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ST. PAUL'S.



IT was hard to decide with what church an account of English cathedral-building should begin, but there can be no question as regards the one that must close the story. After the Norman or Romanesque period came the Gothic with its three successive styles — Lancet-pointed, Decorated, and Perpendicular. After these came the Renaissance period, which produced not a group or series of cathedrals, but, in magnificent isolation, the one great church of St. Paul's in London. And this is the end: St. Paul's is not the last large church that has been built in Great Britain, but it is the last which reveals an architect of genius, or illustrates a genuine phase of architectural development. It is rarely called the Cathedral of London. Many churches have been named for St. Paul, as for St. Peter and Our Lady. Yet every one knows that "St. Paul's" is in London, as "St. Peter's" is in Rome and "Notre Dame" in Paris.

I.

THE name of London possibly comes from the Celtic *Llyn-din* (meaning a lake fort), which, after the Roman conquest, was transformed into *Londinium*. At all events, a city stood in British times upon the spot, sixty miles from the sea, where the River Lea joined the River Thames, and the confluence of a third stream, the Wallbrook, supplied a harbor for the tiny vessels then in use. The legends which say that a temple of Diana first occupied the site

now covered by St. Paul's, that a British-Roman Christian church was built there, that King Lucius was converted, and that St. Helena was in some way concerned in the evangelizing of the place, are as unverifiable as the one which claims that Restitutus, a British bishop who was present at the Council of Arles in 314, took his seat as bishop of London. In short, little is known of British or of Roman London except the fact that they existed; and after the Saxon conquest the municipal record is still almost a blank for centuries, until King Alfred, when he had expelled the Danes in 886, rebuilt and fortified the town which lay a waste of ruins beneath his feet.

The ecclesiastical history of London begins further back than the municipal, although in disjointed fragments. In the year 604 St. Augustine consecrated Mellitus as Bishop of London; but after the death of Sœbeht, the Christian king of the East-Saxons, his flock relapsed into paganism and he was driven home to Kent. In 675 Erkenwald was placed in the reëstablished chair; and so great were his services to the town as well as to the church that he was sainted after death, and was held in particular reverence by the people of London till the Reformation swept such memories away. Then came a line of bishops who, with the exception of the great Dunstan, are now little more than names; and then, in 1044, Edward the Confessor, in accordance with his foreign leanings, appointed a Norman named William. "By reason of his goodness," say the chronicles, William was left in peace when, in the anti-Norman reaction of Edward's later

years, other alien bishops were turned out by the people; and after the Conquest he repaid the debt by persuading his namesake the Conqueror to confirm the city's ancient privileges. Therefore he too dwelt long in the affections of the London folk: until Queen Elizabeth's time at least they made an annual pilgrimage of gratitude to his tomb in the nave of St. Paul's.

But the St. Paul's where he had been buried, the first St. Paul's which we are sure existed, had perished very long before this, destroyed by fire in 1087, only a year after his own death. Bede declares that Mellitus founded it, and Erkenwald is said to have "bestowed great cost on the fabric thereof"; but it was probably a wooden church, often burned and repaired, and greatly changed between Erkenwald's time and that much later time when Ethelred the Unready was buried and his successor Edmund and the Danish Canute were crowned beneath its roof. The Confessor's preference for his great new abbey-church at Westminster threw its older claims into shadow. There, on ground which was not yet London ground at all, instead of in the cathedral church, Edward was buried and Harold and William received their crowns, and near by William Rufus built himself a palace. The practice then begun was resumed after London became the royal residence. No king since Ethelred has been buried in St. Paul's, none since Canute has been crowned there, and John of Gaunt's was the only princely sepulcher which adorned the cathedral that replaced the first one and existed until the great fire of 1666.¹

II.

THIS second church is the one that is commonly called "Old St. Paul's." It was begun in 1087, the last year of the Conqueror's life, by Maurice, the first bishop of his appointing, and was built, of course, after the Norman fashion. Its construction proceeded slowly, and, in the year 1139, was delayed by a ruinous fire. Later in this century William of Malmsbury spoke of it as a "most magnificent" edifice, but it had grown and altered much before it was described and pictured with greater definiteness. In 1221 the choir, which had been very short with a semicircular end, was replaced by a longer one in the Lancet-pointed style; and in 1225 a Lady-chapel, equal to the

choir in breadth and height, was added. Toward the end of the thirteenth century Old St. Paul's stood at last complete, and it was then the largest as well as the most famous church in England. Its length is estimated to have been 590 feet, and its width 104 feet; the spread of its transept was 290 feet; and its height was 93 feet in the nave, and 101 feet in the choir.² Wren calculated that the height of the spire had been 460 feet, and this means that its gilt ball and cross rested on a point fifty feet above the point of Salisbury's steeple; yet an even loftier altitude had been claimed for it by earlier historians. The nave and choir were of equal length, each consisting of twelve compartments or bays; and each transept-arm had two aisles and was five bays in length. The east end was flat, after the general English fashion; but French influence seems indicated by the great rose-window and the group of lights of equal size that stood beneath it, as well as by the unwonted altitude of the choir. The central tower was open as a lantern, perhaps even to the base of the spire. The southwestern tower was the famous "Lollards' Tower" or Episcopal prison, and, like its mate, was low and plain, while the front between them was poor and bald even for an English church. Doorways of exceptional size, however, opened into each transept-end, and there were other great doors into the north and south aisles of the nave.

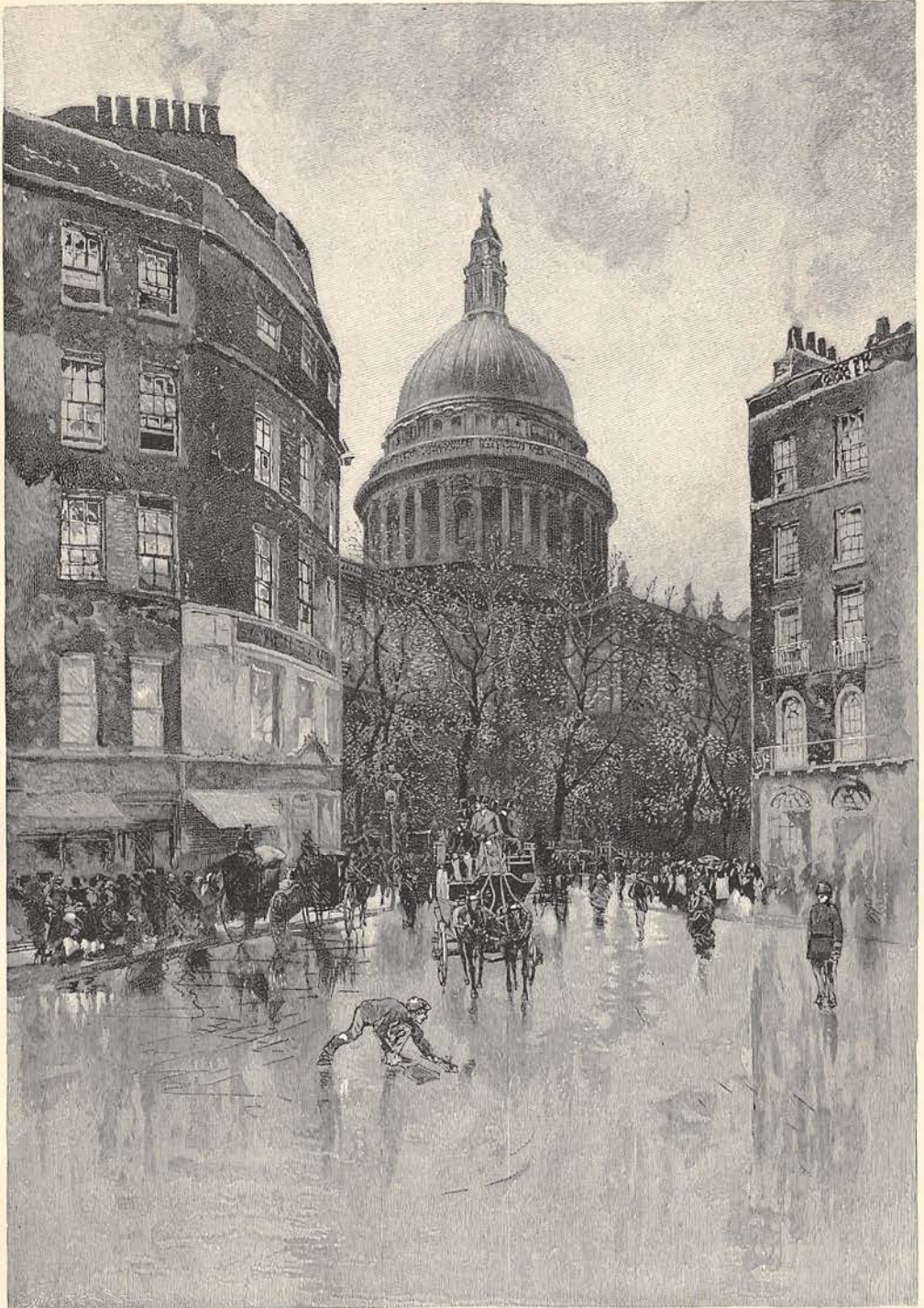
Although kings and princes slept elsewhere, the interior of Old St. Paul's was crowded and gorgeous, for bishops, nobles, and especially the rich citizens of London vied with each other, through life and after death, in the sumptuousness of their gifts. Its most conspicuous feature was the elevated chapel of St. Paul which stood near one of the tower piers, and, with its winding stairway, was richly carved in wood. Its most costly and famous ornament was the shrine of St. Erkenwald, sculptured and gilded and sprinkled with jewels, holding the place of honor just back of the great reredos. The Lady-chapel was shut off from the retrochoir by a high screen. Before it was built a street ran close to the end of the choir, and here stood the Church of St. Faith. Afterward this name was given to the crypt which underlay the whole choir of the cathedral, as it was set apart for the use of the dispossessed congregation.

The walls of the close, or precinct, which surrounded Old St. Paul's and was much larger than the open space we see to-day, were pierced by six gates that were shut at night, the chief

¹ Even the town residence of the bishops of London, the modern "London House," is now at Westminster.

² Dugdale, copying from Stow, states that the length of Old St. Paul's was 690 feet; but the assertion is not confirmed by the measurements of separate portions which he gives, and the figure 6 was probably a print-

er's error for 5. Winchester, now the longest church in England, measures about 560 feet. The only one as tall as Old St. Paul's is Westminster, where again we find a height of 101 feet, while York comes next with 90 feet.



