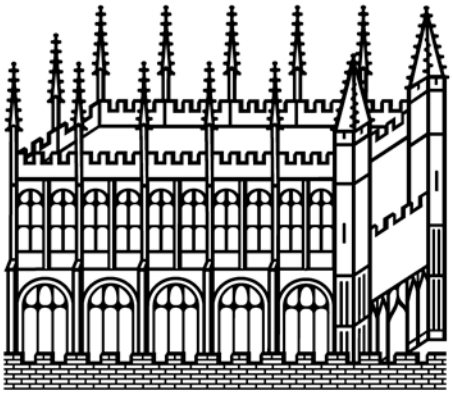


6/.

Gloucester 4'31

[By James Dallaway,
1823.]

NOTICES

OF

ANCIENT CHURCH ARCHITECTURE,

IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY,

PARTICULARLY IN

WITH

HINTS

FOR PRACTICABLE RESTORATIONS.

"IPSI SIBI SOMNIA FINGUNT."

VIRG.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, FOR J. NORTON, BRISTOL, AND BALDWIN, CRADOCK AND JOY, AND MAJOR, LONDON.

THE FOLLOWING STRICTURES ARE ADDRESSED

TO

THE REVEREND SAMUEL SEYER, M. A.

THE ABLE AND ERUDITE HISTORIAN

OF

BRISTOL,

WITH GREAT PERSONAL ESTEEM,

A FULL APPROBATION OF THE COMMENCEMENT,

AND SINCERE WISHES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL PROGRESS AND

COMPLETION OF HIS IMPORTANT WORK,

BY HIS FAITHFUL FRIEND AND SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

Jan. 1, 1823.

A Proeme.

NE of the brightest autumnal mornings, when at Weston-super-Mare,* had induced me to wander among the rocks under Worle hill; and that I might inhale the air, which had passed from Newfoundland uninteruptedly over the Atlantic, more bland than the classical *Favonius* of Italy, I reposed myself upon a stone-seat. My mind was full of the scene around me, and as my eye glanced from one beautiful feature to another, memory presented to me a bay, land-locked in like manner by promontories and shelving masses of red and grey granite, with similar rocky islands, set in the sea.

Returning from the Levant, many twelvemonths ago, a Mediterranean storm had forced the ship into the bay of Telamone, in the Florentine territory, where, upon landing, I was detained for two days. It was at the same season of the year. The coincidence of this with the "fair Lavinian shore," is indeed most remarkable. In front, Mount Argentiere projects to the south, like Bream down—on the west, the isle of Giglio is extended, like the coast of Glamorgan.—Monte Christi lifts itself from the waves as the Steep-holms, in the centre, with the same lumpish form and mural rock at one extremity, as it were, violently shorn off—and a headland of Elba is crowned with a light-house, as that upon the Flat-holms.

Comparison of one picturesque object, or whole scene, with another, is a true source of information and delight; reflection introduced similar points of view, and memory confirmed the recurrence of the appearances of nature in countries very distant from each other.

* A pleasant village and bathing place on the Bristol Channel.

Thus I fell insensibly into successive hallucinations, until I was fairly enveloped in a day-dream—at least in something

"—— rather like a dream, than an assurance."

Then I saw (or seemed to see) a tall man, suddenly turning round the corner of a rock, and pursuing the sheep-track, which led to my seat; who advanced towards me, and was habited in the *costume* of the reign of King Henry 7th.

He inclined a little, as being about 70 years old—his air was that of an ancient gentleman (or perhaps a physician)—his coat was of light purple cloth, short, and not falling below his knees, with full sleeves, puffed or slashed with silk, and trimmed with sables. His doublet was of black stuff, and a small twisted chain of gold was suspended, but not low, from his neck. He had a "potent," or short stick, in his hand, with a horn top. A gleam of kindness, rather than deep intelligence, played upon his healthful countenance—his eyes were grey, but bright, and his beard shaven, with whiskers. His bonnet was round, with the edges divided and turned up, and made of black velvet. I was observing him with perfect complacency, when I became a little startled, upon hearing his voice, and the language of other times.

THE DIALOGUE.

W. W.—Save you my master—may allhallowes have you in their holy keeping!

OTTIΣ.—I return your salutation with respect, and request the satisfaction of knowing to whom I am now speaking.

W. W.—William Botoner, called Wyrcestre is present with you. It seemeth me good to hold a brief parlance with you, touching the state of our ancient native town of Bristow, when I paced and measured almost all the great buildings within it, not overlooking forsooth, any street, lane, gate, conduit, or cellar, for in those days, most of the space for housing of merchandize lay beneath the ground.

OTTIΣ.—Your perseverance, my worthy Sir, has merited and received the praise and thanks of every intelligent lover of topography, for the Panorama you have presented, of objects now sunk in the abyss of time.

But I am somewhat curious to learn some of the leading events of your life, before we discourse concerning your Itinerary.

W. W.—You *(a)* know that I was born in Bristow—my father's name was Wyrcestre; but having married a daughter of Thomas Botoner, of Coventry, the younger brother of two very rich men, and being more wealthy himself than my kinsfolk, I have used that name. (*b*) I spent four years at Oxford, (*c*) yet not as a very painful student; and having been fostered by that most worthy knight, Sir John Fastolfe, I repaired to his castle of Cayster, in Norfolk.(*d*) There I became his valect or retainer—his seneschal—his secretary and his physician. I attended him in the wars, and so highly did he prize my bounden service, that he made me the overseer of his last will. God rest his soul! All the toil and tene that I had heretofore taken was as nought to my bickerings with the Pastons and Mowbray Duke of Norfolk, in that behalf. But having waxed grey in that service, I came back, as doth the hunted hare, to the form which I had left; and woned in my own house in Bristow.(*e*) There I dwelled in peace and quietness; tilled my large garden,(*f*) lying without the Castle-ditch, anont the churchyard-gate of St. Philip's, with medicinal herbs—healed the poor sick folk, and kept my body in health by my walks, daily taken, in some quarter of the town. Once upon a time, it bethought me, to mark down in my tablets sundry measurings of the churches and other main buildings, and who had builded them, as far as I could ken. I am told, that a certain clerk of Cambridge hath imprinted my (*g*) rude scrawl, which, it seemeth, he had not the cunning to decypher truly, in all words. It was a rough scantling only.

