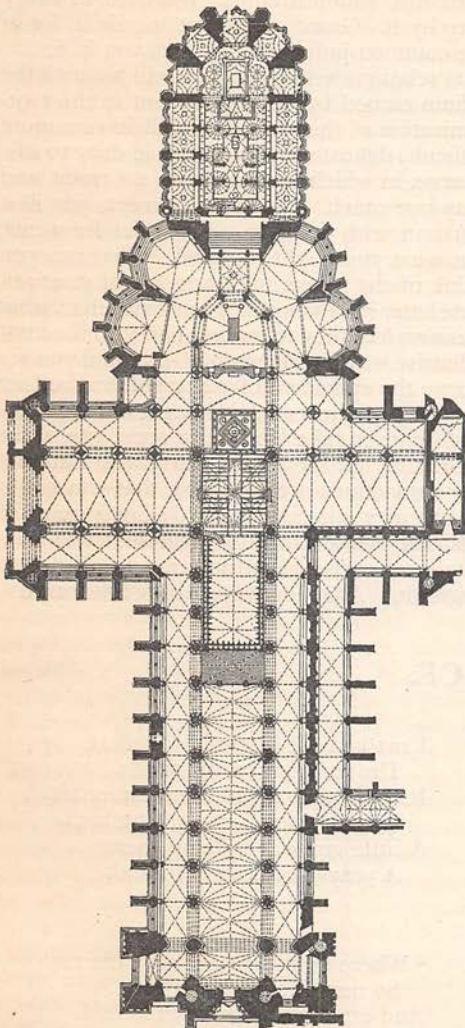


## WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

I.



PLAN OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

ADDISON, in a paper only too familiarly known, has expressed the pensive satisfaction which came to him through an occasional meditative stroll among the monuments of Westminster; and Irving, in his "Letters," records the delights not merely of strolling through the abbey's aisles, but of actually living within its cloisters. "Ensnconced," as he finds himself, "in the very heart of this old monastic establishment," this "singular and monkish nest," he

compares his residence here to his sojourn in the halls of the Alhambra, and wonders, reasonably enough, if he is always to have his dreams turned into realities. Since those far-away days others of the same race, on one side of the ocean or the other, have followed in the footsteps of these gentle academics, until the mental attitude proper to assume before the great historical fabric of the British Isles has come — thanks to the Englishman who established the precedent, and to the American who assisted in confirming it — to be not only pretty clearly determined, but tolerably well conventionalized.

In its general outline this attitude may be taken as tenderly emotional. However subject, indeed, to such modification as is likely to ensue from the introduction of historical, literary, and ecclesiastical information, the pose is taken primarily with a view to reflection, reverie, and the general play of soul, an end which may be achieved or not, as fortune favors, but which assuredly should be attempted.

Times change, however, and we change correspondingly. The semi-suburban abbey of Queen Anne's day has long since been sucked up into the vortex of the great Babylon. The slow stage-coach known to the earliest of transatlantic pilgrims is superseded by another means of locomotion, which brings Manchester and Birmingham within three or four hours of the capital, and fills the aisles of the minster with endless throngs whose pressing consciousness of time-tables puts an effective bar to the meditative habit which had its vogue in an earlier and an easier age. Addison, strolling through the abbey in the present year of grace, might require a greater degree of abstraction than his utmost power could compass. Irving, keeping bachelor's hall among his monastic antiquities, might well doubt the inviolability of the curtain of seclusion hung up between him and the outside world. For the abbey with which we now have our account is a latter-day abbey; an abbey whose vis-à-vis is the Aquarium, where from eleven in the forenoon to eleven at night — hours longer than those permitted by the dean to his sculptured effigies — the acrobat and the skirt-dancer have things their own way; an abbey past the portal of which there races all day long the charioteering omnibus, vivid with praises of the last new soap, or infants' food, or illustrated monthly, and packed with bargain-hunters bound for the Army and Navy

Stores, or with excursionists headed toward Victoria; an abbey filled with processions of red-cheeked provincials who pay their six-pences, and who follow vergers—sad-robed and not inevitably grammatical in their searching sonority—through ranges of cluttered chapels; an abbey of multiplied and multiplying scaffoldings, of placarded requests, commands, explications, announcements, diagrams, illustrations, warnings, oburgations, prayers, and pious ejaculations. It is an abbey for which facile “drawing orders” have provided a special population of sketchers, painters, measurers, and note-takers; a dog-eared abbey every leaf of which has been fluttered a hundred times, making all talk of moldings and mullions the merest superfluity; an abbey where each succeeding season adds some new incongruity to a range of monumental sculpture the associated effect of which is much too incongruous already; an abbey that is still striving against fearful odds to be at once a Valhalla, a museum, and a house of prayer; an abbey wherein an abandonment to the serene and lofty emotionalism attained by gifted spirits in past days is as impossible as at St. Pancras or at Charing Cross; an abbey which, for the compassing of a body of harmonious and homogeneous impression, must regretfully be confessed as scarcely the equal of the General Post-Office.

## II.

YET there is one view of Westminster which is not only harmonious, but singularly comprehensive as well, and it is the very view, fortunately, which is commonly presented first. It offers itself to you as your cab leaves Parliament street and sheers away from Westminster Bridge, and it may be enjoyed with more leisure and thoroughness through the broad windows of the tea-house on this corner—with more comfort, too, if the hour happens to fall late on an afternoon in January. From this point the imagination that is capable of being put into motion by the cup that cheers may find itself able to conjure up the beginnings of Westminster—to sweep away from the foreground the several little grass-plots inclosed by modern Gothic ironmongery, with their clustered lamp-posts, their rigidly monumental British statesmen, and their drooping, absent-minded cab-horses, and to look across and back to the mystical Isle of Thorns, from which, in the midst of wide marshes, the first abbey rose—an abbey the Benedictine brethren of which were equally solicitous for Saxon souls and for their own tithes in Thames-caught fish. The imagination incapable of so long a flight may satisfy itself with a picture of the abbey as it stood in the later days of Henry III., when the newly

built choir in early English Gothic looked down in a high-shouldered fashion on the old Norman nave of the Confessor, and even topped the antique towers of the same severe and early day. A shorter flight still would take us back to the time of Charles I., when the abbey, a towerless torso, yet fully Gothic as far as it went, existed alongside of Westminster Hall and the Parliament House as one of an ineffective trio which rose from a swarm of mean and dingy houses fronting on a mean and dirty riverside.

But, after all, observation comes easier than imagination, and the average traveler, despite the faint flutterings of fancy, will see the abbey essentially as it exists to-day—a picture which, in the absence of anything like a general understanding, still “composes” fairly well, and which has in it many of the elements of greatness.

In this picture the right of the view is held by the towers of the abbey itself, and the left by the varied towers and multiplied turrets of the Houses of Parliament; while the center, which is a little weakened by the absence of the erection that should rightly crown the crossing of the minster's choir and transepts, is partly accomplished by the united effort of Westminster Hall, the chapel of Henry VII., and the church of St. Margaret. This latter is the principal aid—suggestive of a coach-dog attending a saddle-horse, or of a transport conveying a man-of-war. Its battlemented tower presents a decided feature, and serves, too, the purposes of scale as well as of companionship. To all this add a half fog, by which the Gothic of actuality and the Gothic by mere intention are fused and harmonized—a cold, blue thickening which puts the long ridge-pole of the minster almost at one with the leaden sky behind it, which tones down the glittering modernity of Parliament's great bell-tower, and which kindly drapes the dubious details of Sir Christopher Wren's west front; under which circumstances the general *mise en scène* of Westminster is perhaps at its best.

The west towers represent the last original work done on the fabric of the abbey. The chain of dates leading up to the time of their construction is easily followed through. The founding of the abbey, “the Collegiate Church of St. Peter in Westminster,” is credited traditionally to Siebert, King of the East Saxons, A. D. 616. Remains of his tomb are still shown near the usual entrance to the choir chapels. The first church on this spot actually known to history was that preceding the present one. It was erected by Edward the Confessor in the last days of the year 1065, a few days before his own death, and a few months before the Norman invasion. The present church was

begun by Henry III., with the idea of honoring the builder of the preceding one, and the choir, as it now exists, was opened for service in 1269. The nave, working westward from the transepts of Henry III., was continued by Edward I., Richard II., and Henry V., through a period ranging from the latter part of the thirteenth century to the fore part of the fifteenth. The magnificent chapel of Henry VII. was finished in 1519, in the expiring days of the Gothic style. The west towers were not undertaken until two hundred years later, and were completed about 1740.

It is customary to put the reproach of these towers on Sir Christopher Wren, without perfect justice, however. In feature and outline they are at least plausibly Gothic, and any dropping into the vernacular of the eighteenth century that they betray may fairly be attributed to the diction of those pupils of his under whom the actual construction was accomplished. In the first years of that century Wren himself went over the building pretty thoroughly, and his clear and painstaking report to the dean is still preserved. He also offered drawings for the completion of the west towers, which at that time were so low that the height of the gable between them intercepted the sound of the bells. He seems to have approached the enterprise in a spirit commendable enough. "To deviate," he says, "from an approved form is to run into a disagreeable mixture." It was his idea to undertake the work, "still continuing the Gothic humour of the tracery stone work; all this, too, without any modern mixture to show my own invention." He also recommended strongly the immediate construction of a heavy central tower, since the iron rods which the medieval builders had used as a makeshift had been removed, so that the vaulting of the cross stood in danger of springing, owing to the absence of a weight above sufficient to hold it in place. He furthermore exhibited a project for a spire for suitably finishing such a tower—a spire Gothic in intention, at least. However, it must be recollected that his façade for the north transept, now happily removed, was a complete fiasco, and it is likely enough that a tower in Queen Anne Gothic might have resulted merely in one more feature for charitable muffling by the friendly fog.

