



BY
R·H·MACKMURDO, A·R·I·B·A.,
1883
G·ALLEN, SUNNYSIDE, ORPINGTON, KENT.



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WREN'S CITY CHURCHES.





Drawn by A. H. Mackmurdo.

Engraved by G. Allen.

SOUL STRIVINGS FROM STRUGGLE INTO CALM.



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P R E F A C E .

THE origin and main body of this essay framed a lecture given at the Rev. S. Brooke's College, at a time when I was impelled by double motives to choose this subject,—one its own intrinsic interest, the other its opportuneness. For at the time of its delivery, the representatives of the English Church were trying to pass through Parliament, a bill for the destruction of these City Churches. Along therefore with others, zealous and active in awaking public interest on their behalf, I used each occasion that offered to help save a cause whose knell was loudly sounding in our ears—a knell that was, indeed, the tolling of the Church's own fabric's funeral.

Happily, the bill for their destruction is no longer before the House; yet there is

nothing to prevent its being brought forward again at any time. For this, then, and the following reason, we must not be too sanguine of their safety. For it is clear, the preservation of these buildings can be ensured by means only of their general appreciation,—a means so difficult, and distant in attainment, that these churches' life must still for some time be considered in jeopardy.

It is of little service to say, 'Such and such a building ought to be preserved,' since it is a fact patent to all, that a people will only keep, and maintain, those monuments which it really appreciates and gladly cares to keep. The monuments must, in fact, be their own guardians and self-advocates; they must appeal, not to a people's veneration for antiquity, neither to its knowledge of history, nor again to its regard for ecclesiastical sentiment; but they must have the power of making appeal to a people's heart, without force of fashion, or play of affectation; they must be cared for and appreciated, solely on

account of their own beauty or service. Hence, merely because they are ancient monuments I do not desire they should be preserved, nor because they are churches do I cherish their keeping; but I do greatly care for their conservation, because their beauty is a reality to me, and to many,—because I know how much this city, we cockneys may justly be so proud of, at the present day owes in architectural interest to these buildings: and lastly, I desire their preservation, because in a future generation, when the battle of the styles has been fought, and the people are catholic in thought and taste, I can well imagine how much they may be appreciated and praised of all.

For this reason, then, deeming it better these buildings be regarded purely for their artistic merit, and intrinsic value, rather than associated interest; I have, in this essay, not dwelt on their archæological aspect—an aspect not greatly interesting to me, beside being one that may be treated by some other

more glad and more competent. Accordingly, thus much only of their monumental history, as is necessary for this simple appreciation, have I introduced into the descriptive essay; so much only, as will enable them to be linked in the mind, with all those other sources of pleasure and beauty, born of the same age; with all other kindred conceptions in sister arts and sciences, that become helpful through their interpretive power. And further, by the synopses placed at the end of this work, I have likewise linked them with all companion events, that are as similar bubbles bursting in the same great brain-wave flowing over Europe; common in their origin and correlated in their nature.

Concerning any details that tell of Wren's private life, I have, as on points of archæology, again been silent, since this essay does not pretend to give any other biographical sketch of the architect, than is to be read in his own life's work.

Those who would know the man, the

manner of his life, and treasure of his mind, can gather certain knowledge, only from this sure and untinged source—from his works; which retain, to this day, all that was great, gentle and undying in the man's life, and are for ever the unerring expression of his own deepest feeling, the bodied image of his own soul's fondest thought: thus illustrating Tickell's lines,—

“The lifeless rocks each various thought betray'd,
And all the soul was in the stone display'd.”

For further information as to the detail of his life, and extent of his work, I would refer the reader to the works enumerated below,* in which much reliable information will doubtless be found.

Respecting his works, it is enough here to speak of the City Churches,—those works,

* “Life of Sir C. Wren,” by Lucy Phillimore. “Sir C. Wren and his ‘Times,’” also “Life and Works of Sir C. Wren,” by J. Elmes. “Works of Sir C. Wren,” by J. Clayton.

that I do not doubt one day being justified for calling, the most perfect embodiments of fine imagination and culture, which England at present possesses. A justification that will be given by the more intelligent public, when the London merchant cares first and most, how to enjoy the pleasures of a fuller life, instead of first and mostly caring how to gain the means of a hungering life he scarcely lives: for then, he will not fail to find leisure in which to look at works worthy his admiration, and no longer be content to hurry by them, as regardless of their beauty, as is the hack horse of his cab. For, know that the charmed wiles, and full power of beauty belonging to architecture, are only to be shown to those that love all art for her own loveliness' sake, and to those who by pain, and many pains, have sought to discipline, and culture their taste, for receipt of her favour and enjoyment of her gifts.

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WREN'S CITY CHURCHES.


ALONE in the art of a people long since past away, do we get given us the entirety of its nerve life, its expression, by own tongue and hand, of pulse beats and throes of heart, its elating joys and saddening sorrows, its grief gloom and gleam of glory. So, silent though it seems to be, even architecture, reading lightly its lithic language, we find fraught with high strung human feeling, as impassioned and full of character as poetry or painting may be. But to gain the swift strong appeal of any art, the art of any time or people, a responsive chord of kindred feeling is needed in our own natures, which, for tuning to full harmony of response, the imagination must first picture to itself the salient conditions of that public life, or mind movement, which gave birth to this art. For


who can appreciate form or feature of any artistic production, its sense or sentiment, but he that consciously or unconsciously acquires the particular habit of feeling that was native to the artist, and gave by its expression peculiar mould to his work? Who, but he that feels the beauty of their spirit, understands the purport of their form-being, can appreciate the works which are the subject of this essay—the city churches of Sir Christopher Wren—these living memorials of the seventeenth century, which, as all art creations, not only flood us with the fulness of individual character, but bring straight down to us the impress of that formative power, moulding the man, and the men of a day long dead—the soul-greatness of the age. For, if the mind be of that homogeneous nature we suppose it to be, there must be such a strong similarity between the art or expression of feeling, and the literature and polity—or exponents of thought, common to the time, that each may be taken as the interchangeable term of the other. It must likewise follow, from this homogeneity of the mind, that thought and feeling develop simultaneously, each acquiring gradually the same characteristic of increasing completeness; and as a result giving to ideas greater complexity and unity, to feeling

subtler sensitiveness and intensity. Further, a synthetic study of the seventeenth century soon shows us that this was so. For what otherwise—as example—was the meaning of the birth of politics at this time, if it did not mean that man, now for the first time, while grasping more completely the idea of his own individuality, was able to conceive a larger unity of which he was an essential and integral part? What, again, was the meaning of the effort on the part of Milton, to write a pure lyric poem, and prose treatises based on classic models, if it did not mean the expression of a desire for increased finesse of form, for a larger and less broken unity in all imaginative productions?

What was the meaning—in regions religious and scientific—of the general desire to gain individual liberty, and recognize as willingly universal law, if it did not mean the natural exercise of a mind conscious of increased capacity for independent thought, and possessed with the concomitant power of forming greater generalizations? So, when we come to the art, the best art of the day, we find its burden the same: we find its chief characteristic to be finish of detail and largeness of conception. 


Thus the art of this, as of any past period,


becomes interesting in the greatest degree; being literally the love lay of a people's pleasure, a visible and tangible record, telling past history of present passions, a memorial of all most human in the genius of the age, as embodied, not only in the artists—such as Inigo Jones, Wren, and Bernini, but in all sorts and conditions of men—in Bacon, Galileo, and Kepler; in Harvey, Newton, and Descartes; in Milton, Shakespeare, and Johnson; in Gassendi, Spinoza, and Locke; in Hooker and Dryden; in Corneille, Racine, and Molière. 

Different in many ways as these men were, they shared the same mental motive, and were united by a common kinship in thought. All humanists; their thoughts were centered in man's being, their studies limited to man's environment; each silently saying what one of their own poets wrote,— 

“The proper study of mankind is man.”

And yet, while each was making special study of man, his actions, or his surroundings, all, by wider knowledge of the world, were beginning to realize man's actual relation to the material universe, and by force of fact acknowledging his subjection to undeviating cosmic laws, in whose

high-governance man now first discerned a faint glint of glory, destined to bedim cold codes and creeds of soon outworn belief. 

Thus, aware of the universal sway of law—of a right method of action, as well as of thought—each in his art was consciously harmonizing spontaneity of emotional expression, with more general laws of form than were before recognized; each in his philosophy, consciously subordinating mental constructions to objective facts; each in his history, referring individual character to external influence of the day, while acknowledging the innate force of the social past. In a word, the world was waking to a wider consciousness of man's earth-bound life, and true God-capabilities; his recognition of the inevitable limitations that condition all being, arousing corresponding desire for increased sense enjoyment, and bringing with such concentration of thought upon humanity, a new religion; with such consciousness of law, a fuller liberty. 

For a time had come, when, after a long period of self-abasement and self-introspection, during which the development of man's moral nature was evolving itself, his intellectual and emotional requirements felt need of stronger nutriment, with freer exercise; since the mind,

long habituated to turn its mirror upon itself and refer conduct to its own ideal, was now conscientious without effort, and so set free to exercise itself upon objects outside it. Beside, having secured to itself a certain strength of moral discipline, it could henceforth enjoy the fuller liberty of expression for which it longed.

Hence, the rapid introduction of natural science and emotional art, combined with a dawning devotion to human divinity, which characterized the Renaissance; when the mind sought with eagerness new pasture lands in which it could find the food it craved and the exercise it needed: the former found nowhere more readily than in the art of pagan Greece and Rome, which alone sufficed to provide the necessary æsthetic stimulus; while the classic literature was universally found fittest material to feed, and stimulate to scientific study, the young vigorous intellect of this waking age.