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

ENGRAVED BY H. E. SYLVESTER.

ST. PAUL'S FROM CHEAPSIDE.

one standing opposite the west end of the cathedral at the top of Ludgate street. Behind the walls house-fronts and peaked roofs gathered themselves together, and even within the precinct were many buildings, some pressed close to the mighty fabric of the church itself. In fact, Old St. Paul's stood like a Continental, not like an English cathedral, architecturally as spiritually bone of the city's bone, with the life-blood of human activity centering in its mighty heart.

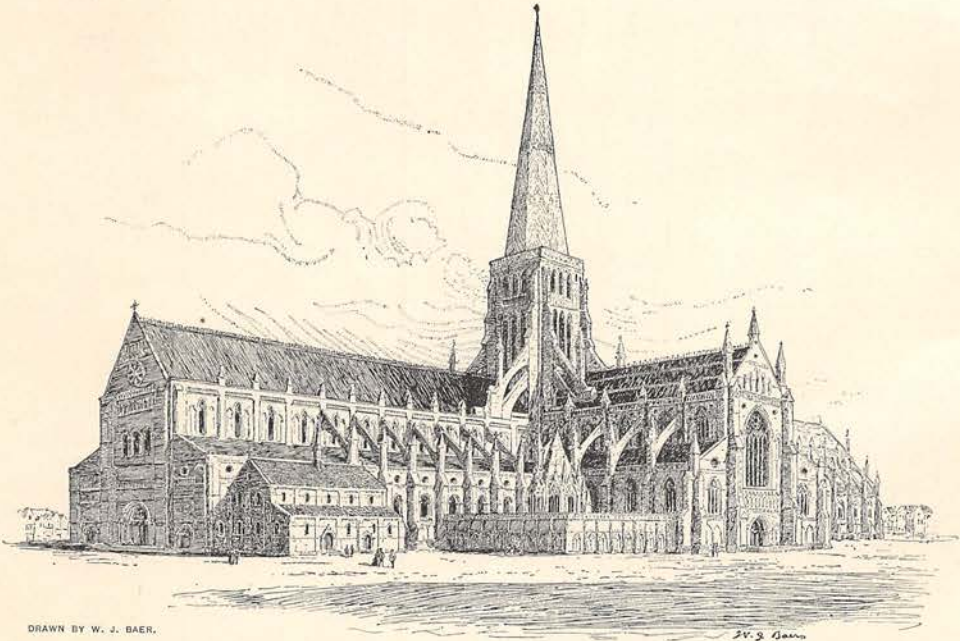
Close to its northern side, toward the west, lay the bishop's palace, "London House," with its gardens and private chapel and door of communication into the nave. Opposite rose the Church of St. Gregory, clinging to the wall of the south aisle and the Lollards' Tower, and lifting its steeple as high as the ridge of the cathedral roof. Behind St. Gregory's rose the octagonal chapter-house, placed in an unusual

long south side which were not half concealed by the cloisters and St. Gregory's were so built against by houses and shops that little save the upper stories and the great door in the transept could be seen.

An irreverent medley, modern taste may say; a motley, illiterate architectural crowd, intrusive at the best and in many of its parts distressingly plebeian. But how picturesque, how natural, how vital, how expressive of a cathedral's function as the soul of the city's life, as a temple of the people's God!

III.

EIGHTEEN years of work were needed to repair the injury when, in 1444, the spire of St. Paul's was struck by lightning. But another bolt which fell in 1561 did infinitely greater damage. Then the spire, which was of wood



DRAWN BY W. J. BAER.

OLD ST. PAUL'S FROM THE SOUTHWEST.

(Reproduced from a restoration, prepared for Longman's "Three Cathedrals Dedicated to St. Paul," in which, for want of exact data, the western towers of the cathedral and the spire of St. Faith's were omitted.)

way in the center of the quadrangle formed by the cloisters. Just behind the palace lay another cloister, used for burial, and this too encircled a chapel first built by the father of Thomas Becket. Near the northeast corner of the choir stood the famous outdoor pulpit called "Paul's Cross," and opposite the east end soared a great belfry with a leaden spire. These were only the chief of the large buildings which in the early sixteenth century surrounded St. Paul's; and, moreover, all those parts of its

incased in lead, was wholly destroyed, and all the roofs fell in heaps of rubbish into the church. The spire was never rebuilt, and though the other portions were at once repaired, it must have been in a slovenly fashion; for, sixty years later, "the princely heart" of James I., says Stow, "was moved with such compassion to this decayed fabric" that he made a state pilgrimage to the cathedral to hear a sermon of appeal in its behalf, and appointed a Royal Commission to consider means for restoring it. The cor-

roding of "coal-smoak," by the way, was even in those days cited as one perpetual source of trouble.

The foremost architect of the time was Inigo Jones, and to him the repairs were intrusted. He renewed the sides in a "Gothic manner" which must have been very bad; added a "Grecian portico" which was very good of its kind, but wholly out of place at the west end of such a church; and then was prevented by the explosion of the Civil War from confounding confusion further. Before the year 1640 as much as £10,000 had been contributed toward his work in a single year, but in 1643 the entire amount was only £15.

As early as the fourteenth century there had been clerical protests against the desecration of the nave of St. Paul's by "people more intent on buying and selling than on prayers." As time advanced the scandal grew till the church became a veritable fair-ground. "Paul's Walk," of which we read in many an old play and pamphlet, was the space between the north and south doors of the nave. Here horses and mules were led through the church, fops displayed their clothes and consulted their tailors, lawyers met their clients, and maids and children romped, while near a certain pillar servants regularly stood for the inspection of intending masters. "I bought him in Paul's," exclaims Falstaff of Bardolph. A letter written by a London gossip in the year 1600 says, "Powles is so furnisht that it affords whatsoever is stirring in France, and I can gather there at first hand sufficient to serve my purpose." A tract of this period is called, "How a Gallant should behave himself in Paul's Walk," and a little later Bishop Earle declares that the place is "the great exchange of all discourse, and no business whatsoever but is here stirring and afoot. . . . It is the synd of all pates politick . . . the thieves' sanctuary."

When we charge Calvinism and republicanism with the damage they did to English churches, it is well to remember that reverence for sacred buildings was on the wane even in late Catholic days, and had almost wholly departed while the heads of kings were still unthreatened and Anglicanism was still supreme. I have merely hinted at the abuses practised in St. Paul's, and they were only a type of those which, to a greater or less extent, prevailed in



DRAWN BY W. J. BAER.

PAUL'S CROSS, FROM AN OLD PRINT.
(FROM MURRAY'S "HANDBOOK TO THE CATHEDRALS OF ENGLAND.")¹

every English cathedral of the time. Surely there was some excuse for the Puritans when they ordered Paul's Cross removed in 1642, confiscated the houses and revenues of the dean and chapter and likewise everything in stock for the use of the repairers of the church, and, finding it too big to be pulled down, employed it as a cavalry barrack, and built two stories of hucksters' booths into the new Grecian portico. They but carried a step further the desecration and damage that had been going on for centuries. It was only in part their fault that when Charles II. got back "to enjoy his own again" the special possession which he called Paul's Church was a mere mangled mass of masonry. Stow spoke only of the final stage in a long process when he wrote that "by the votes of Parliament . . . the very foundation of this famous cathedral was utterly shaken to pieces."

In 1663 feeble and futile efforts were begun to bring back its life to St. Paul's; and in 1666 Dr. Wren, whom we know as the great Sir Christopher, was asked to suggest a more efficient scheme. His answer showed that he would have proceeded like Inigo Jones, modifying "the Gothick rudeness of the old design"

¹ The folly of seeking exact information in old pictures is shown by this print, where, to make a "nice

picture," the artist has calmly reduced the length of the choir of Old St. Paul's from twelve to four bays.

with casings, additions, and alterations "after a good Roman manner." Indeed, his accompanying drawings prove that, had he got to work, he would have been a much more radical innovator than Jones. But less than a week after they were approved his plans and estimates were set at naught by the "Great Fire," which broke out on September 2. Pepys tells us how, on September 7, he had "a miserable sight of Paul's Church, with all the roof fallen in and the body of the quire fallen into St. Faith's."

Can we much regret that Wren was thus enabled to leave us a church wholly in a "good Roman manner"? Had there been no fire in 1666, our legacy would not have been Old St. Paul's in any adequate sense. It would have been a mongrel structure, where the last of England's great architects would have done gross injustice to the work of his forerunners, and small justice to the style of his time or to his own immense ability.

IV.