Yet his willingness, even desire, in that age of "taste" to renovate and to complete the abbey in a style harmonious with the original fabric has its own significance. It is easy indeed to select facts from English history that will illustrate the peculiar consideration, the preëminent sanctity, that the abbey has always enjoyed, and that will emphasize the centrality of its position as the rallying-point of Eng-

lish life and English sentiment. It would be necessary simply to cite the coronations and jubilees, the royal marriages and funerals, or to recall the processions and "Te Deums" that have celebrated the victories of English arms. Yet it would not be out of place to add to these the fact that in a day famous for its sodden self-complacency, its false feeling, and its feeble taste, an artist was found who showed himself willing to spare the exterior of this great monument any such mass of form and detail—puerile, dropsical, inept, inane—as disfigures and defaces the interior.

### III.

BUT it is through such a "marble wilderness" as this—marble jungle, one might better say—that the visitor must hew his way to a conception of the architectural organism of the structure; a jungle the complications of which are hardly lessened by the guide-posts set forth so numerous. Were not the abbey one of the most lucid and symmetrical of England's great Gothic constructions (perhaps Salisbury alone is more so), the possibility of an immediate and convincing *coup d'œil* would be only slight. The general dispositions consequent upon the present arrangements for worship serve to show how widely architecture and archæology may straggle apart, while the arrangement of the monuments in many parts of the church impairs or altogether destroys the architectural effect. Thus the choir, architecturally speaking, is divided by a screen into two distinct parts for two separate purposes. The nave, too, is treated in the same fashion—a fashion nowhere rooted and general, fortunately, except in Spain, where the protrusion of the choir into the nave is one of the great fixed facts. Under this arrangement, the feature the length and height of which should be the chief glory of the abbey is as good as cut in two. Nor is the presence of the choir-screen made more grateful by the incorporation of the memorials to Earl Stanhope and Sir Isaac Newton, works which sum up only too capably the tastes and tendencies of the days of George I.

It is a matter for regret, too, that the symmetry of the transept aisles should have suffered an unfortunate break from the intrusion of the cloisters, since a full complement of aisles is a feature of such rarity that no treatment of it can be too considerate; while the apse (and nothing, assuredly, requires an increase of intricacy less than a pentagonal apse with a due attendance of chapels) has come to be crowded with an assemblage of gigantic and confusing monuments. The most gigantic and most incomprehensibly placed of these must be confessed to date from our own century—most incomprehensibly placed, that is, unless

the intrusion of Watt among the Plantagenets is to be accepted as a masterful statement of the fact that old things have passed away, and that all things have become new, noisy, and hideous. The introduction of this monstrous effigy into the small chapel of St. Paul began with the mutilation of an interesting and valuable tomb of the fifteenth century, and ended with the collapse of the vaulting beneath the floor and the threatened destruction of both work and workmen.

The great figure of Watt being once accepted, no one will find any incongruity in the small bust, close at hand, of Sir Rowland Hill, the promoter of cheap postage. We do not strain at gnats after swallowing camels. Where the steam-engine goes the penny post may follow.

But the greatest lack of appreciation of the normal tone and the structural integrity of the abbey is shown forth in the monument of a certain admiral whose time and place was the India of the last century — a monument that should have a peculiar interest for those who find the prototype of the Gothic cathedral in the forest-aisles of the north. Here the sculptor has obscured the beautiful shaftings and capitals of the thirteenth century by chiseled applications of tropical vegetation; so that the architecture that came in through the northern pine is seen passing out through the southern palm. Such are the ingenuities of Westminster.

When, through these and kindred difficulties, an apprehension of the structure is reached, it is seen that this building, the fame and functions of which are so English, is the result of influences decidedly French; indeed, there are few English churches wherein the French feeling is more strongly apparent. It might be going too far to claim broadly that all the best features of the church are distinctly Gallic; but the soaring, slender, reed-like grace of the nave is surely more suggestive of Rouen and Amiens than of York or even Salisbury, while the polygonal apse presents a means of rounding a corner which never obtained the same full measure of acceptance north of the Channel as south of it. This favorite Continental feature is indeed found in England — at Canterbury, for instance, or at Gloucester; but the square east end, with a large window, holds its own for the regular thing, as witness Wells, or Worcester, or, more noticeably still, Lincoln. Furthermore, the workmen at Westminster were indisputably Norman, and brought with them not only their own methods, but their own materials, as far as seemed desirable. The earliest critical examinations of the restorers made it plain that the work of carving was begun in Caen stone, being continued in Reigate, the nearest available substitute. So, too, with the oak and chestnut of the roofing.

And if one refrains from declaring that the best features of the church are distinctively French, one may also refrain from pronouncing the poorest features peculiarly English. But the one pet vice of English church-building comes out very strongly at Westminster in the low, narrow doorways. The English builders have always persisted in proportioning their church doors to the human figure, rather than to the façade in which they occur; not even the practical requirements involved in the processional use of banners have often been able to raise these low-browed archways. The French flock may be fancied as going up to the house of the Lord with a spacious expansion of spirit corresponding with the wide and lofty portal which admits them; an English congregation oozes in as humbly and as inconspicuously as their builders could possibly arrange for.

Yes, on the whole, the impartial traveler, whose plans include the most accessible countries of the Continent, may very well wait to enjoy his Gothic in the country where Gothic originated. It is only a day from Westminster to Notre Dame, and no one need be importunate for the left-handed Gothic of Germany, or the half-digested Gothic of Italy, or the overwrought and unduly individualistic Gothic of Spain, when the whole wide field from Rouen to Carcassonne is whitening for his sickle. It is there that one feels most poignantly the grace, the fluency, the protean pliancy of the greatest of the medieval arts — is most keenly aware of the one elusive, indefinable touch that France knows, and always has known, how to bestow; and it is pleasant to feel that this same dexterous hand has at least touched Westminster Abbey, if it has not, indeed, altogether transfigured it.

Yet the most magnificent portion of the abbey, the chapel of Henry VII., must be acknowledged as thoroughly English, and in no wise indebted to foreign influences. In the first decade of the sixteenth century, when the Flamboyant Gothic of France was making its forced compromise with the Renaissance forms just come up from Italy, the Perpendicular Gothic of England, as yet beyond the reach of the classic revival, was taking its own last and surprising development. While Louis XII. was busy with the Château of Blois, on the Loire, the first notable fusion of Gothic and classic in France, Henry VII. was pushing the now insulated Gothic of England to its culmination in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, King's Chapel at Cambridge, and the Lady Chapel of Westminster. Of these three the last is the most gorgeous, sensational, *éclatant*. It is a veritable *tour de force*. Its fan-traceries and fantastic pendentives almost defy the law of gravitation.

The excesses of its elaborate stone carvings almost transcend the limitations of material. This overwrought and determined creation shows, like South Kensington, what England can do in the arts when she sets her jaw, and tries.

## IV.

BUT architectural considerations, even those of the broadest and most sketchy sort, are not insisted upon by the general visitor to the abbey; it is the monuments that he most anticipates, and to which he gives most heed. Nowhere else in the world can such a collection be found, no series so long, so varied, so continuous, so well preserved, so wide in range. The earliest and noblest group, the royal tombs in the Confessor's chapel, have indeed been surpassed in number and in splendor; but the misdirected energies of the French nation, whose political activities we may decline in favor of their artistic ones, have been so exercised all over the Continent that these have now no real rivals. For the French, it must be confessed, have not exactly shone as travelers. Their misconception of the rôle has been displayed most egregiously more than once; Louvois among the tombs of the German emperors at Speyer, and Soutl among those of the Spanish kings at Leon, have not done much to increase the luster with which "toutes les gloires de la France" are commonly claimed to shine. Nor have the French done much better as mere excursionists, as must be acknowledged by any one who recalls their doings among the tombs of their own kings at St. Denis. However, they have never appeared within Westminster, except as builders and as individual and infrequent visitors; and there is little doubt that the presence there of a large body of them, acting with the unillumined vigor which they have displayed in so many other lands, would occasion considerable surprise. Perhaps only one other thing would occasion the English people a greater surprise—to emerge from an hour of frenzy and to realize that they had wrought such havoc for themselves. But this event is unlikely. Perhaps only one other event is more so—the doing of this for them by any other people, even with a Channel tunnel to assist. Westminster, in fact, is not merely a collection of monuments; it is in itself the one great and conspicuous monument to the self-control, general reasonableness, and common-sense ability of the race. All of which has been said before; but nothing prompts commonplace more than stability. Britannia may not be over-luminous in the arts, as the abbey itself all too plainly shows, but she knows how to apply to herself the governing force of her own hand.

