the last century, when they were endeavouring to recover the ancient Grecian manner, (for the Romans borrowed from the Greeks,) but whether they had then a retrospect to those particular times when the Goths ruled the empire, or only used it as a term of reproach to stigmatize the productions of ignorant and barbarous times, is not certain; but I think they meant it [of the architecture

of our early christian churches, which was really Roman architecture (though of a rude age) and was] so called by our Saxon ancestors themselves."

"But some writers call all our ancient architecture *gothic*, without distinction of round and pointed arches; though I find of late, the fashion is to apply the term solely to the latter; the reason of which is not very apparent. The word *gothic*, no doubt, implies a relation some way or other to the *Goths;* and, if so, then the old Roman way of building (our Saxon and Norman way) seems to have the clearest title to that appellation: not that I imagine the Goths invented, or brought it with them; but that it had its rise in the gothic age, or about the time the Goths invaded Italy. The stile of building with pointed arches is [comparatively] modern, and was not known in the world until [six hundred years after the Goths had ceased as a nation."]

"Sir Christopher Wren thought that this should rather be called the *Saracen* way of building; the first appearance of it here was, indeed, about the time of the crusades, and that might induce him to think the architype was brought hither by some who had been engaged in those expeditions, when they returned from the Holy Land. But the observations of several learned travellers, * who have accurately surveyed the ancient mode of building in those parts of the world, do by no means favour that opinion, or discover the least traces of it."

"Cornelius le Brun, (says Captain Grose,) an indefatigable and inquisitive traveller, has published many views of eastern buildings, (particularly about the Holy

* Pococke, Norden, Shaw.

Land,) but only one ruin with pointed arches, besides the church near Acre, occurs; and both these were built by the christians while in possession of the country. Near Ispahan in Persia, he gives several structures with pointed arches, but these are bridges and caravanseras, the date of which cannot be determined; and consequently they are as likely to have been built after, as before the introduction of this stile into Europe."

The same writer then mentions some buildings of this kind at Ispahan, but which it is not certain are older than 1600 of the christian æra. The tomb of Abdulla, one of the apostles of Mahomet, has pointed arches; but it is not known how long after his death it was erected. It is said to be decayed by time; but this may be from the badness of the stone, as much as from the antiquity of the building.

" Some have supposed this kind of architecture was brought into Spain by the Moors, (who overran that country about the middle of the 8th century,) and that from thence, by way of France, it was introduced into England. But the only instance which seems to corroborate this supposition (at least the only one proved by authentic drawings) is the mosque at Cordova, in Spain; where, according to the views published by Mr. Swinburne, although most of the arches are circular, or horse-shoe fashion, there are some pointed arches, formed by the intersection of two segments of a circle. This mosque, it is said, was finished about the year 800; and if these arches were part of the original structure, they might be allowed to decide the question; but as it is also said that this mosque has been more than once altered, and enlarged by the mahome-

tans, we can conclude nothing from it unless we knew the date of the present building."

"There are also pointed arches in the Moorish palace at Grenada, called the Alhambra; but this was not built till the year 1273,—long after pointed arches are known to have existed in England."

"In the drawings of the Moorish buildings, given in *Les Delices de l'Espagne*, (said to be faithful representations,) there are no traces of the pointed style of building; there, as well as in the Moorish castle at Gibraltar, all the arches are represented circular."

These remarks are extracted from the essay of Captain Grose, and added as an amplification of Mr. Bentham's remark, that actual observation does not favour the common opinion *that the pointed architecture was brought from abroad.* I shall here scarcely anticipate the reader's reflection, that it is the origin of the *pointed arch*, not of the *pointed architecture*, that has been all along enquired after. Who would not suppose, on hearing that the pointed stile of building was imported from Palestine, or from Barbary, or from Persia, that, in one of these countries, at least, the churches, or mosques, and palaces, and all splendid buildings, were of that elegant order; brought to perfection, and richly ornamented?—Accordingly, some of those who believed the stile to be *Saracenic*, discovered that it was admirably adapted to a hot country; by its long aisles, and lofty roof, and massive walls, keeping out the sun, and producing cool porticos, or colonades, to walk under; and that it was foolishly adopted here, where cold and humidity are generally prevalent.*

* Vide *Riou's Architecture.*

These notions are certainly obvious, and sufficiently prepossessing; but, unfortunately, they are entirely unsupported by fact; a *pointed arch* or two have been found in Spain, in Palestine, and in Persia, of uncertain date, and included in structures where the greater part of the arches are *round;* and even these appear to have been the consequence of alteration, for it is certain that the *few* are more likely than the *many* to be thus produced.

Is there, in all this, anything like a proof that the *pointed architecture* was imported? Even if the oldest *pointed arch* could be proved to have been found abroad, it would not affect the conclusion in any degree: there may have been *pointed arches* in some of their buildings in Persia, (*or elsewhere,*) accidentally produced, as ours were; but they did not follow up the plan; they did not apply this method to the whole of immense structures, as was done here. Besides, when we had got the *arch,* where should we have gone to find the pillar? The elegant cluster column, and all the enrichments of the capitals; together with the finnials of the buttresses, and spires of the roof—the tracery of the windows, and the fret-work of the vaultings,—these were not imported with the arch; there were no prototypes from which we could copy.

