

WELLS CATHEDRAL.



WHEN the traveler opens the great scrap-book he calls memory the pictures which impress him most are sure to be those that were painted in by some vivid or peculiar effect of light. Such to me are the memories of Vesuvian slopes at midnight with lava streams burning their red smoke above and the Bay of Naples, lighted by a pale moon, below; of the southern point of Greece as we rounded it after a storm, Cerigo showing black to the southward against a crimson sky, and Cape Malea rising in the north, a vast sheer precipice of purple; of Avignon as we came down the Rhône, which flashed pink in a setting July sun, while the yellow diadem of towers was pink for the moment too; of the Nile and the desert when it was hard to say which was whiter under a strong morning light; of the mid-Atlantic in June when it was impossible to say whether the sky or the water was more astonishingly blue. And with these pictures ranks the cathedral close at Wells as I first saw it, in one of those rare tender sunsets when a rosy mist fills the air and makes the greens of nature like those we sometimes find in ancient tapestries.

I.

WELLS lies low in a wide, rich valley set around with hills of varied outline, the rocky Mendips backing it, and the peak of Glastonbury rising over marshlands to the southward. At some distance from the cathedral towers springs the splendid Perpendicular tower of St. Cuthbert's Church, and between them stretch quiet, low-browed streets, widening out into a market-place before one of the gateways of the cathedral close. Entering this gate we see the cathedral a little to the northward, with its sculptured front looking on a broad level lawn bounded by a wall and a low line of houses. Close to its northern side, when we have crossed the lawn, runs a broad street spanned by a bridge-like building which springs from the transept end to the entrance of the Vicars' Close, a double row of ancient little homes. The chapter house lies just beyond the bridge. Beyond the east-end of the church comes the lower roof of its Lady-Chapel; its southern side overlooks the most lovely wide gardens in the world; in these gardens, near

a natural fountain which forms a big pool,¹ falls in white cascades and fills a moat, there rises, with the water around its feet, a palace smothered in vines and trees; and beyond the gardens and the moat run avenues of enormous elms.

As we made this circuit, partly inside, partly outside the close, and at last along the shady avenues, all things grew mysterious and supernatural as the rosy glow deepened in the sky, more and more suffused the air, and softened local colors in a radiance that was neither pink nor gray nor green, but everywhere seemed to have a tinge of all three tones. Everything was quite distinct, yet we rubbed our eyes as though a veil of gauze were hiding realities that could not be so fair. It was romance made tangible. Here was indeed the palace of enchantment, without a discordant feature, and with no possible feature lacking, even to spell-bound princes who swam about as swans among the lilies of the moat. There was not a person to be seen, and often not a glimpse of any world beyond this roseate, silent park. Nature and art, blended together, were existing simply for themselves; and the stillness and glamour seemed so ancient, so miraculous and seductive, that at last one thought of escape for safety. An hour of such enchantment and—who knows?—we too might be swans on the moat, or swallows in the air, or stone figures under a stone canopy forever.

II.

WHEN a bishop of the West-Saxons was seated at Winchester in 635, half a century after the landing of St. Augustine, the district we call Somerset was almost wholly in the hands of the Welsh or ancient British inhabitants. Gradually the West-Saxon rule extended, and out of the diocese of Winchester was cut the one which had its cathedral first at Sherborne and afterwards at Salisbury. But it was not until the reign of Edward the Elder, about the year 909, that there was need for further subdivision.

It has already been explained that owing to the peculiar condition of the country, in the hands of invading tribes who had split it into many districts and wiped out the dominion of the old Roman centers, English bishops were not invariably seated, like their foreign brethren

¹ The name of the town comes from this fountain, and in the old Latin chronicles is *Fontana*.

ren, in important towns. The claims of the diocese as a whole were considered first; a central and accessible site was the main desire. And, as a rule, the prelate took his title, not from his seat, but from the district or the local tribe. For a while we hear of a bishop of the *Sumorsætas* simply; and, though the old Roman city of Bath stood within the northern limits of his diocese and the new English stronghold of Taunton near its southern end, his stool was placed between them at Wells. Here history points to nothing but a church, dedicated to St. Andrew, and a collegiate house; it is mere tradition that would have us think the house had existed since the time of King Ina, two centuries before, and that for a while at least it had served a bishop of his creation. A few miles from Wells stood a monastic establishment of undisputed age — Glastonbury, where, through centuries of heathen conquest, the memory of King Arthur and his religion had survived. But these old English organizers were practical men of another race, caring no more for British and ecclesiastical than for Roman and municipal associations. Much of this region was then marsh and water, surrounding dry elevated spots; and Glastonbury's mount was a veritable island — the "Isle of Avalon." The more accessible site of St. Andrew's Church was naturally preferred to one where the bishop and those who sought him would have to depend on boats.

Duduc, who ruled from 1033 to 1060, is the first prelate of any note. When he died he wished to leave his private possessions to his church; Harold, as earl of the district, took them for his own; and out of this seed of fact grew the picturesque legend we all learned at school — how Harold plundered the church at Wells and drove its bishop and priests into banishment. Gisa, a Lotharingian, succeeded Duduc. Without compelling his clergy to take monastic vows, he built a cloister and other needful structures and made them live in common. William the Conqueror did not disturb him, but when Gisa died, in 1088, William Rufus put a Frenchman in his place, John de Villulá from Tours; and the first act of the foreigner was to imitate in his diocese the invariable condition of things abroad. He took his chair from the isolated church of St. Andrew and set it in the church of St. Peter within the walls of Bath. This church he reconstructed and in it he was buried, while all he did at Wells was to pull down Gisa's works and build himself a palace with their stones. The church of Wells was no longer a cathedral; its chapter was broken and scattered, and the bishop who still ruled it was Bishop of Bath. But the next prelate but one — Robert, born in England of Flemish parents — united old and recent

claims; his title was Bishop of Bath and Wells; he had a chair in St. Andrew's and one in St. Peter's, and it was settled that his successors should be chosen by the secular canons of the former and the monkish canons of the latter, all voting together. In the time of the Reformation the chair at Bath was suppressed. Since then the cathedral at Wells has stood alone as it did before John of Tours. But, with the usual English love of symbols from which the life has long departed, the prelate who is enthroned there is still called Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Bishop Robert had been a monk and sub-abbot at Glastonbury, but he made no effort to bring monks into the close at Wells. Indeed, now that Gisa's buildings were gone, each canon returned to his own home, where forever after he dwelt in peace, with separate emoluments and dignities as well as a share in those which the chapter, as such, came to hold in independence of the bishop. At first, whether the chapter were secular or monastic, the bishop was its immediate head. But as the pride of the house and the outside responsibilities of the bishop increased, a dean was placed over the secular chapter and a prior over the monastic; the prelate had only indirect control, and sometimes there was war between him and those whose chief care should have been to serve his needs. Robert appointed a dean and a precentor at Wells, and possibly some of the other dignitaries — the subdean, chancellor, and treasurer. In his time there were in all twenty-two canons at Wells. Later, the number rose to fifty; and there are as many as this to-day.

III.

If a church indeed stood at Wells in the eighth century it can hardly have survived until the Norman Conquest. But the building into which Robert brought back his *cathedra* was of old-English origin, and perhaps as ancient as the establishment of the see in 909. It was in a ruinous, dangerous state, and Robert either repaired or rebuilt it. We cannot say positively what he did, for written records are vague and confused and no stone of his placing survives. But it seems probable that at least certain parts of the old-English church remained at his death, although this was in 1166, just a hundred years after the Conquest, when almost everywhere else in England relics of pre-Norman times had long disappeared from cathedral sites; and it is certain that whatever then remained stood for half a century longer. Savaric, who ruled from 1192 to 1205, forcibly possessed himself of Glastonbury and there placed a third episcopal chair,

so that Joceline, who came after him and ruled till 1242, signed Magna Charta as "Bishop of Bath and Glastonbury." But this was a transitory change. Episcopal claims to the abbey were soon bought off and Joceline gave himself up to the interests of his church at Wells. This he rebuilt in the Early-English style so thoroughly that no more trace remained of Norman than of old-English handiwork. The west-front and nave of the present cathedral, its transept, the three western bays of its choir,—then completed by an apse or chapels,—and all its towers up to the level of the roof, were built by Joceline; and a cloister too, of which certain parts are standing. The lower story of the chapter house and the connecting bridge were finished by 1290, and the upper part about 1300. Early in the fourteenth century the east-limb of the church was greatly extended. It was always the wish of mediæval builders to do their new work with as little disturbance as possible of the old, and there is evidence in the stones themselves to prove that here the Lady-Chapel was first built; that then the retro-choir—with projecting arms like a small second transept—and the eastern bays of the choir were put up, joining Joceline's three bays after his apse or chapels had been destroyed; and that finally these three were altered. The Decorated style was now in use, and the upper stories of Joceline's Early-English choir were given an accordant shape. The "singers' choir" had been accommodated beneath the tower, and the short east-limb had been the presbytery for the higher clergy. But now the new portion was the presbytery, and the choir was moved back under the new roof that covered Joceline's bays. The Lady-Chapel seems to have been finished by 1325, and the rest by 1350. Ralph of Shrewsbury was the bishop from 1323 to 1364, and he also founded the Vicars' Close and constructed the walls and moat around the palace, which had been greatly enlarged some fifty years before. By 1321 the central tower had been carried to its present height, the southwestern tower by 1385, and the northwestern before 1450. All doubtless once bore spires of wood and lead.

Thus the cathedral church at Wells was not a new creation on a new site, yet it was not gradually formed by the rebuilding of parts some of which survived in their early shape much longer than others. In the Early-English period its predecessor was entirely swept away to make room for it; before the end of the Decorated period it was finished all but its towers; and as it was finished, so, with very little change, it has lasted till our day.