But the royal tombs at Westminster make only a beginning; take the abbey throughout, and no collection of epitaphs covers a wider range as regards the station, the fortune, the careers, the aims, the achievements, of those commemorated. And the nature, and taste, and artistic quality of these commemorations cover a range correspondingly wide. It is needless to cite many individual examples occurring in the wide pendulum-swing between pomp and puerility, between the lovely and the ludicrous; but the rise, and succession, and debasement of styles, along with the flux and flow of tastes, might present a theme almost trenching upon the inexhaustible.

If one were to execute a line of cleavage that would broadly cut into two sections the work of the six centuries of statuary from Henry III. down to our own day, that line might fall within the later days of Elizabeth, and the basis of division would be established according to the manipulation of language for purposes of "epitaphy." In the later Tudor days the English language found itself, as we may say, and the skill in the use of one language widened itself to a greater readiness in the use of language generally. Thus, on one side of our line, we find three centuries of comparative reticence, and, on the other side, three later centuries during which a fluent readiness mounted only too often into a vainglorious verbosity. The reticence of earlier days sometimes retires into absolute silence; no contrast could present a wider chasm than that between the tomb of the first Edward, on the one hand,—a plain, chest-like assemblage of marble slabs, equally disdainful of art and of letters,—and that of almost any one of the ephemeral celebrities of the Hanoverian epoch, military or political, on the other.

In earlier years the beneficiaries of fame, however exalted, were content to adopt an attitude of passive and unconscious repose; even the most restless and irrepressible never rose beyond a posture of prayerful humility, and that rarely. But no man could be expected to turn an ear perpetually deaf and unresponsive to such fluency and facility in praise as became rife in the seventeenth century. Accordingly we find that the effigies rise to the inscriptions; they revive; they pose; they begin to enter into the spirit of the thing; they betray undisguisedly their appreciation of popular applause. And by the time the fore part of our own century is reached, they seem to say through their spokesman, the cross-legged and complacently smiling Wilberforce: "It is good, indeed, to be here; better to be conscious that we are here; but best of all to know how highly our presence here is prized."

After having called back these gentle shades

from another world, it becomes necessary to provide them with company. They come from a good place, most of them, and the company must be good, too—as good as can be got. So Virtue steps in, and Justice, and Benevolence, and Faith, Hope, and Charity, and the whole gentle sisterhood. And Glory comes,

ideal of monumental sculpture as reared and realized in those drear days of Charleses and of Georges, such the result of “the taste of antiquity and politeness.”

But it would be unjust to represent that the English people reached such depths as these unaided. Sculptors from the Continent have en-



THE ABBEY, FROM PALACE YARD.

ENGRAVED BY H. E. SYLVESTER.

and Fame, and eke the British Lion—which last (commonly regarded as a ravening beast that goes about seeking whom he may devour) shows, in such society as this, the softer side of his nature. He is like enough to fall away into a lacrymose resignation, and often does.

Now, has this beauteous band been invited hither to exist in a mere state of placid passivity? Is the great one whom all delight to honor called up from his dark retirement to remain still barred from all mundane activities? By no means. The “kneaded clod” regains the “sensible warm motion” so valued by the condemned brother of Isabella, and the same motion animates his attendants. Not all the acrobats and skirt-dancers of Westminster are to be found within the Aquarium; the darkling aisles of the abbey, too, are enlivened with fluttering draperies, swung in self-conscious grace, and with corresponding distortions of form and feature. These banded groups of marble strut, and simper, and sprawl; the honored brow is crowned with laurel; one’s fame is flapped from stony scrolls; one’s glory is blared through brazen trumpets. Such is the

joyed conspicuous employment within the abbey. Italians, Frenchmen, Germans, and Dutchmen have found their best opportunities there, and have brought their own ideas and ideals with them. In the first half of the last century a great vogue was enjoyed by Roubiliac from France, and Rysbrack from Holland, and much of the bad work in the abbey is due to the influence they exerted on English pupils—Bird, Read, and others. To Read was due the monument to Admiral Tyrrell in the south aisle of the nave—that famous “pancake” affair (so called from the shape of the clouds involved in the scheme) which it was found necessary to cut down and partly remove. Bird designed the monument to another admiral—Shovel—in the same part of the church, and his failure to be picturesque, even with a Roman toga, a shipwreck, and a periwig, has been the occasion of much humorous comment.

But there is another ideal—an earlier one and a better one, and it is to be discovered long anterior to Roubiliac, and Rysbrack, and Read. It antedates, too, the Cecils, and Suffolks, and Somersets, and other great Elizabethan folk,



THE WEST FRONT, FROM PALACE HOTEL.

ENGRAVED BY H. E. SYLVESTER.

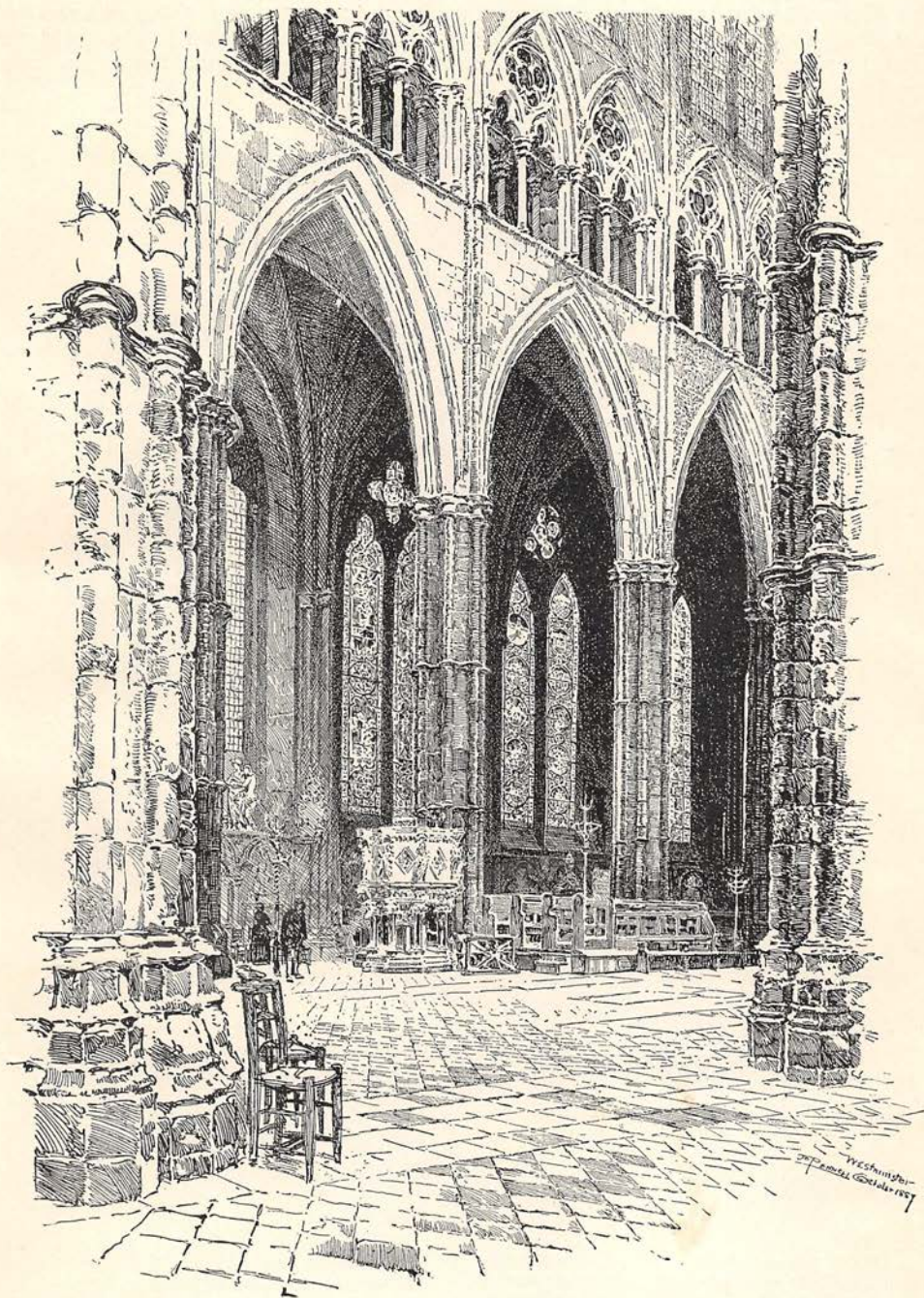
whose tombs fill the clustering chapels of the ambulatory with a pomp almost comparable to the tombs of the doges at Venice or to those of the popes at Rome, and with an architectural verbosity almost sufficient to counterbalance the self-control shown in the use of engraved epitaph. And we may believe, too, that this earlier ideal was a purely English one. For there was in the earlier days of Gothic art a certain happy hour the felicity of which has been caught, and fixed, and perpetuated. It was not, indeed, the hour when the Gothic bud had just freshly opened, for the principal tombs of that date in the abbey are curiously exotic, and seem to suggest Salerno and Ravello rather than either England or Normandy; nor was it yet the later hour when the overblown Tudor rose, as shown in the chapel of Henry VII., was on the point of falling to pieces. It was the fortunate hour when the flower of Gothic art was fully expanding itself in its first freshness at the end of the thirteenth century, and it produced the triple group of monuments that stands just within Westminster's chancel-rail.