OTTIS.—In your notes, you have made no mention of your maternal grand uncles, Adam Botoner and his elder brother, having, in fact, exceeded even William Canynge in munificence, as the founders of a church larger, if not so richly ornamented, as that of St. Mary Red-

(*a*) Itin'. p. 277.
(*b*) Itin'. p. 276.
(*c*) Itin'. p. 178.
(*d*) See the Paston Letters, 4 Vol. 1, 4to. 1787-90, published by Sir J. Fenn, particularly two in the 4th Vol. pp. 65 and 73; dated 1455 and 56.
(*e*) Itin'. p. 277.
(*f*) Itin'. p. 210-214.
(*g*) Itinerarium, sive Liber rerum memorabilium Willelmi-Botoner dict'. de Wyrcestre. Ex Cod. Autographo autoris in Bibliothecâ Coll. Corp. Christi, Cantab. No. 210. primus eruit edidit que Jac. Nasmith, M.A. 1788, 8vo.

cliff. St. Michael's, Coventry, is still perfect, and one of the finest parish churches in England. (*h*)

W. W.—I was never at Coventry. That thing was irksome and sore to me to think upon, seeing, that I was thereby deprived of a portion of my patrimony from the fear of purgatory;—but Master Canynge had far more goods and *richesse*, and did not thereby bereave his children of their means.

OTTIΣ.—I have seen three of your memoranda or note-books. Your Itinerary has been more faithfully copied by another clerk of Cambridge, (*i*) and, with your collection of medicinal receipts, is (*j*) now safely kept in the British Museum; and your compendium of English history, which Thomas Hearne hath printed, is now preserved in the library of the Herald's College. (*k*) I must be candid with you to remark, that your hand-writing is in so very cramped and small a character, as to have rendered a perusal of your MSS. a matter of no inconsiderable difficulty.

W. W.—I cry you mercy! Verily and in sooth, you are not enow aware, that I wrote only to be read, by myself. Day after day did I ponder well, in what fashion I should indite a book for other men to read, touching our famous town. Nathless, that day never came. And the Clerks of your time have been fain to carpe at my Latin and English, without due intendment. Now, gramercy! as to my Latin, it is a sort of vernacular language, then much in use with priests and lawyers, and eke with leeches—but, by my fay, not like that written by that pithy clerk, Dan Cicero.(*l*) For my English, it is not less good than that which was then commonly written or spoken, for which I can vouch; (*m*)

(*h*) Dugdale's Antiq. of Warwickshire, Vol. 1, p. 147, Edit. 1730.

(*i*) The Itinerary of W. W. transcribed from the original MS. by W. Cole, M. A. It is now in the British Museum, to which he bequeathed his MSS., not to be inspected till he had been dead twenty years. MSS. Cole, Vol, 43, from page 1 to 50.

(*j*) Brit. Mus. Catalogue Ayscough, No. 24, Article 26. "Extracta de libro Bertholi Phisicæ de Johanne Grene Bristollia per W. W.

(*k*) Annales annexed to Hearne's Liber Nig. Scaccar' &c. printed from a MS. No. 48, Norfolk, in the Library of the Heralds' College.

(*l*) W. W. translated "Cicero de Senectute," by the desire of Sir J. Fastollfe, and presented it to W. Wayneflete, Bishop of Winton, in 1473. It was afterwards printed by Caxton.—Herbert's History of Printing, Vol. 1, p. 30. Lewis's Life of Caxton, p. 55.

(*m*) See the English language of all the Correspondents in the Paston Letters, for a confirmation of this assertion.

nay, for the latter, Master Leland himself did not write better. I trow, that they are some-deal hard with me, for the nonce.

ΟΥΤΙΣ.—I really think so. What a singular coincidence there is between yourself and Leland! His itinerary is certainly more extensive, his notices as brief, with a few exceptions—his Latin better, for he was a classical scholar of high merit, but his English is what he found it, that of conversation in those times, and not a whit more polished than yours. Like yours too, his MSS. having been long concealed in College libraries, were at last printed by laborious Antiquaries.

W. W.—What a puzzle and turmoil do these modern clerks make about my measurings! When I was walking *perchance*, then I counted my paces, and wrote them down in my table book:—when I went forth for *the nonce*, I carried my measuring rod with me, and marked them down in the same fashion. I had eftsoons communed with myself to compare them together, and to draw forth the true measurings, from both. I prithee do the like, and forbear blame.

ΟΥΤΙΣ.—I have done so, in many instances, but not in all, successfully; which I attribute to the mistakes of the transcriber, as to the numerals. Indeed, I considered "gressûs meos" as nearly indefinable, but as I now perceive that you are a tall man, I can fairly allow and fix them at twenty inches each, upon an average, for in certain instances, they are both more and less. Yet with this apparent discrepancy, I am convinced, that the result of a patient comparison, would be a discovery of the true dimensions, confirmed by a re-measurement of buildings, which remain.

W. W.—What think ye of the exact workman-like scantling, I have given in my notes touching Redcliffe porch, and eke that of St. Stephen, with its tower also. I was wont to frequent those holy buildings for my soul's health, and ever and anon to hold short parlance with (*n*) Master Benet and Master Morton, the Freemasons; who told me more concerning their craft, than I could have learned elsewhere.

ΟΥΤΙΣ.—I regret exceedingly that you did not more frequently give us, that kind of intelligence—particularly as to shrines and tombs—windows of portraits in stained glass and coat-armour, with the dates

(*n*) Itin'. pp. 220—224.

of the several buildings. The terms of masonry are not at this period quite intelligible, having grown obsolete in the lapse of three centuries; but I have followed your description of St. Stephen's tower with satisfaction, having compared it exactly with the building. How do I envy you a sight of Bristow, as it stood in the year 1480! *Then* were the massive walls and gates intire—the Castle, with its magnificent keep, "the fairest tower in western land" proudly reared its head—now levelled with the earth—" the baseless fabric of a vision." The two beautiful churches of the Franciscans and Carmelites, one with its slender spire, and the other with its handsome tower—each then rivalling the neighbouring church of St. Stephen, and now only known by their sites—so many windows "richly dight" with iridical colours—shrines and altars of exquisite carving—*all* demolished by indiscriminating zeal, or hidden from the sight, by worse taste.

And now, my worthy Sir, allow me to request a favour—we were born, *perhaps*, under the same planet " cognato jungimur astro"—and under its influential direction we retain the local predeliction. Our youth passed at Oxford, and we have both spent the best part of our days; each in the service of an honourable and high born master, as his confidential secretary. They are departed to the world of Spirits! You had a house and lands to return to at Bristow, I am a sojourner, and wish to devote a short time to pursuits similar to your own, as applied to the same objects. When you wrote, Redcliff, St. Stephen's, St. John's and Temple, were fresh from their founders' hands. In the intervening centuries, they have suffered no less from mutilation, than repairs.

Fatal alike to them, the task
Of those who marred, and those who mended.

It is the pride of the present day to adhere most strictly to ancient models. Let me not presume too far, if I strive to further these corrected opinions by such hints as a certain acquaintance with Gothic Architecture may suggest. But—I am ΟΥΤΙΣ, and have *no name*—suffer me to adopt *your's*, with the adjunct of "redivivus" as my literary " nom de guerre."

