

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL.



THE architectural record of the great church which stands at Salisbury is unique among the records of English cathedrals. Its foundations were laid upon a virgin site in the year 1220; thirty-eight years thereafter it stood complete up to the top of the first stage of its tower; and time respected the unity thus achieved. No great calamity brought ruin upon any part of the structure, and no new needs provoked its alteration. A single style rules it from end to end, inside and out, from foundation-course to roof-crest. Only the spire and the upper stages of the tower were added in a later century, and to most observers even these look of a piece with all the rest.

It was by means of an act of transplantation, however, and not of new creation, that its thirteenth-century builders had the chance thus to make Salisbury Cathedral all their own. The body of their church was new and the spot upon which it stood, but in name and soul it had already long existed.

I.

ABOUT the year 705 the great diocese of Winchester was divided and its western portion formed into the diocese of Sherborne. In the tenth century this in its turn was cut into two or three, one being called Ramsbury or Wiltshire. At the time of the Conquest Bishop Herman occupied the chairs of both Ramsbury and Sherborne. As he was a foreigner by birth William did not dispossess him; and when William's council decreed the removal of isolated rural sees to places of more importance, Herman removed his to Old Sarum, and the names of the two earlier dioceses were lost in that of Salisbury.

Old Sarum, we say to-day. The Romans said Sorbiodunum, the English Searbyrig, or Sarisbyrig. Sarum was merely the Latinized medieval term which in the thirteenth century was applied to the neighboring new town as well as to the old. Now we call the former Salisbury, but the prefix we still use in speaking of the other perpetuates the memory of the time when they were namesakes.

From prehistoric days Old Sarum had been a strong and famous place. Nature had made it conspicuous in the levels around it, and successive races of men had fortified it to the best of their power. No spot in all England is of

more curious interest now. In this crowded little land we soon learn to expect that every historic site will show signs of modern life, that in every spot where a building has stood some building will still stand—if not perfect, then in ruins; or if not the first building, then a later. Who looks in England to find a mighty place of old turned into such a "heap" as those cities of the plain whose punishment the prophets foresaw? Who expects to see the sheep feeding and the plowshare turning where there have been not only Roman roads and ramparts but a great Norman castle and a Cathedral church? Yet this, and nothing but this, is what we see at Old Sarum.

Its broad, desolate hill lies isolated in the valley near the river Avon,* not very far from the skirts of the great table-land called Salisbury Plain. Even the roadway leaves it at a distance. First we pass through an inn-garden, then cross a long stretch of slightly rising ground, and then climb successive steep and rugged though grassy slopes. These show in scarcely broken lines the trend of the ancient walls and fosses. Their main portions are of Roman origin, but, if we may believe tradition, the outermost line was added by King Alfred when the Danes were on the war-path. Once on top of the hill, we find it a wide, rolling plateau, bearing here and there a group of trees, but nowhere a building, and only in two places any relic of man's handiwork—only two shattered, ragged bits of wall. Most of it is covered with rough grass, very different from the fresh turf of English lowlands, but far off to the westward there are signs of agricultural labor. This was where the great cathedral stood; and how much else once stood where now is an almost Mesopotamian desolation—all the adjuncts of a cathedral, ecclesiastical and domestic; all the parts of a stronghold that was a royal residence as well; and all the streets and structures of a considerable city, stretching down the hill and out into the valley. Hence, as from an important center, once radiated six Roman roads. Here Briton and Saxon fought, and the victors held their parliaments, and were in their turn assaulted by the Dane. Hither were summoned all the states of the realm to do homage to William the Norman, and, a century later, all its great men to pay reverence to that young son of

* This is not Shakspeare's Avon, but another of the name which flows southward to the Channel.

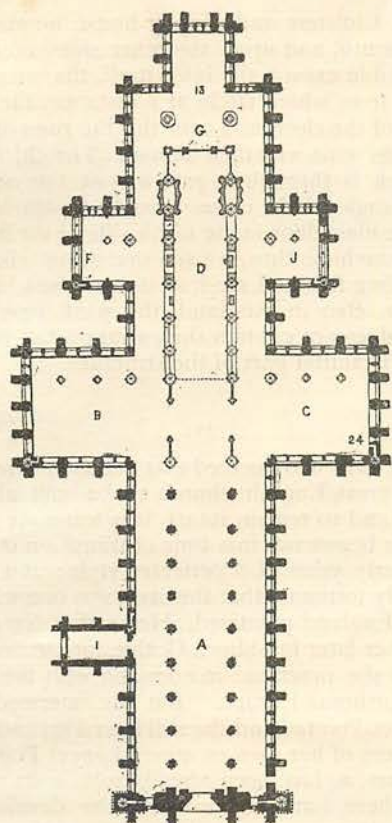
Henry I. who was to perish in the wreck of the "White Ship." Here was drawn up the "Ordinal of Offices for the Use of Sarum" which became the ritual rule for the whole south of England. Here, in a word, for centuries and under the dominion of five successive races — British, Roman, English, Norman, and again in the new sense English — was one of the great centers of ecclesiastical and military power. To-day it is nothing but a heap. Citadel and lordly keep, royal hall and chapel, cathedral, chapter-house and close, convents, parish churches, municipal buildings, burghers' homes and streets, and the mighty walls which once inclosed them, all have been swept away,— their very stones removed for use in distant spots. The colossal earthworks which once bore the walls are not greatly damaged; the little village of Stratford-under-the-Castle marks perhaps the site of a valley suburb; and the two forlorn patches of wall may still stand for generations. But above ground Nature has reclaimed all else to barren unity. Below ground a long passage is known to exist, though its entrance has been closed for a century, and in 1835 curious antiquaries laid bare for a moment the foundations of the cathedral church. It was 270 feet in length, and had two western towers with a great Galilee-porch between, transepts and aisles, and a deep choir which, as was usual in later English but not in Norman days, ended in a flat east wall. It was consecrated in the year 1092, and was begun by Herman, finished by his successor Osmund, a companion of the Conqueror, and much altered and enlarged by Roger, the warrior-bishop of King Stephen's time. It seems to have been inclosed by the fortifications of the castle, and this fact typifies all those which led to its eventual abandonment.

From the beginning, the close association of ecclesiastical and military power was a source of trouble. At Durham the bishop had been the first comer and was indisputable head of the community, and the might of the sword always assisted the might of the staff. But the bishop of Sherborne and Ramsbury came to Sarum, so to say, as the guest and dependent of its military chief. Some of his successors united both titles—as in the case of the bloody and potent Roger. But from Roger's day onward church and castle were at feud, and the burghers of Sarum, who were tenants in part of the one and in part of the other, fed and fanned the discord. Municipal disputes were then not settled by words. Hand-to-hand struggles were frequent in Sarum, and naturally the priests did not often have the best of the matter. In the reign of Richard I., for instance, "such was the hot entertainment on

each part" over certain disputed boundaries "that at last the Castellanes, espieing their time, gate between the cleargie and the towne and so coiled them as they returned homeward that they feared any more to gang about their bounds for the year." Moreover, the cathedral establishment was sadly cramped for space, the town "wanted water so unreasonably as [a strange kind of merchandise] it was there to be sold," the hill was cold and cheerless and the wind blew over the lifted church so that often "the people could not hear the priests say mass." And then, on general principles, "What," as one of its canons exclaimed, "has the house of the Lord to do with castles? It is the ark of the covenant in a temple of Baalim. Let us in God's name," he added, "descend into the level. There are rich champagnes and fertile valleys abounding in the fruits of the earth and profusely watered by living streams. There is a seat for the Virgin patroness of our Church to which the whole world cannot afford a parallel." Times had changed since that distraught eleventh century, when such spots as Durham and Sarum had seemed the best for churchmen's homes. What they wanted now was not convenience of defense, but freedom of access and the chance to live well, since anywhere they could live in safety. So, in the reign of Henry III. and the bishopric of Richard Poore, the first stones of a new cathedral were laid in the valley. As it stood more than a mile away from the old one, we can perhaps as readily believe that the Virgin showed the spot to the bishop in a dream as that he marked it by an arrow shot from the ramparts of Old Sarum.