These are three Gothic canopies of varying grace and compass. They shelter three figures that recline on three altar-tombs decorated with little niched statues. Certain shields present

certain discreet and appropriate devices in the way of heraldry; beyond this, surviving friends offer no remarks. "Aymer de Valence!" What should be the tomb of a man bearing such a name? What collocation of letters could be more instinct with grace, dignity, alertness, virility, chivalry? And what commemorative monument exhibits a more felicitous union of these qualities than his and that of his neighbor, Crouchback? Yet this is the beautiful group that it was proposed to break up, some hundred and twenty-five years ago, by the introduction of a monument, from the hand of the Bird already mentioned, to General Wolfe, the hero of Quebec. Horace Walpole, however, protested against this violation; and the dean, assured that Aymer was not, as he had supposed, one of the Knights Templar, an order against which he appears to have held an inexplicable prejudice, became amenable to reason. So Aymer de Valence still holds his own, while Wolfe's monument, one of the major disfigurements of the church, was placed, less ruinously, elsewhere.

V.

To quarrel with the monuments is the time-honored privilege of the writer on Westminster Abbey, and one may perhaps be permitted



IN THE NAVE.

in addition a word of good-humored protest at the placarded explanations accompanying them; for the solicitous authorities have done their work only too thoroughly. Explication abounds. It is insistent—one might almost say vociferous. It greets you at the very doorway—as if the façade of the north transept

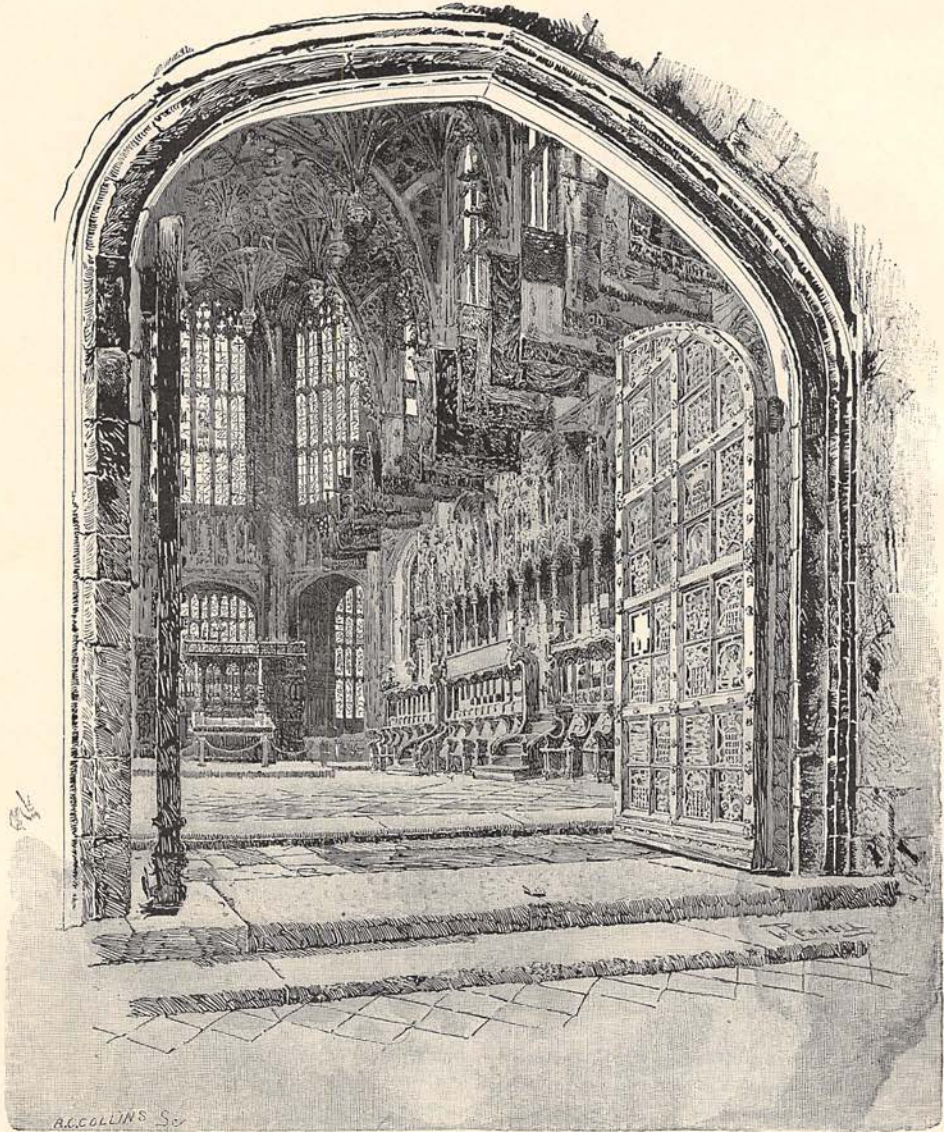
had undergone its recent restoration only to make its recessed doors the better suited for a bookstand; it adds a ledgeful of books and pamphlets to the tomb of Mary, Queen of Scots; it hangs a set of type-written verses near the cradle of the “abbey baby.” And once in a while there comes a white, sprinkly fall of pla-



cards all over the place, and then we know that the "drawing orders" are being called in.<sup>1</sup>

But the printed matter put forward by the

abbey authorities does not stop with mere explanation. Its wider range may be appreciated by a reference to the series of placards resting



HENRY VII.'S CHAPEL.

ENGRAVED BY R. C. COLLINS.

<sup>1</sup> A curious circumstance with regard to the inscription on the Shakspeare monument in Westminster Abbey has been brought to light by Mr. William Bispham of New York. He wrote to the English "Notes and Queries" of March 10, 1888, the following note, which has been reproduced by Dr. Furness in his Variorum edition of "The Tempest," page 211:

"Tempest IV. I. On the Shakspeare monument in Westminster Abbey are these lines from 'The Tempest':

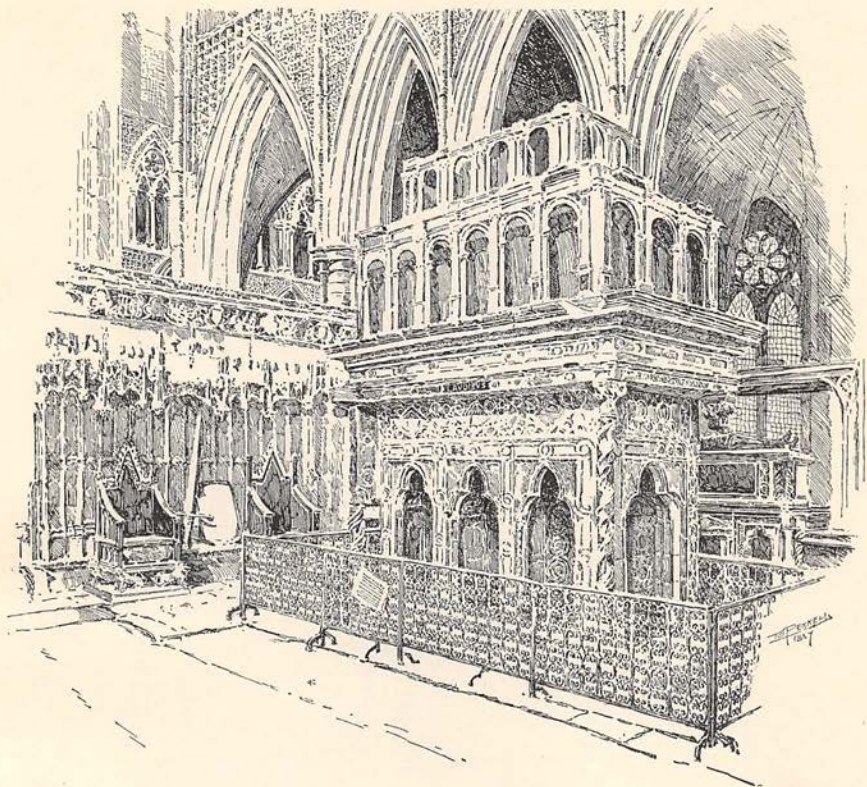
"The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;

And like the baseless fabric of this vision  
Leave not a rack behind.

"But in all the editions I have here the lines run thus:

"And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind.

"Can you or any of your readers explain why this transposition was made, or refer me to an edition of Shakspeare's plays in which these lines are arranged as they are placed on the monument?"—EDITOR.