One reason for thinking that Bishop Robert only repaired the old-English church is

the comparatively small size of the present building. When a Norman reconstructed he worked on a very lordly scale; but here, where the thirteenth-century church was certainly as large and probably much larger than its predecessor, it measures only 338 feet from the western to the eastern wall, and only 385 if we include the Lady-Chapel. At Gloucester the length is 406 feet, exclusive of the independent Lady-Chapel; at Winchester, where the Lady-Chapel is small, the total length is 525 feet; and at Salisbury, where it lies much as it does at Wells, we find 450 feet. Lichfield, the smallest of all the English cathedrals, is but four feet shorter than Wells.

IV.

IN the design of its nave, shown on page 732, this cathedral differs from all others in England. Elsewhere we have seen over each of the pier-arches one or two great arches in the triforium story, most often with smaller ones, resting on little columns, variously arranged within them. Groups are thus formed which, corresponding with the pier-arches below and the divisions of the vaulting above, give definiteness and unity to each successive bay. Each bay, taken from floor to ceiling, is not, indeed, a separate composition to be thought of apart from the others; yet the eye readily notes its individuality and sees the whole interior as composed of a series of well-marked divisions. But here the triforium arches run in an unbroken series, low and small. The scheme is a French, not an English one. We may find something very like it in the Norman church that William the Conqueror's wife built at Caen, and in a few buildings in the Pointed styles in various parts of France. In Great Britain it appears only in these southwestern districts, as at Wells, at Glastonbury, and in the cathedral church at Llandaff in Wales. Foreign influence must have been at work, but just why or how no one can venture to say. It shows also in the character of the moldings, which are very rich, but less boldly treated than in thoroughly English work of the period; in the closer grouping of the shafts that form the piers; in the leafage of the capitals, where, although the type is English, there is a classic feeling more often perceptible in more southern lands; and especially in the abaci or flat tops which finish the capitals. As soon as Englishmen used pointed arches they replaced the square abacus, inherited from classic art, by a round one, while in France the rectangular form persisted. In the choir of Canterbury the square abaci seem quite natural, for we know a French architect was employed; it is more surprising, well on

in the thirteenth century, to find them here again.

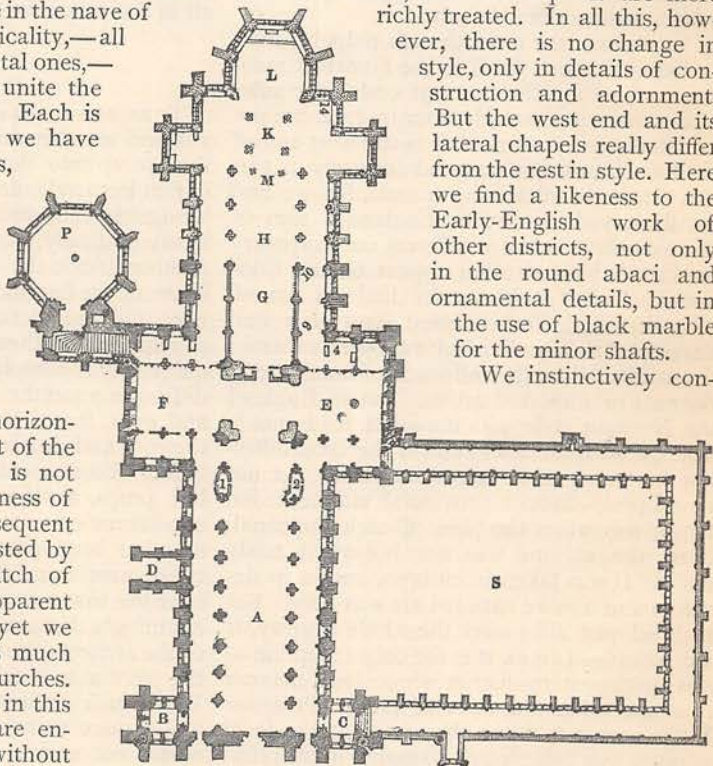
But look higher up and we see that an Englishman rarely borrowed wholesale, and, also, that his originalities were not always improvements. The vaulting-ribs rest on corbels, formed of clusters of little shafts, on a line with the base of the clearstory; and this is a usual English expedient. In a French church, whatever the design of the triforium, they rest on shafts which, descending to the main piers, bind all three stories together, define the scheme as consisting of a series of bays, and accent verticality. Thus we find them even in Queen Matilda's church at Caen, built soon after the Conquest, although it is probable that its first ceiling was not of stone but wood. There is no feature in the nave of Wells which expresses verticality,—all the strong lines are horizontal ones,—and there is nothing to unite the three successive stories. Each is charming in itself; but, as we have already found in other cases, each is more independent of the others than it should be in ideal Gothic work. Nevertheless, the effect of the nave is good, for the proportions of the main arcade are well adapted to the dimensions of the interior as a whole, the strong horizontal lines increase the effect of the length,—which, for once, is not very great,—and the lowness of the triforium and the consequent size of the clearstory, assisted by the uncommonly sharp pitch of the vaulting, add to the apparent height. It is a low nave, yet we do not feel the lowness as much as in most other English churches. There are no little columns in this triforium, but the arches are enframed in roll moldings without bases. The outer moldings, both of the pier-arcade and the triforium, end between the arches in large carven heads; sculptured medallions adorn the intermediate spandrels of the triforium; and the heads of its arches are filled with little decorated tympana. The window traceries, shown in the clearstory on page 732 and suggested in the aisle, are Perpendicular repairs made in the fifteenth century.

Across the west end of the nave runs an arcade of five arches, four blank, but the central one pierced for the principal door. Above are the three tall, narrow windows which show in

our picture of the façade, filled with glass that was brought from the Continent in the seventeenth century and of no great artistic value. From the ends of the aisles to right and left open the square chapels under the western towers.

The student who desires to know in just what sequence the various parts of the nave were built should mark a very visible place of junction between the fourth and fifth piers, counting from the west. To the eastward of this the courses of masonry are small, to the westward much larger; and here the character of the decoration changes too. The projecting heads are larger to the west, the triforium tympana show foliage instead of grotesque beasts, and the capitals are more richly treated. In all this, however, there is no change in style, only in details of construction and adornment. But the west end and its lateral chapels really differ from the rest in style. Here we find a likeness to the Early-English work of other districts, not only in the round abaci and ornamental details, but in the use of black marble for the minor shafts.

We instinctively con-



PLAN OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH AT WELLS.

A, Nave; B, C, Chapels under western towers; D, North Porch; E, F, Transsept; G, Choir; H, Presbytery; K, Retro-choir; L, Lady-Chapel; M, High-altar; P, Chapter house; S, Cloister; 1, Bishop Budwith's chantry; 2, Dean Sugar's chantry; 4, Part of Bishop Beckington's chantry; 9, Monument of Bishop Button II; 10, Effigy of Bishop Beckington.

clude that the half-foreign, so-called Somerset manner was used in this district when the pointed arch first replaced the round, but naturally did not long persist, pressed upon by the weight of common English influence; that the nave was built while it reigned, and that the west-front shows the spread of the typical English style. We might thus definitely conclude if only an architect, who has had a better chance than any one else to

study the question, did not declare the front to be earlier than the nave.¹

Look now at the transepts and we shall be still more uncertain. Old chronicles say that "by reason of an earthquake" a vault or spire (*tholus*) fell in the year 1248, soon after Bishop Joceline's death, but was at once rebuilt; and it must have been the tower above the crossing, for the adjacent parts evidently have been patched. In the nave the repairs did not affect the original design; but in both arms of the transepts—which perhaps suffered more—the triforium arches are grouped in twos, like those in other parts of England. On the other hand, in the ends of the transept, uninjured by the falling vault, we find the nave triforium again, all but the sculptured details, which make entire default.

To repeat: the nave, though palpably built at different times, is all in the Somerset manner, and so are the transept ends; the sides of the transept, certainly later in date, are not in this manner, but neither is the west end of the nave; and this, on good authority, is earlier. It is an interesting puzzle, for we find hardly anywhere else in England a sign of those conflicts between different contemporary manners which so often appear on the Continent. There each district had an art of its own, which from earliest days grew and developed in an individual way, yet was sometimes affected by the influence of neighboring districts or imported artists. But in England the Norman style was imported ready made and spread from end to end of the land, differing here and there in certain points, yet not developing distinct provincial manners. So, too, it was when the pointed arch appeared. Now the scheme was not borrowed ready made. It was taken in embryo, and in its development a more national art was born. But it developed alike over the whole country, if we except—I think it is the only exception—this southwestern district whose local manner is expressed in the nave of Wells. Professor Willis seems to have thought that the local manner was indigenous, though "in all probability" the true Early-English style came from France.² But if this be so, why is the local manner more like early French work than is the typical Early-English? It seems more reasonable to believe that two ways of

building were in vogue in the district at once; that two schools of architects, as we should say to-day, or two companies of builders, as we should have said in the thirteenth century, were vying with one another, and that now one and then the other got the upper hand. Antiquarian science likes to place all changes in clear, orderly sequence and show just how one thing logically developed from another. Such, indeed, is the only right way to deal with most of the architectural changes we find in England; but an exception can be recognized when common sense demands. If we recognize it here we may accept any date for any portion of the nave and transept that the best authority gives; rejecting it, thinking that all the work in one style must be earlier than all in the other, we are left in a puzzle indeed.

v.