With the ecclesiastics went most of the burghers of the hill-town. At once its importance departed and, more slowly but as utterly, its very life. The stages of its decline cannot be traced with surety. But the mere fact that after the time of Bishop Poore history refers to it only seldom and as though by chance proves how quickly it died. A writer who visited it in 1540 says that not a house then remained, that the castle was a heap of "notable ruinous building," and that in a chapel dedicated to Our Lady burned the only lights which proved man's presence. Nominally Old Sarum existed as a town until the year 1831. Until then two so-called representatives of its chimerical inhabitants sat in the Parliament of England. But for years out of mind it had then been as invisible as it is to-day. Perhaps when the priests shook off its inhospitable dust they cursed it as the Hebrew priests had cursed the cities of the plain.

As it gradually dwindled, the new city of priests waxed and grew, absorbing its life-blood, stealing away the stones of its body.



PLAN OF SALISBURY CATHEDRAL.

A, Nave; B, C, Main Transepts; D, Choir; F, J, Minor or Eastern Transepts; G, Retrochoir; I, North Porch; 13, Lady Chapel; 24, Entrance to Cloisters.

Peace dwelt within the borders of New Sarum, and the only ramparts it needed were the low walls which still fence in its close—signs not of anticipated conflict, but merely of the church's isolation from the world.

II.

APART from its great central feature the modern Salisbury is not an interesting town. The main streets are commonplace, though in out-of-the-way corners we find picturesque bits of domestic work and a Perpendicular church or two; and while the chief square is spacious, it has scarcely more architectural dignity than that of some New England city of the second rank. Doubtless it was once more interesting—the scene-painter bids us think so when "Richard III." is being played and the time comes for Buckingham's execution. Beyond the suburbs, however, out in the valley of the Avon, the England of today is as lovely as ever, and from here the town seems a pretty enough base for the splendid spire which soars above it. All possible adjectives of description and nouns of com-

parison have been worn threadbare in the attempt to paint this spire. But no words can do the work. To call it a "titanic arrow" weakly pictures the way it lifts itself, seemingly not towards but into the blue of heaven. To liken it to the "spear of an angel" does not figure the strength which dwells in its buoyant outline. We may speak of it for the thousandth time as a silent "finger of faith" pointing to the home of the faithful and not hint at the significance it wears to the imaginative eye, or cite with emphasis the many feet it measures and not explain the paramount place it holds in the landscape—how it is always the center and finish of every scene, whether we stand far away or near; how it persists in our consciousness even when our backs are turned, or when the blackness of night shuts it out from corporeal vision. Standing just beneath it, we cannot but keep our eyes perpetually lifted to its aerial summit, to mark how the moving clouds appear to be at rest and it appears to move—like a gigantic, lovely dial-hand actually showing us for once the invisible revolution of the globe. When we are far away, on the desolate levels of Salisbury Plain, we see its isolated, slender stateliness for miles after town and church have vanished beneath the plateau's edge; and when it also disappears it still seems to be watching us—it is still the one thing with which imagination takes account until we are finally in presence of that huge circle at Stonehenge, in comparison with the antiquity of which Salisbury's spire is modern. The whole of architectural progress lies between the forms of these two famous monuments. Here are rough, unhewn, uncouth monoliths, raised by brute strength and standing by the force of mere inertia—there, delicately chiseled blocks piled in myriads one upon another to a dizzy height, the utmost science and the subtlest art creating and maintaining them. Here is the impressiveness of matter subdued by mind into positions full once of a meaning that now is lost but not subdued into even the remotest semblance of grace or beauty. There a strength infinitely greater is combined with the last word of grace and loveliness, and expresses meanings, faiths, emotions, which are still those of our own world. Yet there is no undecipherable stage in the long sequence which lies between. The steps are close and clear—not, indeed, in England, but in other lands that we know as well—which lead from men who were content to set two great stones over against each other and lay a third on top and call them a temple, to men who caressed their stones into exquisite forms and surfaces, piled them aloft in complicated harmonies of outline, and crowned them with pinnacles—as

light as air, as strong as iron — which all but touched the clouds.

It is interesting too to remember, that new as Salisbury seems when compared with Stonehenge, the one can boast no earlier name than the other. The Druids may very well have built Stonehenge, but the barbarians whom the Druids ruled must have camped before the Romans on the hill of Sarum. Perhaps from this same spot, indeed, went forth the constructors of the undated temple and those of the thirteenth-century church.

III.

ONE can well understand how attractive their new site must have seemed to the emigrating priests — low and level, warm and fertile, and close to the silver Avon's banks. But its too-tempting unlikeness to their old position brought them new discomforts. The land lay so low as to be almost swampy, and the river ran so close that in times of flood it ran into the church — an even worse visitor than the wind of the hill-city, as it could enforce the discontinuance of services for days together. Even until comparatively recent years local grumblers called the close the sink of the city and the palace the sink of the close. But no hint of such discomforts appears to the eye. The close is simply one of the greenest, freshest, and sweetest of earthly spots; and outside of fairy-land there can be nothing lovelier than the palace and its gardens, except the incomparably fairy-like garden and palace at Wells. If Durham seems the petrified portrait and interpretation of the Church Militant, Salisbury is the very type and picture of the Church of the Prince of Peace. Nowhere else does a work of Christian architecture so express purity and repose and the beauty of holiness, while the green pastures which surround it might well be those of which the Psalmist wrote. When the sun shines on the pale gray stones and the level grass and the silent trees, and throws the long shadow of the spire across them, it is as though a choir of seraphs sang in benediction of that peace of God which passeth understanding. The men who built and planted here were sick of the temples of Baalim, tired of being cribbed and cabined, weary of quarrelsome winds and voices. They wanted space and sun and stillness, comfort and rest and beauty, and the quiet ownership of their own; and no men ever more perfectly expressed, for future times to read, the ideal which they had in mind.