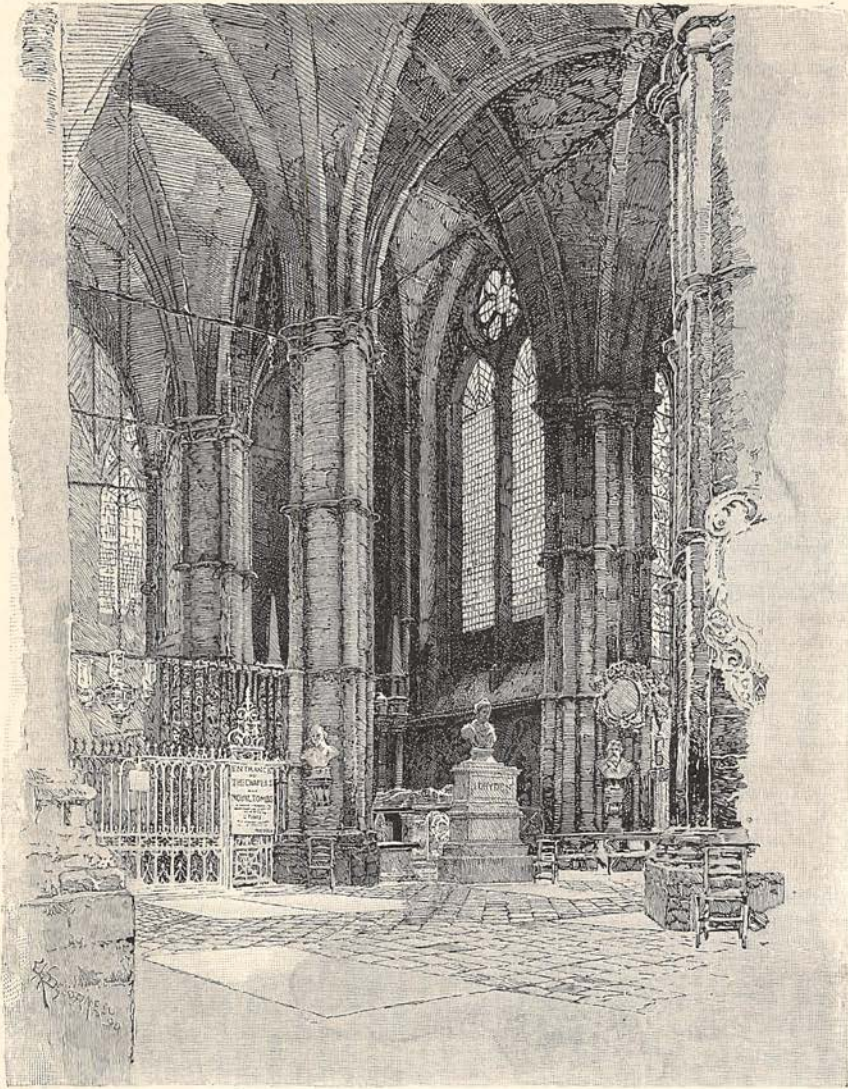
SHRINE OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR, AND CORONATION CHAIR.

on the tomb of John Hollis, Duke of Newcastle, in the north transept. There are seven of them. The first gives directions for entrance to the chapels and royal tombs; the second is a "Whereas," and refers to divers complaints of damages and defacements; the third recites the hours of public worship; the fourth requests persons not to touch the monuments; the fifth directs persons not to walk about during divine service; the sixth presents a general plan of the transept; and the seventh declares that "surely this is none other but the house of God." If the executors of John Hollis, Duke of Newcastle, could revisit earth in this present day, they might have a fellow-feeling for those short-sighted builders of ours who sometimes put up their residences in streets only too surely destined for a future of street-car and retail traffic. In fact, trampling feet and jostling signs frequently leave little choice between an aisle in the abbey and a hundred feet of shop front on the Strand.

Other monuments receive equal attentions—names, dates, diagrams, facsimiles. Others, again, receive none at all save through the hand-books. Any system by which each would receive a just and proper amount of official attention would seem deserving of considera-

tion. One might wish to think twice, perhaps, before unequivocally recommending that the monuments be numbered, and that the seeds of information now so broadly and so unequally sown be gathered into one compact and convenient catalogue. Yet Titian's "Annunciation" and Murillo's "Conception" (both of them designed as objects of devotion, and originally placed as such, and both, too, more worthy of the devotee's regards than most of the things that Westminster can show) now bear numbers; and worse things might come to the abbey than the sightliness, decorum, and justness that meet in a well-managed gallery. The abbey *is* a gallery, a museum; nor does the travel-spirit that makes it such show any great sign of being on the wane.

The full recognition of the abbey as a great and permanent excursion-ground might have some effect, too, on the conduct of its services. No function there now but is hindered by the half-muffled coming and going of many feet; none that is not "assisted" by many whose rôle of quasi-worshippers is obvious enough. Now, there is a way of reconciling and harmonizing the devotional aspect of the abbey with its excursions aspect. One Spanish fashion—rather a bad one—seems to have been



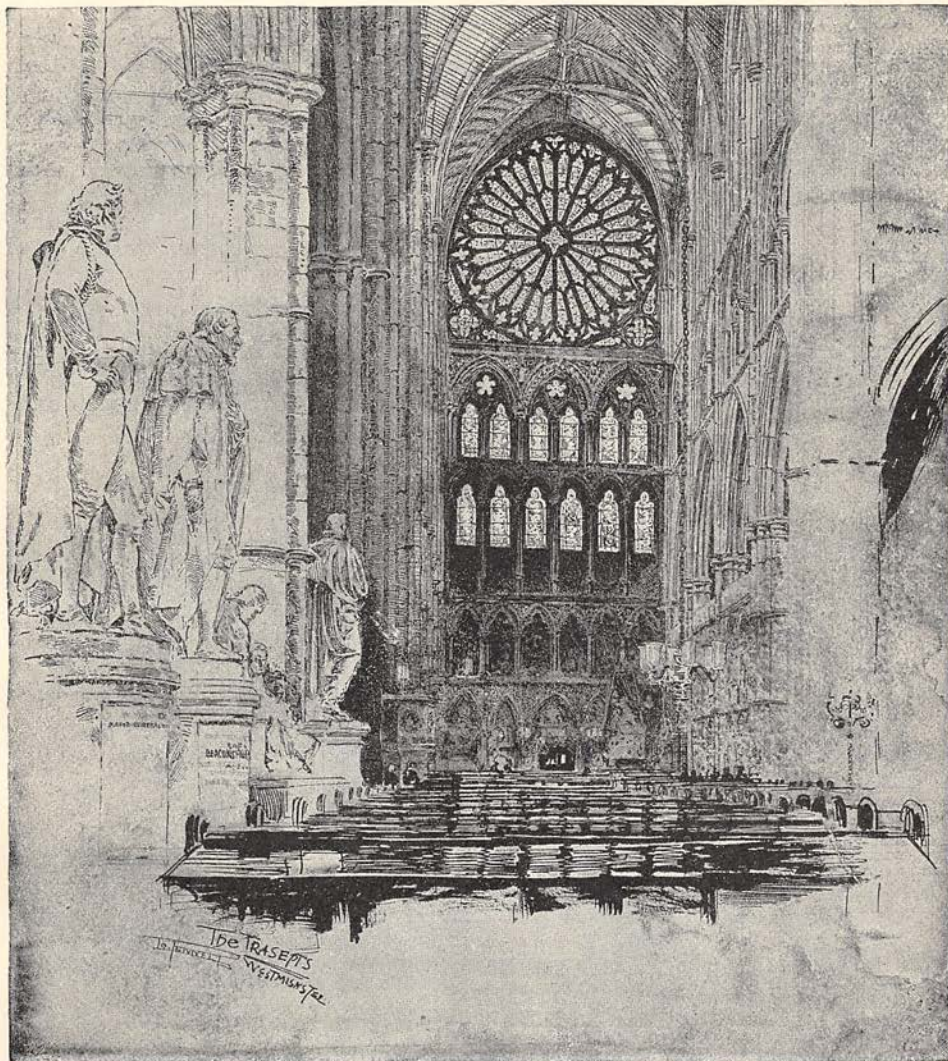
DRYDEN'S TOMB.

ENGRAVED BY E. H. DE L'ORME.

followed in the choir arrangements; a second Spanish fashion — rather a better one — might be adopted as regards the functions generally. This idea considers every cathedral as a parish in itself, and provides it with a chapel to be used as its own parish-church. The abbey is not a cathedral, it is true, but it has been one, and it holds its own to-day against the real cathedral of London, and, indeed, against the cathedral of the Primate himself. Besides, its case is exceptional in many ways; so that the transfer of the ordinary week-day services to the church of St. Margaret close at hand, and the reservation of the abbey for Sunday services only, and for great and exceptional functions, might be to its advantage, considered either as a museum or as a minster.

Perhaps with this change, too, the house-keeping arrangements of the place would become a trifle less obvious. At present we ask for a reception-hall, and we receive a "living-room." Fewer brooms and dust-pans would please; the William IV. furniture might be acknowledged as *passé*; the numerous bars, ugly and exasperating at best, could be given an aspect not quite so rudely extemporaneous; and more care might be exercised in guiding those long strips of matting across the pavements. For truly, considerable saw-sharpening goes on at Westminster, and the teeth of the over-sensitive visitor are likely to be set on edge.