TURN now to the illustration on page 731 and you will see that there is no lantern carrying the eye up into the tower—only a low vault of rich Perpendicular fan-tracery. But the first thought is, Why does this curious sort of screen, heavy and ugly, one arch inverted on top of another, block the great graceful arch which is one of the four that support the tower? And why, did the picture show the other three, should we find them encumbered in the same queer way? Simply because these four arches did not support the tower when, between 1318 and 1321, it was built up three stories above the roof and dowered with a heavy chime of bells. These singular features are not screens but props, testifying once more to want of conscience or want of skill in those who have so often been proclaimed the possessors of every artistic and moral virtue. Sixteen years after the tower was finished it had settled so alarmingly that great fissures ran from the apex of the arches, distorting all adjacent parts, and the piers were sinking bodily into the ground. When such damage befell in other cathedrals and a mere enlargement of the old supports would not suffice to stay it, props were supplied in a straight, beam-like shape, running across from arch to arch. Here the device is much bolder and more ingenious, and evidently more effectual. It is more interesting therefore; and certain critics, Freeman among

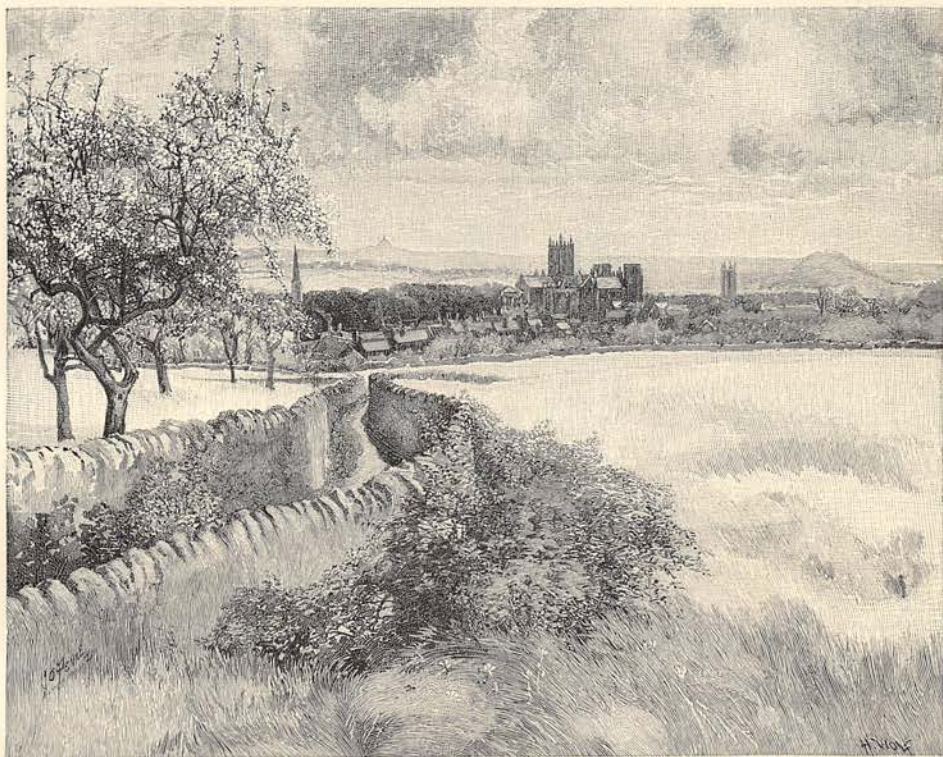
¹ In the brief account on page 726 I quoted Freeman's statement in his "History of the Cathedral Church at Wells." But after the book was written Mr. Irvine, an architect charged with repairs on the west-front, carefully examined the nave as well. Basing his conclusions on structural and artistic evidence, he believed that the west-front, with the three bays next it, was built before Joceline's time, in advance of the old façade, which was not disturbed. Joceline then built the eastern bays of the nave, with the transept and choir;

and after his death the old front was destroyed and the two ends of the nave connected, the three existing Early-English bays to the west being largely reconstructed. Freeman himself confesses that he once thought the west-front the earliest portion, but was convinced of error by Professor Willis. Whatever their sequence, all parts belong to the Early-English or Lancet-pointed period.

² "Transactions of the Archaeological Society," Bristol.

them, almost decide that it is better too from an artistic point of view, as less conspicuously interfering with the effect of the original work. But could anything be more conspicuous, more startling, than these gigantic curves? Do the straight beams at Canterbury and Salisbury assert themselves half so plainly as after-

Such a form is common in wooden ceilings but most uncommon in those of stone, whether they date from the Decorated period or from any other subsequent to the Norman. It is certainly not an improvement on the more usual forms in nave and transept. The effect of the low roundish curve is far from agreeable,



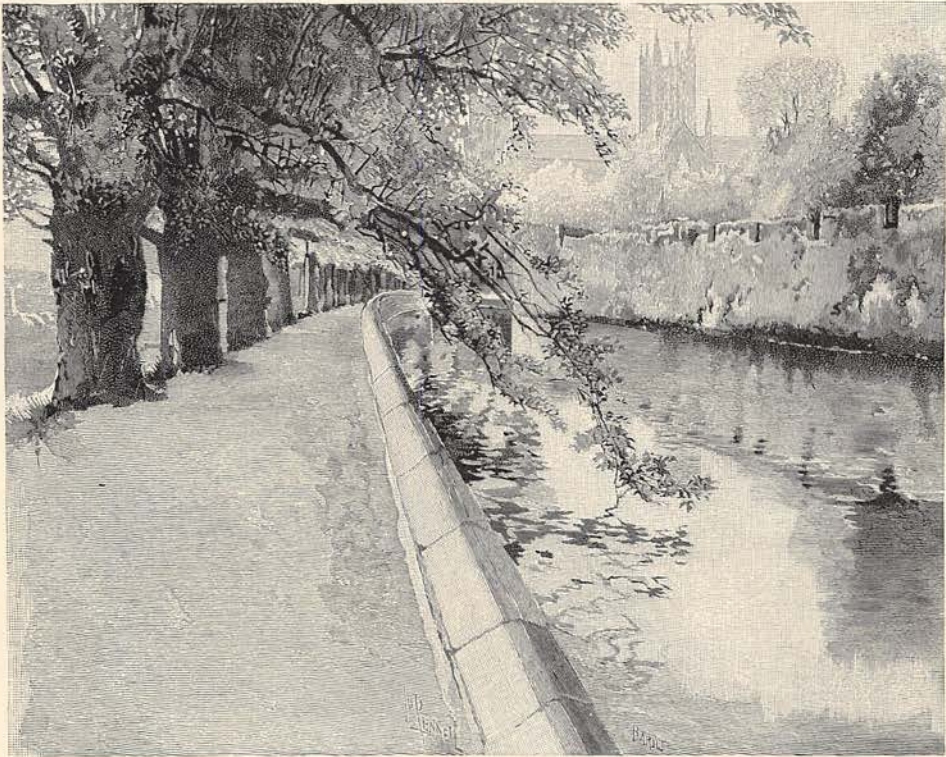
WELLS FROM THE NORTHEAST.

thoughts prescribed by some insistent structural need? The one great argument in their favor is purely sentimental. The church is dedicated to St. Andrew, and, whether by accident or by design, they suggest a St. Andrew's cross. A glance at the ground plan tells how the main supports were strengthened when the bracing was done. The dark spots show the old size of the four supporting piers, and the lighter shading their enlargement. The triforium arches next these piers in each direction were filled in at the same time and for the same imperative reason.

Over the inverted arch, and beyond the fan-vault under the tower, which was inserted in the fifteenth century, there is a glimpse of another rich ceiling covering the choir, while the illustration on page 734 shows it more plainly. It is not a pointed vault of any usual pattern, but a coved or barrel vault merely pierced at the sides to give place for the clearstory windows.

nor is it improved by the rib-work, designed with curious disregard for its position on such a curve.

In the bays next the tower, seen in the foreground of the same picture, we find Joceline's work in the pier-arcade with its square abaci and close-grouped shafts. But the stories above, as we know, were altered in the fourteenth century, when the portions farther east were built, and, like these and the ceiling, are in the Decorated style. The triforium has tabernacled arches forming groups in each bay, and the clearstory windows are wide and high, filling the spaces from side to side. All is much lighter, much freer, and more florid than in the Early-English work of the nave. At the east-end is a great window of geometrical tracery, below it come delicate rows of niches on the blank wall of the triforium stage, and then three of the most graceful arches that ever were built. And under these arches, over the



THE MOAT.

high-altar and the screen behind it, what a suggestive glimpse of the retro-choir and of the Lady-Chapel still beyond!

There is nothing more charming in England, there can be nothing more charming on earth, than this part of Wells Cathedral as we enter it from the choir-aisle; or, standing as far east as we can, look back into the choir through the three arches in its end. This is the word, however—it is charming work; not great or imposing or wonderful in any way except for its delicate beauty. It does not awe us in the least, nor do we marvel how mere men could have built it, or, having built it, could turn their hands to the ordinary tasks of life. It is not solemn or impressive as ecclesiastical work of the noblest type may be; turned to some other purpose, look and purpose might not seem out of keeping. But to say this is not to find fault; it is only to mark the kind of work in which, one cannot but think who has traveled widely, Englishmen succeeded best. When we want the grandiose and sublime in Gothic art—architecture that thrills the soul, arouses religious emotion, yet makes us think the creature man almost the peer of his Creator—we must go to the tremendous interiors of France. When we want the purely lovely and gracious, the simply human and comprehensible in its

most delicate form, we may well content ourselves in England. To say the least, we should not so often find it elsewhere.

On the ground plan the Lady-Chapel seems to form five sides of an octagon. But in reality it is a perfect octagon, with five sides projecting from the retro-choir and three included within it. The five are formed each by a great window based on a low line of wall, the three by open arches resting on isolated pillars, as may be seen in the picture on page 735. An octagonal vault is thus supported, which clearly defines the scheme to even a careless eye; and outside too it is defined by the steep octagonal roof rising higher than the roof of the retro-choir. In the retro-choir, near the isolated pillars of the Lady-Chapel, between them and the arches of the choir-end, two other pillars are placed; and at each side others still (not marked on our plan). From each springs a great group of vaulting ribs, as from the support we have found several times in the center of a chapter house. Of course the effect that is so beautiful when only one cluster of shafts breaks into a palm-like cluster of ribs is infinitely increased by repetition. With each change of place in this retro-choir and chapel comes a new grouping of the pillars, a new arrangement of the elaborate lines of the ceil-

ing; and there is none where harmony is less than perfect, none where the last word of refinement, loveliness, and grace has not been spoken.