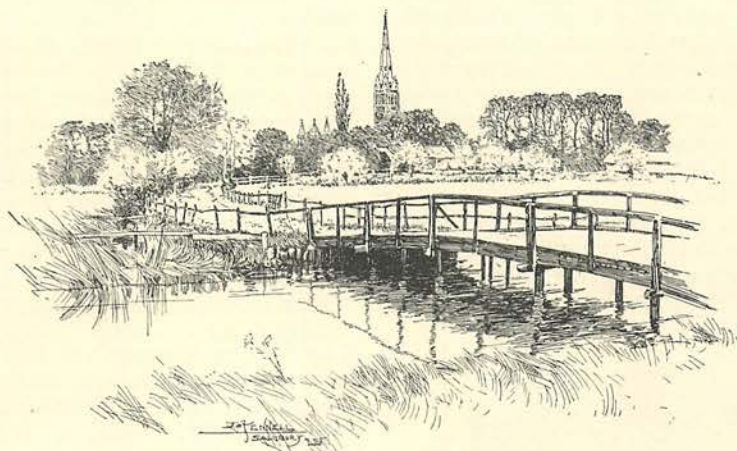
The cathedral stands upon a great, unbroken, absolutely level lawn which sweeps around it to west and north and east, while close beyond it to the south rise the trees of the episcopal gar-

den. Cloisters and chapter-house lie also to the south, and upon the other sides nothing is visible except the lawn itself, the magnificent trees which circle at a distance, the low wall of the close, and over this the rows of the canons' vine-wreathed homes. The chief approach is through a gate-way at the north-east angle of the close, whence a path leads to the main door in the north side of the nave. Approaching thus, we see the whole church standing free and see it at its very best. For, as so often in England, the west front not only does not contain the entrance, but is the least beautiful part of the structure.

IV.

AS FATE had decreed that this should be the only great English church to be built all at once and to remain intact, it is fortunate that it was begun not in a time of transition but in the early years of a perfected style; and it is doubly fortunate that this style was one which only England practiced. Her earlier Norman and her later full-blown Gothic (or Decorated style) she practiced in common with the rest of northern Europe. But the intermediate Lancet-Pointed and the still later Perpendicular were of her own creation. Lancet Pointed features, as has been already told, were used elsewhere, but were nowhere else developed into a homogeneous scheme of construction and decoration, and so long used as to come to full perfection. When the corner-stone of the choir of Salisbury was laid, the style had just thrown off the last trace of Norman thought. When the west front was finished, it was just beginning to develop certain ornamental motives which became characteristic of the Decorated period. If the church had been built with the express wish to show what the Lancet-Pointed style meant in its purest essence, what it could achieve without help from any other, its witness could not be plainer or more precise.

Its plan is the ideal plan of a great English church, free alike from Norman and from contemporary foreign influence. The immense length of the nave and choir (480 feet) and their comparative narrowness; the double pair of transepts, each with its single aisle; the great north porch; the square endings of all the six limbs and even of the apse (if so it may be called) which projects to the eastward — all these are thoroughly English features. When we look at the exterior we find it also typically English, by reason not only of the squareness of all its parts and the shape and finish of all its openings, but of the lowness of its roofs as well. It is this lowness which gives to central tower and spire their

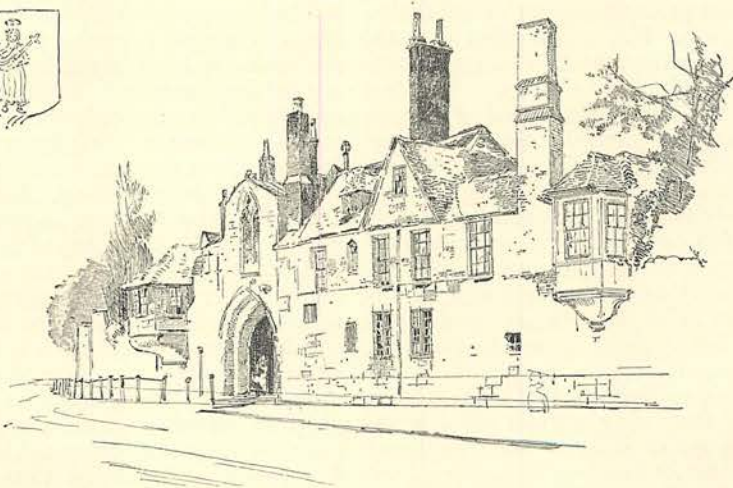


THE SPIRE, FROM THE RIVER.

unmatched effectiveness. Tall though the spire of Salisbury is, two or three others exist which are still taller. Amiens, for example, stands 22 feet above it. But at Amiens the roof-ridge is 208 feet from the ground, while at Salisbury it is only 81. I need not speak again of the vast increase in interior majesty which the high French ceiling gives. But outside, I may repeat, the advantage is the other way. The body of the church is more beautiful if less imposing, and tower and spire are thrown into incomparable relief. Yet even at Salisbury they do not seem too high for the supporting structure. They do not dwarf the church while so imperially asserting themselves. The vast length of an English church and the wide spread of its transepts compensate as evidence of strength for the lowness of its walls, and amply sustain, to the æsthetic

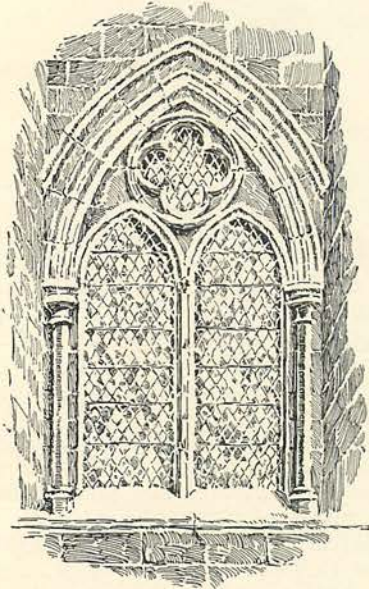
sense, the loftiest ascending lines. In fact, no better church than Salisbury could be imagined as a preparation for one of the tallest spires in the world. Its successive portions so build themselves up from east to west in gradually increasing height that it has a graceful dignity, a buoyancy, a lifting, bearing, aspiring effect which we feel would be incomplete did a less aerial pinnacle surmount the whole.

This is the great beauty of Salisbury, the composition of its mighty body as a whole. So finely proportioned and arranged are its square masses of different heights and sizes, so splendid are the broad effects of light and shadow they produce, so appropriate is the slant of the roof lines, and so wisely placed and gracefully shaped are the simple windows, that for once we can give no thought



NORTH-EAST GATEWAY TO THE CLOSE.

of regret either to the circling apses of Continental lands or to the rich traceries and surface carvings and figure-sculptures of later generations. The openings of the main story and the capitals of their shafts are merely molded. Traceries are employed above, but sparingly and in the simplest patterns. The buttresses are small and the flying ones which support the upper walls are few. The water-tables, which play a marvelously effective part in strengthening and enlivening the walls, are but a succession of unornamented though exquisitely profiled sharp projections and recesses;