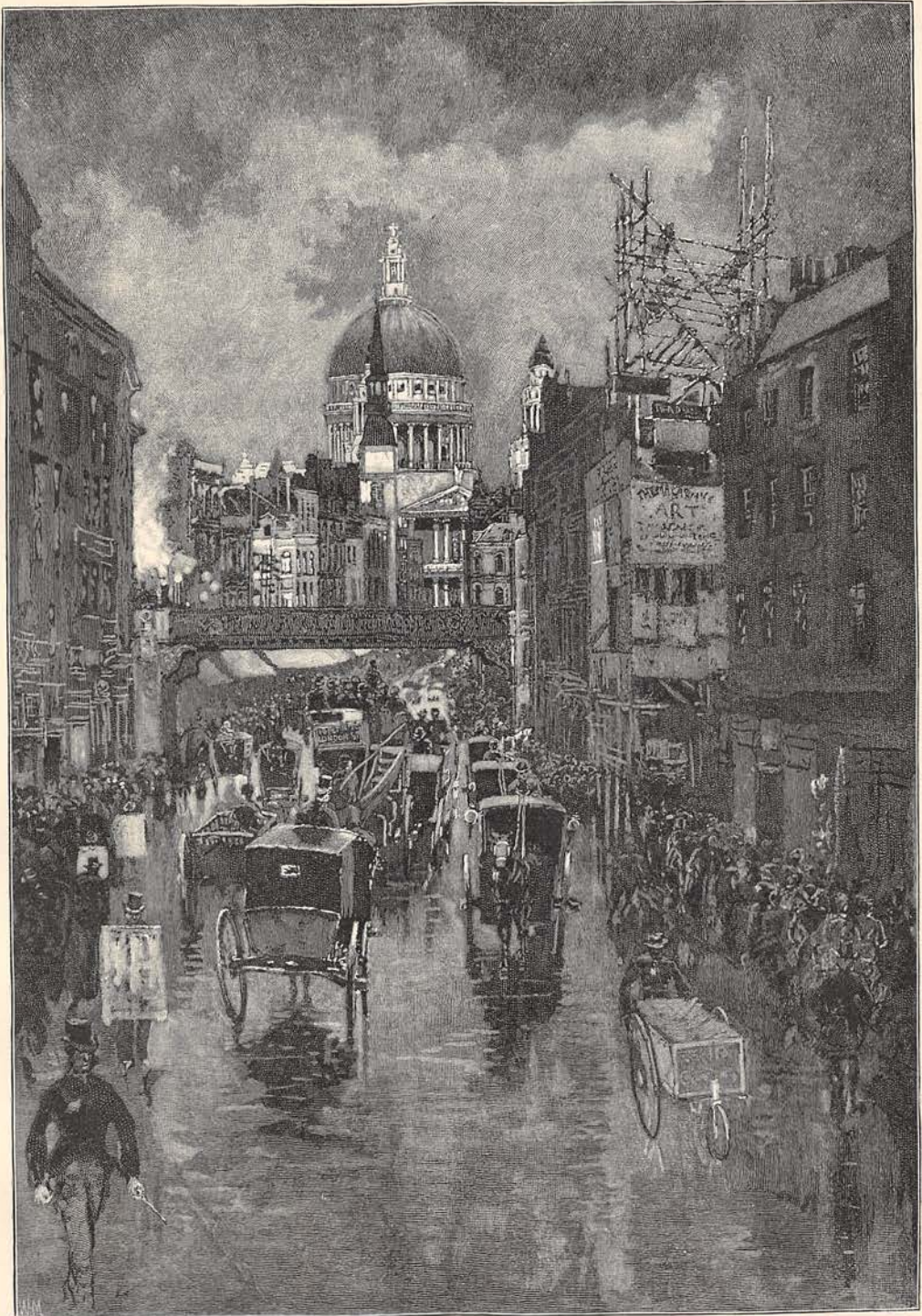
EVERY one who has seen Westminster Abbey knows that, when Henry VII. built his chapel, Gothic architecture still ruled in England. But long before Tudor times the great movement we call the Renaissance of Art and Letters had begun in Italy.

A vague reverence for the traditions of antiquity had never wholly perished on Italian soil, but no real knowledge of what they meant illumined the medieval period. The Greek language had been entirely forgotten by Petrarch's Italy; she despised the ruins of Rome, and her architects were building Gothic structures, although the difference between their work and northern Gothic proves that, all unconscious of the fact themselves, their native sympathies were with the structural ideals of antiquity. It is true that, long before, in the first half of the thirteenth century, Niccola Pisano had fed his talent on the beauty of ancient sarcophagi. But he was ahead of his time; his own works are Gothic in form if often classic in feeling, and the blooming season of Italian Gothic architecture stretched all through the fourteenth century. The revival of secular learning, the rise of what is called "humanistic scholarship," began with Petrarch and Boccaccio in the middle of this century. It gradually excited an interest in the art as well as in the literature of the past, and the renaissance of classic architecture may be dated from the year 1403, when, amid the long-neglected ruins of Rome, Brunelleschi caught the inspiration which soon lifted into the Florentine sky the enormous dome of Santa Maria del Fiore. The succeeding years, up to about 1500,

form the experimenting, growing stage of Italian Renaissance architecture, and its noblest, finest time was during the next half-century.

Meanwhile the Renaissance movement, with all that it implied in all domains of thought, had been spreading further and further north. As regarded art, England was the last country to be swayed, and her old architectural manner died very hard. Henry VII.'s chapel, finished about 1516, is altogether Gothic in conception and in treatment. Even as late as the reign of his granddaughter, Gothic art still clung to the skirts of the church; the square casements and classic details of many a great Elizabethan manor-house group with the tall pointed windows of its chapel. But the fight was then practically over, and in the days of Charles I. and Inigo Jones Gothic art (it sounds much more out of date with the contemporary *à!*) was quite dead and almost altogether despised. Wren heartily despised it, and rejoiced that it was dead. If left to himself, he never would have built with its bones except when he saw, as at Westminster Abbey, that "to deviate from the old form would be to run into a disagreeable mixture which no person of taste could relish"; and even Old St. Paul's did not seem to him a case like this, perhaps because Inigo Jones had already begun the mixture. It was outside influence that forced him to Gothicize the plan of St. Paul's and, in some of his parish churches, to "deviate from a better form" and to give them a medieval outline curiously at variance with the classic character of their details.

It is foolish to ask whether Wren "ought" to have felt as he did, whether England and the world "ought" to have abandoned Gothic for Renaissance art. They had no choice in the matter. Even before the new forms of the south were arrayed against it, Gothic art was dying from internal causes. Its constructional and its ornamental schemes had arrived at a point whence they could develop no further. Truth and dignity in construction, charm and appropriateness in ornament, had alike been lost. There was no longer any feeling for beautiful proportions or for features which should explain their purpose while they gratified the eye. Nothing new could grow out of the elements which, beginning with the sturdy walls and piers and arches of the Norman, had passed through varying phases of strength and loveliness into the mechanical fantasticality of late Perpendicular Gothic, with misshapen windows, shrunken traceries, and flattened arches, with stalactite vaults, reed-like bundles of shafts which almost denied their columnar origin, and gridiron patterns for decoration. And an architectural style never stands still: when it ceases to grow it decays and makes room for something else.



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

ENGRAVED BY W. H. MORSE.

THE FRONT OF ST. PAUL'S FROM FLEET STREET.

But even if Gothic art had still been vigorous, it would have given way to Renaissance art. The change of style expressed a change in esthetic temper, and this itself was only a part of the great general change which had come over the mental attitude of Europe. Medievalism in religion, in the pursuit of knowledge, in morals, and in manners, had been swept away; how could it survive in art? The new world had gained intellectual liberty by basing itself upon a combination of Christian and classic learning; its art could not be anything but a Christianizing of classic elements. The century which had buried Bacon and Raleigh, which had given birth to Newton, to Milton, and to Cromwell, to Hobbes and Locke, to Bunyan and Burnet, which had cut off the heads of King Charles and his archbishop, and had driven King James from the throne, could not express itself in the forms of Gothic art. Sir Christopher Wren, who was a Protestant to the backbone, and who wrote the preamble which explains that the Royal Society was founded to make provision for the study of "Natural Experimental Philosophy," could no more have chosen to build like Alan of Walsingham or William of Wykeham than like Erkenwald himself. The seed that Brunelleschi sowed grew as naturally, as inevitably, as that which was dispersed with Wyclif's ashes. The dome of St. Paul's followed as logically after the spire of Salisbury as the Royal Society after the medieval schoolman's lecture.

It matters nothing whether abstract criticism thinks dome or spire the finer, prefers the Gothic or the Renaissance ideal; Wren lived in a creative age and could not doubt that, to work well, he must use the style then alive and developing. Like all great architects, he had small regard for mere antiquarianism or sentiment when they stood in the way of his own success. Yet, like all great architects, he did not think of styles merely from the esthetic point of view. He knew that changes in style resulted from changes in construction, that these were brought about by new practical needs, and that, in consequence, the style which looked most beautiful to him was also the best for his clients' service. Practical requirements were uppermost in his mind. The most radical alteration he proposed before the fire was to cut off the inner corners of the four interior arcades of St. Paul's where they met beneath the tower, so as to "reduce this middle part into a spacious dome or rotunda, with a cupola or hemispherical roof," by which means the church "would be rendered spacious in the middle, which may be a very proper place for a vast auditory." He was ruled, in short, by the wish to fit the old Catholic edifice for the new Protestant form of worship. The days of vica-

rious services, of gorgeous long processions, of relic-worship, and of constant private prayer at a score of minor altars had departed; the days of congregational worship had come with their new necessity for massing an audience within clear sight and hearing of the ministrant and preacher. The old cathedral type was no longer appropriate; the new architectural manner of the Renaissance stood ready with a new type promising greater convenience.

v.

THE fire had prepared a path for Wren, but antiquarians, churchmen, and bureaucrats hampered his advance. In consequence, St. Paul's is inferior in many ways to what it might have been. The story of its building, could I tell it in detail, would give much sad comfort to modern architects who think that the buffets they meet and the bonds they must wear are an invention of our own degenerate days.

Immediately after the fire Dr. Wren was named surveyor and principal architect for the rebuilding of London, and one of the commissioners "for the reparation of St. Paul's." He saw that it could not be repaired, but others refused to agree with him and began to patch up the nave. Soon, however, Dean Sancroft wrote him: "What you whispered in my ear at your last coming hither is come to pass. Our work at the west end of St. Paul's is fallen about our ears. . . . What we are to do next is the present deliberation, in which you are so absolutely and indispensably necessary that we can do nothing, resolve nothing, without you." In July, 1668, an order was given to remove the ruins of the eastern part of the church; but fresh attempts were made to restore the nave, and only in 1670 was it "fully concluded that, in order to a new Fabrick, the Foundations of the old Cathedral, thus made ruinous, should be totally cleared." This work was practically finished by the spring of 1674, and meanwhile Wren had been discussing with himself the plans for a new cathedral, and making drawings and models for the eye of the king and commissioners.

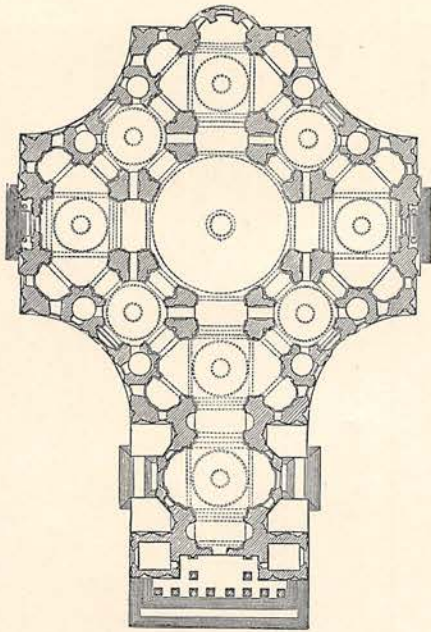
Of course, now that a wholly new church was required, he offered designs in which no trace of the medieval cathedral scheme survived. First he drew "several sketches merely for discourse sake to find out what might satisfy the world." Then, having observed "that the generality were for grandeur, he endeavored to gratify the taste of the Connoisseurs and Critics with something coloss and beautiful, conformable to the best stile of the Greek and Roman architecture," and in various drawings and a model (which is still preserved at South Kensington), he presented the church of which



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

ENGRAVED BY W. H. MORSE.