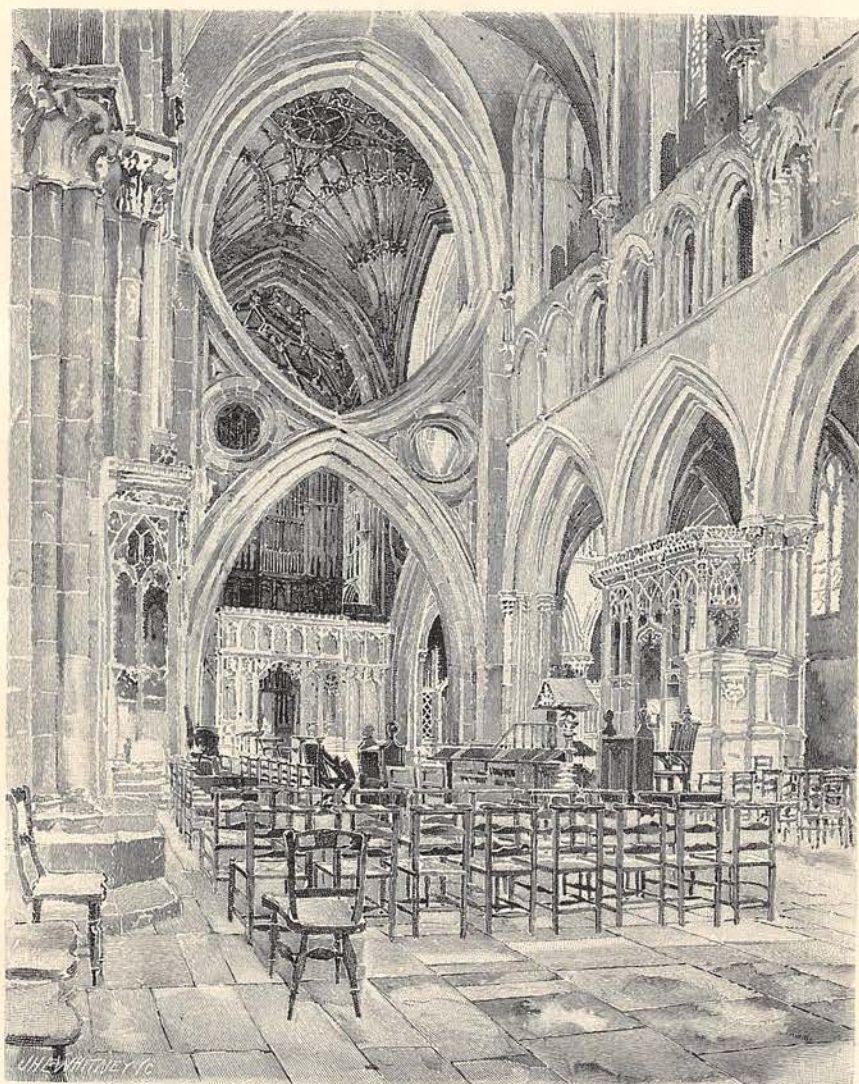
The projecting arms of the retro-choir and the angles between them and the Lady-Chapel were formerly chapels too, with minor altars where particular saints were worshiped; and the ancient names are still applied to them.

In the choir-aisles the three western bays

the greater richness and delicacy of the fourteenth, with the smaller scale of its details and the more varied and "naturalistic" treatment of the foliage decoration, now studied directly from native plants.

VI.

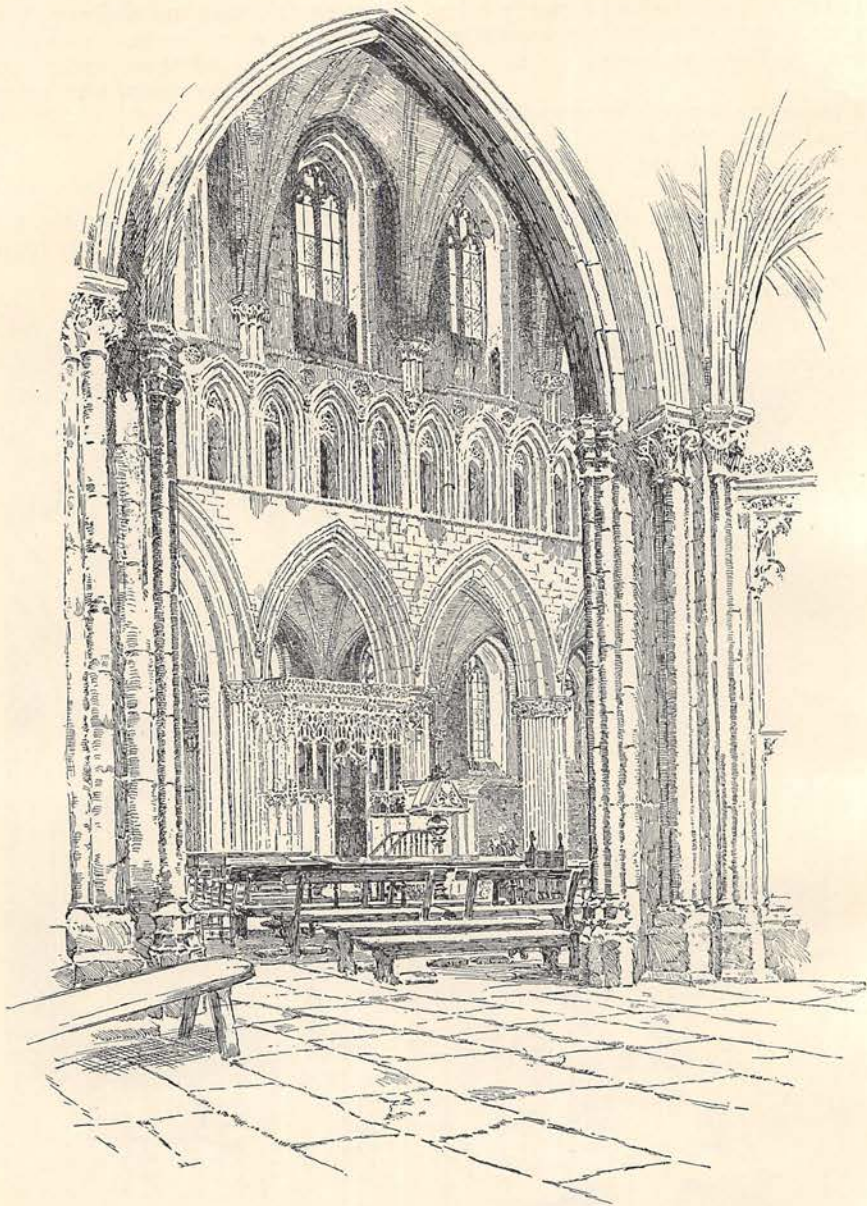
ALL through the interior of the cathedral the stone, relieved not many years ago of thick



THE NAVE, LOOKING EAST.

show Joceline's Early-English work, and the others the subsequent Decorated. The contrast between the two can be more readily appreciated here than in the choir proper, where so much altering has been done: the greater vigor and simplicity of the thirteenth century,

layers of whitewash, has a soft creamy-yellow tone, and in the far eastern parts, as well as on the west wall of the nave, the smaller shafts of the clustered pillars are of polished black marble. The window traceries of the eastern limb are a little monotonous, yet rich and ef-



THE NAVE, FROM THE NORTH AISLE.

fective. The great east window and the two which adjoin it in the clearstory keep intact such beautiful ancient glass that the eye bitterly complains of the crude modern colors with which the other clearstory lights are filled. It has not the blue radiance, enhanced by vivid notes of red, which distinguishes the best glass of France and shows the noblest beauty the material can compass. But it is soft, suave, and brilliant too, with its browns and greens and yellows enlivened by not a little white. The same quality that is expressed in the stone

forms speaks once more in this color. There is less audacity, less virility, less strength of imagination, than we can find across the Channel; but great harmony, sweetness, refinement, and charm. In the Lady-Chapel the glass is also original and of the same date (about 1340), but has been so largely reset that the quondam patterns can no longer be traced in the mass of gorgeous fragments.

The choir has been elaborately refurnished in modern days. From earlier ones nothing remains except some little *misereres* on the

lower range of stalls,¹ and the lofty episcopal throne, which dates from the fifteenth century but has been entirely restored.

With ancient monuments the church is well supplied, though we do not find such a lordly sequence as in Winchester. The space between

eled—though often we must bend low to see it—into the likeness of a vault with ribs and cells: in no two of these inch-wide ceilings is the design the same; and the ornaments of the infinitesimal pinnacles above look almost like spiders' weaving.



WELLS FROM THE SOUTH.

two of the piers on the north side of the nave is filled by the Perpendicular chantry of Bishop Budwith, who died in 1424—an octagonal pavilion, so to say, with doors into the nave and aisle, and walls like traceried, unglazed windows. There are no towering pinnacles like those in some of the Winchester chantries—Perpendicular art was still in its soberer mood; but for airy grace the design could hardly be excelled. It is marvelous what a fairy-like ingenuity is displayed in such structures, the scale is so very small, yet each detail is so carefully studied and variety is so endless. Look, for instance, at the tiny canopied niches, only a span or two in height, which once sheltered tinier figures. The ceiling formed by the base of the canopy is mod-

Opposite, on the south side of the nave, is the similar chantry of Dean Sugar, who died in 1489—heavier, but bold and fine, with a fan-vault covering the interior where the monument once stood. One of the angels carved on the cornice holds the dean's arms—three sugar loaves surmounted by a doctor's cap.² A plain stone pulpit close by was built in the sixteenth century. Until our century's "restorations" there was a slab in the nave popularly called "King Ina's tomb." Of course the attribution was absurd, yet the removal of a stone bearing from lang syne such a title seems all but sacrilegious.