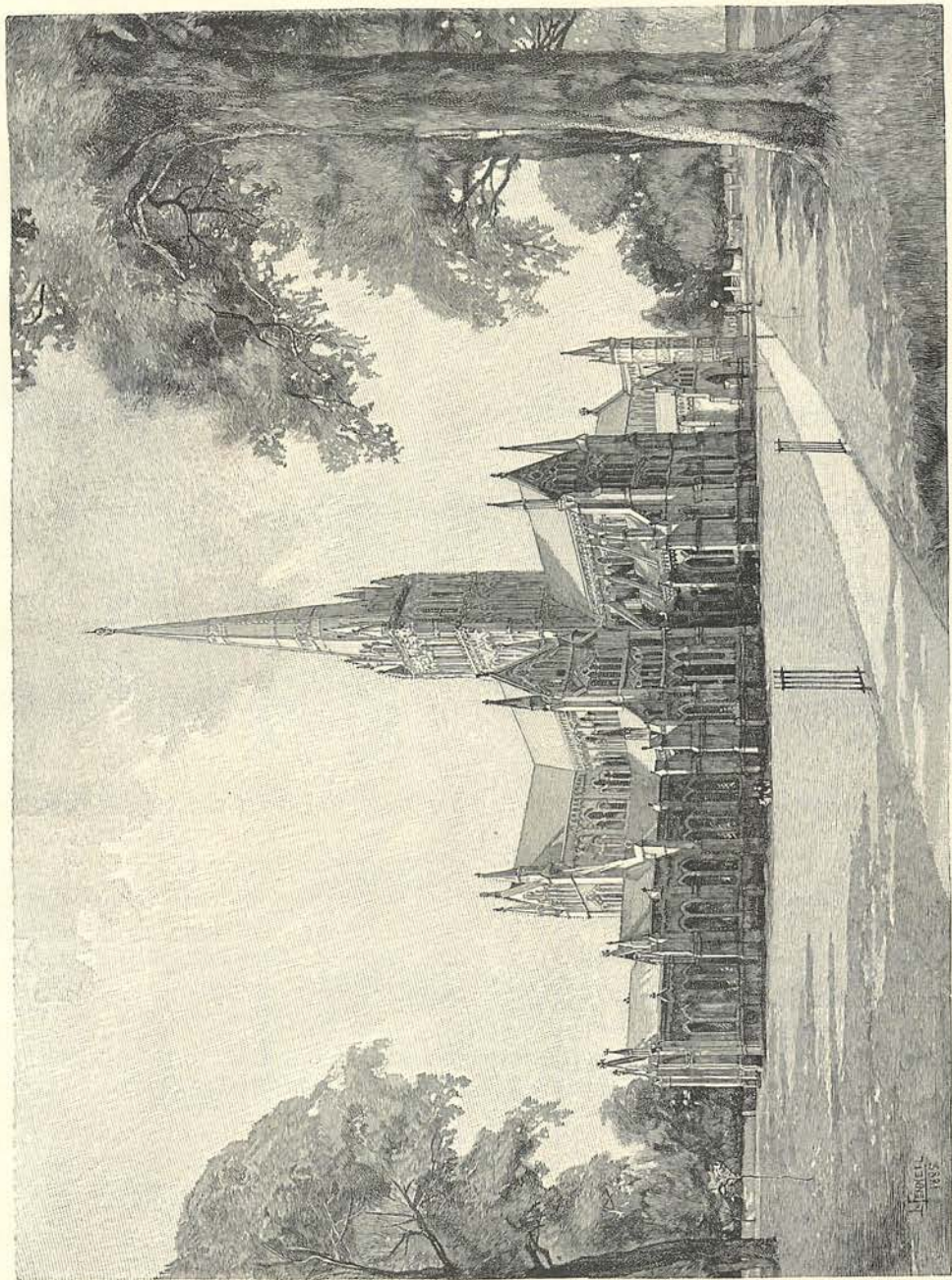


EXTERIOR OF TRIFORIUM WINDOW, NORTH TRANSEPT.

and even the arcaded cornices are not elaborate. Except upon the western front there is nothing which properly can be called sculptured decoration. The whole effect is in the strictest sense architectural. Few large buildings teach so clearly the great lesson that beauty in a building depends first of all upon composition, not decoration; upon masses, not details; upon the use and the shaping, not the ornamentation of features: and very few show half so plainly that medieval architects could realize this fact. Gothic ideals so commonly reveal themselves through forms which are strikingly varied, or very complicated, or lavishly adorned, or all these things at once, that we are too apt to think them identical with such qualities. We are too apt to think that Gothic art cannot be individual without being eccentric, or interesting without being heterogeneous, or grand without being grandiose or half-barbaric, or lovely without the riotous charms of lace-like carving and ubiquitous

figure-sculpture. But Salisbury is both grand and lovely; and yet it is quiet, rational and all of a piece, clear and simple, and refined to the point of utmost purity. No building in the world is more logical, more lucid in expression, more restful to mind and eye.

Mr. Henry James, who is usually a sensitive observer, has called Salisbury a blonde beauty among churches. Certainly its chief charm is grace, not power. It is a distinctly feminine structure as compared with Ely or Durham, and we may grant that it is a blonde beauty as were those daughters of the gods who were "divinely tall and most divinely fair." But if by the term is meant any hint of weakness or mere prettiness it is a distinct misnomer. When the same pen writes that the beauty of Salisbury is a little *banal*, we are bound to dissent with emphasis. It may look so in a picture, for in architecture scale has much to do with the character of the impression we receive. The enormous size of Salisbury gives its design a force, a grandeur, an individuality which it would lack had it been executed on a smaller scale. In actual presence of its calm immensity most eyes will not find it commonplace or so lightly graceful as to want impressiveness. The truth is this, I repeat, with regard to Gothic architecture: we so often find imperfectly realized attempts that when we find completeness we are tempted to think the aim must have been an easy one to reach; we are so used to seeing virtues mixed with faults, or at least with different virtues, that when they are unmixed we hardly feel them precious; we are so cloyed with rich details that simplicity seems insipid; and we are so often met by an infinite picturesqueness that when it is absent we depreciate strict architectural beauty. It is strict architectural beauty that we find at Salisbury. If we think it feeble it will be because we cannot see strength when it has been brought to perfect poise and ease. If our verdict is *banal*, it will be because we cannot tell the commonplace from the simply and exactly right, or do not know how rare the latter is — because we long for eccentricity as a proof of personality, and need what the French call *emphasis* to impress us. There is no over-emphasis about Salisbury — neither in its effect as a whole nor in any of its parts, neither in its design nor in its treatment. But just in this fact lies its greatest merit; and just by reason of this fact joined to its mighty size and its exceptional unity, it is intensely individual, personal, distinct from all other churches in the world. Here, for once, we find one phase of the medieval ideal of a great Christian church perfectly expressed by constructive forms alone, and find that it has extraordinary majesty, yet a still greater degree of loveliness.



SALISBURY CATHEDRAL FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

Is there nothing better to do than to turn away with the verdict: Perfect, but too perfect; simple, but too easily understood; grand, but not grandiose enough; entirely lovely, which is a fault; exquisitely complete, but therefore unexciting?

It is not a new idea of my own that if a classic Greek could come back to life he might like Salisbury better than any other medieval building. But it came to me as a new idea when I first saw the church, and the fact is perhaps worth citing as a line of

Gothic kinds, and that in its kind it stands unsurpassed, unrivaled, unapproached. If we put ornamentation out of the balance and judge for constructive beauty alone, it is one of the two or three great churches of the world—partly because of its singular completeness, but largely for more intrinsic reasons.

V.