THE FRONT OF ST. PAUL'S FROM LUDGATE HILL.



PLAN OF ST. PAUL'S AS FIRST DESIGNED BY WREN.
(FROM MURRAY'S "HANDBOOK.")

the plan is here reproduced. This plan suggests a magnificent interior most intelligently carried out. In this huge octagonal space, and in the symmetrical arrangement of the four arms, convenience has been well secured, yet ecclesiastic dignity has been preserved. Despite the presence of the eight immense piers needed to support the dome, the area thus provided is far better for congregational services than the long narrow limbs and serried colonnades of medieval churches, while the short nave (which is really more like a large vestibule) provides for an overflowing assembly, gives place for entrances of fitting grandeur, and supplies a point of view whence the magnificence of the great octagon can be fully appreciated.

The exterior of this favorite design of Wren's¹ is far less satisfactory. Whether judged for beauty or for ecclesiastic feeling, nothing could be worse than the curved walls which form the angles between the four limbs of the cross, and the small dome which rises over the nave groups most inharmoniously with the larger one. This larger dome, evidently studied from St. Peter's, is the best feature of the design; but Wren improved upon it when he actually came to build, and so, we may believe, he would have improved upon the rest of the design had he been allowed to keep to the general scheme which it indicates.

¹ Wren's grandson, who is our authority for most of his beliefs and experiences, says in the "Parentalia" that Sir Christopher "always seemed to set a higher value on this design than any he had made before or since, as what was labored with more study and success, and,

The hindrance came from "the chapter and some others of the clergy," who thought his model "not enough of a Cathedral fashion, to instance particularly, in that the Quire was designed circular," and that there were no extended limbs with aisles. Drawings in which the choir was enlarged were then presented; but the "Criticks" were still dissatisfied, and Wren was obliged to begin afresh, using the old "Cathedral form," but, as he said, trying so to rectify it "as to reconcile the Gothick to a better form of Architecture." Several designs resulted, one of which was approved by Charles II., who, in the warrant immediately issued for beginning the work, explained that he had "particularly pitched" upon it, "as well because we found it very artificial, proper and useful, as because it was so ordered that it might be built and finished by parts." The architect was directed to commence with the choir, and the king gave him "liberty in the prosecution of his work to make some variations, rather Ornamental than Essential, as from time to time he should see proper." Whereupon Wren did begin, took the liberty to vary essentials in the most fundamental way, and erected a church almost incredibly unlike the one that his royal master had approved. The drawing which bears Charles's signature is still preserved. It is a front elevation showing a portico with fourteen columns, a low body with transepts having plainly treated windows, tiny turrets instead of western towers, and the most astonishing substitute for a dome. Fancy a very low spherical roof supporting a very tall drum with large windows between its groups of pilasters; above this a narrow, elongated, fluted dome, not so tall as the drum that bears it; and above this again a spire composed of six arcaded stories, each encircled by a railing, which gradually decrease in diameter toward the top, where the finial shows a series of diminishing balls—a spire that can almost be likened to an unusually slender Chinese pagoda. This was the chief feature of the design which King Charles preferred to all others. Who can regret that Wren did not regard it as "essential," but went boldly back to the dome he had first conceived? The clients of that day, we see, were no wiser than the clients of ours. May architects of our day justify their own occasional lapses from the conscientious fulfilment of a definite commission by citing Sir Christopher's example? Perhaps—if they are very sure they are Sir Christophers and are working for the nation and posterity rather than for an individual who, as we can fancy was the had he not been overruled by those whom it was his duty to obey, what he would have put into execution with more cheerfulness and satisfaction to himself than the latter."

case with King Charles, cares but little one way or the other. At all events, Charles had been long in his grave before the dome was built. The first foundation stone of the new church was laid at the southeast corner of the choir on the 21st of June, 1675. The top stone of the lantern on the dome was placed in 1710, in the days of Good Queen Anne. Not only King Charles, but King James, and King William, and Queen Mary had died as St. Paul's was growing. But, on the other hand, not only Wren himself, but Strong, his master-mason, and Henry Compton, the bishop of London, saw it begun and saw it finished. Its total cost, including subsequent decorations, was £736,752 2s. 3¼*d.*, and was largely covered by a grant to the commissioners of the tax on coal.

VI.

THE length of St. Paul's is 500 feet, exclusive of the steps of the portico; the spread of its transepts is 250 feet, and the breadth of each of its arms is 125 feet. In plan it is a Latin cross of the typically English kind, with nave and choir of equal extent.

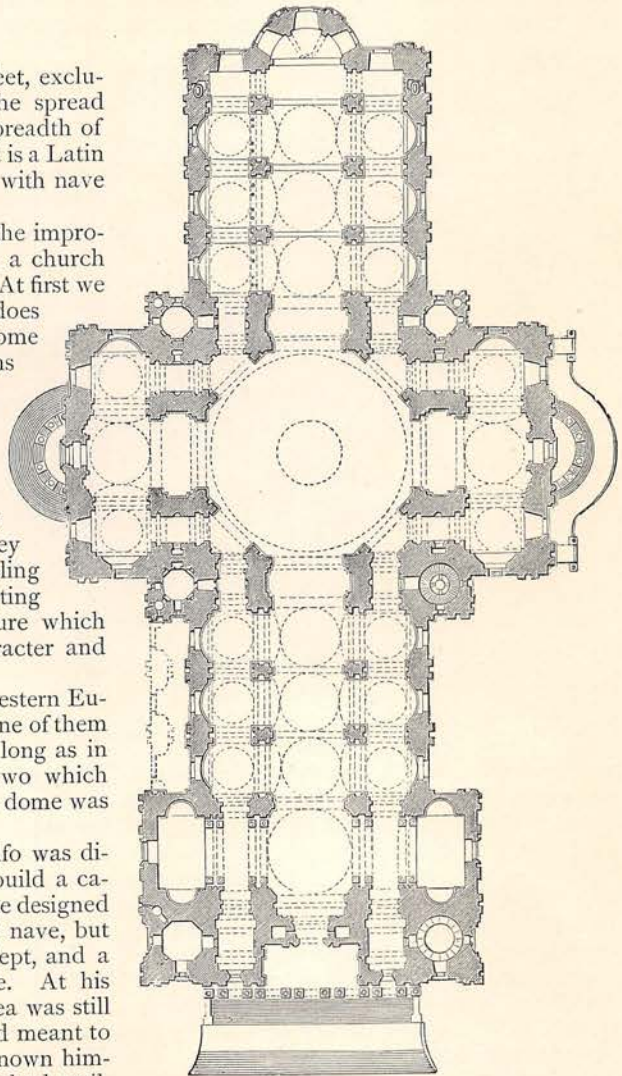
As soon as we enter it, we feel the impropriety of choosing such a plan for a church whose main feature is a lofty dome. At first we scarcely see that there is a dome; it does not reveal its importance until we come almost underneath it, and then it seems to have little relationship with the long perspectives behind and before us. Their lines do not lead the eye up to its lines. Their narrow horizontal vistas are in discord with the vast sweep of its base and its broadly soaring sphere. They cry out for some form of central ceiling which would unite instead of separating them. It cries out for a substructure which would everywhere predict its character and confess its preëminence.

Many other domed churches in western Europe have extended naves, but in none of them are the other three limbs nearly as long as in St. Paul's; and in the case of the two which are most famous, the designer of the dome was not responsible for the nave.

During the Gothic period Arnolfo was directed by the city of Florence to build a cathedral of exceptional grandeur; so he designed Santa Maria del Fiore with a long nave, but with a very short choir and transept, and a central area of unprecedented size. At his death, about the year 1300, this area was still unroofed; no one knew how he had meant to cover it, for probably he had not known himself; and no one dared suggest a method until, in 1420, Brunelleschi proposed to revive the

dome as the Romans had used it in their Pantheon and their baths. Under Byzantine influence Romanesque architects had erected many small domes, notably those of St. Mark at Venice and of St. Front at Périgueux. But after the development of the Gothic style domes were less often used, were constructed with a system of ribs, like vaulted ceilings of other kinds, and, except in the case of one or two Italian structures, were domical as regarded the interior only. Brunelleschi naturally sought counsel of the Romans when he wished to build an enormous roof, domical inside and out; and he naturally adopted their ribless system of construction and their decorative details.

Thus we see why there is architectural discord in Santa Maria del Fiore. And thus



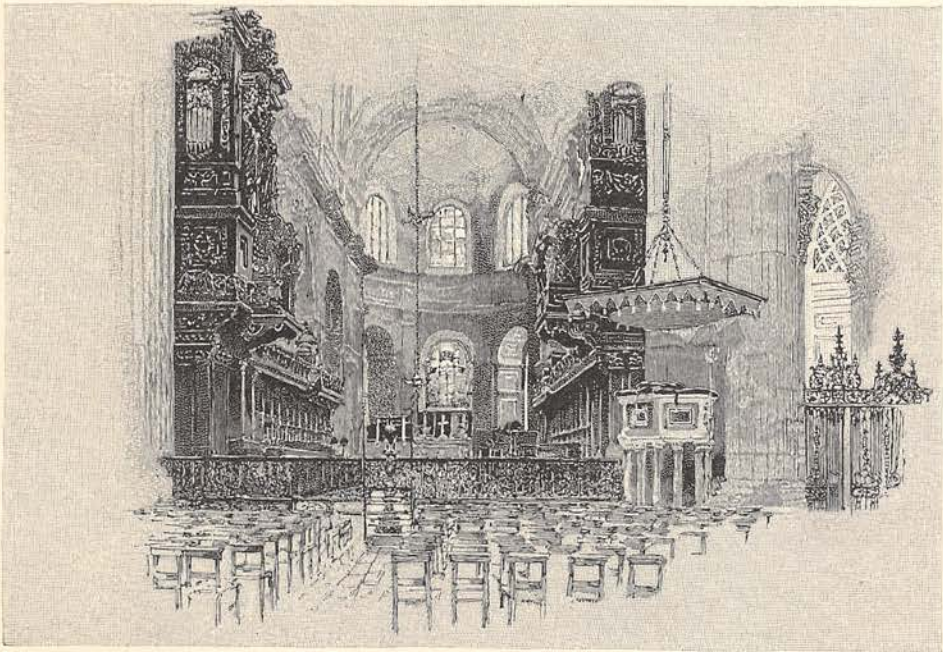
PLAN OF ST. PAUL'S.
(FROM MURRAY'S "HANDBOOK.")

we learn once more that great architectural innovations are not inspired by mere changes of taste, but by new constructional needs. As, however, these needs make themselves felt in times of general change, mental plasticity, and development, the new scheme naturally meets a nascent taste, or turns wavering preferences in its own direction. Brunelleschi's dome, fathered by a practical necessity, was at once acclaimed as an esthetic triumph. Its success led architecture into a new path; and its offspring are not only all the other domes, but all the Renaissance buildings of every kind with which the Western World is covered.