W. W.—Allowed, but use it right warily.

A flight of Sea-mews rose, at this very instant, from the beach beneath me, and with their shrill note recalled me to myself, and dissipated my trance. My venerable companion had "vanished into thin air."

What mannere Man he was—perchaunce
Ye may behold the vraisemblaunce.

Not Rowleie.

I.

The Tower of St. Stephen's Church.

ORE than half a century has now elapsed, since my observation was first directed to the singular beauty of Saint Stephen's tower, by one who well knew how to discriminate its excellence, and who fixed upon my young mind an indelible image of this paragon of Gothic architecture, as the pride of my native city.

Since that period, I have wandered "far and wide," but in my occasional visits, I was never an hour in Bristol, before I took my original station, and refreshed my imagination by contemplating the fairest form ever effected by the taste and skill of the architects of the last Gothic school.

I once more survey it—but with proportionate regret—and will therefore pass to an investigation of the history and peculiar style, which belong to this edifice, and to its æra, the last, indeed, and most eventful, in the decline and fall of what we now term "Gothic Art."

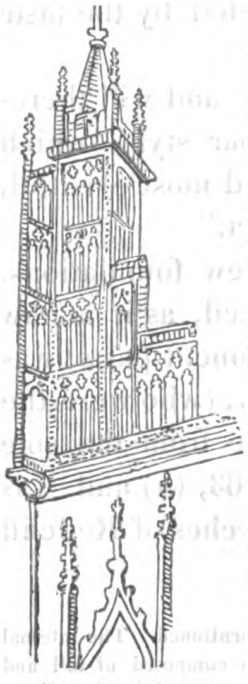
The whole church of St. Stephen was rebuilt upon new foundations, between the years 1450 and 1490, when it was completed, as it is now seen. It is in evidence, that the church, with its component parts, was erected at the joint expense of the Abbey of Glastonbury, (who were the patrons) and the parishioners; but that the tower rose from the sole munificence of John Shipward, who was Mayor, in 1463, (*a*) and was the worthy rival of Canynge and Frampton, in their churches of Redcliff and St. John's.

(*a*) John Shipward, the grandfather, was Bailiff in 1415. John Shipward, the son, Mayor in 1455. John Shipward, the grandson, Mayor in 1477. The second of these was probably the founder, the whole having been completed by the last mentioned. The internal arcade of the nave was *then* composed of tall and slender pillars, nearly ten feet of which are *now* enveloped in "*pantaloons of mahogany.*"

Tower-architecture of the most perfect construction appeared in its zenith, during the latter part of the 15th century, and with remarkable excellence, in the counties adjacent to Bristol.

The dimensions of St. Stephen's are, to the gargoiles or water spouts 118 feet, and from thence to the summit of the pinnacles 15, making a total of 133 feet, (*b*) and a diameter of fourteen feet by twelve; a proportion which, in the first consideration of it, seems to be scarcely reducible to practice. The effort was made—and the result is surprise and delight, alike to the "oculi eruditi" and the casual spectator. As to the correct height, a slight discrepancy occurs between the measurement of honest old W. Wyrcestre, and Mr. Barrett, because the 157 feet of the former, included thirty one below the surface. Wyrcestre tells us (*c*) that the working architect *(de opere manuali)* was "Benet le Free Mason"—but this is an imperfect designation; and the true name of a man, who far surpassed his contemporaries in point of talent, is sunk in the abyss of time.

The principle by which I conceive the intrinsic beauty either of a tower or spire to be constituted, is the concentration of the ornamental particles in one divison of the structure. Where (comparing it to a column) the shaft is plain, as in this instance, the capital should be exuberant—where the base of the spire is most richly ornamented, the *broche* or spire should be plain and intire, as in St. Mary's at Oxford. I know of no clearer elucidation of this simple principle.



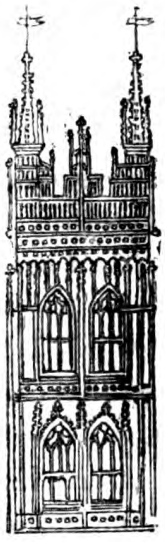
St. Stephen's Tower.

The parapet of St. Stephen's has latticed battlements, and no finial placed between the pinnacles. It *had*, likewise, a single lattice, resembling the open mullions of a window, attached angularly to each pinnacle, and resting upon a gargoil or waterspout—the effect was very striking and beautiful, and almost unique, but was perhaps an afterthought, as others are, at Taunton, Huish and Thornbury. The shaft of this tower is higher and more ornamented, than that of Magdalene College, Oxford, to which only, of those I know either as having

(*b*) Barrett, p. 510. (*c*) Itin'. p. 220.

really seen them, or as represented by drawings, a just analogy can be made in point of plainness and simplicity. The upper story of the first mentioned, is of the same design and exactly half the proportion of that of the tower of Gloucester Cathedral, (*d*) and the higher pinnacles and latticed ballustrade similar, without the projecting additions. It is a plausible conjecture, that the same architect was employed *here*, at Thornbury and Gloucester, and at Taunton, Somerset—the leading design being the same, with very small deviation, from the peculiar circumstance of each. Such a coincidence of plan rarely happens but from the adaptation of others.

The very graceful effect of St. Stephen's is caused by the smallness of the diameter in proportion to its height—the accumulation of ornament upon the highest story, as contrasted with the plainness of the other three; and that the whole elevation is free from the incumbrance of buttresses.



Taunton Tower.

The tower at Taunton (*e*) does not greatly exceed St. Stephen's in point of height, but in diameter. It is not central and supported by piers, but rises from the ground. The buttresses reach only to the corbel stone of the fourth story, where they terminate in elegant finials, which cluster with the highest division of the tower. This part comes into a more immediate comparison. The finials of the angular turrets are not latticed, but solid, and four others intervene, which are placed above the battlements. St. Stephen's rises in an equal shaft from its base, and Taunton diminishes in each story to the summit. A single mullion only, not a lattice, is projected from each angle, as far as it was practicable.

In a comparative survey of the towers known to have been erected between 1450 and the Reformation (the precise æra of the downfall of Gothic art in England) we shall find that this singular lightness of elevation was perhaps its last effort "*l'ultimo sospiro!*" That of Magdalene College, Oxford, is simplicity itself; *this* and Taunton have more ornament dispersed over the subordinate parts.

(*d*) Height 222 feet to the topmost pinnacle. Diameter 30 feet.

(*e*) Height 153 feet. It resembles the tower of St. Jacque at Dieppe, in the arrangement of the buttresses.