Fed by such food, and strengthened by such exercise, this new habit of mind, as it gained strength, could not but powerfully re-act upon the whole nature; necessitating rapid and radical reforms in well nigh everything that concerned individual, civic, and social life. In government, arbitrary will must henceforth give place to

rational and national organization, popular power being substituted for divine right of kings ; while in religion, theological dogma would be bound to bend before dictates of general sense experience. In the world of science, theories would be founded more firmly on fact ; the whole habitual working of the mind acquiring that exactness of method, which gave peculiar charm to obedience of law.

Again, in the arts, order, form, and metrical proportion would be substituted for rule of thumb, caprice, and picturesqueness ; asceticism fulfilling itself in æstheticism ; *force* of expression giving place to *ease* of expression—the Goth shouting where the Renascent whispered : while in the yet undefined sphere of commerce, mercantile laws ; and in the rising handicrafts, corporate guilds, would be organized in obedience to the same instincts. I say ‘instincts,’ because, though few were conscious of the nature of the new world that was being opened to them—to the people, to but a portion of the people—it was but a new enchanting influence it knew not what, yet blindly followed. To the remaining portion of the people the new spirit was hardly known, and by it but slightly felt ; yet in so far as it did feel the new impulse, it feared the consequence of a blind response to

its stimulus, and hence endeavoured to sustain the old order of things; indeed, strained every nerve to resist the strong incoming tide of far sweeping progress. ~~~~~

Thus arose the civil war, in politics; the hostile sect, in religion; the opponent school, in science; the rival style, in architecture: the new forces completing, in their sum, the strong reversion of the age to past types of structural form, and long unused formulas of thought—the age becoming, in fact, Pagan, and in spirit, anti-Christian. ~~~~~


And it is well, before speaking of the marked distinction there is between the two rival styles in architecture, we should refer to this reversion to past types, in order to measure the influences that past forms of art exercise upon new conceptions; for thus only shall we comprehend the meaning of this great change in artistic expression, and understand the reason of so complete and general a substitution of the classic for the Gothic type, in all arts, most markedly in architecture. ~~~~~

In studying the history of art, as we approach its later phases we are especially struck with the powerful influence pre-existing forms of art exercise upon the new; an influence so strong,


that in quite modern times it seems as though the conceptions of the past were even a more powerful factor in the evolution of new art forms, than the aspect of external nature—sole parent of primitive art.*

Hence, if art be in truth the reflex of the mind's reaction from its surroundings, giving now gratification to desire for something of greater completeness—now, exercise to memory of something of older association, it would be odd indeed, did not the imagination, at a time when the spirit of the long buried past had been resuscitated, receive a new stimulus. And hence, taking into account the cumulative force of art in casting the mould of the imagination, we could not but expect the forms, in which the new conceptions should cast themselves, to be chiefly determined


* For further development of this theory of art-genius, I would refer the reader to Part II., chap. i., of Alex. Murray's "History of Greek Sculpture," now issuing from the press. (Murray, 1883.) A work which will surely bring the author the gratitude of all students of art history, because of the rare philosophic thought that has been brought to bear upon the mass of carefully investigated facts there connoted.

by those, towards which circumstances were directing the sympathies of the national mind. For, the cumulative power of art, working through continuous generations, at some time equals, and afterward overpowers, the more constant force of nature, her progenitor; attaining its highest pitch of power, when the mind, having ceased to feel any stimulating power in a form of art, grown impotent by familiarity, is introduced to a new type, which, though ancient, comes fresh to a mind in sympathy with its embodied and suggestive spirit. For, thus was it at the Renaissance, when, with the classic literature came classic art, fresh from the storehouse of the hidden past, full of worldly pomp and animal sanity, subject to strict conventional rule, yet grandly licentious, and only too well accoutred with graces likely to win the devotion of all sympathetic and searching natures. 


To this new form of art, then, the mind was at once drawn with magnetic force, producing in its first flash of sudden contact these churches of Wren—creations that were the product of the first complete and fully sympathetic union of the Northern mind with Southern art, and not by any means, as has been sometimes said,

the result of a mere imitation of classic models; inasmuch as the Renaissance art differed considerably from pure classic forms. 

And this was so because what had been inherited from Gothic times could not have been eradicated, had it so been wished, but must perforce be intermingled with the old in forming the new, so far modifying Roman art, as to bring it into harmony with English sentiments, and Northern habits of mind. Thus, this child of the Renaissance partook of the character of both its parents, though bearing the form of the one, wielding wider influence for the time being.


To take Gothic:—In this there was imaged forth the mind of a people marked by strong predilections such as these—predilections peculiar to all simple natures—love of long uplifted lines, and oft repeated repetitions, a leaning to redundancy of detail, and preference of acute curvature, with vigour of outline, bounding forms made bold by sheer strength of treatment. 

Classic forms, on the other hand, shadowed forth the character of a people far removed from barbarism, no longer limited to pursuit of trade for employment, nor wage of war for renown; a people steeped in culture, recreated by intellectual pleasures, proud of self-gained power;

subject to stern discipline, if linked to worldly force, and made magnificent by pomp of show: yet, having a nature softened and somewhat enervated by a too genial clime, a too generous soil; a people possessing the oil and the wine of human temperament. Hence their art was large, splendid, and arbitrary; full of flat surfaces wherever the eye could rest, and if it willed, wander without weariness; an art, characterized by lines lying low in recumbent position; curves softly sweet and subtle; masses measured and metrical; outlines free from sudden surprise, or fickle change—quiet, grand, and stately, as the movement of a Roman matron, to whom the classic art was in its first birth dedicate. 


In the Renaissance of Wren we get these qualities in all their fulness, but slightly seasoned with the salt of Gothic character; and added to a subtler refinement, there is introduced a play and picturesqueness, unknown in classic architecture, along with an individualism never found in any preceding art. For the outlines of the Renaissance are as dignified, yet more changeful; its detail as refined, yet more spontaneously varied, than that of its pagan prototype. In a word, the whole body of architecture has grown more muscular, without becoming coarser; more


scientific without losing sentiment. And as, taken in no narrow sense, all Gothic art was as one intense heart-yearn after some ideal good,—a yearn unsullied in its rapt devotion, undeviating in its one desire, unbroken in its long duration,—so Renaissance art becomes to us, as the gratification of the whole man in sense enjoyment of all attainable good; elevated, and disciplined by unceasing effort to extend the limit of worldly wisdom, and make yet fairer all earth beauty.

Thus we see the gradual evolution of art, as of all else, wrought out by rhythmic beats of contending impulse; thus we mount the spiral stair of progress, by alternate turns, that take us now toward the East, now toward the West, bringing us periodically over the point we occupied long since, yet within closer reach of our high hovering ideal. 


Thus, then, was it, that at a time when the race was rounding the turn of its progressive route, there were in every sphere of life, in every art, in every science, two contending and irreconcilable principles, at work and war: principles that had been fought out in Italy and Spain during the fifteenth century, in France during the sixteenth, and now finally to be fought out in England during this seventeenth century.


For England was certainly late in following the lead of other nations in the Renaissance movement: Petrarch had sung his 'Laus Veneris' two hundred years before Spenser his Marriage Odes; Macchiavelli wrote his tracts of worldly wisdom a century and a quarter before Thomas Hobbes his 'Leviathan' philosophy; Galileo, by his theoretic substitution of the sun for the earth, as centre of our system, practically inaugurated the atheological school of science one hundred years before Newton bore testimony to its teaching in his discovery of the inevitable and unchangeable nature of law. Again, two hundred years had elapsed, before the Cavaliers and Roundheads fought out a battle similar to that in which the Guelf and Ghibelline were ranged each against other on the battlefields of Italy; and lastly, since the commencement of St. Peter's at Rome, one hundred and twenty years had passed by, before we had thought of erecting a single Renaissance building in England. But the tide had long been coming north, and it was bound to beat over the cliffs of England ere long, and be upon us. The influence of Italian culture and civilization was at length making itself felt, softening the rudeness of northern habits, dispelling simplicity of Gothic

thought; though in so doing not less sapping man's animal vigour to minister to his higher mental life. 


Thus, any man of exceptional promise in art was at once sent off to this polished people, among whom dwelt the Muses. And accordingly, in 1572, the son of a cloth worker, who showed an early fondness for landscape painting, was despatched to Italy, for study of the 'masters'; in no long time to return, vested with the honour of being the first Englishman to introduce classic architecture into this country. 

For, although the Renaissance movement in art had been, some little time since, initiated by Italian and Flemish artists brought by Henry VII. into England; yet Inigo Jones, our next best architect to Wren, was the first through whom the movement showed itself as a national one; the first after the foreigners to give it real and effective impulse at home. However, to effect this, he had insuperable obstacles in his way, since the romantic spirit of the Gothic peoples was yet in England, untamed and undisciplined, unprepared to receive the rarer spirit of Italian art; willing only to borrow here and there the outward forms and bare nomenclatures of classic


ages, clinging still to its old love of quaint and crude excess. 

Spenser's 'Fairie Queene' was but a Christian romance interlarded with classic allusions; Chapman's 'Homer,' an English tale of Grecian heroes; Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' classic only in its epic form; though here and there, in this early dawn of the new day, we see thought-clouds, that have caught some fleck of the new sun's light, showing up the true colour of man's material necessities, and tinging with hues of heaven, his earth-born desires, each and all, henceforth considered, co-sacred and holy. So again, in architecture, Audley End is but a Gothic palace with cloak of added classic detail; and it is clear, that not till we get Pope for poet, and Wren for architect, are we shown the mature flesh-form of the full Renaissance spirit. 

Inigo Jones, though he freed architecture from vagaries of untutored taste, that were the inseparable accompaniment of an art decadence, could do little more than introduce to his country the outer mould of classic architecture, leaving the task of maturing and nationalizing what he commenced, to Wren his follower. On account of such work, this worthy precursor

of Wren bears the same relation to his successor, that Bacon bears to Newton, and that Girtin bears to Turner. 