It is probable that when the eastern limb of the cathedral was first finished its early bishops were commemorated in a series of pseudo-

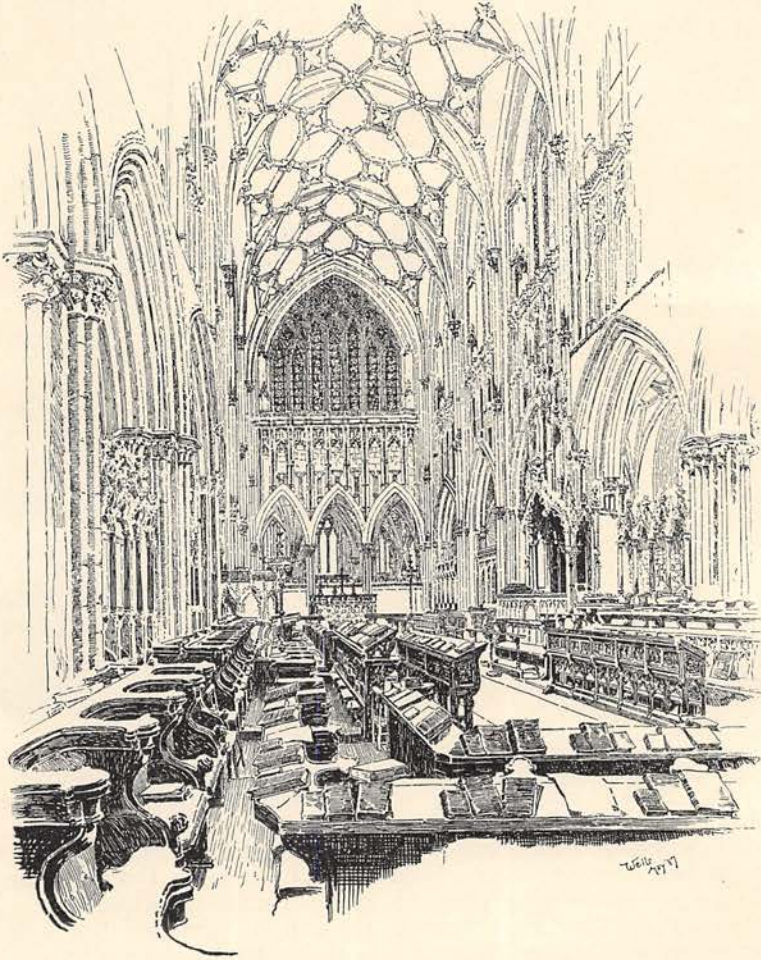
¹ The seat of a stall was made to turn up against the back, as the occupant should stand during a portion of the service. But to relieve his weary bones there was a little projection from the under part of the seat against which he could rest, and this was called a *miserere*. It is here that the medieval sculp-

tor often expressed his quaintest and most grotesque, and, to our minds, most profane imaginings.

² On the left of the illustration on page 731 a bit of Budwith's chantry shows, and opposite it Dean Sugar's and the pulpit, while these last can be seen again on page 732.

historical monuments. At all events a singular number of episcopal effigies in the Early-English style are still scattered about in the choir-aisle, the transept, and the basement of the chapter house. In the south choir-aisle a low coffin-like stone once covered Bishop Button, the second of the name, who after his death, in 1274, diligently devoted himself to the

tered near that of the posthumous dentist. It bears two figures—above, an effigy of the prelate in episcopal robes, and below, a wasted body in a winding-sheet—with long-winged angels kneeling around them. In the retro-choir, as though guarding the lovely Lady-Chapel, built in his day, lies Bishop Drokensford under a shrine-like canopy.

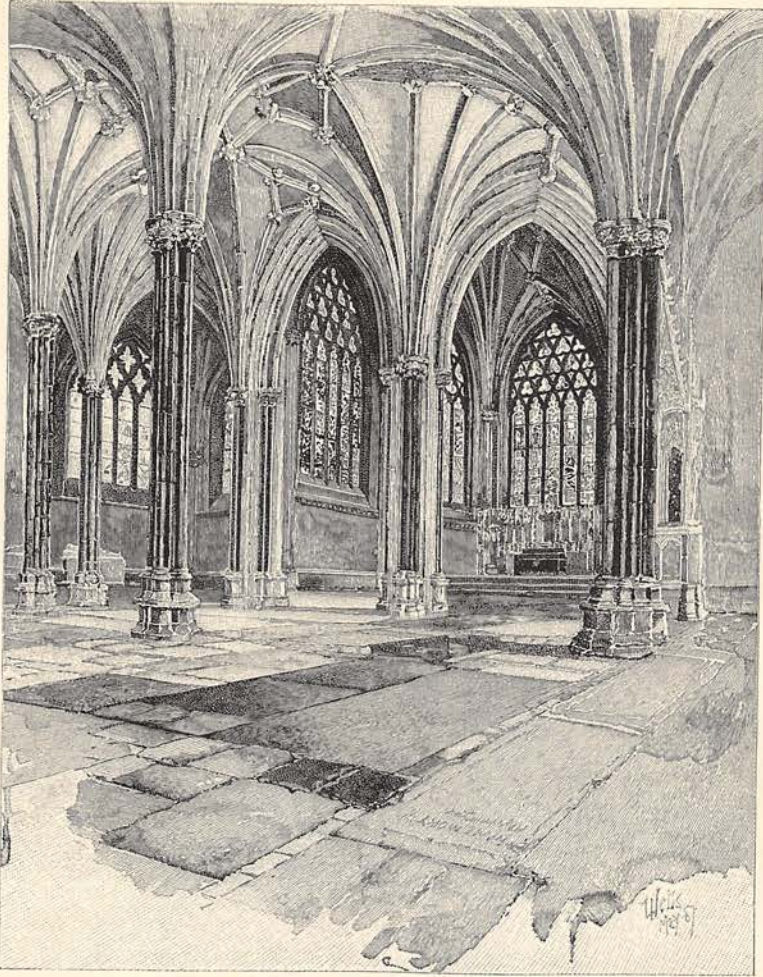


THE CHOIR, LOOKING EAST.

cure of toothache. The stone has been removed from the place where his body lies under the modern stalls; and to make room for the stalls Bishop Beckington's splendid Perpendicular chantry was also ousted. The fact that the monument which this contained was not at least recombined on another spot with the little chapel itself would seem odd enough had we not already learned that the natural course of "restorers" in the earlier part of our century was to do the most unnatural possible thing. Now, while the broken chantry mourns in the transept, the monument stands unshel-

In the south arm of the transept is a Norman font, possibly a relic of Bishop Robert's church, and if so the only one. In the north arm is a great clock, much repaired at many times, but built in 1325 by a monk of Glastonbury, with a multitude of instructive functions, and stiff little manikins to strike the hours. Richness of effect is greatly increased in the transept by the Perpendicular screen-work, which shuts off its aisles and divides them into chapels.

The great solid choir-screen, that has come down from the fourteenth century through many vicissitudes of repair, never really be-



THE RETRO-CHOIR AND LADY-CHAPEL.

longed in a cathedral with a collegiate chapter. Thus to divide the church was to imitate with little reason the practice of the monks, who, giving up the nave to laymen, kept the choir for themselves and really needed isolation for their many special services.

We chanced to be in Wells when for the first time the nave was artificially lighted. Nothing could be more beautiful than the effect, as all along the base of the triforium a million tiny stars of gas shone out in close-set rows. This is the usual mode of lighting old churches in England, and is far preferable to any arrangement of standards or chandeliers. To be sure the gas blackens the stone somewhat; but a little "toning" is not unwelcome in interiors which, to get rid of the whitewash of centuries, have been scraped to a painful neatness. The occasion was a harvest festival, and the sight was impressive as the town dignitaries entered in a body, in red robes and

golden chains, and the bishop made the tour of the nave with his crozier borne in front of him and his choristers and clergy. But the sermon sounded odd in transatlantic ears. This well-to-do flock, in their pretty little town, may have acquiesced when their bishop, coming from what is perhaps the loveliest home in all England, boldly said that God's gifts, even of a material sort, are equally distributed among all his creatures—that to enjoy the beauties of nature, for instance, one does not need to own them. But suppose his audience had been gathered from the East End of London?

VII.

WHEN the chapter was monastic a great group of buildings stood beside the cathedral, and the chapter house was one of them, opening from the cloister and not directly connected with the church. In collegiate

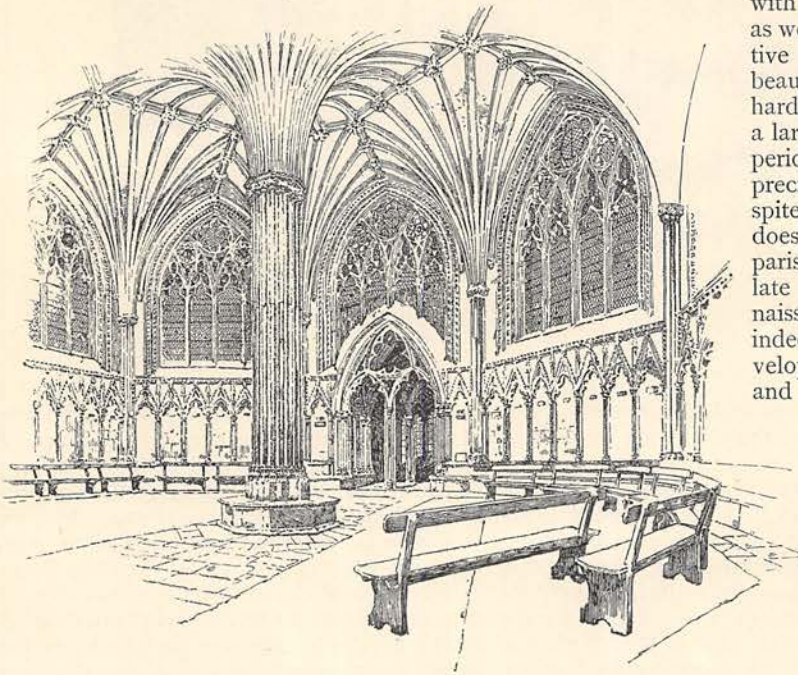
establishments the chapter house alone was essential, and then it usually opened from the church itself. At Wells there is a cloister too, but it clearly shows itself a luxury. It is entered only from the transept corner, whereas in monastic cloisters there should be two doors, one for the abbot and the other for the monks; and it has only three walks instead of four. Two of them are now in the Perpendicular style; but the eastern one—over which a Perpendicular library was built—is Early-English of Joceline's time, as was the palace to which it led. This is the only real purpose that was served by the charming quadrangle, except, indeed, as its central green, shadowed by an ancient yew, was a place of burial. No buildings for life in common ever opened from it, and the chapter house stands far away in its true collegiate position—northward of the choir.