A leading principle of these architects of consummate skill was to excite surprise by a certain *hardiness* of execution (*arditezza* and *hardiesse* as the Italian and French writers on Gothic Architecture have termed it) and still more by the success with which they have perfected attempts apparently beyond the powers of man to construct. At first, confined to the period I have assigned, the buttresses singly placed against each face of the tower, became double at the angles, and were sloped or diminished gradually till they were lost in the final pinnacles. Buttresses so constructed are almost universal, when the tower is intended to support the superincumbent weight of a tall spire. The great difficulty to be overcome was that of intirely omitting the external buttresses, because a visible support took away the illusion.

The three neighboring counties of Gloucester, Somerset and Wilts, supply, not unfrequently, specimens worthy of praise, which the lapse of three centuries has not impaired, and which are preserved, nearly, in a perfect state.

The western towers of York Cathedral afford a particular proof of my assertion, with respect to the application of buttresses. The central tower of Lincoln, instead of projecting angular buttresses, has circular ones, which contain staircases; and that of Canterbury, straight mural ribs or flat projections, double, and terminating in pyramidal turrets.

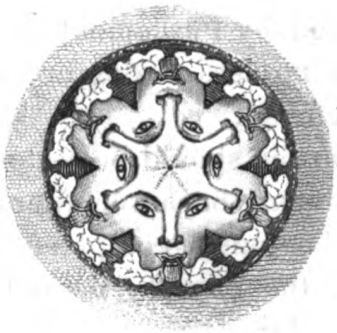
Gloucester Cathedral.

Such were the variations adopted in the progress of Church-architecture, and with the sole view of producing an incredibly light effect by omitting or artfully concealing the usual appearance of support and strength; and depending only upon scientific construction. We may observe in later examples, that the finial, repeated between the corner turrets, and rising upon the open or latticed battlement, is no longer seen.

Conjecturing that the plans of the three towers first mentioned originated in the same *unknown* genius, the suspended lattice attached angularly to each pinnacle was a sublime effort. *Here*, at Taunton, and Thornbury, the relative height allowed of such daring—at Gloucester,

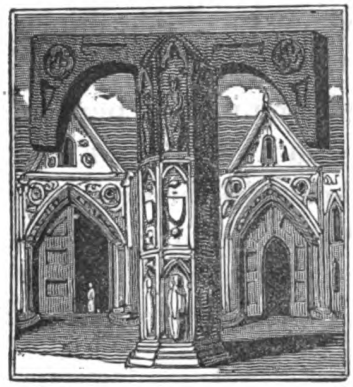
the addition of nearly one hundred feet of elevation, rendered the attempt much too hazardous.

The violence of the wind and storm has more than once caused a partial dilapidation of this exquisite work. In 1703, a hurricane, which was felt in almost every part of England in its ruinous consequences, precipitated three of the pinnacles of St. Stephen's, to the ground. By the greater wealth, and perhaps piety, of our predecessors, that injury was speedily repaired, according to the ancient model. When its decay was lately ascertained, after repeated damage, the idea of perfect restoration was abandoned, (I trust for a time only) and a mutilation has taken place. Alas! the true admirers of the most beautiful, because the most graceful, tower in England, have now to contemplate it, as "the Sun shorn of his beams!"



II.

Of the Church of St. Mary Redcliff.



THE octagonal porch and muniment room, added by W. Canyng (the younger) to the north-porch, is an extremely good specimen of the Burgundian style, first introduced into England in the reign of Edw. 4., and chiefly applied to mansion-houses in the reigns immediately subsequent; of which the most perfect examples remain, at this time, in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk.

It has been frequently delineated, and with sufficient accuracy. Greatly, indeed, has its fine filligrain carvings been injured by its vicinity to the ceaseless volcanos, those numerous glass houses; the corrosion of the air, impregnated, as it is, with coal smoke, having decomposed and blackened the surface. Henry 7th's chapel, before the restoration voted by Parliament and now nearly completed, had been deteriorated in no less a degree, so that the architectural ornaments were nearly defaced.

To propose, that this portico should be restored to its pristine beauty, would be to indulge a dream, because, although I am confident that ingenious masons might be found, competent to the undertaking, the funds of the Trustees of the church, do not equal the resources of Parliament. Besides, in a few years, the mischief would recur; and it would be as easy a task to remove Vesuvius, and to set it in the sea, as those pyramids, which, not like other volcanos, have a certain cessation, but continue to throw out volumes of dense smoke, both by day and night.

The tower was the work of W. Canyng (the elder) or of Simon Burton, and was not completed, with its spire, till the commencement at least of the fifteenth century. The total height was originally 300 feet; but after the fatal storm, in January 1445-6, the tower only was 148 feet; and

(a) The porch of the church of St. Michael de Vancelles at Caen, is the prototype of those of Redcliffe and St. Stephen.—Cotman's Normandy.

including the fragment of the spire 164, which is the present elevation.

It exhibits from this circumstance a gross deformity. The first idea communicated, is that of a stump or truncated limb, and is "an impotent conclusion" of a grand object, exciting by its sad contrast, a sensation which borders on the painful.

A beautiful and characteristic effect would, I apprehend, be produced by the adaptation of the following addition; I would propose two models.

I. That of the summit or finishing of the central tower of the Abbey of St. Oüen, at Rouen in Normandy. From the centre of the large square tower, at the parapet, rises another of an octangular shape, having an elevation of about 30 feet, English. From the four corner pinnacles a double flying buttress (arc-boutant) is thrown to join the octagon, and by thus twice breaking the light, by intersecting it, produces an imposing effect. The octagon has eight tall finials, connected by a latticed parapet of open quatrefoils and crockets. The total height is 240 feet, and the date of its completion in the 15th century.(*a*)

II. The lantern or octagon placed on the tower of the parish church of Boston, in Lincolnshire; (*b*) which, in its principal parts and compo-

Rouen.

Boston.

(*a*) Turner's Tour in Normandy, There is an octagon tower likewise of the Cathedral.

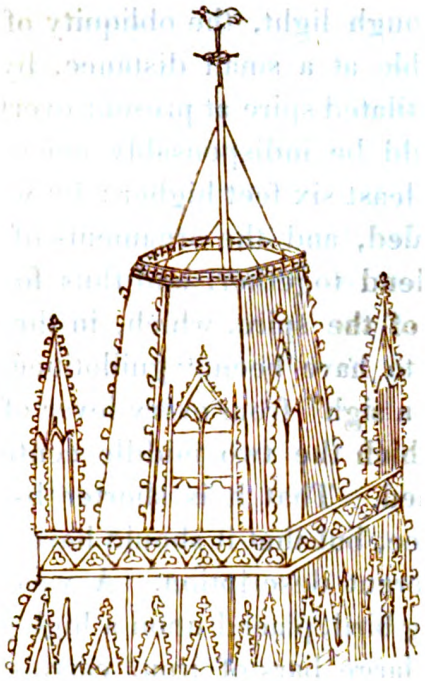
(*b*) Britton's Architecural Antiq. Vol. 4, p. 119.