When St. Peter's was projected, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, Bramante designed it in the Renaissance style with an enormous dome; but he clung to the long

by the wishes of the clergy,—always tender of tradition and averse to novelty,—later Italian architects often combined a long perspective with a swelling dome. The first domed church built in Paris, the one attached to the Convent of Val-de-Grâce, shows the same arrangement. The chapel royal of the Hôtel des Invalides is the first Renaissance church, on northern soil at all events, where we find a scheme comparable in architectural unity and logic to those which Oriental builders had elaborated many centuries before. It is square in plan, and its dome rests on an octagon the four greater arches of which open into four short and equal limbs, while the four smaller ones open into chapels occupying the corners of the square and covered with low domes.

It would be rash to say that the combination of a dome and a long nave cannot be well effected.



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

THE CHOIR.

ENGRAVED BY K. C. ATWOOD.

medieval nave, and so too did his immediate successors, San Gallo, Fra Giocondo, and Raphael. Then came Peruzzi, who suggested a Greek cross for the plan, and then the younger San Gallo, who went back to the Latin cross. When Michael Angelo was appointed architect, he too preferred the more compact plan, and his design was carried on by his successors, Vignola, Della Porta, and Fontana. But before the church was quite finished Pope Paul V. bade Carlo Maderna increase its size by the prolongation of the nave.

Influenced by these two famous churches, and doubtless also, like Sir Christopher Wren,

But certainly the most successful domed interiors are those where we find the most compact and symmetrical disposition of parts, while next in excellence come those where choir and transept are very short and, as is the case at St. Peter's, the nave's immense breadth supports its length and predicts the presence of the dome. If the nave of St. Paul's were wider, we should be less distressed by its length; but the chief defect of the interior is the vast length of the choir, which leaves the dome poised upon stretching colonnades, unsustained to the eye by any massive bulk of wall. Even the transept is too long for good effect; and all this



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

ENGRAVED BY H. E. SYLVESTER.

INTERIOR OF ST. PAUL'S, LOOKING FROM THE NAVE INTO THE CHOIR.

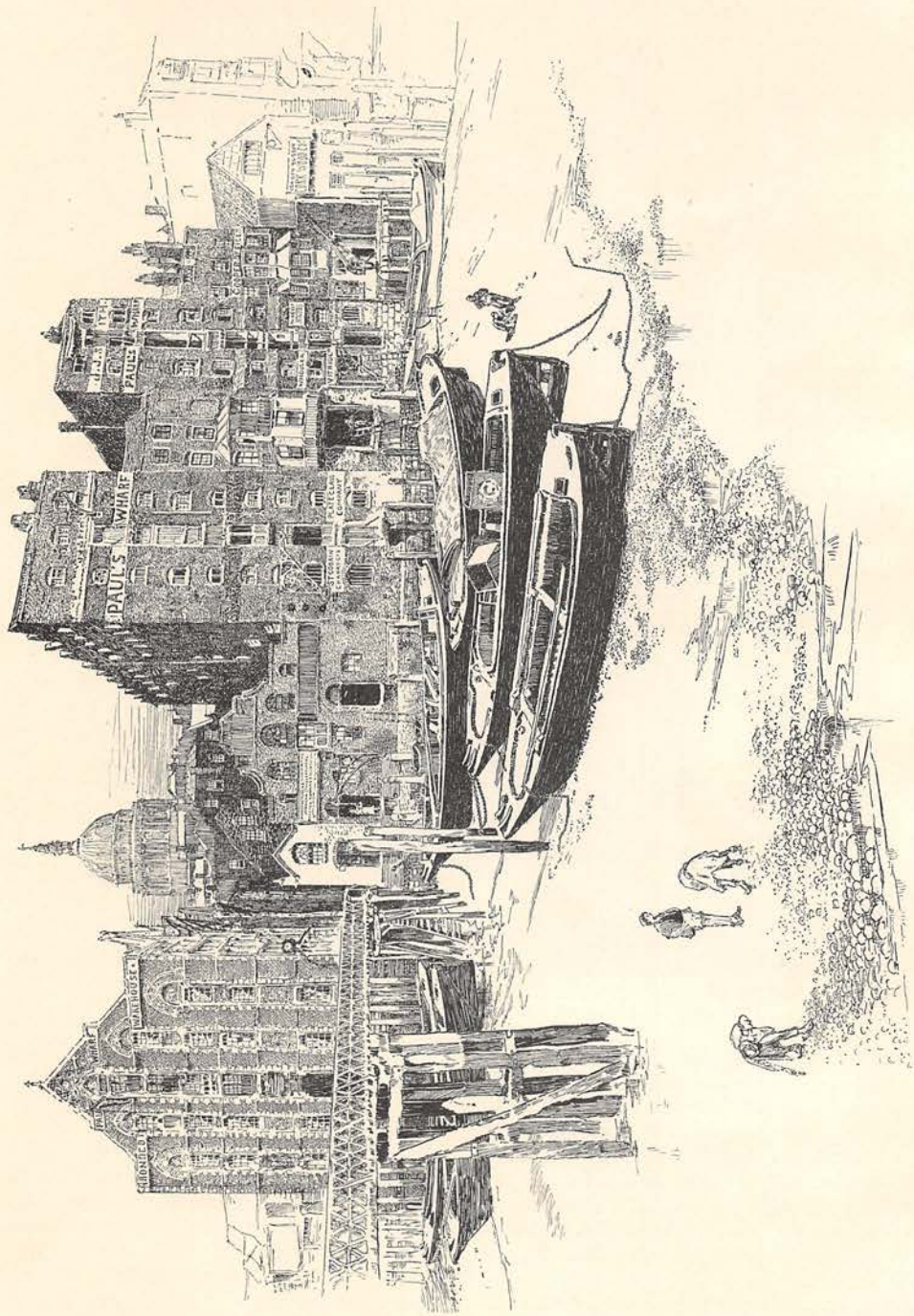
deference to medieval precedent has not really increased the commodiousness of the church, except from a superficial point of view. I mean that more people can enter it than can profit by their entrance. I have seen Canon Liddon preaching beneath the dome when I could not hear him, although I stood at a considerable distance from the transept door; and of course I was still more entirely excluded from the rest of the service.

However, all things considered, we marvel less that Wren should have been forced to plan his church in this way than that he should have preferred a more compact plan himself; for he knew little or nothing of the Orient, and could not have been helped by the chapel of the Hôtel

des Invalides, as this was begun in the same year as St. Paul's.

VII.

BRUNELLESCHI'S dome was built in the simple Roman way, its shape and the diameter of its base being the same as those of the area inscribed by its supports. Eight piers and eight connecting arches bear a wall or "drum" in the shape of an octagon, and from this wall spring the eight sides of the dome. But the dome of St. Peter's is a polygon of sixteen sides, and only four piers sustain it; so its builders employed what architects call "pendentives" — curving surfaces of wall which, filling the spaces between the arches, unite above in a con-



THE DOME FROM ST. PAUL'S WHARF PIER.

DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

tinuous wall of the shape desired for the base of the dome; and the picture on this page shows how, by the use of pendentives, the circular drum of St. Paul's was accommodated to the octagon formed by the eight supporting piers. Above the plinth at the base of the drum is a plain surface of wall with a balustraded gallery, and above this a tall colonnade pierced with windows; and then the dome curves in to its open central "eye."

The dome of the Val-de-Grâce was begun by Leduc about 1655 and finished in 1685. It would be interesting to know how far it had progressed by 1665, the year before the fire, when Wren wrote, "I have busied myself in surveying the most esteemed Fabrics of Paris and the country round"; for in a very important point it presents a strong contrast to the domes of Italian churches, and a close likeness to those of the Invalides and St. Paul's.

The solid brick wall which forms the lower portion of Brunelleschi's dome divides, about half-way up, into two shells with a space of several feet between them; but the expedient was purely constructional, as distinguished from architectural, for the walls have the same curve, and so, inside and out, the form of the dome is the same and its dimensions are practically alike. St. Peter's dome — inside of brick and outside of stone — is constructed in a similar way. But at the Val-de-Grâce there are two distinct and different domes — a comparatively low spherical vault of stone and, starting from a much taller drum and therefore rising much higher, an external dome of wood covered with lead; and at St. Paul's we find the same arrangement. But whether Wren learned this from Leduc or not, one feature of his dome was all his own, a third wall rising between the other two, a cone-shaped dome of brick which helps to solidify the whole structure but was specially designed to support the stone lantern, ninety feet in height and immensely heavy.

This intermediate cone, like the doubled walls of Santa Maria and St. Peter's, was a purely constructional expedient. But the separation of the inner from the outer dome was an architectural idea in the most fundamental sense of the term. If original with Wren, this idea proves that he possessed creative power of the noblest sort, and, in any case, his conception and execution of it are his highest titles to fame. Yet it has often led to his condemnation as an "untruthful" and "insincere" architect by those who do not understand the meaning of the words as thus applied.

His purpose, of course, was to make his dome as beautiful as possible both inside and out. In pursuing such an aim, an architect must respect broad structural veracity. He must not build a dome outside where there is none within, or cover a domed ceiling with, for instance, a square external tower. His exterior must interpret his interior; but the interpretation need not be a detailed explanation. Over their stone vaults Gothic architects raised wooden roofs of far higher pitch; and above their central lanterns they carried square towers to a much loftier height, and crowned them with stone or timber spires which certainly expressed no interior feature. Wren's two domes are the legitimate successors of forms like these, and his intermediate cone is a fine constructional expedient, as lawful as the timber framework with which Gothic architects braced and tied their spires of stone.