It differs from all other English chapter houses in having two stories. The basement, or undercroft, is hardly to be called a crypt,

vault rests on these pillars and the outer walls. Above, in the chapter house itself, we find the same octagonal shape and a taller, lighter cluster of shafts in the middle; but naturally, now there is nothing but the roof to support, no minor pillars encumber the floor. Like the Lady-Chapel, the chapter house was built in the Decorated period, but a generation earlier, when bolder forms of tracery were used. The proportions of the room, and consequently of the windows, are somewhat low; but the traceries themselves are extremely fine. Only a few fragments of ancient glass remain in them. The decoration of the jambs with rows of the ball-flower is delightful; so too the rich canopied arcade that runs above the canons' bench, and especially the graceful doorway, which, combined with a window, relieves without disturbing the sequence of design in the eight walls.

The purpose of the bridge-like building we see on page 737 was to carry a staircase which connects the church not only with the Vicars'

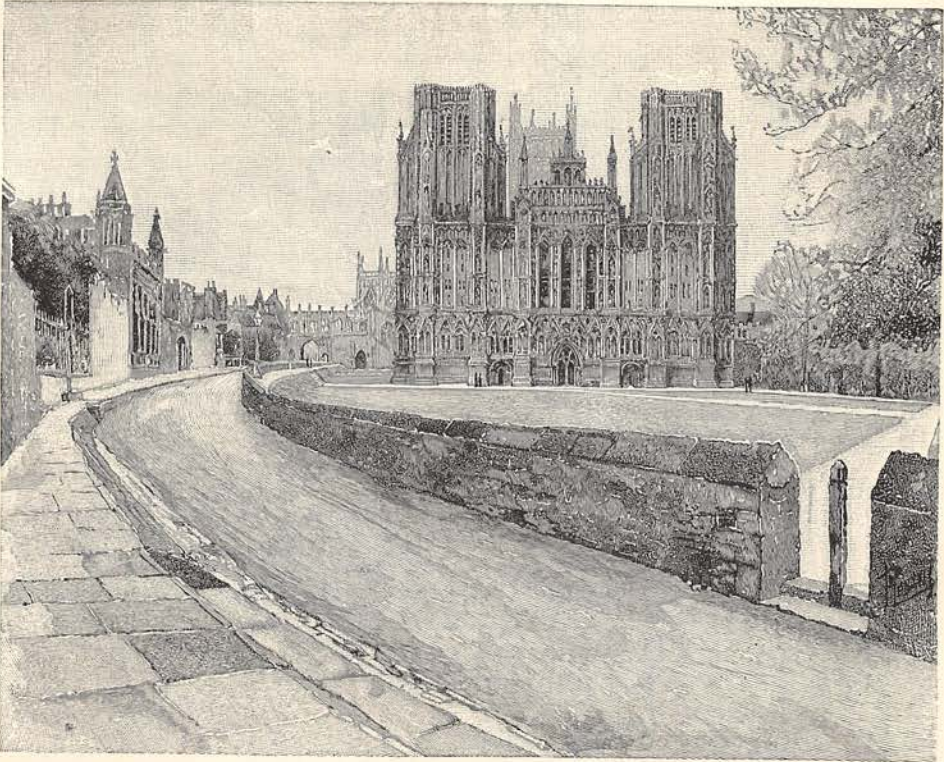
Close, but, half way up, with the chapter house as well. A more effective approach to the beautiful room could hardly be fancied, and a large staircase of this period is a rare and precious relic. But in spite of its dignity it does not stand comparison with those of late Gothic and Renaissance times. Then, indeed, with the development of domestic and palatial architecture, large stairways first showed all the beauty of which they were capable. Here the existence of a stair is not confessed by the walls: inside, the fine windows bear no relation to the slope they light, and outside, no



THE CHAPTER HOUSE.

since it is above ground and lighted by twelve narrow windows. It is dusky all the same, dirty, gloomy, and uncanny, filled with broken bits of sculpture and much ecclesiastical rubbish. In the center of the octagonal space, fifty feet in diameter, stands a clustered pier; the vaulting-ribs, which rise from this, descend to rest on a circle of eight round pillars, and a second

one would guess that there was aught but a level passage within. The steps themselves are almost roughly cut, with small thought for their profiles; and the way in which their divergence into the chapter house is managed is so perfectly simple that it looks naïve and a trifle rude by contrast with the refinement, the exquisite finish, of all neighboring features.



THE WEST-FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL.

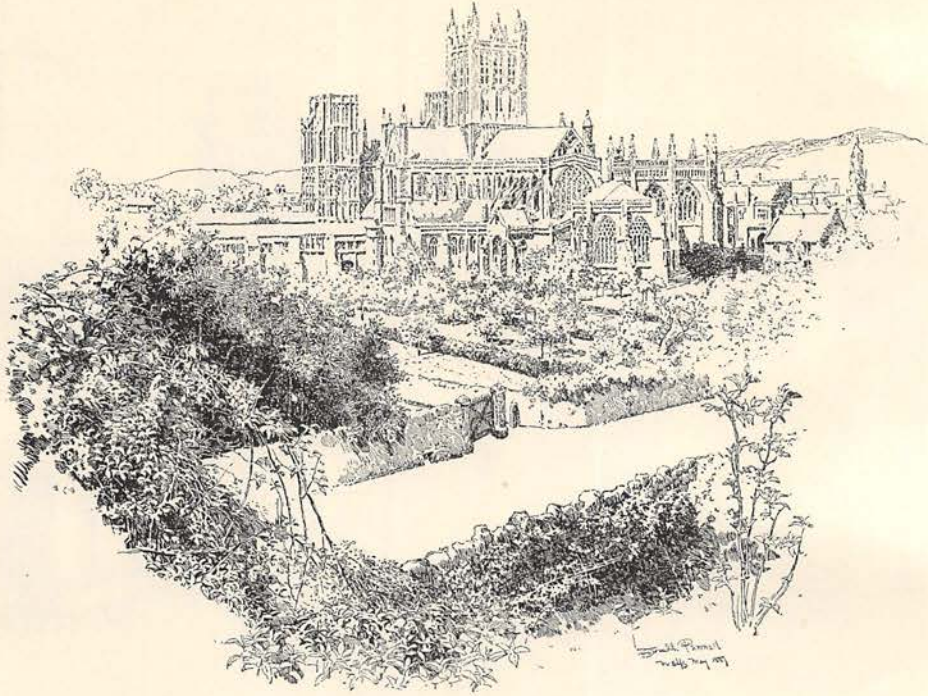
VIII.

If the great fame of the west-front of Wells rested on architectural grounds we might well say that the popular voice is not always the voice of good judgment. To be sure, size is a factor that should never be underestimated in architectural work, and this façade is very large even when not tried by English standards. But it is a sham as truly though not as palpably as those of Salisbury and Lincoln. The great towers do not stand parallel with the aisles but quite beyond them: the church is not nearly so wide as an end view implies.¹ The falsehood is instinctively resented, and it actually injures beauty of effect. If a mendacious width is never desirable, surely it is least desirable where there is no great height in the nave to support it. Neither majesty nor grace of proportion can be claimed for this façade; it is merely big and not honestly big at that. Nor are defects in proportion palliated by art in the design. There is indeed great vigor, resulting from mere bulk and the simple repetition of large parts; but it is vigor that palls

with familiarity. After a while we feel it needed no imaginative power, and little ingenuity even, to combine these successive buttresses and wall-spaces and cover them with arcades. Examine the arcades themselves and there is no stronger ground for admiration. Many of the features and details are very charming, but there is sometimes a lack of skill in their combination, as where the tall main arcade cuts into the little one above it. Put this beside the front of Notre Dame in Paris and we see a merely effective arrangement contrasted with a true architectural conception where all parts are beautiful in themselves yet each is admirably related to all others, where the design truthfully expresses the building behind it, and unity of effect coexists with great variety. The three doors at Wells, opening into nave and aisles, confess the true width of the church; and for this reason it is fortunate perhaps that they are so small—so very small, as Ruskin says of English doors in general, that we fancy them not portals for the men who could build such churches, but mere “holes for frogs and mice.” The towers above

¹ The cathedrals of Amiens and Paris, contemporary with Wells, measure 136 and 116 feet across the front, while Wells measures 147½. There are French façades a good deal wider still; yet if this were what it pretends to be it would rank among the giants.

The west-front of Lincoln was built by Bishop Hugh, a brother of Joceline's. They are called “Hugh of Wells” and “Joceline of Wells,” as born in the Somerset city where one of them was afterwards enthroned.



THE CATHEDRAL FROM TOR HILL.

the roof are Perpendicular work of the fourteenth century. The fact that they are almost precisely the same deserves remark, as the southern one is more than half a century older than its mate.