sition, greatly resembles the first mentioned. The sides of Redcliff are pierced with much larger and taller windows, which are open, and the parapet of either has the same ornaments. It may be incidentally mentioned, that the celebrated tower and spire of Louth, in Lincolnshire, have at their juncture, four arched buttresses of a similar form, which spring in pairs, from the four great pinnacles of the tower. Of the church of St. Michael, Coventry, built by the Botoners, a century earlier, the tower is finished with flying buttresses, which are bent inwards to form a lantern; surrounded by a latticed parapet and finials before the spire commences—so that had a similar accident happened, as to Redcliff, it had exhibited a perfect design. At Harfleur, in Normandy, the

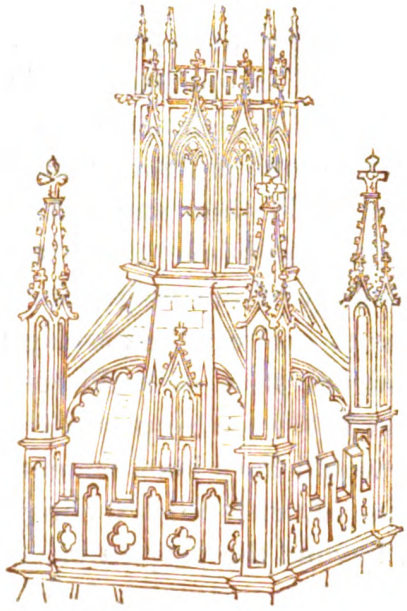
Louth.

Harfleur.

same application of this architectural principle may be seen. There is too, a certain co-incidence between Redcliff and the church of St. Maclou, at Rouen, finished in 1512. The spire was destroyed by a storm, in 1705, and the tower is now truncated. All these churches, which I have mentioned, are of the same æra; and diagrams of them are thus presented, with a view to substantiate my comparison.



Redcliff 1823.



Redcliff renovated.

PROPOSED ADDITION TO THE TOWER

OF

Redcliff Church.

The first object to be obtained is to supersede the effect of mutilation by filling up the eye, so as to combine the whole finishing of the tower, into somewhat of a coronal shape, (or as it is styled by the historian of the Cathedral of Rouen, "La Couronne,") by taking away as much as possible the discordance of the oblique lines of the base of the spire, and giving them a perpendicular appearance, as if it had been constructed with such a primary intention, as in the instances of Rouen and Boston, already cited. To conceal such a defect must, in this instance, be the sole effort of art; and if it can be done, so as to present to common observers the invariable effect of symmetrical proportion, all that is proposed or intended, will be eventually gained.

If arch or flying buttresses, in pairs, but placed one parallel with the other, should be applied between the corner-pinnacles and the

base of the spire; by giving them a thorough light, the obliquity of the remaining trunk would not be perceptible at a small distance, by an optical deception, so produced. The mutilated spire at present overtops the finials of the pinnacles, which it would be indispensably necessary to elevate, with rich and full crockets, at least six feet higher; by which means the oblique line would be concealed, and the ornaments of the summit would then succeed, so as to blend together, and thus form a correspondent whole. The termination of the spire, which, in the late phraseology of our neighbours, appears to have been "guillotineé," is such as to excite "the passing tribute of a sigh" from every lover of the magnificent style of architecture, by which the two middle centuries (14 and 15) were so proudly distinguished. That it is shorter by the head, would have been lamented in silence, but that it should have been so *restored*, calls forth feelings of a different description. A weather-cock, beyond the proportions of any living bird, placed upon a high pole, supported from every side or angle by large bars of iron, carries the sight from the parapet, which appears to be not more than a foot in height, and communicates the idea of a top-mast. This circumstance is not so much a matter of surprise, because there is a tradition, that the Churchwarden, two centuries ago, under whose auspices this notable improvement took place, had some concern in the dock yard. He had an abstract notion only of the manner in which a ship or church-tower ought to be decorated. Shall we indulge a foolish conceit, if we compare it to a huge gold laced hat stuck upon the decapitated neck of a giant?

With a decided opinion as to the present ill adapted finishing, (*c*) and with a view to the pursuance of a design which might have been adopted by Canyng's architect, instead of a spire; for the instances recommended are of the same date; the parapet of the broken spire should be surrounded by eight tall finials—the four to answer the large angular finials higher than the others,—upon which as many vanes might be placed as on the tower of St. Stephen's. The latticed work battlements between them to be like that of the last mentioned. Masses of stone, frequently perforated, so as to appear like filligrain or lace, acquire an effect of

(*c*) It appears to have been so adopted, because W. Wyrcestre calls the parapet placed upon the fractured spire, "le garlond." P. 221.

almost magical lightness and relief, where the material, heavy in itself, yet has to the eye, the apparent ductility of metal. Of this, in the degree to which it is capable of being carried, we have not in England any instance to be compared with those on the Continent. The spire at Strasburgh is always quoted as the best example.

With respect to the general effect, much depends upon colour; but no offensive contrast of *old* and *new* needs be presented, if the restored parts were constructed with the darkest grey stone, which can be procured in the neighborhood; and the Parker's cement used, which may be harmonized, by any shade of colour, to an unity of tint.

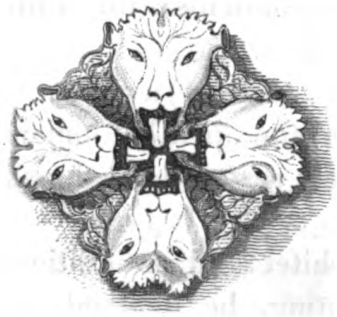
Nor is a lamentable defalcation less observable, in the loss of the pinnacles originally placed, one above each of the flying buttresses and the parapet, surrounding the whole church. These, in Canyng's days, added grace and lightness, and completed the whole elevation. During the time of the Republic, it is very probable that many of them were much decayed from a long suspension of repairs, and the corrosion occasioned by the smoke; and in those times of parcimony, at least, (as concerned Church-establishments) the whole were removed, and the present bad effect presented.