The civil war between Charles and the Parliament was raging high; every man's blood burning with fire of fanaticism, papist or puritan; seething with heat of political strife, 'twixt royalty and the common weal, when the old Rector of East Knoyle in Wiltshire, was presented with a son, on whom this spirit of the 'new Birth' was destined to fall, with a peculiar intensity, and from whom it was again to be reflected far and wide, through arts and sciences all—these contending brain-tempests weaving his swaddling clothes. Yet these sudden storms that raged around his cradle, were but the clearing of a winter sky for the opening spring that was to come, bringing a new vigour to all political, intellectual, and artistic life; and as, after the strong winds of March, the sap flows freer and faster in the rigid trunks and mature tree branches, bringing new life and nutriment to the young spring shoots; so these storms awakened the vigour of England's intellect, giving it withal fresh sustenance and stirring strength. It would therefore be strange, did we not find,

in the arts of this age, some new life, some strongly marked character, giving graphic index of the mental activity of the time. 


To seek shelter from these passing storms, while the mind might be prepared to enjoy and make use of the day spring that was dawning, all studious men were anxious, and not less so than others, this Dr. Wren, now worthy rector and soon to be royal architect. In this way the times favoured study, while they presented strong incentives to action, and gave new powers for the mind to wield; which time opportunities the old rector's son, Christopher, made the most of,—this miracle of a youth, as he was called,—who gave such early promise of his power and marvellous fertility. For, at the early age of fifteen, we find him taking out patents for certain mechanical inventions, and a little later, elected demonstrating assistant at anatomy lectures in Surgeons' Hall; at twenty-one he is made Fellow of All Souls', Oxford; at twenty-five, Professor of Astronomy in Gresham College, and when but eight-and-twenty, offered the degree of D.C.L. by both Universities. By victories over the first mathematicians of the age; by his profound mathematical tracts, and astronomical dissertations, by his ingenious inventions, and by his newly

applied methods of scientific investigation, Wren was celebrated throughout Europe. ~~~~~


But this is not all: the Philosophic Club, which after his astronomical lectures, met in Wren's room, soon became, through his instrumentality, the Royal Society for the Promotion of National Science and Positive Philosophy,—he being the one chosen to draw up its royal charter, he being chief among those to whom were presented the various problems sent for solution to the Society, by the savants of Europe.


It needed but the opportunity, for a man of so severe training and such rare fertility of imagination, to set upon the age the seal of its own powers, and make articulate its highest aspirations. Well then was it, that at the time when the man was awaiting the opportunity, and the opportunity had come, it was not lost, for loss of the man to turn it to best account. Yet, by what ghastly and hideous messengers was this golden opportunity heralded to our Metropolis! ~~~~~

The Great Fire of 1666 came as a purifying power to cleanse a city fouled by black pestilence, and so infected by fever, that life was scarcely safe within its plague-girt walls. The timber huts, in which the London poor had huddled


and hovelled for centuries, were fit but for fuel of flames; yet not so all that was now destroyed, since it so happened, that in the cleansing fire, the old cathedral and eighty-seven parochial churches, were licked up by the flame tongues of this dragon of fiery destruction. 

Wren had just returned from Paris, whither he had been bound on a Continental tour; where, too, he had the good fortune to meet Bernini, who had fired his enthusiasm for the architecture of the "New Birth," by showing him his drawings of St. Peter's, Rome, just completed, and of the Louvre, then building. Being Surveyor-General to the King at time of Fire, Wren was without delay summoned to the royal presence, and exercised such speed in the execution of his orders, that a few days only elapsed before he had completed a plan for the rebuilding of the entire city—a plan which, had it been adopted, would have saved us the extensive alterations we are now obliged to make, at so heavy a cost. But no one was far-sighted enough to see the value of his schemes; the old lines of the narrow meandering streets were, therefore, in almost all cases adhered to in the rebuilding. However, in the reconstruction of the cathedral and city churches, Wren was, with little exception, not


interfered with, and fortunate was it for us that such was the case. 

The population, by hideous plague, and civil war, had been considerably thinned; and there needed not to be rebuilt all of the churches destroyed. Wren, therefore, was allowed some liberty in choosing the most advantageous sites on which to erect the fifty-three churches that were to take the place of the eighty-seven that sank in this seething flood of flames. 


Now, we have spoken of one of the characteristics of this age as a consciousness and enjoyment of all-pervading law; giving birth to a state of things when no object was attained but by some conscious principle, no inquiry made but by close logical method; the most licentious sentiment expressing itself within rigorous limits of recognized law or conventional principle. A poem is planned out according to the strictest laws of form, metrical harmony, and ideal proportion; the unity in form, the exact relation of line to line and stanza to stanza, being strictly kept throughout, within and under which perfect liberty is enjoyed. Accordingly, the spirit of the age exacts the same care from Wren in planning of his cathedral and design of her daughter churches,—the former of which we may consider


the most completely developed example of the dramatic form of architecture; while the playful and individual character, combined with a simplicity and intensity of sentiment displayed in the surrounding steeples, stamp them as finest among lyric compositions. 

That these churches of Wren have all the qualities of lyric compositions, will be acknowledged by all who give them careful study; their fulness of feeling and strong individuality being the characteristics which give them distinction among all architectural works whatever.


In Spain, in Italy, and in England there had been a treatment of architecture not dissimilar from that which was the fundamental motive in these. There was at this time, as has always been the case, a 'style' of architecture about in the air; a certain definite style always taking form in certain class of work. But none was endowed with that strong personality, none wrought with so much feeling, as was this work of England's 'Michael Angelo. 


The Gate of Honour at Cambridge is an exceedingly fine work; Inigo Jones' chapel at Whitehall no less so; but neither of these will compare, for qualities in question, with St. Martin's, Ludgate Hill, or St. Stephen's,


Walbrook. The work of Inigo Jones and of John of Padua was of a more abstract beauty, like the beauty of Greek art:—the beauty of the form of man ere he had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;—which work we may well compare with Wren's, as the lovely Byzantine architecture of the Florentine Baptistry will compare with Brunelleschi's 'Badia,' or Michael Angelo's Medicean Chapel. For in Brunelleschi's dome (Florence cathedral), how much individuality; * in St. Peter's, Rome, how little! 

So full of an intense, strong personality was Wren's work, that, when he died, architecture fell asleep, as completely as did sculpture when Angelo's breath was no more to quicken dead marble into life. It was not that the movement died; but he that gave it particular form. 


The general movement which whirls each succeeding age through the heaven of thought, now bringing it under influence of this constel-

* There is between Brunelleschi's work and Wren's a strong likeness; and in beauty of proportion, sensitiveness of feeling, and largeness of idea, I know no buildings worthier than Wren's city churches to compare with San Spirito of Florence, and the Badia of Fiesole. 


lation of ideas, and now under that, goes on in its course, generation after generation; while it is given only to certain individuals here and there to give articulate expression to the ideas specially influencing the times. 


The Renaissance movement sped on its persistent course after Wren's death, but the form it took in architecture was given to it by one whose great soul's girth compassed centuries; so that till lapse of these no man was found to follow up his work. 

Has it not been so with Blake? Did he not by intensity of feeling and strength of individuality give form to the modern lyric phase in his paintings and poetry? When he died, who was there who continued to make it as distinctly articulate as did he? Yet the new lyric spirit is as active as ever—we are born into it. And thus was it in Wren's day; though the lyric spirit of the seventeenth century was not like the lyric spirit of to-day. It is in this nineteenth century fuller and more subtle; for example of which compare Milton's 'Lycidas' with Shelley's lyric 'A Poet's Dream,' or his ode to 'Night.' These lyrics in stone, then, are but portions of one great complete poetic composition centered in the cathedral.

As forming together a single group these steeples must therefore always be thought of, each member viewed as having been placed and planned with designed relation to other members around it; and in conscious and chosen connection with the whole. For each member of this cluster, like each member of the human body, has a peculiar office to fulfil; has its structure determined by its own proper function, and affected by its position with regard to the rest, in obedience to a principle ensuring strict correlation of parts in every composition: a principle newly discerned, and now for the first time in any completeness applied, because hitherto too alien to the temper of the Goth to be perceived by him. 


The Goth, sternly simple in character, expended himself in vigorous energy of expression, and built instinctively, according to the single impulse of his electric enthusiasm; not by conscious reasoning. He professed obedience to no rule, but the rule of thumb; hence the want of unity in his design, the doubtful stability of his build, the shirking of science in his construction. This quality of isolation or individual separation is very marked in all early English work; each structure being, to the Goth, as a thing in and by itself


complete, each building regarded by him, just as by his religion he regarded himself, as an isolated unit,—a soul self-separate, alone responsible for his acts in this world, his salvation in the next, regardless of reference to surroundings, or chance of circumstance. Moreover, had this principle been known before, no single man had ever an opportunity of applying it so fully; never was presented an opportunity of designing so great and important a group of buildings—a group of buildings extending over the entire area of the greatest city in the world—a group of buildings mighty beyond all in monumental interest. 


Such an opportunity was given to Pheidias, or Palladio, never: such has never been offered any man, since Wren's day. And happy was it, that the good fortune which now gave the opportunity, gave also the man to use it well. 