It is well to say at once, however, that in thus estimating the merits of Salisbury I have



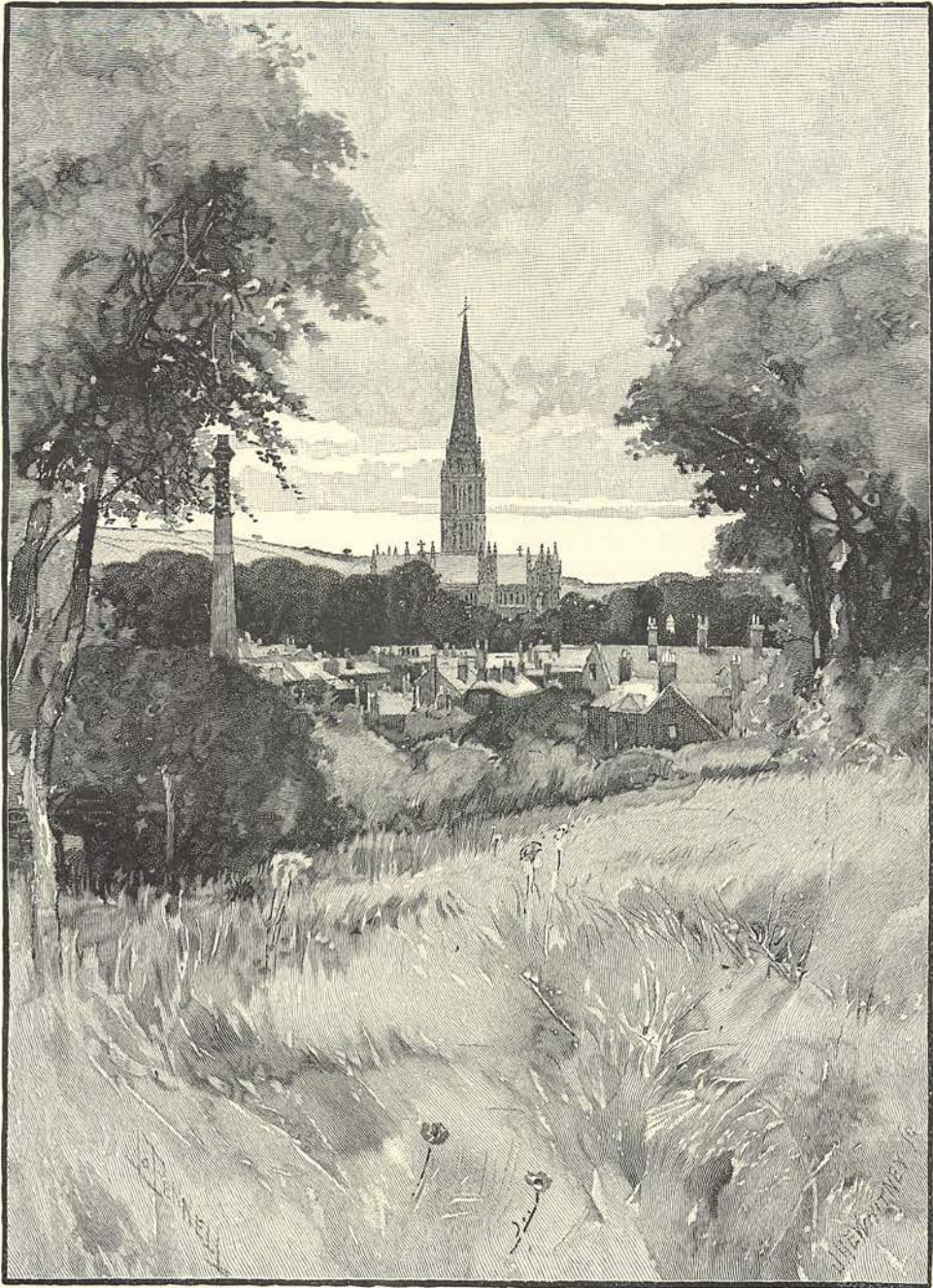
THE CLOSE AND A PART OF THE WEST FRONT.

evidence in a significant direction. If this building would seem exceptionally perfect and lucid to the eye of a Greek, if we should choose it as the first to show him when explaining what medieval builders understood by a temple of their faith,—if this is true or can by any colorable license be construed as truth, is not Salisbury magnificently praised? Meat that is fit for the gods must be good, though to our jaded appetites there may seem little spice in the dish.

I do not wish to be understood as saying that Salisbury is the most beautiful church in the world or in England, or even as saying that so it seems to me. Moods change, and with them estimates of perfection. Architectural beauty is of many kinds, and even within the limits of the Pointed styles we may judge for different virtues with differing priorities as the result. All I mean is that Salisbury's kind of beauty is the most purely lovely among

left its west front out of mind. This front is, indeed, one of the best of its kind, but its kind is indisputably bad.

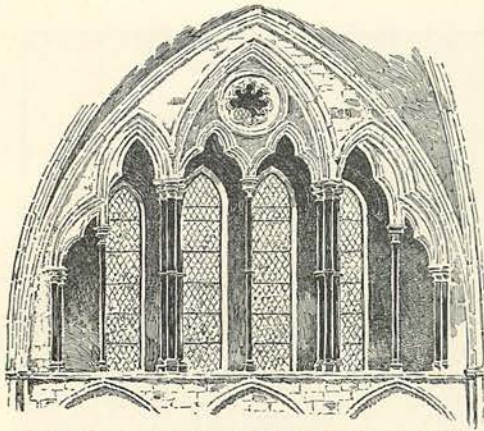
The west façades of England offer a curious subject for study. Norman builders loved dominant central towers and English builders always persisted in this love. Across the Channel it was soon suppressed by a desire for lofty ceilings, and the west front profited by the change. Its towers became of chief importance, and their combination with the principal door-ways and with the great height of wall-curtain, which was justified by the high nave-walls behind, resulted in designs of extraordinary force and splendor—in designs which, as elevations, are by far the finest works of medieval genius. In England, where the western towers remained subordinate to the central, and where the body of the church was low and narrow, no such magnificence of front was logically possible. But great beauty



THE SPIRE OF SALISBURY.

and excellence might still have been possible but for two unfortunate facts — English builders sometimes took even their principal doors away from the west front, and they sometimes tried to simulate the grandeur of French fronts by illogical, untruthful con-

struction. The first act was a great architectural mistake, the second was a crying architectural sin; and both fault and sin appear at Salisbury. In front of the low aisles the wall rises almost as high as in front of the nave, standing as a useless screen crossed by rows



INTERIOR OF CLERE-STORY WINDOW, NORTH TRANSEPT.