But why should it ever have been thought that the form of a *pair of compasses* extended upon two perpendiculars, must needs have been copied from foreign objects? The pyramids are, indeed, the oldest *pointed* buildings, but they are not arches; the *roofs* of houses are *pointed* and the *roofs* of our churches were *pointed* long before they had pointed arches; and, certainly,

if this sort of imitation must be accounted the origin of this arch, there was no occasion to go so far from home to catch the idea. In truth, it seems likely enough, that clumsy pointed arches were first constructed in building bridges over small streams, on account of their manifest simplicity; for a few flat stones placed on their edges, and leaning together, would form an arch of this sort; and, by erecting many piers, they would at last have a long bridge over a wide and shallow water: but it is not to these remote probabilities that we need trace the enquiry,—foreigners were as likely to adopt such arches, as ourselves; and so they were to strike out the aspiring arch from two segments of a circle, had they been as much in the habit of building long colonades, and vaulted porticos, with arcades in the walls both within and without; but if about the same time with ourselves, or something before, or later, they formed any pointed arches at all, they did not pursue the idea, and complete the order. Until they can produce such an entire building as *Salisbury cathedral*, in any foreign country, (and older than that,) or such another as *King's College* chapel, in Cambridge, we may safely conclude, with the authors I have quoted, *that the pointed architecture is truly English.* "Having thus in vain (says Grose) attempted to discover from whence we had this stile, let us turn to what is more certainly known, the time of its introduction into this kingdom, and the successive improvements it has undergone."

"I have not met (says Mr. Bentham) with any satisfactory account of pointed arches; when invented, or where first taken notice of. Some have imagined

that they might possibly have taken their rise from those arcades we see in the walls of the early Norman buildings, where the wide semi-circular arches cross and intersect each other, and form thereby, at their intersection, exactly a narrow and sharp pointed arch. In the wall, south of the choir, at St. Cross, is a facing of such wide round interlaced arches, by way of ornament to a flat vacant space; only so much of it as lies between the legs of the two neighbouring arches (where they cross each other) is pierced through the fabric, and forms a little range of sharp pointed windows: it is of king Stephen's time; whether they were originally pierced I cannot learn. But whatever gave occasion to the invention, there are sufficient proofs [that] they were used here in the reign of Henry the 2nd. The west end of the old Temple church, built in that reign, is now remaining; and has, I think, pointed and round arches originally inserted; they are intermixed; the great arches are pointed; the windows above are round. The great western tower of Ely cathedral, built in the same reign by Geoffry Rydel, bishop there, (who died A. D. 1189,) consists of pointed arches. At York, under the choir, remains much of the old work built by archbishop Roger, in Henry the 2nd's reign; the arches are but just pointed, and rise on short round pillars, whose capitals are adorned [as the Norman capitals often were] with animals and foliage."

At the conclusion of the volume from which this appendix is taken, there is a series of engravings intended to illustrate the *rise and progress* of the pointed arch; some of the subjects of which we shall here

arrange, in addition to what Mr. Bentham has produced :——

I.—The first specimen is part of a series of intersecting round arches, (or *interlaced,)* each round arch forming, below, two narrow pointed ones: these are taken from the upper part of the south transept of Winchester cathedral; being part of the original work, constructed before the year 1093.

II.—The next specimen is the series of interlaced arches from St. Cross, quoted above from Mr. Bentham, where the intersections are *left open*, forming a series of pointed windows (though small, and without mullions) which enlighten the chancel. This church was built about 1132.

III.—The third specimen, from the same church, represents two highly pointed arches, without any circular intersections; but ornamented with Saxon mouldings, and supported by Saxon pillasters.

IV.—The fourth specimen is from the same church, and is to the same purpose, but more extended: it consists of massive Saxon columns, with their appropriate capitals, supporting *pointed arches*, throughout the whole western nave. These are, also, part of the original work.

V.—The fifth specimen is the great western portal of the same church. It consists of a double-pointed arch, with trefoil heads, and an open quatrefoil in the centre above them; forming, altogether, one elegant pointed arch, which rests upon four slender columns, with neat capitals and bases. The arch has, also, ornaments appropriate to the order, differing entirely from the Saxon.

This arch presents a perfect specimen of the style as it was in the reign of king John, and the early part of Henry the 3rd, from whose time the pointed style is dated. It is evident (says the writer) that this portal was added after the general building of the church; * and the windows of the upper part, and the groining of the nave, were also then altered to their present appearance.

VI.—The sixth specimen is the great west window of the same church, over this portal, and built at the same time. It is divided by simple mullions into five principal lights, having a wheel above, ornamented with trefoils, &c. This is believed to be one of the earliest *great west windows*, which afterwards became a general ornament to our churches.