To return:—this characteristic of unity in design, is then the first and most important characteristic of these city churches,—a characteristic which gives to London an interest above that enjoyed by any Continental town; yet an interest and a beauty too little valued because unrecognized but by so few. Few are there who have ever seen this group of churches: this one

has often seen this church, and that one another; but each has looked at the church he knows, as one is in the habit of looking at a modern building, an edifice having reference to none other in its neighbourhood. But these churches are not to be seen in this disconnected and un-associated way. Go and look, I would advise you, at the entire group on your first opportunity; for from the tower of St. Saviour's, Southwark, the entire group is to be seen, and I know no more magnificent sight. No view lauded by Cicero, in town of France, Germany, or Italy: no most favoured sight, in either Cairo or Constantinople, is to be compared with this view of London, wrapt in her day-dark halo of earth cloud, that veils and absorbs into its mystic being the noise and the clamour, the strife and the stir, of the mighty intense human life that throbs below: the pale cathedral lifting itself aloft—a miracle of unmoved dignity, boldly central among her square massive mansions, and huge blocks of seven-storied offices; its dome as soft in outline, as tender in gradated light, as any summer cloud, yet standing not alone, but surrounded by her daughter churches, whose steeples blazon the sky with pinnacles of sable and silver—monumental symbols of man's soar-

ing flights of pure ideal desire—indeed a most lovely sight! 


And this united group of church towers, each of which ministers to the other by counterpoint of form, by playing change of outline, and variety of aerial tone, Wren was so careful in planning, that no two similar outlines neighbour one another; seldom even has he placed together two steeples in equal strength of tone, but has beautifully intermingled the varying depth of stone, lead, and brick, to enrich his changing melody of form: so that here we see pale pillars of pearly light, that have cleft their murky way through waves of misty sea; while there, pinnacles have lift heavenward earth's deep gloom and dark despair, to catch on their gilded crest some ray of sun-bright hope. 


Thus the value that each is to its neighbour, in offer of complementary form, at once harmonizing and intensifying intended effects, is only seen when these steeples are viewed in some such palpable connection. 


When, for instance, in walking up Ludgate Hill, we see, 'as maiden 'tween two warriors strong,' pale Martin's tower standing 'mid Paul's stout porch pinnacles; its sable spire brought clean against the cathedral dome, we

discern a new majesty in Paul's, a new inimitable elegance in St. Martin's; we see what scale and distance is given to the building behind, by the dark leaden tone of the steeple in front: we delight to note how its slender form and subtle curves combine in giving such bigness and boldness to the cathedral dome, that it seems now to cover an acre or more of ground, and vie in buoyant grandeur with the domed and pillared clouds above. In return for which good service done, the mother church lends the little spire a maiden delicacy and gentle loveliness, surpassing that she would of herself possess, unsupported by this masculine grandeur behind.

Again, when walking up the old approach to St. Paul's—Watling Street—we see Wren has so placed the steeple of St. Augustine, that its sharp terminal may prick the yielding clouds, immediately in front of Paul's circling vault. And we note here, as on the other side of the cathedral, what value each part renders its neighbour; how beautiful features are, as by a charming sorcery, intensified, and singular effects aided, in finding their required complements. Both St. Paul's and St. Augustine's have, however, suffered a loss in the alteration


this spire has undergone;—a heavy and severe lined spire now taking the place of one exquisite in proportion, and sweetly sinuous in outline. 

If, however, we doubt the reciprocal benefit these forms receive one from another, let us in imagination change the position of either of these buildings, and place, say, the steeple of St. Benet's in the place of St. Martin's; and that of St. Mary-le-Bow in place of St. Augustine's; we shall then at once see how much St. Paul's loses; how much resultant beauty is marred by ill adjusted contrasts, and how impossible it is to alter the designed relations of this close knit group. 


For unity, if it be anything at all, is a quality of the most sensitive nature, most soon completely despoiled, last and rarest in actual attainment. 


“A mind that grasps the whole is rarely found ;
Half-learn'd, half-painters, and half-wits abound.
Few like thy genius at proportion aim ;
All great, all graceful, and throughout the same.”

When, then, we have once seen this family group of churches, not only do we henceforth think of them as having exceptional

historic importance, but as having exceptional value, on account of such intended unity, and so conjoint completeness. We henceforth look upon all these churches, as so intimately connected one with another, that St. Paul, bereft of its surrounding steeples, is to us as a parent bereft of her children—a Niobe in architecture. Likewise these churches, without their Metropolitan Cathedral, we regard as so many disconnected members, having neither head nor trunk to unite them. 


This intellectuality of design, this unity of conception, this greater completeness and conscious associating of part with part, one lays great stress upon, since it is peculiar to Renaissance art: to the art that has been wedded to the new world wisdom; the art of cultured, disciplined, and broadly trained minds—minds that find license only within law, and art perfect but when conjoined with science. Moreover, these qualities are common to the finest examples of every art; we find them alike in poetry, painting, music, and sculpture. But Gothic, or Romantic art, is devoid of such late-born characteristics; indeed, they are irreconcilable with the childlike spontaneity, spirited energy, sudden surprise, and rapt enthusiasm,


which animate the strong, muscular fibre of Gothic art, whether that art be architecture, sculpture, painting, or song. 

In order to see how important is this element of relationship in architectural works, when next you go westwards stand in the gardens before Palace Yard, and looking upon the Gothic minster, the church of St. Margaret, and Houses of Parliament, ask yourself whether the architect, when erecting these latter buildings, for a moment thought of their design, as requiring any relation to the then existing buildings next them. Certainly, no trace is there of any adjustment of individual taste to this general principle of co-relationship; there is, so to speak, no social sympathy evident between these buildings, and one grieves to think how different might have been their effect had this political principle, as we may call it, been observed, and a sympathy between them ensured,—the Abbey invited to lend its aid to Barry's pile, the Parliament buildings in return assisting to intensify the spirited character of the old Gothic minster. 

But this isolation of treatment is a part of, and a piece with, Romantic art; for example of which, in poetry, compare Langland's 'Vision

of Piers Plowman' with an ode by Dryden; or, if you will, with Shelley; and you will find this effort to gain homogeneity of design—this intended proportion and geometric relation of part to part, line to line, and stanza to stanza—as characteristic and complete in the one as it is conspicuously absent in the other,—a homogeneity allowing within these restraining conditions a freedom of sentiment impossible to the earlier poet. And herein, it may be said, lies the difference between Renaissance and Gothic art—in, *i.e.*, this rare refinement of feeling, that ensures subtle transition and complete intellectual co-ordination of parts in every artistic conception, while indicating a temper that loves to ripple the surface of a strong, deep, persistent stream of passion, full in its flow and perfect in its period, with lighter waves of sweetly varying form: a temper that is independent of such structural features as pointed arch and buttress of Gothic architecture, or round arch and beam of classic art: since an artist is always able to force either into submission to his own passing power of sentiment. Further, the elementary forms of such structural features as the pointed arch and buttress that the one possesses, the

beam and round arch that the other uses, are in great measure accidental, and due to other and external causes, indicating but slightly in themselves the characteristic of the age that employed them. For, you may have pointed arches and buttress without departure from pure classic feeling and thought in architecture—as in St. Clement Danes; or you may have round arches and horizontal beams while maintaining the essential character of Gothic conception, as evidenced in so many of the pseudo-Renaissance buildings lately erected in the city. 

This first characteristic of unity in grouping belongs, then, to these churches as a whole, this being the family characteristic. But it appears no less markedly in the design of each separate building; and to this and other characteristics, which belong to the churches as individuals or members of the family group, we must now refer. It is not my intention here to speak of the *churches* proper, which should form the subject of a separate essay, requiring as they do more prolonged study than I have yet been able to give them. Thus purposely in this paper I confine my remarks to the steeples. 

Wren being no day dreamer, no fog-brained

theorist, but a man eminently and definitely practical, he did not miss to mark what were the first requirements in the design and structure of a city steeple. Built in a narrow street, the lower part of it never to be seen except from a position immediately in front, and under one side of it—therefore never seen, this lower part of it, except in steep perspective, and part by part; your head requiring to be thrown farther back to enable you to see each succeeding stage,—built, this lower part of it, against buildings of irregular and coarse projection; a web of windows and cornices, a network of vertical and horizontal lines,—it must, to look well and dignified under these conditions, be kept flat and full of repose; not a feature added that is not asked for; its limiting lines leading the eye cloudward, its doorway and belfry windows of severe simplicity, all projections of subtle delicacy; its surface, in breadth of stillness unbroken as a maiden's sleep. To a building so conditioned, no ornaments must be added where their effects can never be fully appreciated; no related proportions of space to space, of opening to opening, depended upon, where they can never be seen; nor should such projections be given, as steep perspective.

must make coarse. These, then, are the first requirements; and these Wren rigidly observes; indeed, the calm quiet grandeur, and unbroken repose of his towers, is very marked, and their most beautiful feature, bringing a stirring eloquence from forth their stately reticence. A sense of this beauty of restraint is experienced, growing and growing upon you, as you walk down Fleet Street, and approach St. Martin's Church on Ludgate Hill: as again, when walking down Cheapside, and approaching St. Mary-le-Bow, you feel this same principle of beauty, because so harshly broken by the church's projecting clock. Do but look at this tower from one hundred yards or so down the street, and in your imagination remove this protruding timepiece; then, compared with its changeful outline above, what grandeur of surface is here! The sheer unbroken fall of its front, as that of some precipitous alp: the buildings that side it, in their broken surfaces, looking not unlike heaps of shattered and sifted débris. This even surface Wren will break on no account. Obligated to build a balcony, from which the Sovereign may view the city pageants, he has given it the slightest projection, thrusting it back as far as he dare,