There can be no question with regard to the esthetic advantage of the diverging domes, since they give the architect perfect freedom, enabling him to care in a special way for interior and for exterior effect. It was no new discovery that a given set of proportions may not look equally well inside and outside a building. Gothic architects could not carry a great church too high for increase of majesty and charm in the interior; but the higher they carried it, the harder was the task of preserving grace in the exterior. Compromise offered the only relief from this difficulty. But there was another way out of the opposite difficulty, the one which dome-builders had to meet, and the seventeenth century was intelligent enough to find it.¹ We wish Byzantine builders had found it when we see the most beautiful ceiling in the world, the wide hemispherical vault of St. Sophia in Constantinople, appearing outside the church as a flat saucer-like roof, quite devoid of dignity and of grace. The dome of St. Peter's is very beautiful both within and without; yet within it seems almost too tall despite its enormous span; and outside it can be fully appreciated only from a point so distant that the body of the church sinks into comparative insignificance beneath it. The desire of Sir Christopher and his French contemporaries was to raise their outer domes so that they might produce their full effect from near as well as from distant points of view, and surely it was a lawful ambition. We cannot think the great gilded sphere of the Invalides or the fluted gray cupola of St. Paul's a foot too high; but fancy them revealed as ceilings up to the base of their lanterns!

¹ Although Renaissance architects were probably not helped by the fact, this solution had already been found some time before by certain Oriental builders. The beautiful outer dome of the mosque at Ispahan, which dates from the fifteenth century, is a shell of wood covered

with lead, rising far above the inner dome; and of similar form and fabric are now the domes of St. Mark's in Venice, originally built low and solid, but covered in the fourteenth or fifteenth century with tall wooden shells.



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

THE NORTH AISLE OF THE NAVE.

ENGRAVED BY J. W. EVANS.

Increase of height was secured, not by elongating the sphere itself, but by making the drum more prominent. Brunelleschi, like the Romans and all Oriental builders, used a very low drum; Michael Angelo raised his much higher, saying that he wished to "swing Brunelleschi's dome in the air." But Wren, with his doubled cupola in mind, could be much bolder still; and we cannot too greatly admire his design where, though the drum has two stories and one is immensely tall, unity is perfectly preserved and the proportions are so beautiful that the dignity of the dome itself is merely increased by the magnificence of its base. Naturally the drum of the interior dome is not nearly so high, being proportioned to its own altitude. Indeed, the height of the outer drum is almost as great as that of the ceiling as a whole.

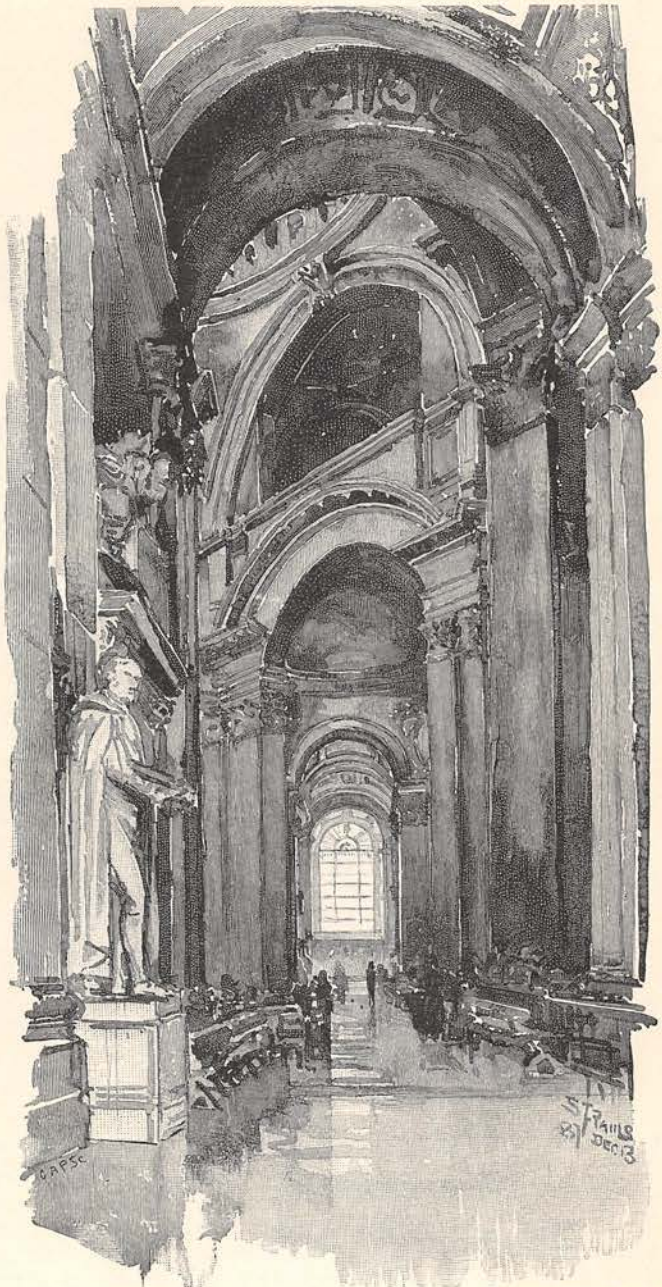
In the chapel of the Invalides the "eye" of the domed ceiling is very wide, and through it we look up at an immense painting which covers the surface of an intermediate dome of flattened shape. At St. Paul's, through a much smaller opening, we look up into the mysterious area of the tall brick cone. The chance to secure effects like these should not be forgotten in weighing the merits of the system of divergent domes, nor the many ways in which such domes permit the builder to lighten his fabric on the one hand, to brace and support it on the other. The lantern on St. Peter's could not be built as large as at first intended, yet the dome has had to be strengthened by iron bands; the dome of St. Paul's is still as firm and steady as at first. Never in St. Paul's, I may add, do we receive a more tremendous impression than when, stand-

ing in the gallery that surrounds the "eye," we look downward into the church, upward into the lofty cone.¹

Far though it falls below the outer dome, Wren's great ceiling is still too high. Its aspect speaks of mystery and grandeur rather than of beauty. Of course it seems even taller than it is because of the smoky air which fills it—thick almost as an actual cloud; and it will seem lighter, more graceful, more beautiful, if it is ever properly decorated. But the outer dome is and always will be Wren's greatest triumph. Can we study such a work as this, look back to its origin in the dome of the Pantheon, and then say that Renaissance art is only a "copy" of antique art? or, as actually has been said, that it is worse than a copy, being a "corruption"?

VIII.

WE are often told that the beauties of St. Paul's are due to Wren, and its faults to his employers. But this is true only in part. Wren did as well as one could with the plan he was forced to Gothicize, especially excellent being the way in which he arranged the supports of his dome so as to leave, from end to end of the church, a clear vista through all the aisles. He rightly asked for brilliant mosaics in the dome, but was forced to see it painted in dark, heavy tones, while all the rest of the interior was left cold and bare. In spite of his actual tears of protest, the Duke of York, intent upon bringing back some day the Catholic form of worship, insisted upon the chapels at the western end, which greatly injure the external effect. And the building commissioners insisted upon the balustrade which crowns the external walls, although Wren showed them that a plain plinth above the entablature formed a sufficient finish, and



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

WESTERN AISLE OF TRANSEPT.

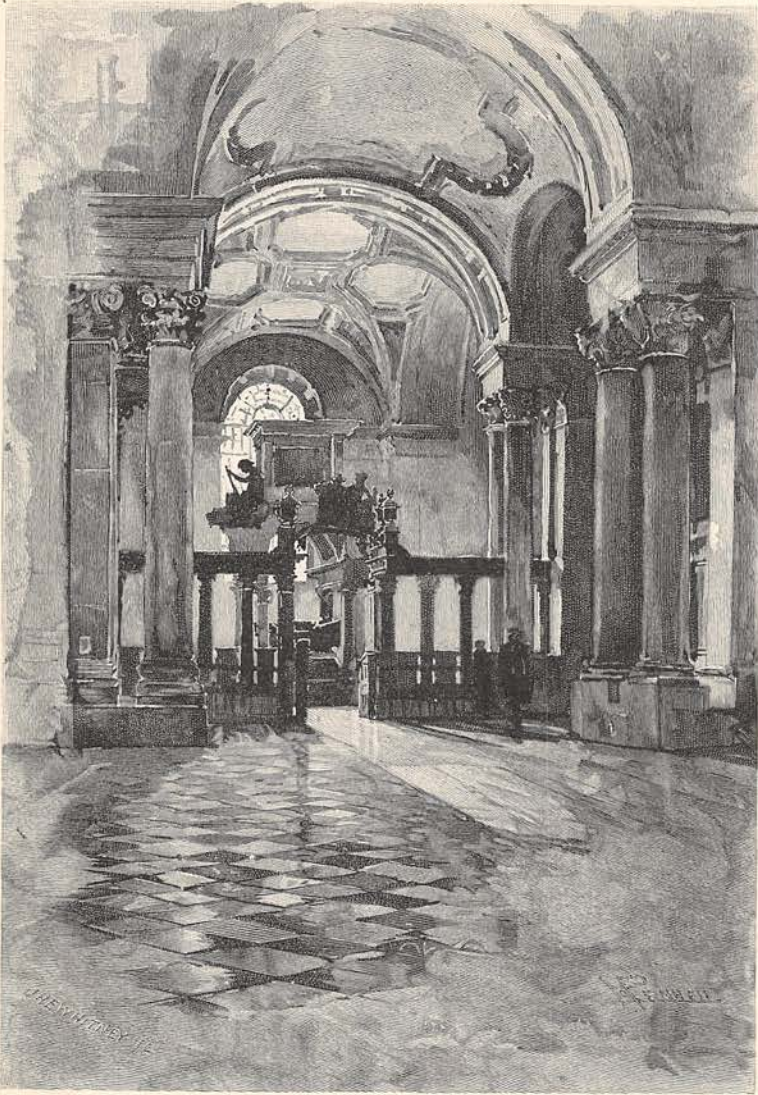
ENGRAVED BY C. A. POWELL.

compared them to ladies who "think nothing well without an edging."

But Wren was himself responsible for the weak way in which the vaulted ceilings of the four limbs spring from a low Attic order, and also for the ugliest features in the whole church—

¹ The dome of the Invalides was designed by the younger Mansard shortly before the year 1700. Its intermediate dome is chiefly a decorative, not a con-

structional, feature like the cone at St. Paul's. The lantern is borne by the outer dome, and, like this, is of wood.