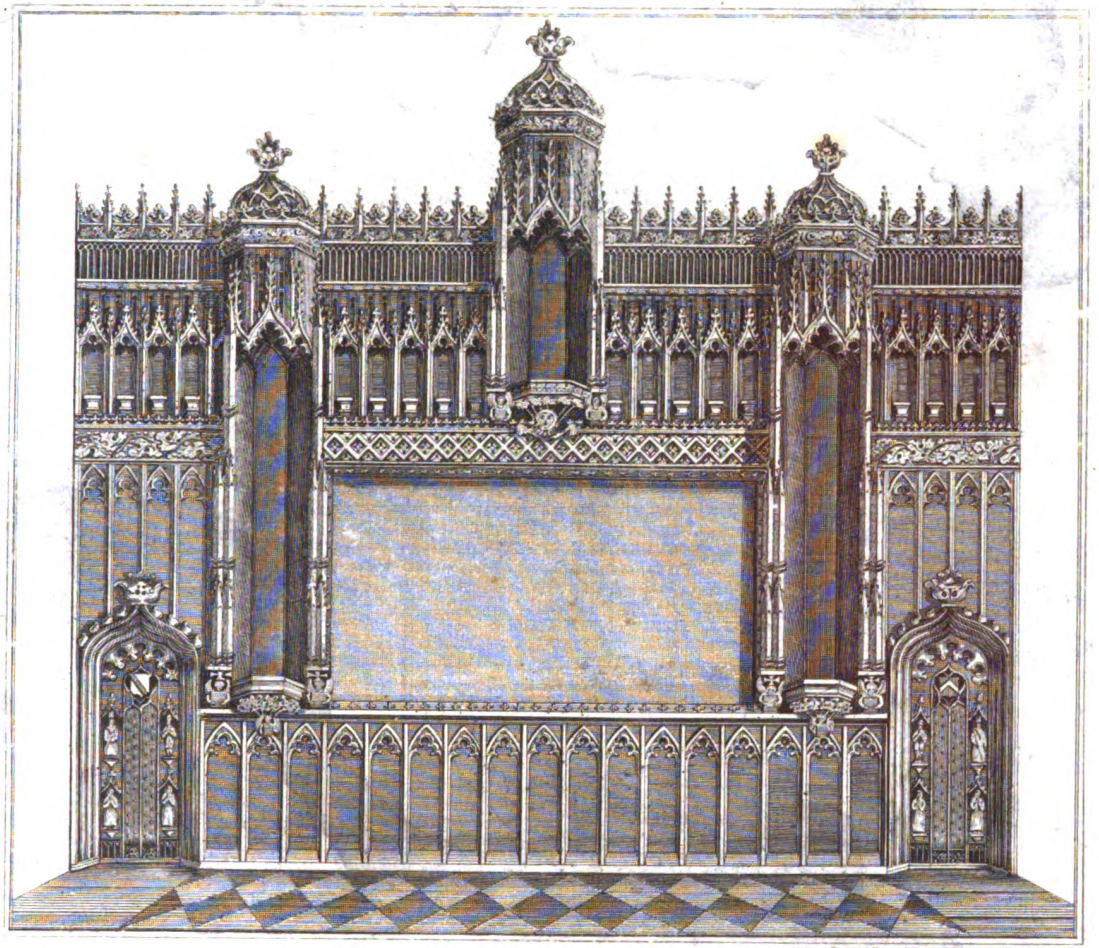
At Cirencester (Gloucestershire) a similar circumstance had happened; but about 30 years since, the open battlements, with the pinnacles, were accurately and completely restored, at the sole expence of an individual then living.

Would a lover of architectural antiquities, and one who admires the Italian schools of Painting, be deemed worthy of forgiveness, if he breathed a wish, in silence, that the sum of £761. and one penny, had been applied, *in preference*, to a pious renovation of the former splendour of St. Mary Redcliffe, instead of having been paid to Hogarth, for his three Altar pictures? Hogarth, indeed, stood alone and unrivalled for his moral and satirical designs; but his known contempt for the old Masters, and his success as a painter of history, are yet within memory. He painted some very large pictures, certainly—which he *gave away;* having been in this instance only, so fortunate as to have found purchasers. And—for the reception of this extensive canvass, the original

altar-skreen, and the richest tabernacle-work, were destroyed, and the great east-window above it, hidden in utter darkness!

When the sublime efforts of the painters of Italy were applied to the decoration of churches, it was of those which were the works of their contemporary architects, and not of the Gothic age; in which, the scriptural subjects were universally stained in glass, or painted in fresco. It has therefore excited a doubt in my mind, whether modern pictures can be placed in Gothic churches, with that strictness of local appropriation, which must ever be demanded by good taste.

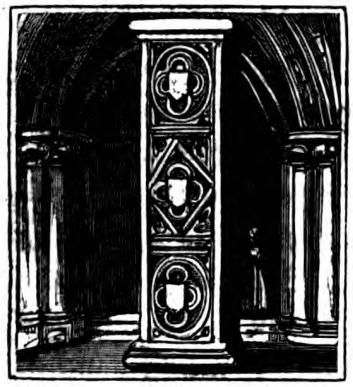




Drawn & Engraved by Will^m Lander Exchange Bristol.

III.

St. Mark's of the Gaunts, or the Mayor's Chapel.



HAIL the restorations of the high altar-skreen, Poyntz's sepulchral chapel, and the great western window, as the dawn of liberal views, and of a better taste. *Auspicium melioris ævi!* The altar-skreen was again exposed to sight in 1820; by the removal of a most heavy wainscot placed before it in 1722, for the express purpose of concealing it. It has been restored with great skill and accuracy, and exhibits an exquisite specimen of its peculiar style and age. The dimensions are small, but symetrical, and of the most delicate tabernacle work, executed in freestone, which I have hitherto observed, in England.

Having been erected subsequently to several others, still remaining or restored in part, some account of each may afford a comparison, both with respect to their history, and the art of sculpture (at least of carving) as employed upon this kind of church embellishment, in particular.

This rich combination of sculpture with architecture has its date of introduction, not anterior to the close of the thirteenth century. It was first introduced in the canopies of sepulchral monuments placed over tombs, upon which, the effigy was recumbent—these were afterwards enlarged into Sacella, or burial chapels, for the celebration of obits, and where prayers for the dead were offered up. The enlarged space gave ample opportunity for a bolder design and more elaborate workmanship. The tombs of the four Bishops, in succession, in Winchester Cathedral,

present to us a perfect specimen. (*a*) These are placed in the interior of the church—they are likewise, in some instances, small attached buildings.

Contemporary with the earliest of them, are skreens of two kinds—those which divide the nave from the choir—and those which are mural, separating the choir from the presbytery and our Lady's chapel (*b*). In these small structures, the richest tabernacle work of niches, finials and pedestals (no longer supporting images) excite our admiration. Statues of kings and bishops are usually placed in the first mentioned, as in the cathedrals of Canterbury, York and Lincoln; (*c*) while the tutelary saints occupy the others, exclusively. Bishop Grandison's skreen at Exeter is external, and is hardly to be classed with the foregoing. (*d*)

Of instances particularly worthy notice, when brought into a comparison with this in the Gaunt's chapel, we may enumerate the high altars in Winchester Cathedral, St. Alban's Abbey, New College, All Souls' and Magdalene in Oxford, Christchurch in Hampshire, and almost with certainty, that of St. Mary Redcliffe, entirely removed and destroyed in 1709. The very curious shrines of St. Werburg and St. Chad, in the cathedrals of Chester and Litchfield (*e*) have been taken down, and the fragments re-composed for other purposes, under the innovating hand of the late much celebrated James Wyatt, who has restored that at New College; whilst those at Magdalene and All Souls are still concealed under the incongruous altarpieces of the last age. In Gloucester Cathedral, Mr. R. Smirke has restored the *reredoss*, or half skreen, which is more simple than the abovementioned in its composition, with great judgment.