The matting and the benches, indeed, claim many distinguished victims. The visitor who brings flowers to the abbey to place upon the



THE TRANSEPT.

grave of Browning—or upon that of Tennyson, close by—can hardly be pleasantly impressed to find the very small and inconspicuous stone hidden under a wide sheet of lead which finishes the irregular course of a long strip of churchly carpeting. And one feels, too, that the welcome extended by the benches and foot-rests of Poet's Corner to the sheaves of flowers that still, after twenty years, come to the tomb of Dickens is only a scanty and a grudging

one. In view of these considerations, it is easy to regret that this space—to many the heart and soul of the abbey—should be so intimately bound up with the daily services while other space so abounds. One becomes conscious, too, of a decided preference for wall over pavement, and sends down a silent thought toward Matthew Arnold in the baptistery, whose narrow ledge, however obscure, still places him beyond the reach of any such indignity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The list of poets actually interred at Westminster is both brief and curious. It comprises: Chaucer (1400), Spenser (1599), Beaumont (1616), Drayton (1631), Ben Jonson (1637), Cowley (1667), Denham (1668), Davenant (1668), Dryden (1700), Nicholas Rowe (1718), Prior (1721), Gay (1732), "Ossian" Macpherson (1796), Campbell (1844), Browning (1889), and Tennyson (1892). The names of Addison, Dr. Johnson, and Macaulay may also be mentioned. Spenser, Jonson,

Davenant, Dryden, and Rowe were predecessors of Tennyson in the laureateship.

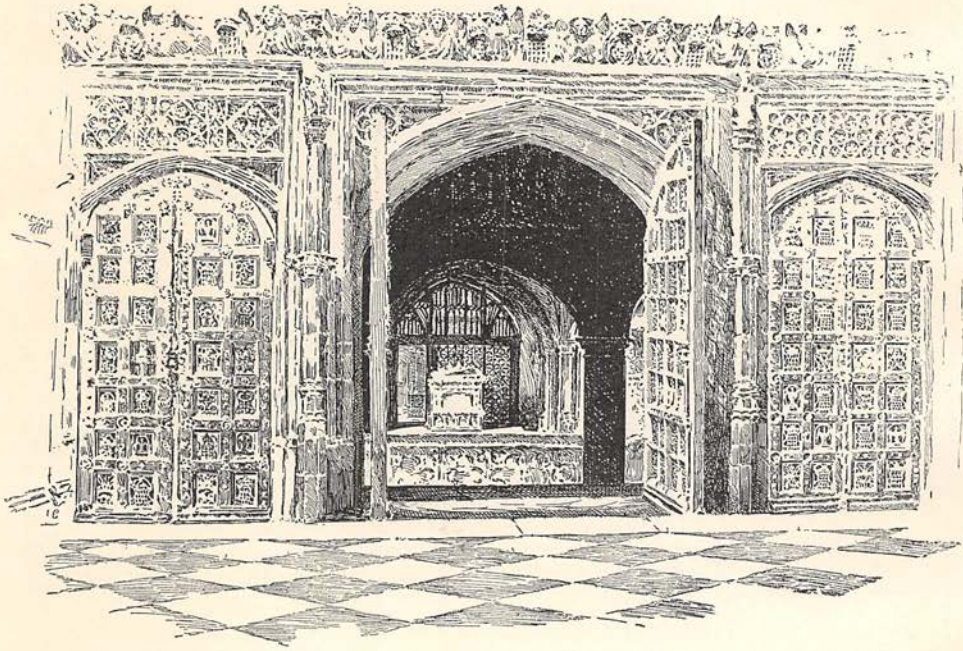
Beaumont is interred near Dryden without any memorial. Macpherson's burial at Westminster was provided for in his own will.

"Rare Ben Jonson" is commemorated in the abbey by three different inscriptions. In each the name is given as Jo~~n~~son; the "h" is invariable.

## VI.

If the note of disparagement has sounded too plainly in some of the preceding paragraphs, it is only because the interest of America in Westminster Abbey is different now, both in degree and in kind, from what it could possibly have been a few years ago. The abbey, within the last decade, has been open to us not only for the conduct of passing ceremonial, but also for the reception of a permanent memorial, and the "difference which is one of the costs of separation," as the "Saturday Review" euphemistically phrases it, has come to be less keenly felt. In February, 1884, the bust of Longfellow was unveiled in Poet's Corner, in the presence of Mr. Lowell, who at-

Duke of Cambridge, the Marquis of Lorne, and Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone. Archdeacon Farrar, in a sermon curiously penetrated by a vein of democratic—even republican—sentiment, dwelt not only upon the life of Grant, but upon the lives of Lincoln and Garfield as well. Such careers, he declared, were the glory of the American continent. He cited the declaration of a preceding President who had avowed that his coat-of-arms should be "a pair of shirt sleeves" as an answer showing "a noble sense of the dignity of labor, a noble superiority to the vanities of feudalism, a strong conviction that men are to be honored simply as men, and not for the prizes of birth and accident." The burden of the sermon was the essential unity of the American and English people.

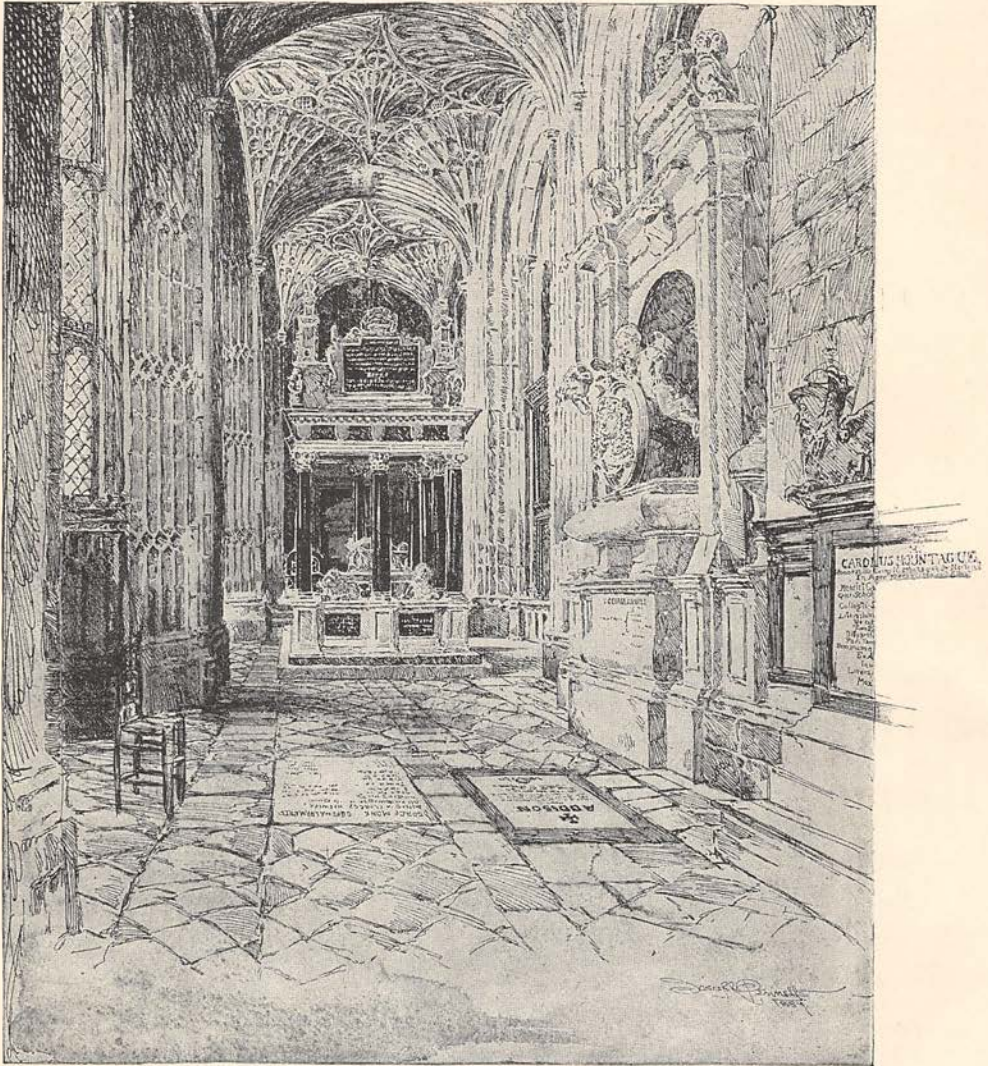


TOMB OF HENRY V.

tended both as a friend and as the representative of our country. The poet's own daughters were also present, as were also many eminent Englishmen. Among the prime movers of the undertaking were Earl Granville and Sir Theodore Martin, and among the ladies contributing were the Baroness Burdett-Coutts and Jenny Lind Goldschmidt.

In the summer of 1885 the abbey witnessed the memorial service in honor of General Grant. Representatives of the Queen and of the Prince of Wales were present, and there was a suitable attendance from the ministry in general, and from the War Office in particular. Places in the choir were occupied by the

Six years later, in the summer of 1891, the same voice pronounced a discourse equally appropriate in honor of James Russell Lowell. No recognition could be more sincere; none can be more complete until England, in the course of the shifting changes of her political future, comes perhaps to see in the man thus eulogized not merely an ambassador, but also an evangelist. So when the proposal to honor Lowell within Westminster as Longfellow has already been honored encounters objections and raises difficulties, and promises to result, even at the best, in a hospitality but clipped and qualified, it rests with us not to protest, but simply to understand—to find reason for



QUEEN ELIZABETH'S TOMB.