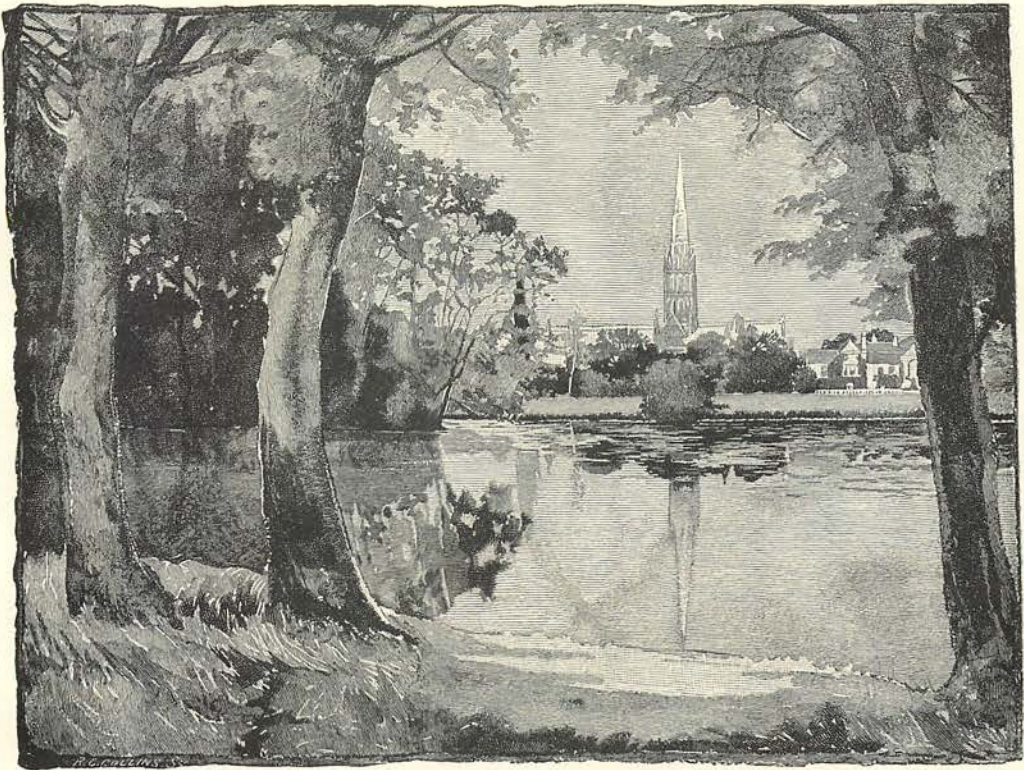
of simulated windows. Three porches exist, but they are much too small for the artistic or the expressional dignity which their place demands. It hardly needs the corroborating evidence of the great porch on the north side of the church to make them seem a mere concession to the precepts of tradition or of foreign practice; and the façade as a whole is palpably an attempt to imitate under hopeless conditions the majestic variety of French designs. It is not a true factor in the general scheme of the building, truly completing the parts which lie behind it. It is a screen whose purpose is to make the church look larger than the truth. From one point of view it accomplishes this task, but from every other the cheat is of course apparent. Strictly judged for the underlying architectural idea, it has no greater merit than a thing we may see any day in any little American town — a house-front a couple of stories in height surmounted by another sham story or two of blank wall, behind which, when we stand a little aside, we see the roofs sloping away. They were a singular race, these English architects. Sometimes they seem to possess, in the highest measure, constructive genius, architectural imagination, æsthetic feeling; sometimes they design like children who have been impressed by a certain object but have no appreciation of what factors really make its beauty; and sometimes they show both phases of their character in the same building and at the same epoch. Such is strikingly the case at Salisbury. The east end, the tower and spire, and the long reaches of nave and transepts look like the work of angel builders inspired by a supernal idea to a supernatural perfection of result, while the west front — built by the same men, or at least by their sons — shows a lack of the first principles of good art which we should condemn in a generation that had been fed on blunders only. Yet the result is as characteristically

English in the one case as in the other. Neither for the supreme success nor for the crude mistake was there any foreign precedent.

The more we look at this façade the more its faults as a design appear, though there is much to delight us in its details of execution. The wings are too wide for the central division, and the middle window is too large for its place; the cornices are deplorably weak, and the rows of blank windows are a cheap device to give the wall a semblance of utility. It is less to be called a composition than a mechanical assemblage of individually attractive features. But it is far more elaborate than any other part of the church, and must at least have had great decorative charm when its multitudinous figures were intact. Time and the Reformation ruined them however, and the modern hand which replaced them was not a great sculptor's.

VI.

It is a pleasure to turn from the front of Salisbury to the tower and spire, which call for nothing but unstinted praise. The upper parts are just a century later than the lower and belong to the Decorated period. But appropriate proportioning has been observed in the shape of the windows, and the richer decoration seems entirely harmonious with the simplicity below. The tower groups and assort with the body of the church as a blown rose groups and assort with buds — it seems but the same idea brought to a richer, fuller development. And the work is as intrinsically beautiful as it is appropriate. Not size alone makes this steeple so famous; not merely the lowness of the roof beneath makes it so splendidly impressive. No other spire in the world is so exquisitely noble in proportions, so aspiring in expression, so graceful in outline, so felicitous in the arrangement of its parts. The angle-turrets are of just the right size, the stories of the tower and the bandings of the spire are of just the right height, the transition from tower to spire — from the four-sided to the eight-sided body — is beautifully managed, and the decoration is applied so well that we cannot dis sever it in thought from the constructive forms it accents. Salisbury's spire has few rivals in the world and, to my mind, no equal. The far greater elaboration of Strasburg's is dearly purchased by a loss of purity in outline and of buoyancy of spring. The same is true with even greater emphasis of Antwerp's and of Mechlin's, whence the spire-like effect has almost entirely vanished. If the open lace-work of Freiburg's great pinnacle has a greater picturesqueness, we may still prefer the solid, pure, and noble slightness of the great English work; and in all of Europe there is no



FROM THE BISHOP'S GARDEN.

other spire of similar altitude and beauty which stands like this as the completing central feature of a great and perfect composition.

It is supposed that the builders of the church intended to carry their tower much higher than the single stage they completed. But their foundations, set on spongy soil, showed signs of weakness, and the recent fall of the great neighboring tower of Winchester warned against temerity. Strong abutments were added in the upper stages of the church, and by the aid of these the fourteenth-century architect raised his upper stories and his spire. The construction of the latter is singularly daring and scientific. To a height of twenty feet its walls are two feet thick, but above that they are only nine inches thick, while the scaffoldings which served the builders still remain within them, hung to the capstone of the spire by iron rods and serving by their cross-bars to brace the fabric. But even thus the soil refused to bear the enormous load with steadiness, and in the fifteenth century great braces were inserted between the four supporting piers to prevent them from bulging outward to their fall. The point of the spire is now twenty-three inches out of the perpen-

dicular, but the fact is scarcely perceptible; and though signs of settlement show far more plainly within the church, they have not increased for centuries, while modern skill has done its best to guard against further movement. It is probable that the original constructors did not think of adding so lofty a finish to their tower; but their successors' thought was a happy one and, as time has proved, it was not altogether over-daring.

VII.

THE interior of the cathedral, despite its size and unity, impresses and charms us much less than the exterior. The features of its design please us best when individually considered. The plan of the great pillars is a welding together of eight circular shafts, four of larger and four of smaller size. The arches between them are sharply pointed and their moldings show that infinitude of beautifully contrasting hollows, ridges, and rolls which is the distinctive mark and the greatest merit of Early-English work. The clere-story openings are divided into coupled lights and filled with simple, strong, yet graceful traceries; and the triforium lights are in groups of three or five.

Each story is beautiful in itself, but there is no intimate connection between them. They are superimposed but not connected. Even in