The iconoclastic edicts of the reforming bishops, in the reign of Edward 6th, caused many of these exquisitely wrought specimens to be irrecoverably spoiled and defaced. For, in fact, at the suppression, many notwithstanding were spared: and former prejudices operated so far against such peremptory injunctions, that they were filled up with

(*a*) See Engravings published by the Antiq. Soc. Lond. Monumenta Vetusta, V. 1.

(*b*) Clutterbuck's Herts, for an engraving of St. Alban's.—Britton's Cathedrals, Winchester, &c.

(*c*) See a series of views and interiors of the Cathedrals of Canterbury, York and Lincoln, by C. Wild—the last mentioned of which is, without comparison, the most perfect of similar publications.

(*d*) Exeter Cathedral, published by the Atiq. Soc.

(*e*) Wild's Interiors of Litchfield and Chester.

morter, or covered (and sometimes carefully) with wainscot. In all of these altarpieces, we observe a door placed on either side the altar, both of which were used by the officiating priests for the purpose of change of vestments, which were deposited in a small room behind. Perhaps, in point of style and æra, the nearest comparison may be drawn between this and the sepulchral chapel of the Countess of Salisbury at Christchurch, Hants; where, as in this instance, the niches are very small, and placed in a parallel line. They contained statues of silver or copper gilt. The sumptuous plate which was exhibited as furniture of the high altar, will confirm an assertion, that the smaller images also were sometimes wrought or cast in silver. Large sums of money were raised by the sale of plain and gilt plate, which was demanded from every church in Bristol, at the time of the suppression, of which many curious accounts are still extant, and of this chapel in particular. (*f*)

As the result of this investigation, it may be fairly said, that for its dimensions and workmanship, no single instance now remaining in England, will be found more worthy the inspection of those, who are engaged in the study of our national architecture.

Of its history nothing positive is known; but there are several circumstances which render it, more than probable, that it owes its present form to the munificence of Milo or Miles Salley, Abbot of Abingdon, then of Eynsham, near Oxford, and lastly Bishop of Llandaff, in the reign of Henry 7th; in which several of the English prelates were eminent encouragers of that species of minute and highly embellished architecture, which is the subject of this slight essay.

The area, immediately under the east window, is of small dimensions but of singular embellishment. The centre is occupied by the altar-skreen. On the right hand, are two sepulchral monuments, both of them in a very elaborate style as to the arcade and canopy, and evidently of contemporary erection. The first is that of Bishop Milo or Miles Salley; and one proof of its having been erected by him in his life time is, that there is no inscription nor legend which was at first placed upon the tomb; and no injunction in his will respecting it. (*g*) The name only is

(*f*) Barrett Hist. of Bristol, p. 374. Total of Plate taken from the Gaunt's, oz. 413.

(*g*) The Will of Milo Salley, Bishop of Llandaff, in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. *Holder, f.* 26.

subsequently added. It bears a very near resemblance to one erected likewise during life, by John Wakeman, the last abbot, in Tewkesbury church. (*h*) I have examined Bishop Salley's will, by which he bequeaths "his best chalice and missal to the High Altar in Gaunt's Chapel, with the *sewte* (suit) of vestments which he had ordered for the Master, Richard Tylar his executor, in London, and the furniture of his best bed for the same purpose." From which circumstance, I think that it may be fairly inferred, that having completed the architecture, he left a testamentary provision, that the necessary ornaments and furniture should be also supplied. Immediately adjoining to it is another tomb, with recumbent effigies, and with a similar canopy, without any remaining inscription. It has been attributed to Sir Thomas De Berkeley of Stoke Giffard (1361), to whom the patronage of the Hospital had descended from the founders; but, as the escocheons were originally blank, and the armour of a later date, I would rather consider it as having been erected by Bishop Salley at the same time with his own, and as a completion of his plan. If my suggestion be correct, the armed effigy must be intended to represent Sir Maurice Berkeley, his grandson, who died in 1464. There are four canopies on the left of the altar, but by an ill-advised elevation of the floor, the *subsellia*, or seats for three officiating Priests, are now upon a level with it.

Beyond the tower, and running parallel with the presbytery or chancel, is

Poyntz' Sepulchral Chapel,

which has been for many years past, used as the Vestry. Before the year 1521, Sir Robert Poyntz of Iron-Acton, near Bristol, rebuilt this chapel of Jesus for the burial of himself and his posterity, and established a Chantry within it. From his will, (*i*) I collect that it was not finished at the time of his death, and that duty having been enjoined to his son Sir Anthony Poyntz, was religiously performed. It is a small attached building, which ***externally*** has suffered greatly by time. ***Within***, it has a beautifully fretted roof, upon one of the bosses of which are carved the arms of king Henry 8th and Katherine of Arragon, the patrons of the

(*h*) Lyson's Etchings of Gloucestershire Antiq. pl. xlv. Ayloff—"In the Chapel of Jesus which lately I have caused to be new edyfied and made."
(*i*) The Will of Sir Robert Poyntz, as above, f. 28.

Poyntz family. Upon another are those of Sir Robert Poyntz quarterly, impaled with his wife's, who was a natural daughter of Anthony Wideville, Earl Rivers, and consequently a niece of the Queen of Edward the fourth. Over the door cases is a clenched fist *(Poing)* repeated, as carved among foliage, and pomegranates, which is their badge, or rather a rebus upon the name. The sides are lined with fine shrine work niches —the windows had once rich stained glass—and the floor was composed of glazed or porcelain tiles, with arms, curious scrolls and devices, which are still preserved. (*j*)

At the time of the suppression of Monasteries, and the demolition of every tangible evidence of the superstition practised by the Romish Church, an "evil genius" was permitted to "stalk abroad" through this land, a sworn foe to the arts of design,—Architecture, Sculpture and Painting. His two most powerful agents were *(et. proh dolor! still* are) white-lime and ochre; and, as if their effects were not sufficiently obliterative of the peculiar beauties of the Gothic school of art, they were used conjointly. What has been the sacrifice made during the last two centuries? Fresco paintings,—which, if they did not rival those of Giotto and Cimabue in the cloisters at Pisa—were still successful proofs, in many instances, of the progress of painting in England; before the use of oil, as a vehicle, was introduced. Of these almost all are obliterated! Capitals of columns, which derived all their beauty and symmetrical effect from delicate carvings, chisselled out with infinite skill and variety, clogged up to an almost even surface, by reiterated washes of white-lime. The carved bosses, which are given as Vignettes to these sections, are in the tomb of St. Richard, Bishop, in Chichester Cathedral. They have been lately restored. The surface of them was rendered smooth by white-lime, which having been carefully removed, a most curious specimen of the exuberance of Gothic fancy and of fine workmanship has been once more offered to view. Those in the crypt under St. Nicholas Church are minutely and beautifully wrought. The late restoration of that subterraneous oratory has been well conducted, and we have now a perfect example of a description of building, which has been