And so with the door pediment. This, which any other man would have projected from the front, Wren has sunk back beneath a circular hood. Thus, where proper to the position, this repose of surface is strictly kept. But it is otherwise where the buildings are so placed that the architect can calculate upon the view of their lower stories never being broken, and thus ensure them a distant view. When, too, they stand isolated, more or less, from other buildings, Wren introduces harmonic beauty of relation, and masterly boldness of light and shade, elsewhere out of place. For, when a tower can be seen from a distance sufficient to take in at a single glance the whole of its height, the beauty of its part proportions can be fully appreciated and enjoyed. So, also, when recesses can be seen from some distance, veiled in their soft shade of smokened air, they are made a thousand times more lovely than when seen near at hand, with sharp shadows hardly marked. Again, the columned portico and foliated arch is only seen, clothed in its own peculiar charm of airy drapery and vapour skirt of soft cloud, from a somewhat distant point. To cavern shade beside a narrow street, where all its


changing mystery and breadth of gradated space can never be seen, shames the architect and disappoints all; for it is a beautiful feature misplaced, and labour thrown clean away. Which truth we can best realize if we stand at the bottom of Ludgate Hill, whence, looking up toward the portico of St. Paul, we may observe the deep rich gloom shed about its recesses, contrasting so well with the pale glamour of the hoary side lanterns above; its large broad shade making the half hidden detail infinitely more precious through the enchanting mystery it throws over all. And while looking upon this group of clouded sculpture, observe how the even surfaces on either side, when bathed in the pale sheen of a city sun, have added light and largeness lent them, by opposition to these richly shadowed spaces. Then, for consummation of this beatific vision below, full of world pomp and power of mind, look up at the colonnade that enriches the dome above; and notice how tender is the pencilling of the sun's ray seen through this medium of earth mist that hangs about; how lovely the dome's dim recesses, where these labour-clouds lurk—listless of heaven's height above: especially lovely this circular colonnade, when seen through

the blue-grey smoke, that rolls along in huge formless waves, like mantle folds of some grim spirit of the nether world. Having now noted the tenderness of this broken shade above, having remarked the richness of this deeply shadowed portico below, walk towards the building, and observe how, at every step you take, the deep shadows lose some portion of their richness, the spaces much of their mystery, till you are surprised to find, when near, the mist has left not a shadow of itself behind; for its breadth being broken, its tenderness no longer felt, it would not stay, nor allow of its mystery being disclosed. ~~~~~

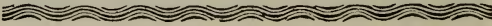
No; these charms the architect can give you, but bargains for distance in doing so—knowing that where this is withheld him, he must give you quite other delights. ~~~~~


Thus far, at present, for the lower part of Wren's steeples. Our next consideration must be their treatment above. ~~~~~


What, in the first place, are the requirements here? In any city—the city of London certainly—the buildings, taken as a whole, are of about the same height: there is, say, at fifty feet, a level stretch of roof presenting everywhere a somewhat monotonous horizon;


and hence any building lifting itself above this line at once attracts the attention, since we see it looming dark against the waning light, or full bright as it catches the faint glinter of sunlight withheld from buildings below. 

Moreover, life in the upper stories, as was the case in Wren's day, required that the horizon should be made interesting and full of architectural variety: bold sweeping vaults, pompous domes, and piles of pillared pinnacles, humanizing the heaven and peopling the sky with creatures born of a poet's brain. That portion, then, of a building which can command such advantages of position—that part of it which, while it attracts the attention, is seen under such happy conditions—should call forth the architect's greatest care and ingenuity, to do justice to the occasion. He must make it exceedingly interesting in outline, because that outline is so clearly seen against the sky; he must make it of most beautiful proportions, since these proportions are fully seen, distance allowing the tower to be viewed as a whole.

Now Wren, master of line that he was, satisfactorily fulfilled these requirements; he being the only man I know in England who has so fulfilled them. 

But there is yet another essential requirement in a tower, no matter what its use,—whether built for sheer strength, whether erected for support of bells, or raised to lift a light. 

A tower should always suggest strength and height—its solid, no less than its soaring character, ever being insisted on. It must needs, therefore, stand well by itself on sure and seen foundation, no other part of the building being allowed to rob it of its dignity or spoil it of its stately bearing, by concealment of the basic storey. And this, as each of the other requirements, has been fulfilled by Wren, with all possible completeness and beauty. 


First, with regard to the towers: these, you will observe, Wren never designs to appear as though they were sitting astride a portico, nor as though they had grown through the confining church roof, as some tall palm through roof of its conservatory. But he stands each staunch and strong on its own unhidden foundation. 

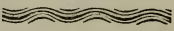
In treatment of outline Wren has been no less successful. The least interesting outline for a roof, as the public is now beginning to feel, is that formed of two straight lines sloped, so as to lean one against the other at

the top: we have as children built it many a time with wooden bricks, and all are only too familiar with this form—a form not objectionable when composing part of severe Gothic architecture, belonging to untempered Gothic times, and excusable when used by those whose severity of life and simplicity of thought required it. But unpardonable when repeated by builders who are not Gothic, and by architects who have inherited a refinement, and have acquired a knowledge of form unknown to the monkish builders of Gothic days: * unpardonable in these times, from an artistic point of view, but quite natural when we know how associations connected with religious feeling override and control all other

* If, in the application of this primitive Gothic form to buildings erected to-day, we but read the context, we find corresponding accompaniment in primitive simplicity of idea, and hardness of feeling in all the architect does. For my own part, I could name many instances, strong in corroboration of what has been elsewhere said, concerning man's consistency of character; it being such that, cut across his nature where you will, his mind's girth and true soul texture will show themselves—the coarseness or fineness of the grain being in smallest particle, or particular act, only too apparent.


influences. This simplest of roof outlines, then, Wren uses as a painter his points of black; they are a foil to his colour, and give pearly quality to his greys. Here and there, as in St. Swithin and St. Margaret Pattens, Wren gives us this simple spire as a foil to the richer outlines; and by contrast to give delicacy to chaster forms. He takes care, however, not to bring any of these hard forms near St. Paul's dome, lest their too great harshness of line mar the quietness of its soft contour. When, again, he does use this stern, untempered Gothic form, he covers it with lead, so that it may loom dark in tone against the pale sky, thus avoiding the appearance of weakness, which, if light, this form always has—a difficulty sometimes overcome by the Goths in giving an entasis of slight curvature to the spire about its centre,—a curvature sufficient to counteract the apparent concavity of two perfectly straight and converging lines. When, however, we leave this simplest form of outline, we have before us an unlimited number of forms: every conceivable combination of ever varying curve, and endless arrangement of rectilinear line. No limit confining the interest and variety we may thus give to a steeple


top; no restriction leaving plea or pardon for the imagination, when repeating itself; no condition affording excuse for faculty to flag through want of material, since every motion of the pencil will suggest innumerable new outlines and countless good combinations of form. A fertile imagination such as Wren's would then have here a splendid opportunity of showing its plenitude and power; nor has the opportunity been lost. 

Without breaking the bounds of architectural propriety, or disgracing dignity of form, Wren has given us, in his fifty-three churches, as many varieties of steeple outline; yet nowhere has he allowed his fancy to be fitful, never allowed mere picturesqueness to enchant him, nor the vagaries of an idle hour to allure him. The result of calm choice of individual form, combined with severe discipline in imaginative composition, shows itself in each one of these masterpieces of architectural design. 


Particularly is this the case with the steeple of St. Vedast, Foster Lane: the tower of which church, because cramped and confined by buildings, is as simple as tower can well be in its treatment; the bold projecting cornice that crowns its head, preparing the way for


the rich form composition above, that divides itself into three stages, each of varied plan. In these three stages the architect has combined three kinds of surface form. The lower storey he has made concave in plan, the next convex or circular, while the top he has formed according to a rigid rectilinear plan. No other than Wren could have placed a circular storey upon one with four concave sides, and not hurt the eye, by glaring discord; but this master of surfaces has so successfully compelled these opponent plans into harmonious unison, that he has made this steeple one of the most beautiful specimens of architecture in the world: and by means the most simple effected it. He has harmonized these two contrasting curves in this very artful way: he has brought out from his circular storey a cluster of pilasters to stand over each angle of the four concave sides below; by which means he soothes the decided difference between the two plans, and softens the severe intensity of the upper curve; at the same time so arranging them, that vertical lines below, and towards each angle, break the sweep of these under curves, producing an optical harmony between them, without destroying the beauty of their reversely rounded

surfaces. These vertical lines at the angles of the first and second stage, you will observe, are again repeated at the angles of the uppermost stage, in such a way that the eye travels up from cornice to crown, without break or jar; connecting, as it does so, surfaces of square, concave, and convex plan. 


At each stage, therefore, we get a vertical reversion of light and shade: here brilliancy dying away into shade, where below the darker tone gradually grows more bright; and there again faint shadows lying, where above it is flecked with gradated light. 


But the horizontal lines are dispersed with even greater care; for most exquisitely proportioned to one another are the intervals between these bands of pale sunshine and girdles of soft shade—intervals that are at one time steeped in bright daylight, at another checked by dim shadows—chill heralds of night. Alter one a finger's breadth you cannot, without destroying the beauty of their proportion; change any two, and the harmony of the whole is broken. Further, while noting how musically these intervals are adjusted, we should not fail to see how the bands of shadow, as they lift themselves against the

light, get gradually lessened, till just a third space up the crowning pyramid, we have but faintest line of shade. Thus this graduated scale of shadow, like graduated tone in music, is ever observed by Wren, and used in a most perfect way, as we shall see in the steeple of St. Martin, Ludgate. 

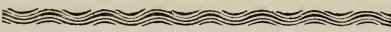
Yet this is not all. Here we have special reasons for delicacy of shadow; for, whenever a surface is so sensitive in its curvature as in this case, its gradated light must be delicately dealt with, and in no case broken by sharp outlines or abrupt forms. Hence, if you will look at the moulding that runs round these windows, a simple bend and no more, you will see how delicate the shadow that always sleeps here. 