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

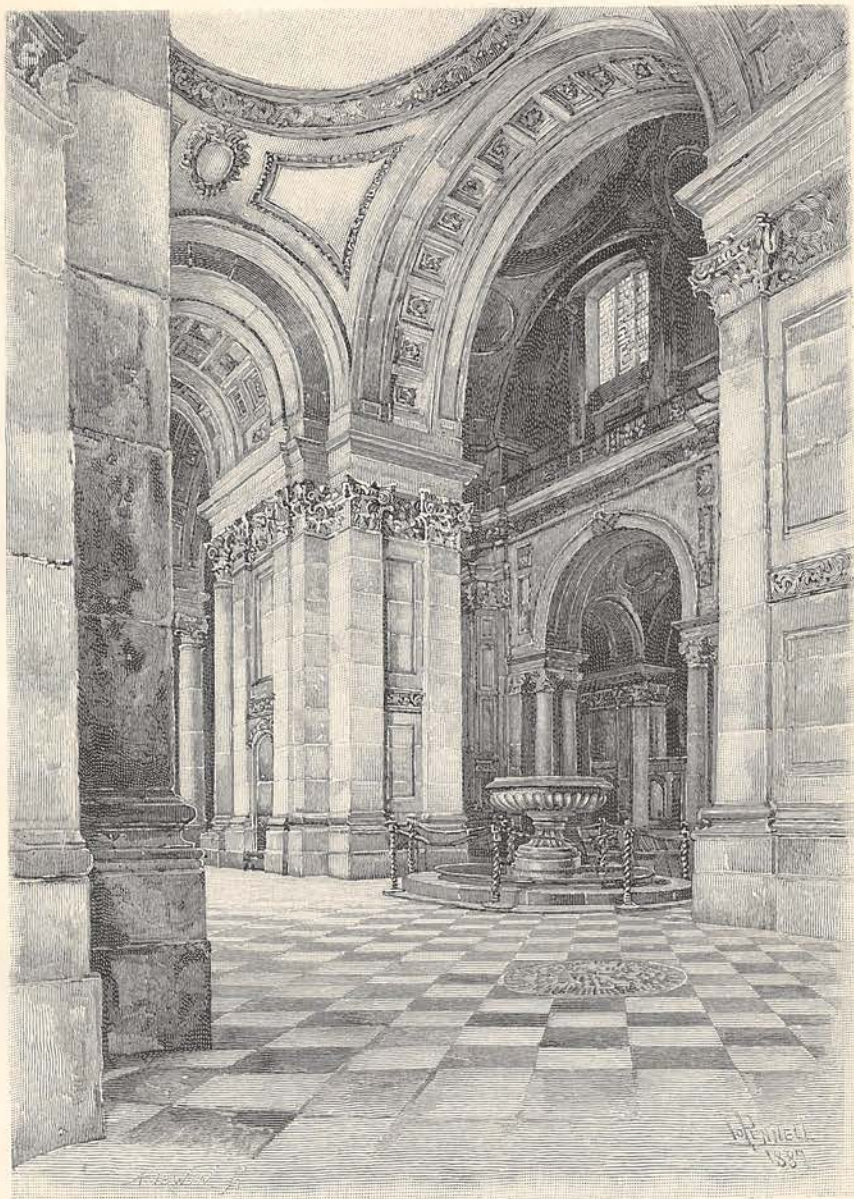
THE WELLINGTON MONUMENT.

ENGRAVED BY J. H. E. WHITNEY.

those superimposed arches which, alternating with the great arches that open into the four limbs, help them to support the dome. These features show in the pictures on p. 655 and p. 659. We are glad to know that after they were built Wren disliked them extremely. But the remedy he proposed does not strike us as quite happy: he suggested that groups of statues be placed in the upper window-like openings and backed with make-believe curtains of plaster! As a whole the interior of St. Paul's lacks unity and repose, while the choice and proportioning of its features do not reveal a very delicate artistic sense, and its scheme of sculptured decoration shows neither the fertility in invention, the exquisite taste, nor the skilful touch which characterize the contem-

porary work of France. Even as a compromise between two architectural ideals it might, we feel, have been a little better managed.

The exterior is much more successful, although here again we cannot give unstinted praise. A want of unity between the dome and the church is still apparent, the one standing on the other almost like an independent structure raised on a lofty platform; yet in itself this platform is superb in mass and silhouette. If we examine the construction of the lateral façades, we find a want of truthfulness which may be criticized with much more justice than the bold divergence of the inner and outer domes. The real walls of the exterior end with the entablature of the lower range of pilasters which defines the altitude of the aisles. Above this



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

THE FONT.

ENGRAVED BY ALLEN IRWIN.

point the wall, with its second range of pilasters, is a mere screen, standing free and hiding the true clearstory wall as well as the flying buttresses which spring to this from the top of the true aisle wall. I do not say the device was a worthy one; but a frank confession of the long aisles Wren was forced to build would have injured that effect of monumental unity and simplicity which is the essence of Renaissance as compared with Gothic art, and would have resulted in a mass far less well adapted than the one we see to form a pedestal for the mighty dome. And, after all, if Gothic architects did

not build screen walls, they were not ashamed, in England at least, to hide their flying buttresses under the roofs of their aisles.

The semicircular porches which finish the transept-ends are not very harmonious features; and, despite its dignity, the western front has patent faults. Wren proved himself a true descendant of English Gothic builders when he misrepresented the breadth of his church by placing the towers outside the line of the lateral walls; and he sinned in another way by making the upper colonnade of his portico shorter than the lower one—unity of effect is dis-

turbed, and the second story looks heavier than the first, whereas it might well have been lighter.

Yet the merits of this exterior far outweigh its defects, for though we may object to certain features and arrangements, the church as a whole never fails to impress in the profoundest way both the eye and the imagination. It

it could hardly have been as imposing as today, when great streaks and patches of inky black accentuate the pallor of more sheltered portions.

IX.

OF course we ought to say more about the character of Renaissance architecture and the



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

ST. PAUL'S FROM WATERLOO BRIDGE—A FOGGY MORNING.

ENGRAVED BY H. E. SYLVESTER.

is a magnificent building, and we cannot always say as much of buildings in which we discover fewer special faults. People who have no eye for the picturesque sometimes complain of its color or, rather, of the way in which smoke and soot have altered its color. But fresh in the first whiteness of its Portland stone,

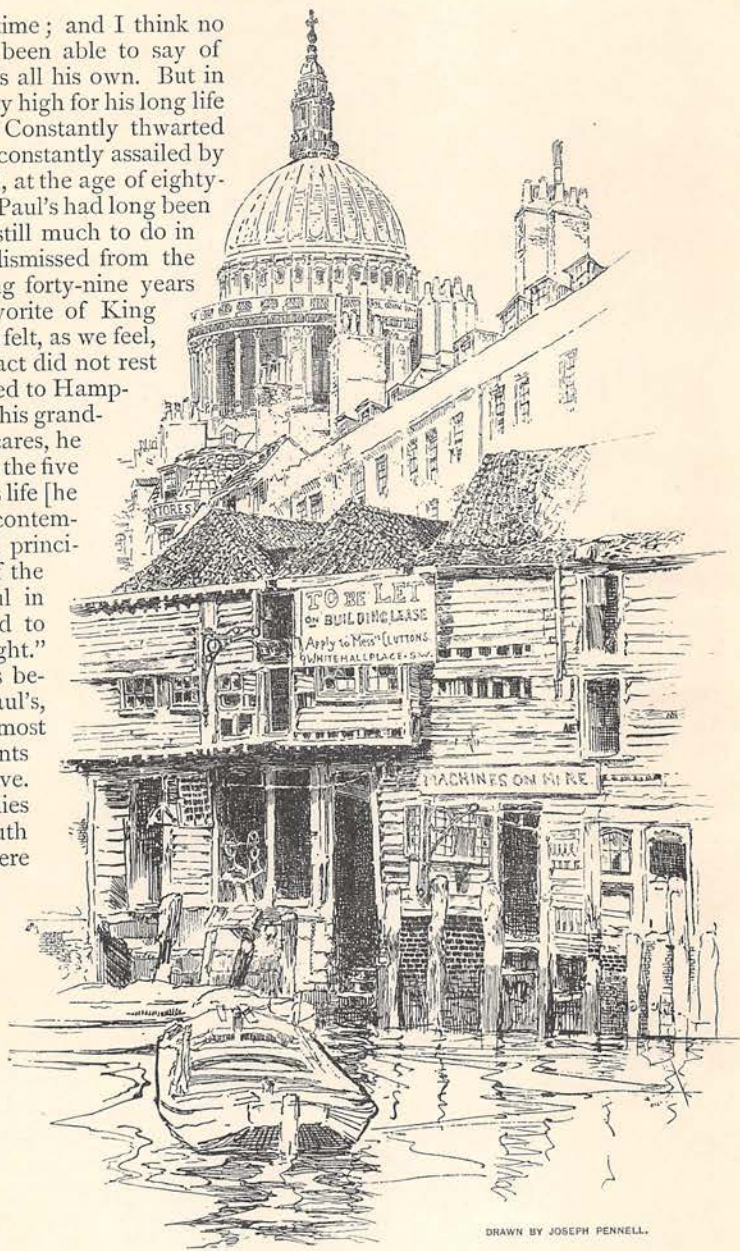
way in which it is illustrated by St. Paul's. But how, in a single chapter, could we attempt to do for this great style what, in a dozen chapters, we found it impossible to do completely for the medieval styles? Now we can make room merely for one or two historical facts of another sort.

Few churches as great as St. Paul's have

been built in so short a time; and I think no architect but Wren has been able to say of such a church that it was all his own. But in some ways Wren paid very high for his long life and noble opportunity. Constantly thwarted in his work, he was also constantly assailed by jealousy and slander, and, at the age of eighty-six, when the fabric of St. Paul's had long been complete but there was still much to do in minor matters, he was dismissed from the office he had held during forty-nine years to make room for a favorite of King George's. He must have felt, as we feel, that the disgrace of this act did not rest upon him. He soon retired to Hampton Court, and there, says his grandson, "free from worldly cares, he passed the greater part of the five last following years of his life [he died at ninety-two] in contemplation and studies, and principally in the consolation of the Holy Scriptures, cheerful in solitude, and well-pleased to die in the shade as in the light."