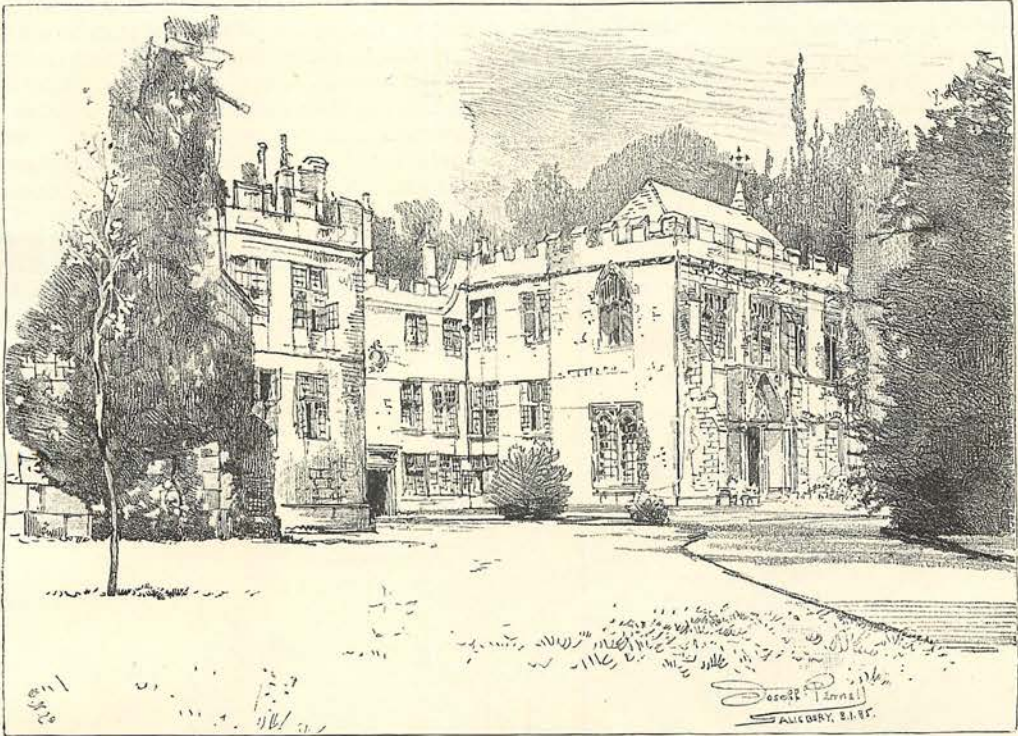
THE CLOISTERS.

round-arched Norman work, where no air of consistent aspiration is expected, the effect is best when certain members rise in unbroken lines from floor to roof, uniting all parts of the design. But here, where they are far more essential, there are no such members. Each range of openings is designed in independence of the others, and the sharply pointed forms do not agree in expression with the strong horizontal demarcations thus produced—the eye is bidden continually to change from vertical to level lines, and neither an idea of rest nor an idea of aspiration is made clear. The roof, moreover, begins its curve so low down upon the walls as to have an almost crushing effect; seen in their long sequence, the features which individually are so charming look somewhat thin and “wire-drawn”; and the entire lack of sculptured decoration seems here a fault, though it seemed no fault outside. Early-English builders could decorate most lavishly when they chose, and one type of capital which they used is extremely rich and lovely. But another type consisted simply of a succession of plain moldings, and it is this alone that we find at Salisbury. Of course the effect must have been very different when the church was first constructed. Then all the untracied windows, which now look so poor and throw so cold a glare, were filled with gorgeous low-toned glass, and the stonework throughout was brought into harmony by paint. But as we see it to-day, an architectural scheme reduced to its intrinsic terms, the nave of Salisbury leaves us a little indifferent. The choir is more attractive, for its

furnishings enrich the general effect and the design of its east end is extremely fine. Three tall arches, the outer ones of very slender shape, are surmounted by a group of five lancet windows and again by another group of five. This is the end wall of the choir proper, and the upper ranges of windows look out over lower roofs and are filled with glass. But through the great arches beneath them we look under these low roofs into the retrochoir and Lady-Chapel, where slender, isolated shafts make exquisite perspectives, changing in effect with every changing step. These outlying chapels, seen thus as through a triple frame, are the

English substitute for the circling apses of the Continent. The prize for picturesqueness, poetry, and mystery must be given to France, but England's device is as charming in a simpler, clearer way; and, I may say once more, there is less need for comparisons in a case like this than for gratitude that different lands show different ideals in perfect execution and not merely variants of the same kind of success.

The monuments which filled the choir and nave of Salisbury were sadly knocked about and mutilated and shifted in Protestant years, and when the “restorer” Wyatt took them in hand a century ago he re-arranged many of them after a scheme of his own. The columns of the nave are united by a low continuous plinth, prescribed, perhaps, for the better distribution of their weight, by the treacherous nature of the soil. Upon this plinth, between the pillars, Wyatt arranged a sequence of monuments. Of course their historic interest is destroyed, yet the effect, superficially speaking, is not bad, and if Wyatt had done nothing worse than this we might perhaps forgive him. How can we forgive him for shattering the ancient windows and throwing their glass “by cart-loads into a ditch”? Some remaining fragments have been patched together in two or three of the windows, but we must go to the cathedral of York to see what we might have seen at Salisbury had it not been for reformers and restorers. A multitude of tombs still remain in the choir and Lady-Chapel—old and modern, large and small, simple and elaborate. Among them is one which is supposed to commemorate Bishop Roger and to



THE BISHOP'S PALACE.

have been brought from Old Sarum, and another in which lies a woman whom a poet's lines, more imperishable than brass or stone, have made forever famous — "Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother."

The great old choir-screen, as in so many other English churches, has been removed, and the eye now passes without hindrance from one end of the mighty perspective to the other. Or, more exactly, it would thus pass but for the huge braces that were built in the fifteenth century between the piers which support the tower. Each is formed by a strong, low arch surmounted by a straight, beam-like piece of wall. The huge original openings are thus divided, so to say, into two open stories, and the Perpendicular decoration on the lower story strikes the only note of discord in the vast architectural unity of the church. The device was constructionally clever, and doubtless was the best that could have been adopted, but the necessity for its adoption was unfortunate.

VIII.

CHAPTER-HOUSE and cloisters, like the church itself, are complete to-day as at first constructed, and they too are in the Early-English style. They were built just after the church was finished and resemble the west

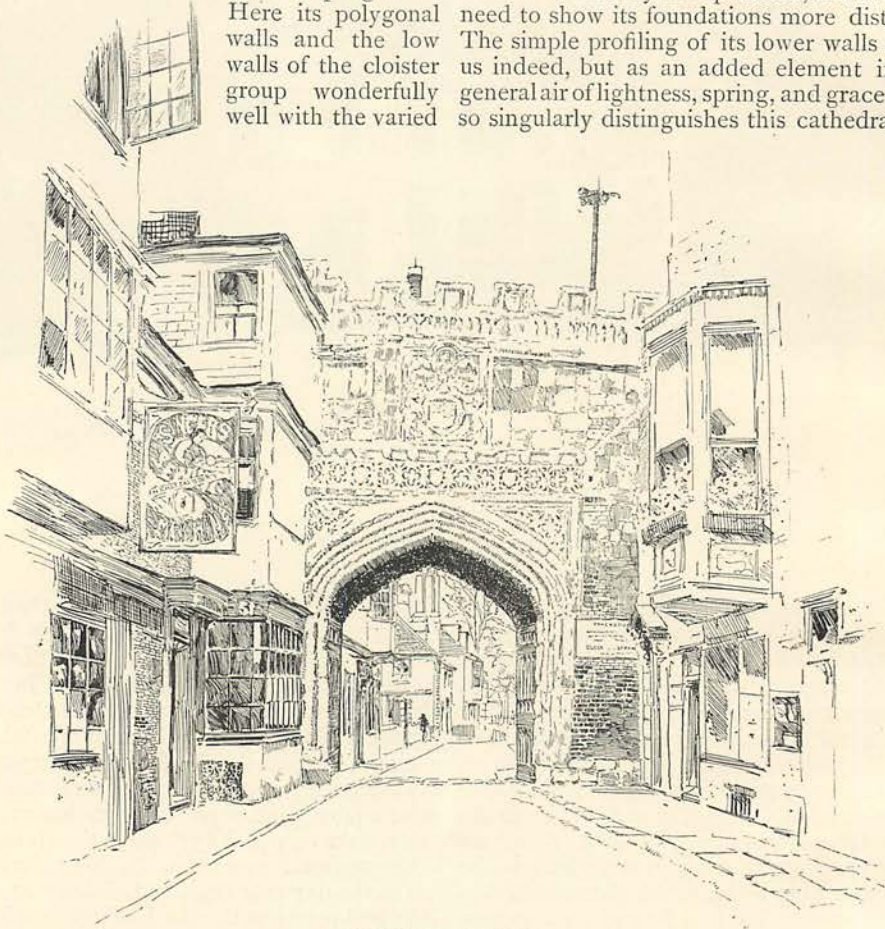
façade, being richer in feature and detail than the nave against the south side of which they lie. Every cathedral chapter needed, of course, a chapter-house for its assemblings; but only monastic establishments needed cloister-walks for the daily recreation of the monks who led their lives in common. Salisbury's chapter was always collegiate, and its cloisters, therefore, were a pure piece of architectural luxury. The fact speaks very plainly through the absence of other monastic structures. Nothing more than we see to-day ever stood at Salisbury except a lofty bell-tower on the north side of the churchyard. It was "multangular in form, surmounted by a leaden spire; with walls and buttresses similar to the chapter-house and cloisters, and a single pillar of Purbeck marble in the center, supporting the bells and spire." It was destroyed by Wyatt, apparently for no reason, but with full consent of dean and chapter.