Concerning the openings, it is sufficient to draw attention to the small elliptic opening in the lower storey, for, by seeing the value that is attached to any particular one, the value which attaches to the form and position of every other opening may be afterward understood. We shall then feel this ellipse is valuable, not merely as giving a point of dark, but as giving in a strong form, and yet in a complete form, the two reverse curves used above. For, from

below, the two horizontal lines of the two curved surfaces appear as curves, answering to the lower and upper curve of an ellipse; thus giving *raison d'être* to ellipse placed below those curves, where its form is required, its value felt at once. Hence we may see that every other part of this design is as necessary to the whole as the whole is necessary to each of its parts. 


But we must now pass on to St. Martin's. The grace and delicacy of this steeple form, as its spire in trembling notes ascends the sky, are of such a quality that words can hardly awaken that fine sense of form by which alone such a pure lyric in architecture can be appreciated. In this, as in all art born of a poet's mind, one is ever forced to fall back on this intuitive perception, which, when wanting, can never artificially be gained. 

However, I would refer you to one or two points. At first glance, who, that can at all appreciate its beauty, is not enraptured with the melody of its many mingling notes of form, its dancing buoyancy, and splendid balance? or who can help but be fascinated by the delicate ease with which the different curves glide each into each, enchanting the eye,


as upward 'tis led, from long stretch of vertical line below, to the finely finished needle crest above? Hardly a movement is there of its quiet surface, while abutted by houses on either side; not until it has lifted itself clear of these busy buildings does it give us the first note of its melody of form. 


And how soft, how grand, are these first notes—so like the opening chords of a Beethoven symphony! how quiet the transition from square of tower to the octagon of spire! how bold that soft sweep of scroll which unites the aisle coping with the tower flank! So, this balcony, which fringes the spire, as some petals the pistil of their flower,—how well it echoes back the columned balcony that fringes the dome of its mother church! Thus every part has its proper reference to the cathedral: though no need to dwell on their particular connection now; suffice it to say, that the curves and proportions of this spire cannot be studied with too great care—a growing familiarity with its form increasing ever more our admiration of its wonderful harmony of maiden grace with manly breadth in design. 

Not less in interest are the mouldings of these steeples, those parts of a building which,


as being capable of expressing the rarest refinement, and as soonest betraying slightest tinge of coarseness in temper, require of the architect his greatest skill. Every building being—whether we will or no—an arrangement in light and shade; the mouldings, that is, the cornice, strings, and various projections, become the telling points of light or telling points of shadow; and such indeed is their importance, that you may test the power of any architect by the way he deals with his mouldings, and observes in them the first principles of composition. 

The first condition to be observed in all design of light and shade, whether in painting, sculpture, or architecture, is this: the lights are to be kept broad and unbroken, the shadows filled with varied detail. Hence, any detail that modulates the surface of the broad lights must be of the tenderest—as soft as the cloud relief that sculptures a summer sky; while carving bold and big, with quick contours, should relieve shadows by variety of reflected shade. This principle, observed in all fine sculpture and painting, has been much ignored by architects, and to the serious detriment of architectural effect. It was, however, never


departed from by the Greeks; but since the Parthenon was built, this principle has never been observed by any architect as it has by Wren. 


You will find it everywhere rigidly observed by him. He never places carving on a projection, but carves under-surfaces, or places sculpture within a recess, as the Greeks recessed their sculptures, in the pediment; kept them beneath bold cornices, or shaded them under the peristyle, thus veiling all carving with shade, or curtaining it with shadow, lest it might become dominant in interest, to the detriment of architectural effect, and thus destroy the breadth, which is the first essential of architecture. Wren likewise observes this principle in his figures, which he either places so as to come dark against the sky, or, if on the face of a building, recesses them within a niche, while a frieze, under a deep-browed cornice, he relieves in its shadow by projecting brackets or carving of bold design. 

But its application does not end here; for Wren instinctively felt that this principle must likewise regulate the use of columns and pilasters: hence he always gives every column a background of shadow, very slight projecting

pilasters being used on the face of the building. For a column is a moulding, and must be treated as such; while a pilaster is but a fascia, a portion of the surface—in fact, a projecting face. And as an example of their relative effects, compare the upper and lower tier of the drum of St. Paul's, or the portico with the side walls, and you will feel the propriety of the respective use of column and pilaster. 


To return to this tower of St. Martin. You will next observe what small, quickly contoured mouldings, Wren uses in the shadows, what broad curves or deep facets of slight projection he uses where the light is held. But beside this first general principle, which maintains the breadth of unbroken light and the changing relief of shadow in every moulding, there is another which regulates the transition from any flat surface to the moulding that breaks it. In mediæval times a moulding was applied to a surface, or cut on an edge, without introduction of any raised or recessed face, as a transition, between the undulated portion and the unbroken surface. And the effect of this was soon felt to be crude and unfinished, when, by acquaintance with more refined work of Italy and Greece, the delicate transitional


'facets' or 'faces' were seen to be so beautiful. Early in the seventeenth century these facets are introduced into English architecture (notice those on the front of Hatfield House, over the Arcade, 1611); but the architects could not treat them quite as happily as was wished, and it is not till we see Wren's work that we are awakened to a just sense of their beauty, and made feel, by the gentleness with which he makes his mouldings graduate from a surface, the abruptness of those projecting mouldings that have no gradated steps to connect them with the wall from which they project. 


As illustration of this principle, compare the mouldings of the New Law Courts with the mouldings that decorate the surface of the church close by—St. Clement Danes. 

These, then, are the two first classic principles, regulating the design and application of each separate order of mouldings considered by itself; but there is another very important principle, which regulates the design of any entire 'group' of mouldings used in a building,—and it is that of their relationship. The various mouldings of a building should be so related to one another that a growing or decreasing

richness of effect characterise them as they recede from the eye: that is, the primary mouldings must project the more as they ascend, while the secondary mouldings may project the more as they descend. It is thus in St. Martin's Tower. The primary group here consists of plinth, string-course of first stage, and crowning cornice, which members grow bolder in projection as they rise; while the group secondary in order consists of the 'headings' of the several features—doors, windows, and tablets—which mouldings decrease in amount of projection as they ascend; thus giving, in the counterplay of these two orders, a kind of fugal arrangement of form, but so adroitly designed that the one order of mouldings is kept clearly subordinate to the other, so as not in any way to conflict or detract from the unity of the whole. The same play of numbers, the same decreasing cadence, woven into a growing fulness, or ebbing on toward the sustained climax, is found in all artistic compositions, notably in Shelley's 'Skylark'; Swinburne's ode to Victor Hugo; Spenser's 'Epithalamion'; and Milton's 'Hymn on Christmas Morning.' Indeed, it may be said, an architect treats each line of moulding just as a

poet treats his stanza lines : both endeavouring to ensure a play of rhythm and ordered variety of cadence, since these pleasant qualities cannot be disregarded without spoiling the music of the poem, or marring the harmony of the architecture. Things are often best seen by their opposites ; only for this reason would I draw your attention to the façade of the New Law Courts, where you will see carving placed on projecting members, mouldings in full light, cut sharp in contour, and as much broken as those in shadow. Huge rolls running close under the eye you will see, and above all find a smaller projection given to the crowning cornice than is allowed the plinth below. 

On the other side of the way, see Wren's gateway of Middle Temple, exemplifying the opposite principle of artistic design ; a structure replete with dignity of reserve, sublime in its calm consciousness of power, bold and broad in largeness of character, yet without suspicion of coarseness, or tinge of untamed temper. 

Before speaking of the influence Wren has upon us to-day, we must refer to the influence he had upon his followers, as this has an especial interest for us. 

It was no new thing to find a man parodied

by his pupils, and it seems to be the common lot of great men that their weaknesses shall be caught up, held before the public, and caricatured in large by their pupils. Certainly it was so with Michael Angelo and Christopher Wren. So is it to-day with John Ruskin and Norman Shaw. The pupils of Wren saw only novelty in their master's work, as in our days the disciples of Norman Shaw see only picturesque in his architectural designs. Hence such monstrosities by the pupils of Wren as St. John's, Horsely Down, and St. Luke's, Old Street Road. Hence, again, the myriad suburban villas of timber and stucco by the apes of Norman Shaw; the deluge of frothy literature that pours into the world under the shadow of Ruskin's name—babbling waters of cant, streams muddy with dregs of democratic reform. ≡≡≡

But Wren's influence upon us to-day, upon you and me, as we walk day by day round and about his works—grasping so great thoughts bodied in monumental being—should be very great. Yet it is not so great as we might at first suppose it to be, since there are many associations which prevent the influence of art working upon us freely. ≡≡≡≡≡≡≡≡


The Church has been hitherto, though no


longer, the chief patron of art; the especial patron of architecture. And it so happened that the days of the Church's widest influence were days when the mind of the people was alike uncultured and unrefined, and what are known as Gothic forms, the fashion. It is not wonderful, then, that the Gothic form and rude character of art, which was thus accidentally bound up with a particular set of deeply-seated associations, should in an age of increased culture be preferred before forms, though more refined, pagan in their origin and anti-Christian in their association. That this is the main cause of the common preference of Gothic architecture by a people who, in the sister arts of literature and painting, prefer the Renaissance, is very evident. For we know that the whole body of the Church literature is founded, presumably at least, on classic precedent: the preachers of the Renaissance being taken as the models of pulpit oratory; the popular religious pictures chosen from the Renaissance art of Andrea del Sarto, of Raphael, and Perugino; the church music founded likewise on Renaissance type; while people will worship, and pastors will preach, only in a building that is raised on pointed arches, and presided over

by grotesque gurgoyles—a fact betraying as great want of real feeling as of intellectual appreciation, and width of unhindered association. ~~~~~

For not until we have dissociated Classic art from Paganism, and Gothic art from Christianity, not until we have looked at each form of art as men and as artists, and not as religious sectaries, can we fully enjoy the strong qualities that belong to each, and appreciate their respective characteristics. ~~~~~


The Greeks loved not the mountains, because they imagined them the abodes of evil spirits and unpropitious deities; there are yet some Londoners who see grim gods and goddesses to peer from out every classic cornice, and regard as unholy, both pilaster and beam. But it is not so with all of us, I hope: we know that whatever a man does well, that is well. Here, in these steeples, all is thought out well, and carried out well,—as, in fact, becomes a man as loving of beauty in execution as skilful in conceptive ability. There is no stolen art here, no slurring construction, no mean nor hasty conception. All that is done is the result of severely trained skill, on the part of a man endowed with a rare artistic sensibility; a man who did so much for his age and for us,

because, as all great men before him, he was intensely receptive, and free as far as could be from bias. Slave to no style, he took what seemed to him best from Classic, Gothic, and Moorish art; knowing that the best in art, whatever its source, must necessarily harmonize, because the best human; just as, in the world of science, facts the most accurate must agree, because signs of the self-same law. 