These will suffice for our purpose; it was shortly after that the cathedral of Salisbury was begun, and nobody will doubt but that the pointed architecture had made many and rapid improvements, since an entire building was planned in this stile, so soon after it originated. We have seen that Salisbury was begun in 1220; and it was about the same time that Peterborough cathedral had advanced to the end of the nave; and the front was added in this new order.—" Hugh Norwold, bishop of Ely, during the same period, took down the circular east end of the cathedral there, and built that elegant structure now called the Presbytery, which he finished in 1250. King Henry the 3rd also, in the year 1245, ordered the east end, tower, and transept of

* Placing it about the beginning of the 13th century. This fashion rapidly spread—for we have reason to believe that Crowland *west window* was erected soon after the *front* of Peterborough, which was done in 1236, according to the history.

the abbey-church at Westminster [built by Edward the confessor, in the Norman manner, as already mentioned] to be taken down, in order to rebuild them in this new prevailing style."—The new work of St. Paul's (of the same kind) was begun in 1251; and, besides these, many considerable alterations and additions were made to several cathedral and conventual churches, and new buildings carrying on at the same time in different parts of the kingdom. Thus it appears that the first *pointed arches* in the churches of this kingdom, were probably formed at the church of St. Cross, near Winchester; at which church they were gradually extended and improved. Soon after which the cathedral at Salisbury was begun, and the style immediately spread over the kingdom; some churches it surprised in the building, and arrested the progress of the Norman manner; others that had not been long finished, were, in part, taken down to admit the advantages and ornaments of this new method.

" During the whole reign of Henry the 3rd the fashionable pillars to our churches were of Purbec marble, very slender and round, encompassed with marble shafts a little detached, so as to make them appear of a proportionable thickness: these shafts had each of them a capital, richly adorned with foliage, which uniting in a cluster, formed one elegant capital for the whole column."—The use of marble pillars (which were laid aside in the next reign, being found liable to split) is a striking argument in favour of the date which we have given to Crowland *west door*, where such shafts are still to be seen.

But one other remark may be here added respecting the *Norman remains* of the west front of our Abbey. It is observed by Mr. Essex, "that it consisted of *five stories* of arches, some of which were circular, some *pointed*, and others *interlaced*." Which fact is yet visible to the observer. Now the oldest *interlaced* work which has been particularized in the essays before us, is that mentioned in *specimen, number* 1, page 177, from Winchester cathedral, and which is known to have been constructed before the year 1093, being prior to the first crusade, "and affords perhaps, the earliest authentic specimen of the pointed arch to be met with in the kingdom." [*Essays, p.* 164.] It has been, also, noticed, that the last work done at this part of the front was, probably, a *casing* only, upon what was done before:—now, therefore, it will plainly appear that the front *so ornamented*, was not the work of Turketyl, when he built the *tower* and *cross aisles*, &c. 943—but was added by some of the abbots after the fire of 1091; probably by Joffrid, when he rebuilt the choir.

We will here bring our tedious enquiry to a close; it is not necessary to trace the progress of the pointed architecture, through its minute and gradual improvements, to its perfection, (as in King's college chapel,) and thence to its decline, when it supported a short-lived contention with the Grecian orders as introduced about 1550; as may be seen in the portico of the schools at Oxford, where the architect has introduced all the *Grecian orders* to adorn an edifice of *pointed architecture:* it was, at length, finally put a stop to, by *Inigo Jones.*

It will appear obvious from hence, that the pointed architecture, hitherto generally called by the abusive term *Gothic*, is truly *English*. Whether the first pointed arch was formed in England, cannot be determined; and, if determined, is nothing to the purpose; for it was in England only that the invention was followed up. Ours was the gradual improvement, from the very first accidental beginnings, to the splendid completion; the ramified windows, the ornamental niches, the elegant canopies, and the delicate lace work of its fretted roofs. All its peculiar ornaments are English; from the narrow pointed window with a trefoil head, to those, wide and lofty, at the east and west ends of our churches, divided by numerous mullions which branch out into all the tracery that decorates their aspiring tops. "The trefoil, by an easy addition (says Milner) became a cinquefoil, and being made use of in circles and squares, produced *fans* and *Catherine's wheels*. The pointed arch, on the outside of a building, required a *canopy* of the same form; which, in ornamental work, (as the tabernacle of a statue,) mounted up, ornamented with leaves, or crockets, and terminated in a trefoil. In like manner, the buttresses that were necessary for the strength of these buildings [that is, to resist the lateral pressure of their vaulted roofs] could not finish conformably to the general style of the building, without tapering up into ornamented pinnacles. [Or finnials.] A pinnacle of a larger size became a spire; accordingly spires were raised upon the square towers of former ages. Thus we see how naturally the several gradations of the pointed architecture

arose one out of another, (as we learn from history was actually the case,) and how the intersecting of two circular arches at St. Cross, may, perhaps, have produced Salisbury steeple."

FINIS.

J. Drakard, Printer, Stamford.