When the chronicler of England's "Worthies" comes to Somersetshire he writes: "The west-front of Wells is a masterpiece of art indeed, made of imagery in just proportion, so that we may call them '*vera et spirantia signa*.' England affordeth not the like. For although the west-end of Exeter beginneth accordingly, it doth not, like Wells, persevere to the end thereof." The phrase "made of imagery" was perhaps a careless one with Fuller, but it aptly expresses upon what the interest and the fame of the great façade really depend. Not the architect but the sculptor has made it illustrious. The statues and groups with which it is covered are later than the front itself. It was about the year 1280 before they were placed in the niches that had been arranged for them. Some are missing, some are shattered, but many are in good condition; they have not been "restored," and they show English sculpture at its very highest level. There were about a hundred and fifty effigies as large as life or larger, and still more of smaller size. They were kings and queens and princes and warriors, angels, apostles, saints, martyrs, missionaries, and bishops, most of them actual or

imagined portraits, although exact identification is impossible to-day. The lowest tier of arches seems to have been filled with those who had converted the island—St. Augustine and his followers, of course; but also St. Paul, St. Joseph of Arimathea, and others whom local legends named as bringers of the glad tidings in earliest British days. Then comes a line of singing angels, and then a line of medallions with subjects from the Old Testament on one side of the central door, and from the New Testament on the other, separated above the door by a niche with a Coronation of the Virgin. A fourth row and a fifth contain the spiritual and temporal lords of the island church, together with their allies and brethren of other lands. The sixth tier—the little arcade above the largest—shows ninety-two small compositions of two or three figures each. All represent the Resurrection, and are remarkable for the absence of the grotesque monsters, devils, and infernal emblems which commonly accompany such scenes when continental sculptors have treated them. The simpler, more naturalistic English conception may be thought in better accord with modern ideas of artistic dignity; yet from the medieval standpoint it once more shows a relative deficiency in imaginative power. Nor did such little isolated groups demand as much of this power for their arrangement or as much architectural skill for

their placing as the large compositions which so often adorn the churches of France. Studying the larger figures we find them also more naturalistic in aim than the best French work, which, be it noted, is a full century earlier in date. But the aim is not worked out to greater truth of effect nor to so high a degree of beauty. The sculptors who labored at Wells were very remarkable artists, but they had not the high inspiration nor the fine technical skill that their French contemporaries and predecessors showed; they did not attempt the noblest problems which medieval architecture permitted; nor is their work so integrally part and parcel of the building as what we see at Amiens, Rheims, or Chartres. But the burden of responsibility for the latter fact at least

her arms and the serpent under her feet. The sculptured series run around the flank of the northwest tower, but at the southwest stop with the façade, probably because of the cloister's position.

When we turn the wind-swept northwest shoulder of the church—called "kill-canon corner"—we see that after all something beyond bulk was gained by placing the tower outside the line of the walls. In a lateral view it gives vigor and variety to the long stretch of nave, and groups admirably with the projecting north porch. This is Early-English of the local type, and antedates, perhaps, both nave and western front. Rich arcades cover the interior walls, and a lingering Norman influence shows in the zigzags which adorn



THE EAST-END OF THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE GARDEN.

should of course be laid on the architect rather than the sculptor himself.

In the central gable stand twelve angels in a row, with the twelve apostles above them, while in the three great niches atop of all once sat Christ enthroned with the Virgin and St. John. The twenty-four figures which, so to say, formed their footstool are almost intact; but St. John and the Virgin have perished, and only the feet of Christ remain. In the central portal sits the Virgin again, with the Child in

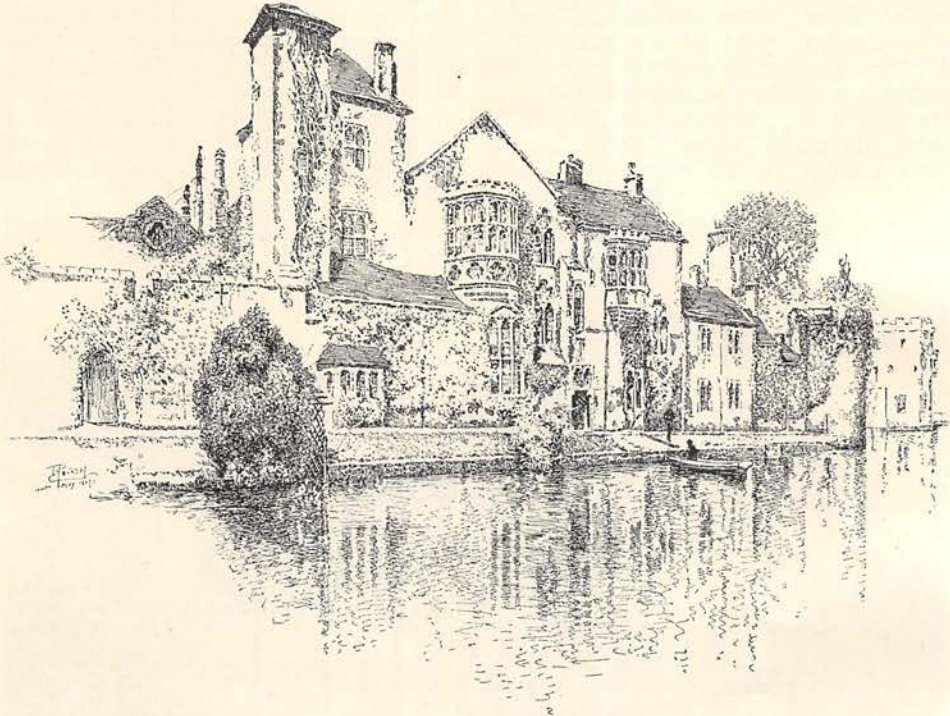
the moldings of the deep portal and in the grotesques that mingle with the foliage on the capitals of its many shafts.

IX.

It is the palace garden that gives this cathedral an environment which even for England is strikingly fair. The close itself is only the green—once a cemetery—stretching in front of the church and some distance farther south.

At its southwestern corner rises one of its three gates, opening from the market-place. Another is behind us when we stand as in the picture on page 738, and the third is in front of us—the Chain-gate under the stairway bridge. Passing through this we pass out of the close and see the chapter house and the Lady-Chapel separated from the street by a narrow line of gar-

St. Cuthbert's Church accenting its existence afar off to the westward. There is little to criticize, much to admire without stint, in the exterior of Wells once the façade is forgotten; and from this point everything seems perfect except the unpinnacled tops of the western towers. But the best thing of all is the way in which all things are grouped—the free



THE BISHOP'S PALACE.

den only. But to appreciate their beauty as they group with the varied outlines of the church itself we must climb the gentle slope of Tor Hill and look from the southeast.

Far off are the western towers, seeming less stunted than when, as we stood beneath them, they were dwarfed by the great breadth of the front. Where choir and transept meet soars the central tower with its light pinnacles. The few buttresses of the newer part of the choir, the low projection of the small eastern transept, the richness of the east window, the true octagonal shape of the Lady-Chapel (separated from the choir-end by the lower roof of the retro-choir), and the vaster pinnacled octagon of the chapter house—all these are clearly seen, supported to the left by the library above the cloister walk and the roofs of the palace, over a foreground of luxuriant garden and against a background of low rolling hills, with the town looking very tiny, but the tower of

yet harmonious connection of the parts, so that the individuality of each is manifest yet each sustains and emphasizes and belongs to the others. In Germany and England we often find groups of buildings which may be composed of inferior elements yet as groups in a general distant view could hardly be matched in France. A feeling for the picturesque and for natural beauty as contributing towards it did something to supply among men of Teutonic blood a deficiency in that purely architectural power which has always been strongest in the Latin races. But among all the groups raised by medieval builders, blending nature's charms and art's together, there can be none more perfect than this at Wells, where the arrangement is masterly and the elements are very beautiful in themselves.

When, near the spot shown in the picture on page 739, we turn our backs on the church we see something far less noble but almost

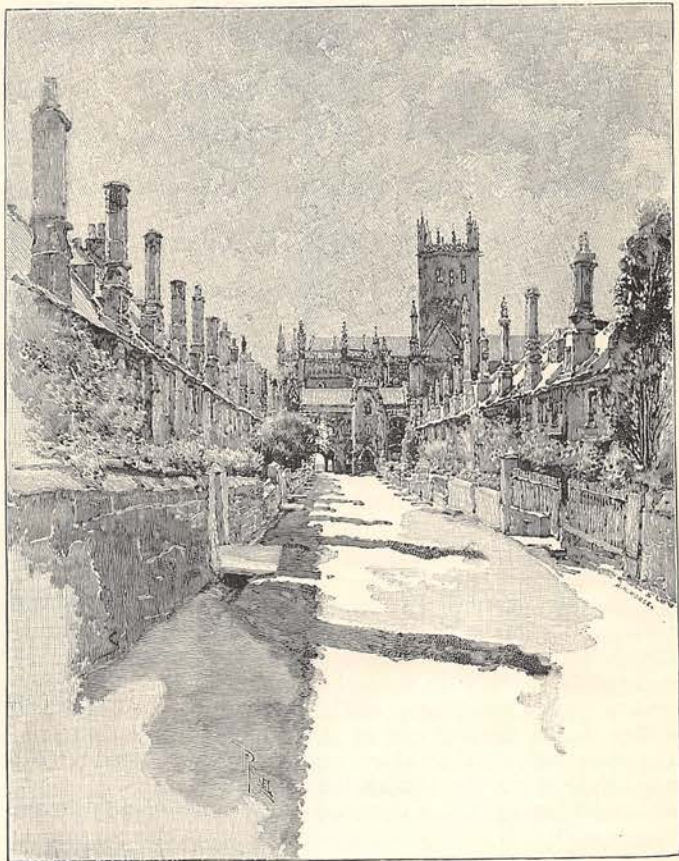
more amazing—a palace which makes the dream of a poet seem prosaic, it is so big yet so pretty, so dignified yet so fantastic, so unnatural to our experience yet so natural-looking here. If ever there has been a romantic home it is this. Not a bishop should live in it, but some festive young seignior with hawks and hounds, going out daily over the draw-bridge on a milk-white horse with the longest possible tail; and on the moat, instead of a stout youth in knickerbockers pushing himself about in a punt with a pole, there ought to have been a boat shaped like a swan with a silken canopy and a troubadour to sing beneath the oriels. I don't know whether or not we might have gone inside the palace, but who could wish it? No modern family, clerical or lay, could "live up" to such an exterior. But not seeing is believing; not seeing, we could fancy them still clad in brocades and treading on rushes, and shivering when the tapestries wave as the wind blows in winter through the patched walls and sagging roofs.