We said Wren was a humanist. Now, the humanists were especially cosmopolitan in their sympathies; they strove to rid themselves of race and class prejudices adverse to the times. They were anxious to inherit the best that humanity (whatever its colour) had left the world, and cared not whether that best came from Pagan, Jew, or Goth. Had not Wren been of this widely sympathetic and receptive nature, he would never have wedded for us, as he has done, our own free play of Gothic outline, with the chaste forms of Southern art; Gothic vigour and picturesqueness, with Classic grace and feeling; never joined hand of Southern maid to hand of Northern warrior. 


These, as all true art works, are new creations born of the brain and the breeze, and must be judged according to the one prime canon of


art, which says of her, "She is but pictured poetry: no representation or reproduction of anything that is, or else has been; but an original production—the new birth of something that before has not been and never again can be—the idol of some happy thought, the play of some pleasing sentiment, mothered of the mind and fathered by the things that be." And to seek the parentage of these offspring of Wren's imagination, we must go to the art of the near and distant past, to Classic and Gothic art, from both of which he drew so largely.

What Milton's prose is to us as writers to-day, what Dryden's verse is to us as poets, what Bacon's philosophy is to us as thinkers and inquirers, that these works of Wren are to us as builders and architects.* 


The mighty influence the literature and


* That I do not advocate the imitation of this Renaissance architecture, beautiful as it is, I may perhaps be allowed to bring to witness the best evidence of my own architectural work, which is an attempt to express, so far as professional conditions will allow, the feeling and thought of the hour; there being, however, no hesitation in adopting any groundwork of form that may be gathered from the varied treasures of art we have inherited. 

philosophy of the past, has had upon the present,—moulding its form, chastening its spirit, invigorating it, and inspiring it,—that the architecture of the past must also have, repel it as we will, deny it as we may. Get away from it we cannot; nor can we ever be as if it had not been. And well this is so, for it is truly great: great as all the work of a great age must be; great as is its literature, great as is its polity, great as is its thought. And to those who can weigh well the meaning of its sleeping stones, and measure the length and breadth of its recumbent lines, this finest Renaissance architecture, as we have said, embodies—is the image and likeness of—the same spirit that is seen, quickening the literature, impelling the polity, and fulfilling the philosophy of its own life's day. 

The 'Eikon Basilikē' we may read once and again; the 'Ode to St. Cecilia' we may chant and chant again; the 'Novum Organum' we may return to for study repeatedly; but these odes to the new world worship, these *nova organa* of imaginative art, are beside us, above us, around us continually: in their presence we live, and by familiar sight of them our taste is hourly tutored and matured. 

These monuments of England's greatest skill in architecture—these speaking piles, that tell of England's birth into the new world, that looks for law and loves all learning—these odes of built-up beauty—these children of the most perfect mother church England possesses, are this day imperilled by a threatened destruction, and wholesale obliteration. The Church threatens to raze to the ground these her fairest fabrics, and sell their sites for pieces of silver. She cares no longer for them; their beauty is nought to her; their history nought. They are but worth the price of their sites in the market. Londoners, and my English friends, care you not for these monuments of your past? care you not to claim what is yours by legitimate inheritance? Will you not stir yourselves to save these buildings, which are the glory of London architecture, the boast of her city, and joint members of her cathedral? Will you not claim them as national property, and guard them as such? Will you let the Church, because supported by State patronage, destroy as she will? No; 'tis time all historic monuments were put under public control, as is done in France, and thus preserved to the people; for the

people do yet, and will yet more, care for them. 

But surely, to our children it will not seem strange that the age which designed the New Law Courts should have destroyed Wren's City Churches; nor that when out of time, the Griffin and the Goth ruled the roast, it fared ill with those monuments, whose glory consisted in their refinement, and in their learning. 



NOTES ON THE TOWERS.

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St. Alban,

WOOD STREET: *rebuilt* 1685.

This church is an essay upon architecture, replete with illustration of the essential characteristics of Gothic and Renaissance art. We see in this building, perhaps better than anywhere else, how the beauty and true 'being' of a style depend, not on the structural forms employed, but on the treatment they receive.

It is in architecture, as in all else of human life, not by *what* he does is man praised of his posterity, but by *how* he does. The 'what' matters little, and for this a great man cares little; but the 'how' is everything to the world, and everything to the man, tasking all his wit, and taking all his care.

Wren has here chosen to use the Gothic forms; but see how, in this tower, he has used them. Disregarding parapet and pinnacles, has he not put these Gothic elements to most splendid service? has he not so steeped them in his own great calmness of spirit, as to make us feel their forms lovelier than ever they

appeared before? In these square buttresses of well proportioned projection, that rib rather than prop the structure of tower, do we not get in fullest, yet least lineal form, the elastic spring and soaring sweep of line which is so beautiful a feature in all good Gothic work? How these bulwark ribs lift you up to the sky, and allow you to rejoice in airy height, without destroying your sense of stony solidity, by too great rupture of surface, or meagreness of line; for their face is broader than their flank, and they cling close to the mass of the tower, not breaking from it every now and again, as is the fashion in debased Gothic, or in 'ecclesiastical' Gothic, such as may be seen in the apse added to this church by Sir G. G. Scott, where the typical angle props, with their usual coarse projection and restless protrusion; are to be seen, pompous of their boasted emptiness: and where, too, they may be so readily compared with the buttress, as used by one, monarch of his art. The oblique finish of these tower buttresses is so well designed, that this unusual treatment may pass unnoticed by many, unless attention be drawn to it: the gradual line which brings them into the face from which they spring, being in so perfect sympathy with the breadth of their character, giving at the same time so complete sense of their strong attachment to the fabric's body. (Wren's study of anatomy has here served him well.)

In the belfry windows, we have a specimen of the most refined treatment of Gothic forms, I suppose, to

be found in England. At Pisa, in the chapel of the Thorn, and in some parts of Giotto's bell tower at Florence, we have Gothic forms treated with as nice sensitiveness, and delicacy of design ; but this finesse of detail is rare even in Italy. Look well at these windows, feel as with finger the richness, yet quiet delicacy of their mouldings, the slight projection of their moulded hoods, soft as a maiden's brow ; the breadth of the tracery, with sense of surface not even lost in the mullions, by so shallow recessing of them, and then go, look at some Gothic liked better before, and future preference will test degree of sensitiveness to form you possess.

The one weakness of Gothic tracery was its tendency to liness, a tendency necessitated by its position. A narrow strip of light stone, placed in a field of almost barren darkness, Heaven hardly could save from looking thin. Its only safety lay in keeping as much as possible of the mullion face flat ; in slightly moulding the sides to give appearance of greater width ; and in relieving the dead blackness of opening, by louver boards in a belfry window, by lead quarries and iron cross-bars in windows that are glazed. Accordingly, in the lower tower window, Wren has given an unusually broad fillet to the mullions, and kept their mouldings well at the sides, in addition to filling the openings with iron cross-bars. For the same reason the tracery of upper belfry windows has been kept nearer the outer face than is usual in Gothic work.

When, on the other hand, Sir G. G. Scott, aided and abetted by churchwarden zeal, laid destructive hand upon the church, he pulled out Wren's fine west window, and put in one more to his own taste, one more consistent with the dry bones of a long-dead style. But this is not all: he altered the mouldings of mullions and tracery, removing at the same time the bars from the windows he left. The difference in effect being too evident to need pointing out—but, alas, the loss!!

As treatment of gable coping, I know no better than that over the west window: this blind tracery is so beautiful in its curves, and so quiet—so different from the fretted restlessness that, in imitation of lace work, so often weakens and disturbs the beauty of Gothic work.

If you look up from this coping of Wren's to the gallery and pinnacles lately put on to the tower, you will quickly discern the difference of spirit in the two designs. The meagreness of the open tracery, the restlessness of the coarsely crocketed pinnacles, the feebleness of the hand that sunk this foliated panel on the face of the central pinnacle, all show the smallness of the unthinking and insensitive nature that has wrought its evil upon this most interesting and beautiful specimen of Renaissance Gothic.

The violence of the acute curves in apse windows, the angularity of its walls, (compare it with Wren's rounded apses,) the coarseness of the mouldings, (com-

pare with mouldings of Wren's N.W. door,) and buttressing; its triviality shown in the little carved rosettes set on the cusps of tracery, in the buzz of crockets on pinnacles, and thin fretting of panels between, make true but painful contrast to Wren's largeness, simplicity, refinement, and concentratedness.