The cloisters, with their coupled windows, simple traceries, and groined roofs are very beautiful, and the priests well gave the name of "Paradise" to the central square of turf with its group of dusky cedars. The chapter-house is of the typical English form — an octagon with great windows filling the space between its buttresses, and an overarching roof borne by a central column. Yet it does not charm us quite so much as some of the

sister-buildings we shall meet elsewhere. Its forms and proportions seem thin and poor, cold and mechanical, and a modern attempt to restore its painted color has given it a dismal tawdriness. If we want to see it at its best we must stand outside, to the southward, beyond the door which leads from the cloisters into the bishop's garden.

Here its polygonal walls and the low walls of the cloister group wonderfully well with the varied

deep velvet turf. The church seems rather to rest upon the surface of this turf than to send out roots into the soil below. The fact might be unfortunate in a smaller structure, giving it a look of slightness and insecurity. But here the structure is so immense, its lateral arms stretch out so broadly, and its square angles are so bold and steady in expression, that it has no need to show its foundations more distinctly. The simple profiling of its lower walls strikes us indeed, but as an added element in that general air of lightness, spring, and grace which so singularly distinguishes this cathedral.



GATEWAY TO THE CLOSE.

masses of the church itself. The composition is one of infinite purity, charm, and, if I so may say, soft grandeur; and the wide stretch of idyllic garden beyond, leading off to the stately palace, is a setting such as England alone can furnish to her structures.

Passing around the church again we marvel at the perfect finish of its masonry and the beauty of its color — pale ashy gray, conspicuously stained below with wide growths of red and yellow lichens. We marvel too at the lack of emphatic treatment in the foundations. Here, where Nature gave no rocky base, we might have looked for a rock-like base of masonry, but the walls rise nearly straight from the

The wall around the close was not built until the fourteenth century, when Edward III. gave permission to "embattle" the cathedral precincts and to use for the purpose the stones of the old church at Sarum. On the north the wall lies so far off from the church, and on the west it comes, comparatively speaking, so near, that the secondary rank of the façade is again explained to the eye. It is nowhere a very lofty wall and in some parts it is very low. Here and there among its stones may be seen bits of Norman carving, which are the only existing witnesses to the style and finish of the ancient hill-town church.

Beyond the wall to the west runs a row of

canons' homes, each set back in its luxuriant little garden. To the north is another expanse of green and then more houses. Most of the dwellings are of Elizabethan design, or of one of those Queen Anne or Georgian patterns which in this country we call "colonial." In size and shape they constantly remind us of things we have seen at home, but in material and color they are wholly English. They have fine red-tiled roofs, and their walls are of brick, or of brick and plaster, or of stone and flint; and where the stones have been patched with ruddy bricks there is no effort to conceal the disparity in material which gives so beautiful a variety in tint. Vines cover, trees embower, and flowers encircle them. The color effect as a whole is enchanting, and the air of mingled dignity, unworldliness, and peace which broods over the church itself broods over the dwellings of its ministrants as well.

Richard Poore, who, as bishop of Salisbury, founded its new church, was the same who a little later, as bishop of Durham, founded there the Chapel of the Nine Altars. It is unlikely that

he was in either case the architect; and though the Early-English style is used in both buildings, it is so differently used as not to suggest that their designer was one and the same. The utmost simplicity of which the Lancet Pointed style is capable rules at Salisbury, the utmost luxuriance at Durham — as regards not profuseness of ornament alone but the constructional forms themselves. It is a singular coincidence, therefore, but doubtless nothing more, that the first man whom we know to have actually built at Salisbury — perhaps as architect, perhaps merely as clerk-of-the-works — bears the name of the northern town, Elias de Derham.

Although Salisbury was a cathedral church from very early times, much of its history is as void of great prelatical names as the history of Peterborough, which was merely an abbey church until the sixteenth century. Not the bishops but the earls of Salisbury, whose cross-legged effigies may be seen in the nave, made the name of their town a power in the world.

M. G. van Rensselaer.

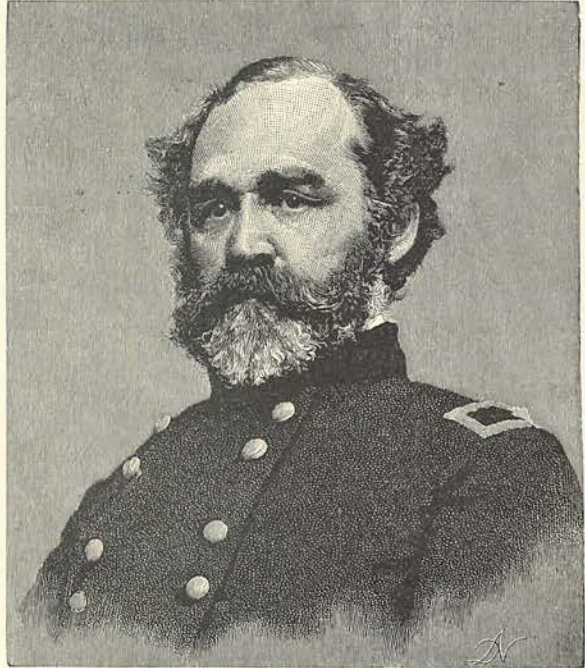
ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.*

THE CALL TO ARMS.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

THE FALL OF SUMTER.

MILITARY and naval expeditions rarely move at their first appointed time. That prepared by Captain Fox for Sumter was, by the President's order, directed to sail on April 6, but did not actually start till the 9th; that prepared by Captain Meigs for Fort Pickens was to have got off on the 2d, but only sailed on the 6th. The fitting out of both went on simultaneously at New York, but the officers concerned were not cognizant of each other's plans and measures, and it so happened that, through a misunderstanding which did not come to light until after the sailing of the latter, the war ship *Powhatan*, upon which Captain Fox depended for his most effective aid in his proposed efforts to relieve Fort Sumter, was transferred to the command of Lieutenant Porter, and sailed to Fort Pickens instead. The details of the incident are too long for the pages of this magazine and must be passed, with the simple statement that the



GENERAL M. C. MEIGS. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRADY.)

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