Patched the walls are in truth, though probably the wind is well enough kept out. There is no more "design" to the building as a whole than continuity in its fabric, where each scar and rent seems to have been repaired with the first material that came to hand, and where time and weather have blended all diverse notes of color into a soft general redness contrasting, just as a painter would have it, with the vivid green of the vines. There was a big magnolia blooming against one wall to give the last imaginable touch of poetic beauty.

John of Tours first built the palace with the materials of Gisa's structures. Joceline began to rebuild it, adding a chapel, and giving the house itself the vaulted lower story and great upper hall which still remain, much altered in feature and function. It would be difficult and not a little painful to trace its later history of addition, defacement, and repair. From the architectural point of view its exterior has not much more merit now than those curious com-

pounds of unrelated bits which the scene-painter loves to imagine. But how often have we wished that we could see something real with half the picturesqueness of the scene-painter's unrealities. Here we find it—something real that looks utterly unreal; a house where all the vandalism and unreason of the past have but worked together for the good of the eye that is wise enough to forget for a moment the meaning of architectural unity, to ask only for effective massing, for charming contrasts of color and a mellow air of antiquity and romance.

A little way back of the palace a great episcopal hall, the largest in all England, was built before the end of the thirteenth century. Now



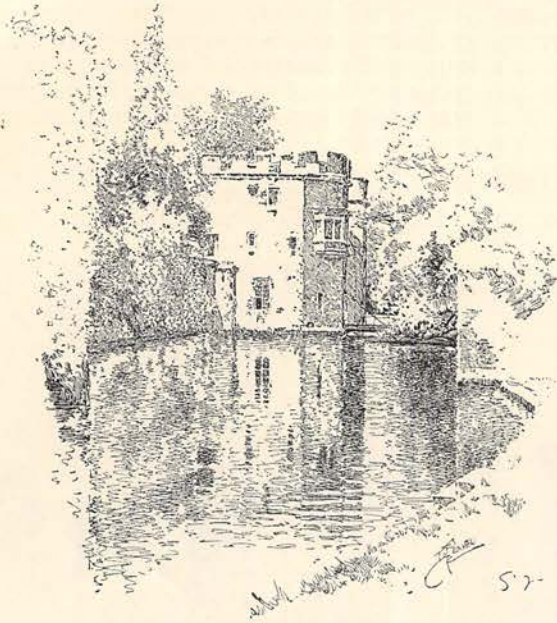
THE VICARS' CLOSE.

the picturesqueness of its ruin contrasts with the picturesque preservation of its older neighbor. Four octagonal turrets and four tall windows stand in a mantle of ivy, and beyond them still stretch the gardens, rising to a terrace whence there is another admirable view of the mighty cathedral pile, and far off to the south the silhouette of Glastonbury shows against the sky.

The front of the deanery, looking on the north side of the cathedral green near the Vicars' Close, was rebuilt in the seventeenth century, but inside its square courtyard the work of the fifteenth century may still be seen. Here Henry VII. was housed, the palace being in

Little of Shrewsbury's Decorated work remains, but that would matter less had the reconstructions of the Perpendicular period been the last. Only one of the houses is intact inside. When priests were permitted to marry, even a priest could not live in two rooms; and gradually several homes have been thrown into one and laymen have been allowed to live in them. Yet in the soft glamour of a September twilight it was easy to repeople the inclosure with its ancient figures, almost easy to imagine that theirs must have been an enviable life.

In choosing twelve English cathedrals for description there are others I could not have helped preferring to Wells did its church stand quite by itself. But its group of minor buildings gives it a claim which could not possibly be overlooked. To disassociate an English cathedral from its surroundings is as though, in portraying a great tree, one should lop off the lateral branches; and here the tree is not only beautiful but unique. Here, much better than anywhere else, we can see what in medieval times was the aspect of a cathedral church served by a body of priests who were not monks, by a large collegiate chapter. Even the loveliness of the general picture at Wells pales before its historic interest.



THE ENTRANCE TO THE BISHOP'S PALACE.

too forlorn a state, when Perkin Warbeck's insurrection brought him to the west.

But nothing at Wells is more charming, nothing is quite so individual, as the Vicars' Close. The canons lived around the cathedral close in separate houses, hardly a trace of which remains. The vicars—their deputies or assistants—were scattered about in the town until, in plaintive Latin verses, they petitioned Ralph of Shrewsbury to give them an abiding place. Here he housed them, in two rows of tiny homes, shut in at the north by a library and a chapel, and at the south by a gateway with a gallery above opening into a refectory, and into the staircase that connected with the church. Once there were forty-two houses, each with a single occupant who slept and found retirement in its two cozy rooms, but dined in common with his fellows, studied and worshiped with them in their private library and chapel, and went with them over their private bridge when his duties called him to the cathedral church. Here indeed the ideal of celibate, scholastic, religious life must have been attained by those who sought it with a pure heart and a quiet mind. Nor does the atmosphere of the place seem much changed despite all the changes it has seen.

before its historic interest.

x.

It is popularly said in Wells that three railways make it difficult to get there and four would make it quite impossible. The trains by which we came from the south certainly showed that we were not on a great highway of travel. They loitered and paused, and gave up their burdens to one another, and then hurried a little and loitered again and brought us in at last some three hours late. But they loitered through one of the most beautiful districts of England, and they brought us in at sunset to a first impression of incomparable charm; and we felt that they must know this to be their chief if not their only duty.

In truth, Wells is such a little, quiet city that it seems as though no stranger could come except for the cathedral's sake. It is the extreme example of a town which owing its life to the cathedral's existence still visibly confesses the debt. We are surprised to find that it ever wished for a parish church like St. Cuthbert's—surprised that it dared to realize its wish and give the cathedral towers a rival. Were there space for much else, now that art

has had its share, it would be interesting to trace the inner history of the town, for there is none which comes nearer to reproducing, on a humble scale, the story of those foreign towns where the bishop ruled bodies as well as souls. But there would be little to tell of the figure Wells has made in outside happenings. It can never have been much more important than it is to-day, and when its bishops achieved national fame they played their parts at a distance.

I have spoken of those who fathered its beautiful buildings, down to Bishop Beckington. There was little left for him to add to the church itself, but his accessory works were manifold; and in the town he did so much that for generations after his death the mayor and corporation went annually in state to pray for his soul by the chantry which our ungrateful time has uprooted and defaced. Before his day there were prelates who had not been remarkable as builders only, but a more curious line succeeds him. He was followed by Oliver King (1495-1503), who was potent at court under Edward IV. and Henry VII. Next came an Italian, Hadrian de Castello, if I may use the word of one who really never came at all. He had been legate in Scotland, and after his return to Rome Archbishop Morton caused him to be named Bishop of Hereford. From this see he was transferred, still in Rome, to Wells; and in Rome he was one day asked to breakfast with the Borgia who was pope. The rest of the story is familiar, though one rarely remembers that its hero the cardinal was likewise Bishop of Bath and Wells—the story of the poisoned cup meant for Castello but drunk by the pope and his son Cæsar. Even after this Castello had no thoughts of England. He headed a conspiracy against Leo X., failed, fled, and was never heard of again. What a contrast between a wolf in shepherd's clothing like this and a Beckington or a Joceline! And the next name has still a different flavor, being the great Wolsey's. He resigned to take Durham's chair instead, and was replaced by Clerk, who carried to the pope

King Henry's "Defense of the Faith," and afterwards to the Duke of Cleves his pleasant message with regard to Queen Anne's divorce. Barlow was bishop when Mary came to the throne, fled to the Continent, and in Elizabeth's day was the first Protestant prelate at Chichester. Bourne was Mary's appointee, turned out by Elizabeth in his turn. Barkley began the unbroken Protestant line in the year 1560. Thirty years later Bishop Montague largely rebuilt the palace and Joceline's chapel, but a more famous name is Laud's. Bishop first of St. David's in Wales, and then of Bath and Wells, he passed on to London and to Canterbury. For another really noted prelate we must look ahead nearly sixty years to Ken, of whose appointment in 1685 one of the few anecdotes is told that reflect much credit on Charles II. As canon of Winchester, Ken had refused the king's request to take Nell Gwynn beneath his roof. When the see of Bath and Wells was vacant in after years Charles was asked who should fill it, and answered,—so the tale runs,—“Who but the brave little man that would not give poor Nelly a lodging?” At all events Ken's independence, no less than his simplicity, piety, and learning, were proved during every day of his episcopal life. In his time Wells for once came conspicuously before the public eye. The battle of Sedgemoor was fought only a short distance away, and Ken sheltered the refugees, and, with the Bishop of Ely, ministered to Monmouth on the scaffold. He was one of the seven bishops then tried and acquitted at Westminster, and one of the non-jurors after William and Mary came to the throne. Deprived of his see, he died in 1711 at Longleat. Bishop Kidder, who succeeded him, is chiefly remembered by the manner of his death. He was crushed in his bed by the fall of a chimney on the palace during the great storm of 1703 which wrecked the Eddystone lighthouse. In all times the bishops of Wells have frequently come from the humbler neighboring sees of Wales, and not a few of them have passed to still more exalted chairs in other parts of England.

M. G. van Rensselaer.

IN THE MARBLE HILLS.



LITTLE more than a hundred years ago the region lying to the north of Massachusetts between the Connecticut River and Lake Champlain was almost an unknown land to any but the hunter, the Indian, and the Indian fighter. Of it the world of the eighteenth century only knew that its untamed wildness had

been threaded since the old colonial days by the war-paths of Indians and Frenchmen, and out of its wide and endless forests came in slow rafts along the ancient thoroughfares of the great lake, the Richelieu, and the St. Lawrence, some mighty pines “for the masting of his Majesty's navy,” and valuable peltry of beaver and otter.

As the forests went down before the ax of