A vast crypt stretches beneath the whole of St. Paul's, and here lie the bodies of most of those whose monuments appear in the church above. Sir Christopher himself lies at the east end of the south aisle. In the place where he ought to have rested, under the center of his dome, lies Lord Nelson, who ought not to have been buried in St. Paul's at all—if it is true that he cried to fate to give him "Victory or Westminster Abbey." Near Wren sleeps our countryman Benjamin West, with Reynolds, Turner, Lawrence, and other artists of less renown; near Nelson sleep Wellington, Collingwood, and other great soldiers and sailors; and of course noted churchmen are not wanting.

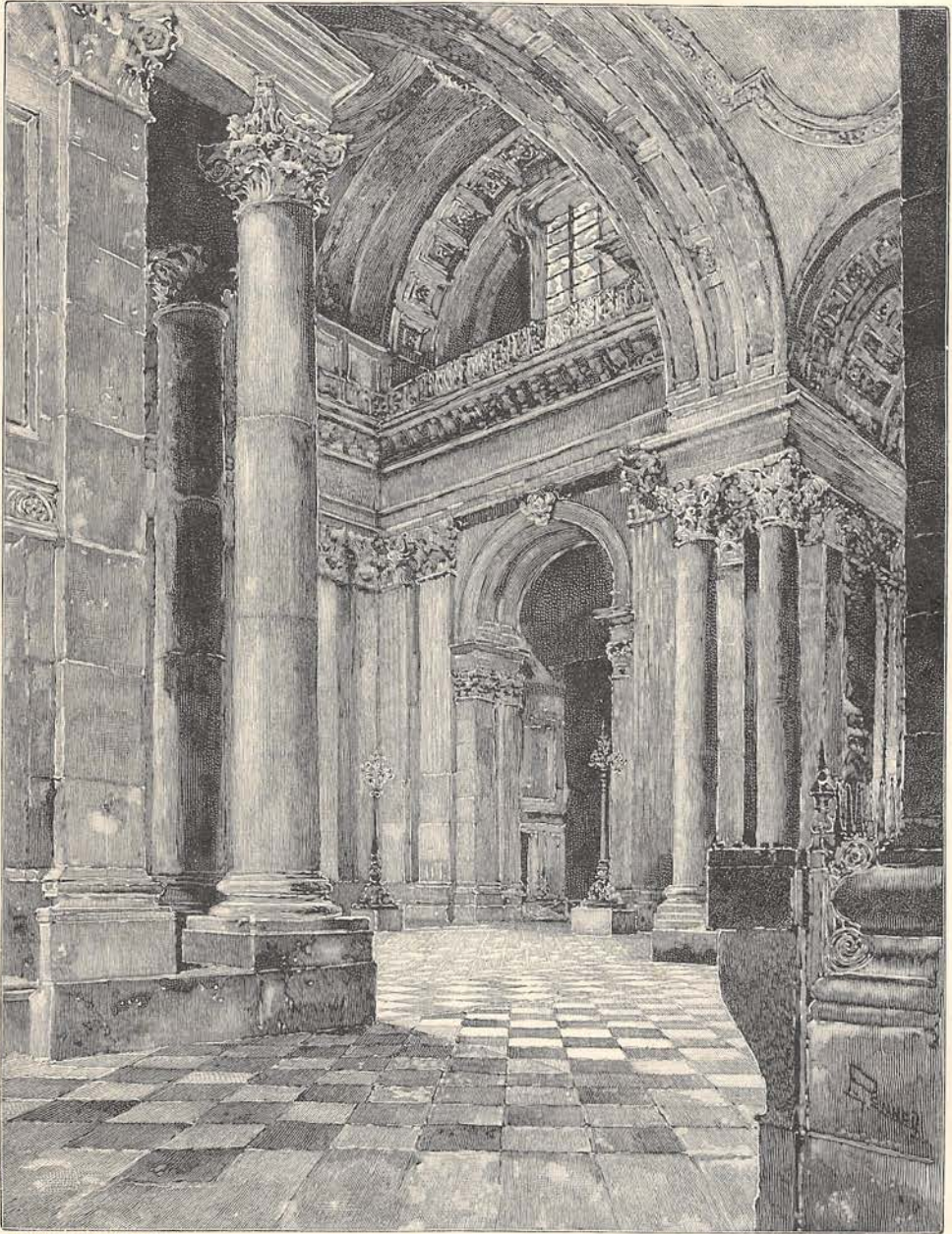
The best works of sculpture which St. Paul's can show are the beautiful choir-stalls carved in wood by Grinling Gibbons, under the eye of Wren. Among all the monuments there is only one of high artistic merit. This is Wren's, and, as we have often heard, it is simply the church itself. The famous inscription which ends, *Lector, si Monumentum requiris, circumspice*, was written by his son and placed on his tomb, but is now repeated over the door of the north



THE DOME FROM THE RIVER.

transept-arm. A full translation runs: "Beneath is laid the builder of this church and city, Christopher Wren, who lived more than ninety years, not for himself but for the good of the State. Reader, if thou askest for a monument, look around thee." And I think the epitaph is as fine in its way as the monument.

Except for a brief period, when the fiery light of the struggles which introduced and assured the Reformation threw a few figures into heroic relief, the bishops of London have not often been conspicuous men. Their power as bishops



DRAWN BY JOSEPH PENNELL.

THE WEST DOOR.

ENGRAVED BY W. H. MORSE.

was not commensurate with the power of their town. The metropolis of England in every other sense, London has ranked ecclesiastically with towns as small as Ely and Wells. Pope Gregory intended that it should be the archiepiscopal seat, but St. Augustine decided otherwise, and his arrangement has never been disturbed. To rise as high as he could in the church, to have the best chance for rising in the state, a bishop of London had to get himself transferred to the tiny city of Canterbury. But Bon-

ner and Ridley, Grindal and Sandys, and John Aylmer, the tutor of Lady Jane Grey, were bishops of London in the sixteenth century, and in the seventeenth Laud and Judson and Compton; while among the deans of the chapter in these troublous times were John Colet, the friend of Erasmus; Richard Pace, the friend of Wolsey; Alexander Nowell, whom Queen Elizabeth rebuked for "papacy" in his cathedral; John Donne, the poet; and William Sancroft, who, after he had helped much toward

the rebuilding of St. Paul's, was raised by King Charles to the throne of Canterbury. Among recent names those of Bishop Tait, afterward archbishop too, and of Dean Milman and Dean Church, are the ones which the world will remember longest.

x.

SEEING the dome of St. Paul's afar off or close at hand, lighted by the faint city sunshine, wrapped in banks of mist like a mountain's shoulder, or outlined against a midnight heaven, who can deny that, despite all the beauty of Gothic spires and towers, a dome is the noblest crown that a great aggregate of human homes can carry? In the measureless panorama of London what are the towers of Westminster, what would be the spire of Salisbury, compared with its titanic bulk, so majestically eternal in expression, yet so buoyant, so airy, that when the clouds float past it we can fancy it soars and settles like a living thing?

The dome of St. Paul's rising above a town like Salisbury would indeed be out of place. But it is not in such towns that the world now puts its noblest buildings. More than at any time since the imperial days of Rome men are now dwellers in cities, and cities grow to enormous size. The dome which the Romans bequeathed us and the form of art which its use first developed, now better express our needs and tastes, and better meet our executive artistic powers than the Gothic spire and the art it typifies. Medievalism has passed out of life; is it not an anachronism to attempt its perpetuation in art? Our true sympathies lie where lay those of Brunelleschi, Michael Angelo, and Christopher Wren. We teach our children from the books of the Greeks and Romans, not of the schoolmen, and teach them intellectual freedom, not subservience to king or priest or rigid creed. We should be glad enough to sit at dinner with Pericles or Cicero, with Wren or Brunelleschi; should we like the food, the table, the manners or the talk of a thirteenth-century bishop? Could he ever grow to be one of ourselves, as Cicero might, as Brunelleschi might, did they come back to try? Of course we admire the churches he built, and in a very different way from the temples of Rameses or the mosques of the Arabs, for his blood is in our veins and the history he helped to make is ours. But lineage and material history are not the only things which control artistic development. Modern English architecture, trying to be "national" again, has interpreted the term as meaning "medieval." But even medieval architecture was really born in France, imported into England; and even St. Paul's is English, though

derived from Italian sources. The wind that sways and fertilizes the mind blows whence it listeth, infusing new qualities into the purest strain of blood; and it is these qualities—mental qualities—which express themselves in art. Not unless Englishmen themselves become medievalized can they hope to build really noble Gothic structures.

"But," some one is sure to object, "Renaissance art is pagan. We may use it for our secular buildings; we want Romanesque or Gothic for our churches." "No," another is sure to protest, "Renaissance art is papistical. Rome may use it, Protestantism should not." Each of these objections contradicts the other, and neither has the least excuse in fact. The "Grecian temple style," which for a time flourished in England and was fostered in this country by Thomas Jefferson, may be charged with paganism; but not the true Renaissance styles which Christian architects, in truly creative times, developed out of the elements of antique art. And this development took place just as the power of Rome was breaking. Renaissance art is really the art of Protestantism. It is the expression of that spirit which, amid other emancipations, wrought freedom in religious faith. St. Peter's and the countless Renaissance churches which Catholic hands have since erected simply prove that even Rome herself could not escape the influence of the great movement which produced the Reformation.

It seems impossible to-day to start quite fresh in any intellectual path. It certainly is impossible to hark back to a path, however sacred, noble, and attractive, from which, four centuries ago, our ancestors naturally and inevitably diverged. To build truthfully, spontaneously, modern men must build in the fashion that was evolved when the modern world was born. Frenchmen have remembered this truth, and it shows in the difference between modern Paris and London or New York. We may admire the forms of Gothic art more than any others, but with them no progressive nation can make a garment to cover all the needs of the twentieth century; with the forms of Renaissance art such a garment can be made; and it is doubly important for us in America to realize these facts. Reflecting that we have a fresh soil, a peculiar climate, new material needs and resources, an inventive turn of mind, an ambitious temper, and a heritage of mingled blood, we feel that we may some day arrive at a new phase of art, distinctively our own. But this can happen, in some distant to-morrow, only if we meet as well as we possibly can the practical necessities of to-day.

M. G. Van Rensselaer.