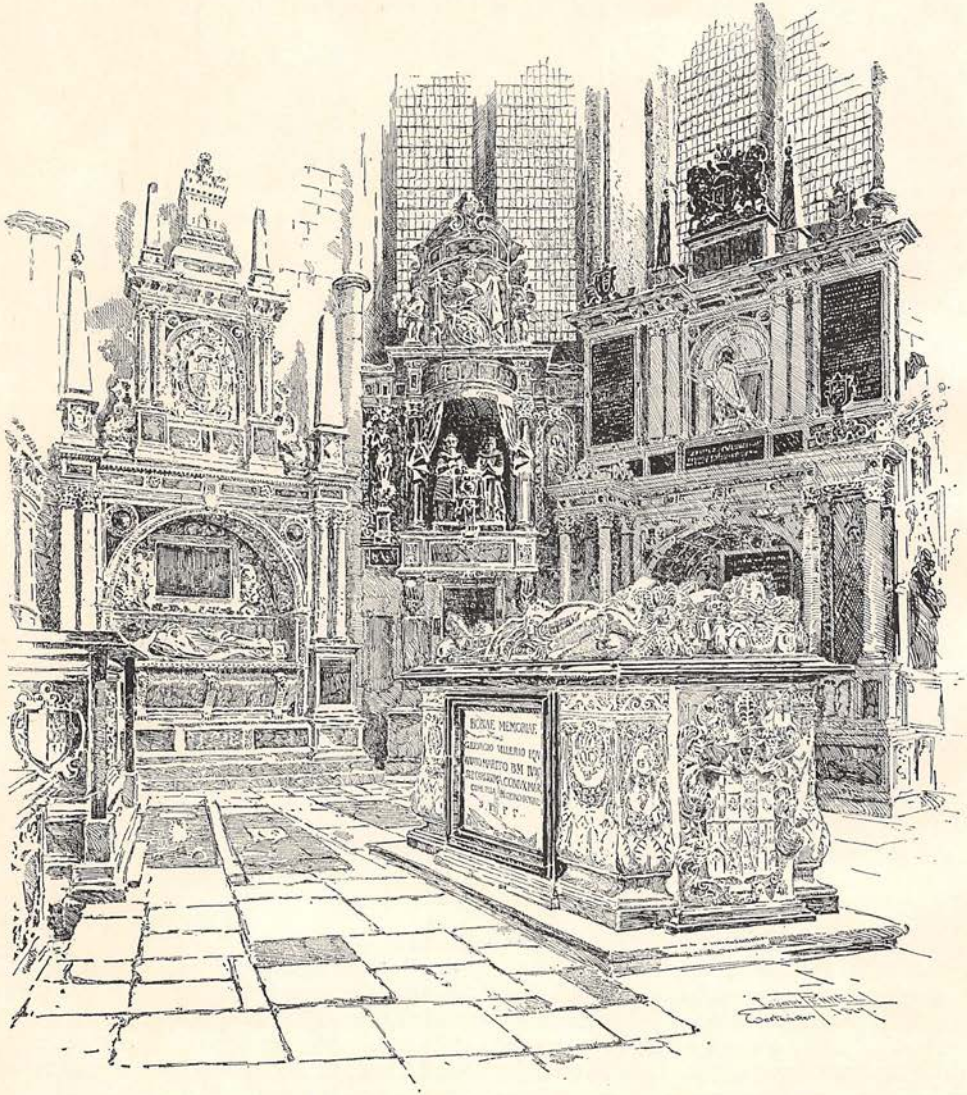
a half concession which may be only an intimation of denial for the future.

Nothing is more powerful in England than precedent. Nothing, therefore, should we expect to find more jealously guarded than the establishment of precedent. Let us consider some of the precedents as regards commemoration in the abbey. Edward the Confessor was interred at Westminster not because he was king of England, but because, being as much monk as king, and having in view his own death and burial, he chose to be the refounder of the edifice, favoring it because his own residence was near at hand. It was the burial of Henry III., after a long interval, which established the regal precedent, and made the choir of Westminster the tomb-house of kings. Again,

Chaucer was interred in the abbey not because he was a poet, but because he had held offices in the royal household, and because his residence, near at hand, as clerk of the works at Westminster, made such a course convenient. It was the burial of Spenser, after another long interval, which established the poetical precedent, and made Poet's Corner of Westminster a sanctuary of song. So, Longfellow, we may reasonably believe, was honored with a bust in Westminster not because he was an American, but because he was a poet, and because, like Edward the Confessor and like Geoffrey Chaucer, he too was "near at hand"—so near, indeed, that his verse is as well known as the late laureate's own, and within as easy reach; so near that the

British journalist or reviewer, in making his facile quotation, does so with complete disregard of differing nationality; so near that in Westminster itself the visitor will frequently chance to hear, in the course of a sermon, a line or a stanza from a friend as close and dear

Yet as regards any course of action to which an inference so drawn may give the clue, we of America can have no just cause for complaint. We can trust ourselves to discriminate between a favor and a right—between a hope and a demand. We should remember that while



TOMBS OF LORD BURLEIGH AND THE BUCKINGHAM FAMILY, ST. NICHOLAS CHAPEL.

to one half of the race as to the other. But just as the coming of the second king made the first one more a king and less a builder, and established the royal precedent, and just as the coming of the second poet made the first more a poet and less an official, and established the poetical precedent, so the coming of the second American, be he poet, essayist, politician, what you will—but the inference is easy.

Longfellow is the only one of our great dead honored by a bust in the abbey, he is not the only one to whom has been accorded the almost equal honor of a memorial service. If the movement to commemorate Lowell in the abbey assumes the compromise form of a window in the chapter-house, as at present contemplated, instead of a bust in Poet's Corner, as originally desired and proposed, this substi-



SOUTH AISLE OF CHOIR.

tute will be accepted with the proper degree of satisfaction, but can hardly be looked upon as (to quote further from the journal already referred to) "the one mark of honor which an Englishman holds the highest attainable by mortal man."

Is not the attitude of America too suggestive of that of a daughter who, after setting up an establishment of her own, continues longer than she should to make demands upon the parent roof? I am young, she seems to say,

and my affairs are not fully in order, and there are two or three little matters that I should like to be helped out with. I have several attractive daughters whom I should like to put advantageously before the public eye; oblige me with the use of your court ceremonial. I have numerous sons, too, whose careers I desire to honor; place at my disposal a part of the great hall of fame in which you are accustomed to honor your own. And patient Britannia replies that as concerns Buckingham Palace there is



room and to spare, but that as regards the abbey of Westminster there is too little even now for her own needs. Part of her reason, yet not all; but in any event, will America kindly make other arrangements?

## VII.

THE English prospectus for a future American Westminster as set forth by Archdeacon Farrar is decidedly not without its attractive features. It suggests the "pictures of the lengthening line of presidents"—a suggestion prompted by the series of mosaic medallions of the popes at San Paolo Fuori, Rome; it reminds us that there would be a propriety in cenotaphs to Raleigh and to Penn; it brings up to us the "sculptured faces of our sweet singers," Bryant and Longfellow; of our great theologians, Edwards and Channing; of our historians, Prescott and Motley; and it reminds us that in such an edifice niches would be waiting for the great figures of the generation now passing away. Of the last names thus brought up to our recollection, three are names of those already gone, and the fame of one of them is even now waiting at the portal of Westminster.

But the disadvantages and drawbacks of a Valhalla made to order have not received as much consideration from Archdeacon Farrar as the discussion of the subject immediately produced from other quarters. Various other countries have tried the same idea, but with no great success. Sometimes the Valhalla becomes the victim of inertia; that of Ratisbon, for instance, has existed for years in all the cold immobility of a neglected refrigerator, though the German nation has never been more active, more progressive, more consciously and vividly alive, more fruitful of great men, than in the half century following its completion. Sometimes the Valhalla becomes the victim of the peculiar mental bias of the epoch in which it was founded; that of Paris, identified to a prejudicial degree with the erratic thinkers of the Revolution, can hardly be considered as figuring in the dying wishes of the great Frenchmen of to-day. Sometimes the Valhalla falls a victim to the peculiar mental make-up of the nation; that of Madrid affords a striking case in point. In the brief period between Isabella and Amadeo a pantheon in the capital was determined upon; the rotunda of San Francisco was set apart and bedizened with a glittering contemporaneousness of gilding, fresco, and marble wainscoting; and the entire country was ransacked for illustrious dead to deposit there. But such transference was extremely unpopular in the provinces,— "the Spains,"— and most of the bodies, even