(*j*) Lyson's Etchings, pl. lxxiv. There was a manufactory of porcelain tiles at Ypres, in Flanders, from whence these were probably brought.

generally left to a worse fate, than that of mere decay. In early times they were used for processions in honour of the dead, and a mass was sung, the first sentence of which is "Clamavi de Profundis!!" Thus the mutual aid which sculpture had lent to architecture in their happiest æra of Gothic taste; and the harmonious effect communicated from one to the other, has been rendered null and void. Shrine-work, in all its component parts, which had escaped absolute mutilation, was incrusted with accumulated coats of white and yellow washings—of all colours the most raw, and ungenial with the characteristic influence which spreads itself over our feeling, as we survey a perfect Gothic church.

A more just appreciation of the efforts of art made in the Gothic days, especially during the middle centuries since the conquest, is gradually prevailing. A clearer view of what constituted their original excellence has at length beamed upon those Antiquaries, or rather Lovers of the Antiquities of this nation, who, having been induced to investigate the subject by analogy and comparison, a more correct taste has been the result, and is, I am glad to believe, now diffusing itself among many who are ambitious of gaining general information.

We owe the more judicious restoration of sacred edifices, in a great degree, to the late James Wyatt. He was fully aware of the importance of optical effect, as produced by unity of colour; and therefore reduced the internal surface of the walls to a neutral tint, upon which the varying light and shade could rest, without refraction. This observation confines itself to *this improvement only*—as to his alleged innovations, they would open a very wide field for discussion.

With respect to the present restoration of the altar, this principle has been successfully adopted. The oblong tablet in the centre was once covered by a fresco-painting, such as may still be inspected in the Royal chapel, at Windsor. To restore it scrupulously, either in point of design or execution, might be obnoxious to many opinions. The finest picture of our own or the Italian schools of painting would not, in my humble judgement, strictly accord. For it would become the concentrating point of sight, and predominate over the shrine work, which would be thus rendered its frame only. Perhaps a double curtain of velvet embroidered as the sacerdotal vestments were, would not be out of place.

Such were formerly usual over altars for the purpose of concealing the sacred elements.

In pursuance of the restorations, which have already given satisfactory proof that they have been adopted and executed with good taste, and an accurate observance of their prototypes, *that* of the great western window now presents itself as commanding, in every point of view of of the Facade of the church, towards College Green. The style of this window is that peculiar to the early part of the 15th century, not that of the original building, but of the same date as are the eastern window, and the timber-frame roof. Specimens of equal beauty and curiosity are seldom seen. Those of Merton College, Oxford, and Exeter Cathedral are the best that remain. If a portico, correspondent in date, design and ornament, were substituted for the Gothico-Chinese pent-house which is now prefixed, as if emulous of the happiest conceit of that exuberant genius, Batty Langley, (*k*) the elevation would be rendered complete in itself—at once simple and embellished.

Let me here conclude these hasty observations—the mere suggestions of the moment—with respectfully offering, as an *amateur*, my tribute of commendation of that liberality with which the Mayor, Chamberlain and other gentlemen by whom the Committee is composed, have commenced these real improvements.

I offer a sincere aspiration that their intentions may be pursued with the same spirit and judgement! Of the artists, whom they have selected for this task of no small difficulty, it is no more than justice to say, that by the talent and ingenuity which they have already shown, they are fully competent to the work. (*l*)

The cenotaph in the vestibule of St. Nicholas church will justly entitle them to this commendation, and is a gratifying proof, not only of respect due to the memory of a benevolent man, the predecessor and almost the equal of Colston; but likewise, of the liberal view taken by his Trustees respecting the kind of memorial which he had deserved.

The arcade under which the effigy of Alderman Whitson is *now* placed is of the richest sculptured or tabernacle work, and was composed from various models of the age of our first Tudor king.

(*k*) Batty Langley, a fashionable Architect, in his day, published "Gothic Architecture Improved"!!! He *flourished* during the tasteless reigns of Geo. I. & II. The best edition (for alas there have been several!) of this precious book is that in 4to. 1747.

(*l*) Messrs. Clarke and Edkins, of Bristol.

Objections may be raised by the, *perhaps*, fastidious observer, that the effigy and its receptacle are not, in point of date, altogether accordant. The effigy or portraiture is in the costume of the reign of James or Charles 1st, in which Mr. Whitson died; and as this newly erected arcade is the most attractive and appropriate ornament of a church, which was built forty years too soon for a correct imitation of the *Gothic*, it is well placed, where it may be seen and (as I think) admired, by all who enter in.

Had Whitson been preceded by a race of Mayors in succession, as his progenitors, this monument might have been intended to commemorate them all.

As to its composition, the only two points concerning which I had any hesitation, were the angels holding shields, appended to the terminations of the open quaterfoil, and the square embattled superstructure.

But, upon consulting Gough's Sepulchral Monuments, a satisfactory example of both will be found; the one of the tomb of John Holland Duke of Exeter, (*m*) in St. Katherine's, near the Tower, London; and the other, (*n*) of that of Lady Lisle, in the Cathedral of Wells.

In the centuries which have succeeded each other, the inhabitants of Bristol have distinguished themselves by a devoted attachment to their sacred edifices. In the piety and opulence of individuals only, have originated several churches, chantries, and towers, all of which are beautiful—some of them magnificent. The same good feeling dictated the *furnishing* of their churches, after the restoration; when in fact, to *repair* was to deface or conceal all projecting sculpture; and to *beautify* was to render all surfaces glaring, either by the raw uniformity of white-lime, or by surrounding the wainscot altarpieces with ruddy cherubs, ogling the decalogue; supported by a many-coloured Moses and Aaron, not less gaudy than Harlequin himself.

It may be now said that we live in an age when good sense has pointed out the investigation of first principles. Embellishment can never be produced by employing ornamental particles, which are incongruous in their effect. Mere whim, or the awkward ambition of producing "some new thing," will never deserve the meed of true taste, from those who

(*m*) V. 2, p. 154. (*n*) V. 2, p. 368.

are qualified to bestow it. A clearer perception of these objects is at length *(sera tamen)* gradually spreading itself among us. Where inclination and judgement are seconded by ample means, of putting them in action; we may safely prognosticate, from what has been already done, that Bristol, the first provincial city in England, will lead the way to the adoption of "pure restitution" in their specimens of Gothic Architecture.

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