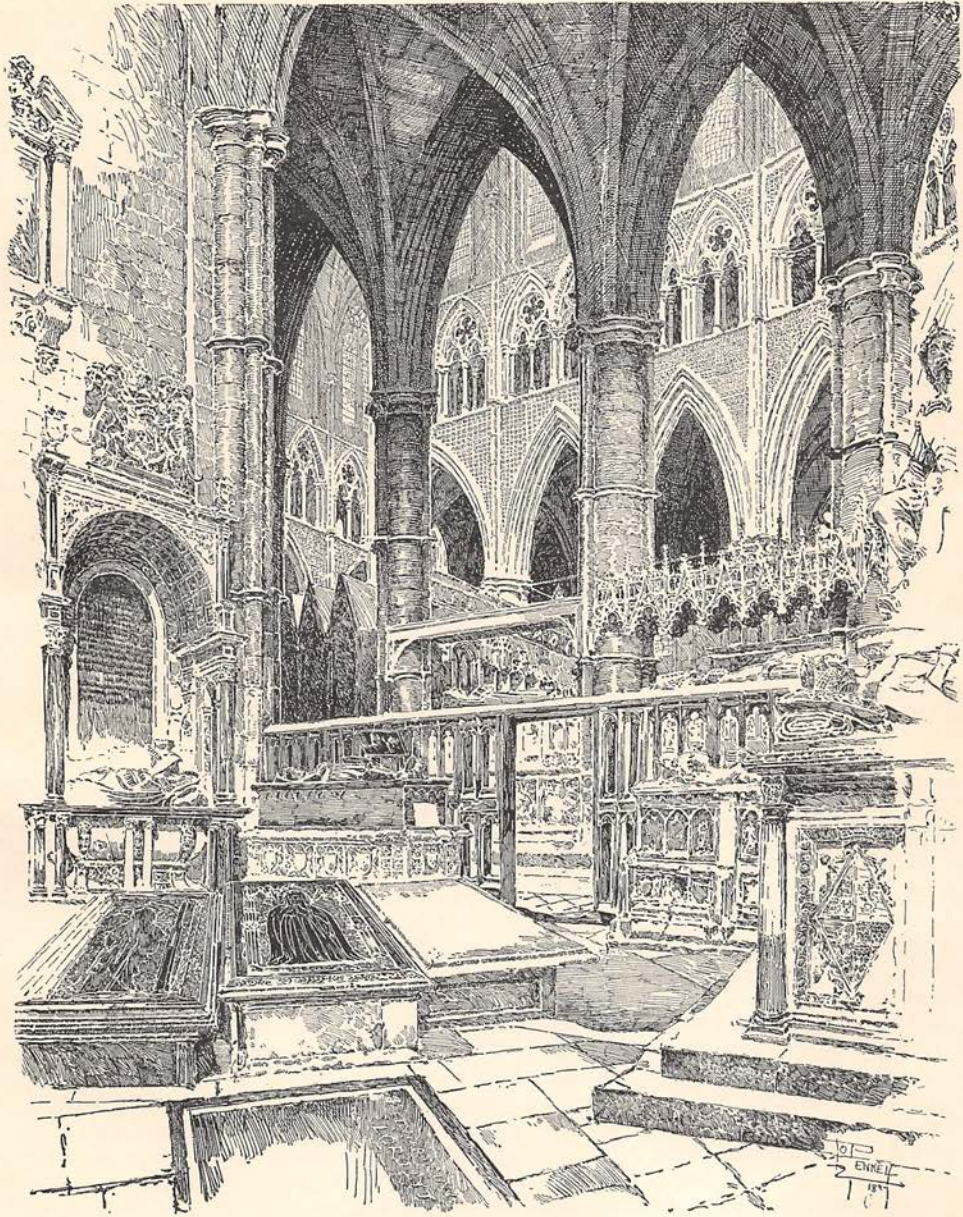
within the short space of twenty-five years, have been reclaimed and restored.

It is not to be assumed that the American pantheon would run on any such rocks as these. We should learn from the German example not to place our Ruhmeshalle near a minor provincial town. Nor would our course be complicated, as in Paris, by the existence of an Institute which confers an immortality on those already living. Neither, despite the great and growing rivalry of large cities, should we have to contend with a rampant sectionalism—such as that of Spain, which would deny the dignity of the very capital itself.

But there are other objections, nevertheless, and they are numerous and cogent. One alone is apparently insurmountable—the necessity of a political basis and the inevitability of a political bias. The voter swarms; the practical politician is abroad. If the guiding and restraining sense of high church dignitaries, supposedly sensitive to the continuity of history and to the force of hallowed tradition, has not always proved sufficient for the prevention of jarring *faux pas*, what might be expected from a rawly extemporized board or committee working on the yea-and-nay plan—a body certain to have the qualities of its active creators and perpetuators and to be provided at the start with a very large space to fill? Our English well-wisher, in his suggestions for a National American pantheon, provides for our early explorers and colonizers, our poets and theologians and historians; but he does not lay equal stress upon our "statesmen," as we are fond of calling them. Now, when we consider that the one character to evoke the vivid, spontaneous, unbounded enthusiasm and sympathy of the American people is the political orator, that this same people is in the habit of prompt and definitive action in a matter which really moves and concerns it, and that in no other land is ante-mortem abuse more subject to the corrective of post-mortem praise, we may imagine the make-up and aspect of our pantheon after a hot political campaign that happened to be followed by a season of severe mortality. It might, at first, give us considerable complacency; shortly it would displease us, presently it would disgust us; and in the future we should be well enough satisfied to bury our illustrious dead near their own families and amidst the scenes with which they were associated during life.

## VIII.

THE only abbey, then, with which we are likely to have much concern is the abbey of Westminster. It is not, indeed, the harmonious whole that the heart might wish, but it is much



ST. EDMUND'S CHAPEL.

better than anything else of the kind in which, for some time to come, at least, we are likely to claim an interest. And those of us who cannot resolve its discords unaided may compass this end by calling in the one art capable of dealing with such a problem. Not that there exists any music absolutely fitting for a Gothic cathedral, since the two great arts of northern Europe were four hundred years apart in the course of their development. Had the music-makers of the fourteenth century enjoyed the

technical knowledge and the varied resources of the eighteenth, we should now possess in sound some equivalent for the piercing beauty, the panting aspiration, and the free-handed intrepidity of an age the chief manifestation of which remains only one of structural form. For the music of the great classic days is only wig-music, after all, whether we take the perky cheerfulness figured by the Haydn peruke, or the labored and majestic graces conveyed by the mighty head-dress of Handel. Still, there

are happy moments when the powder and horsehair of the great German art seem reduced to a minimum. One of these comes when the clear-voiced choir-boy of the abbey sings sweetly the great aria, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"; and another such moment (repeated more than once in the course of the past fatal winter) comes when the strident chords of the Dead March in Saul are rained down in a fiery shower—chords the spirit, poignancy, and daring of which seem almost an intimation of what music might and should have been in those passionate days which reared the angel choir of Lincoln, the soaring front of Strasburg, and the defiant apse of Notre Dame.

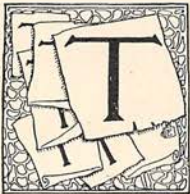
Music, too, produces a pleasant pianissimo in a certain small and retired court that lies buried deep within the abbey precincts—a court which is at once the home of musicians long dead and the residence of others yet liv-

ing. This inclosure (the same, by the way, which was once the residence of Irving) is embellished with a fountain, and in May there is a pleasant show of greenness. Quiet reigns. Even the occasional organ-peal that sometimes sounds through the cloister proper dies out before reaching here. The very names on the brass black-letter door-plates blur themselves into a modest illegibility. For such a spot as this there is no Aquarium; the omnibuses rumble by in vain; monumental vain-gloriousness expires; and the dim roar of London comes to be not a matter of sense, but merely a matter of memory. The pilgrims set out for Canterbury only yesterday; Barnet, perhaps, will be fought to-morrow; one stands quite prepared to assist in a resumption of the daily monastic activities of the elder day—a resumption that seems not only proper, but imminent and inevitable.

*Henry B. Fuller.*

## THE ROUSING OF MRS. POTTER.

WITH PICTURES BY IRVING R. WILES.



HERE were peach-trees all around the house. In front they were planted in rows, but at the back and sides of the house they were growing without order. The long, shining leaves glistened in the sunshine, and all among

the leaves the peaches hung ripe, and ready to be picked. There were a great many peaches lying about on the ground under the trees. Hens were wandering about picking wasteful holes in them, and others were wallowing idly in the dry, ungrassy soil.

There was a narrow, worn path leading down between the trees from the front door to a rough rail-fence. There was no gate. At the end of the path two of the rails had been taken away, and the people who lived in the house, when they wanted to go beyond, climbed over or crawled under. Beyond the fence, in front of the house, the prairie stretched away smoothly for half a mile to a narrow belt of woods along a stream. The public road ran through the yard at the back of the house. There were two gates to be opened when any one wanted to pass through; but few passed, and they opened the gates unquestioningly.

The house was built of logs. It had been whitewashed, but the wash was chipping away in many places, leaving it spotted and rain-

stained. A large grape-vine almost covered the back of the house, and ran out on poles fastened to the roof, forming a green-covered porch. All around the back door, under the grape-vine porch, flat stones were laid. A girl was kneeling on the stones, picking out the weeds that were growing between them. The odor of stewing peaches came pleasantly out to her.

"There, that makes six cans already."

The girl got up and went to the door. She had on a light calico dress, with a brown spray running over it, and a pink calico sunbonnet on her head. Her small feet were without shoes or stockings. The woman standing by the stove, stirring the cooking fruit, turned toward her.

"I wish to gracious, Addie, you'd put on your shoes. You'll get your feet all spread out, going bare. You would n't go that way if we was living in Dayton yet, to save your life."

The girl laughed. "Well, we ain't living in Dayton; that makes the difference."

"You're too big a girl, anyhow. Supposing some one was to come?"

"I'd skip in and get 'em on."

There were several tin milk-pans, full of peaches cut up and ready to be cooked, standing on the table with the glass cans for the canning. Addie went over and took one of the pieces and put it into her mouth. The six