However, let it not be thought that this Gothic of the nineteenth century, with which I find such fault, is Gothic. It has not even the flavour of Gothic. Not a breath of Gothic life is in it; no more life than is to be found in the resuscitated skeleton of a Goth's corpse, even be it William of Wykeham's. So much for grubbing in the cemeteries of buried styles. We can overlook the lack of refinement, the want of concentration, and other shortcomings, in true Gothic work; for it is so splendid in its energy, so passionate in its fire, and pure in its enthusiasm of aspiration. But when its fire has burnt out, its energy dead, buried, and rotted, what then? As well wrap ourselves, ere dead, in the grave-clothes of our grandfathers.

[*Note.*—In the lower stage inside are to be seen traces of the fire, showing the inner case of the interior to be part of the original structure.]

All Hallows the Great,

THAMES STREET: *rebuilt* 1683.

North aisle and tower pulled down to widen Thames Street.

All Hallows,

LOMBARD STREET: *rebuilt* 1694.

An example of the simple square tower, marking contrast in its severe form and pallid purity of tone, to its dusky neighbour St. Edmund the King. Worthy of particular notice here, is the beauty of the mouldings over upper windows, forming a minor cornice to the main one above; and the pierced parapet, in which Wren so seldom indulges, but here so appropriately introduces.

The doorway of the tower is certainly not happy, evidencing in the mind of the architect a want of consecutiveness in the composition. As a doorway placed in the body of a church it would be appropriate, and might be pleasing, but here it certainly interferes with upper portion of tower.

St. Andrew,

HOLBORN: *rebuilt* 1686; *tower refaced with stone* 1704.

As you stand on the Viaduct at 'City Temple's' corner, you see this tower on your right, while on your left are seen the steeples of Christ Church and St. Mary-le-Bow. You are thus in a position to compare the work of Wren with that of the late restorer of St. Sepulchre, Snow Hill. In St. Mary-

le-Bow you see, from this point, extreme grace and lightness: putting to shame the coarse, clumsy pinnacles of St. Sepulchre—destitute of every kind of architectural quality.* In St. Andrew you see how a true artist finished his tower; with what dainty richness of form, and what bold originality he pinnacles his parapet. Instead of a veneer of commonplaceness evenly spread over an entire composition, Wren puts here and there, on an exceedingly simple design, an exquisite touch, to give life, brilliancy, and interest to the whole; a touch of this kind being seen in the unique treatment of the upper belfry window head.

St. Andrew, in the Wardrobe,

QUEEN VICTORIA STREET: *rebuilt* 1692.

A tower wanting in character beside the rest, showing no strong motive in mind of the architect when designing it. The lower part is treated much as though it were a portion of the church, and the whole with too equal distribution of architectural feature. To make matters worse, this tower has been sadly disfigured; the simple circular window of second storey taken out to make place for the clock and framework. In upper storey, a carved

* Wren restored this church after the fire, but little now remains of his work; *this* in its turn has been restored away.

and grossly moulded hood cornice has been put on to the belfry window, beside some very curious chasing cut on the window's feet; while on the angles above, wretchedly mean and wiry cast-iron finials make finicking finish to the restless meagreness that has spoiled this tower.

However, there are beautiful touches here and there, which show a master's hand: notably, in the finish of the angles to belfry stage, where delicately wrought pilasters surmount the quoins that band all corners below.

St. Anne in the Willows,

ST. ANNE'S LANE, ALDERSGATE: *rebuilt* 1681.

This beautiful lantern is much spoiled through having been painted light, instead of being kept dark in tone as intended by Wren, who by its treatment evidently intended it to be thought of as a feature distinct from the tower, and accordingly made the stone parapet of tower to keep complete reticence, that the lantern's simplicity of expression may seem more eloquent and articulate. Indeed, every part is exceedingly simple, yet the care bestowed in giving just the right amount of inclination to the little angle buttresses of lantern, in proportioning projection of fret above; and in controlling the subtle changes of the roof curves, is such as only a master would bestow on so small a work.

From its position with relation to St. Vedast, and Christ Church tower, it will be at once felt that as much nice care of design was here required as simplicity of effect.

This church was originally built in red brick; some portions are now stone,—most covered with cement.

St. Austin,

WATLING STREET: *rebuilt* 1683; *steeple finished*
1695.

I have spoken at some length of this steeple on page 29 of the essay.

St. Bennet : Paul's Wharf,

THAMES STREET: *rebuilt* 1683.

This dusky domed satellite of St. Paul's, as seen from Queen Victoria Street, forms with its church a noble group, the aisle roofs coming up so quaintly against the nave. In this building we have one of those exceptional instances in which Wren has placed carving on a surface; but observe, under no ordinary conditions he does so. He has allowed his windows no mouldings, and above he has thrown out a big bold cornice relieved by no bands beneath them. This carving thus does office for mouldings and for

horizontal bands, with great gain of concentration and effect. But we must not criticize too carefully the carving on these churches, for though the effect is always good and appropriate, the form of the carving is wretchedly bad, the subject of it exceedingly poor. It is the one unfortunate circumstance connected with this beautiful architecture, that the architect had no sculptor. All, therefore, Wren could do, was to design position and effect of the carving, for the rest leaving it to take its chance. Hence it is sufficient to say Wren was not responsible for the character of the carving that enriches his architecture.

St. Bride (Bridget),

FLEET STREET: *rebuilt* 1680-99.

A steeple reminding one of Romanesque towers in North Italy; yet with what added refinement, complexity of form and concentration! For most beautifully united is the circular storied spire to the square tower by the curve of this pediment, the round-headed openings of each storey finding a focus point in the round of clock below. Seen close at hand this steeple is less satisfactory, the repetition being a little monotonous.

When rebuilt, after having been shattered in a heavy storm, it was lowered in the crowning storey fifteen feet.

Christ Church,

NEWGATE STREET: *rebuilt* 1687; *steeple* 1704.

As St. Vedast is a composition of variously curved surfaces, this is one composed of rectilinear forms, in which pleasant play is made, of straight lines over curved as in the clock, and curved lines over straight as in the windows. Above, the play is between surface and recess, where we see the distinctive use of column and pilaster, as referred to in the essay.

From the inner court of the school the best view of this tower is obtained, its loss of twelve urns on the lower corners (taken down 1828) being here apparent enough to show them as valuable in this work as pinnacles in Gothic.

Highly satisfactory as is this steeple in design, it looks ill proportioned when seen full in the front of one face,* thus illustrating the well-known fact that Wren designed 'in perspective,' and not isometrically, as is the habit among architects now-a-days.

The gateway and façade in red brick, belonging to the school building, is also by Wren, the latter with its grand sweep of pediment showing his strength of treatment; the former in the beautiful curved sides and surface of the pilasters, illustrating his love of fine line and subtlety of part adjustment in design.

* Though this is doubtless in great measure due to the loss of vases.

After getting from sight of this façade some insight of Wren's soul-greatness, think what insult it was to his memory and work, the putting on of such a poor restless parapet as now crowns his tower of St. Alban; or such a parody of Gothicism as disgraces and disturbs the reticent beauty of his St. Michael's tower.

St. Clement Danes,

FLEET STREET: *rebuilt* 1680—1719.

The church, and tower to level of cornice just below clock, is the work of Wren, and for nice refinement in composition I know nothing to beat it. The west façade is especially fine, every line most studiously determined, and the whole so musical in its complete harmony that every form is as a chosen note in one grand full chord. The beautiful adjustment of curved aisle copings to contour of tower porch, of side cupolas to obelisk-topped buttresses, of circular openings to each other, is quite marvellous in subtle devising.

But, alas, the circular columniated porticoes, likewise roofed with cupolas, that stood on either side of main building, have been removed—as much to the loss of this design's completeness as would be detrimental to completeness of a chord, the elimination of as many component notes.

The quiet, restful treatment of the Gothic windows

above bring them into new and abiding fellowship with their classic companion forms — one unison of feeling throbbing through all.

The extremely delicate mouldings of nave windows, and apse softly rounded in its curvilinear walls, may well be compared with the hard angularities of octagonal portions in New Law Courts, and with the coarse character of their window mouldings.

From the string beneath clock to finial, the tower is the design of Gibbs—pupil of Wren—one on whose shoulders the master's mantle did not fall; for it is evident in completing this he was as unable to grasp Wren's leading idea, as incapable of devising a distinct idea of his own.

St. Clement,

EASTCHEAP: *rebuilt* 1685.

One of Wren's simple towers standing between the rich compositions of St. Magnus and St. Edmund the King.

The lower portion, being treated so as to form portion of the church, detracts a little from the unity of the tower's character, which would have been grander had the lower storeys been quite plain.

The upper portion, however, which has had all Wren's thought and usual care, is fine, and in its unassuming simplicity effective.

One cannot but wish these angle quoins had not been carried down below the belfry stage ; or, if below, finished at belfry stage by pilasters, as in St. Andrew in the Wardrobe. The church is bold beyond parallel in its frank simplicity—a simplicity with which none but one conscious of power would have been content.

The large west window has been lately opened. Wren had built it up in original design.

St. Dunstan in the East,

TOWER STREET : *rebuilt* 1698.

Another example of Wren's treatment of Gothic forms: yet one that will not compare with St. Alban, nor St. Michael ; for, possessed by what blinding spirit we know not—unless it were emulation of St. Nicholas' Church, Newcastle—he has here for once allowed himself to commit the favourite fault of Gothic builders, and made his steeple stand on stilts. The Goth so greatly loved spangled expanse of painted glass, and effect of attenuated heights, that he was unwittingly enticed to tempt the powers that be, by his weakness and slimness of construction. So feeble and lithe were the limbs of his structure, that not unfrequently it was unable to support itself, till the smith had fast bound it with wrought-iron bands, or the mason propped it with stout stone

buttress ; and here, in a man's work where last expected, is the same fault, a sense of lightness being obtained by trick of build, at expense of seeming stability. The wind may whistle, we know, for centuries through the legs of this steeple, and not shift or shake it the least ; but its apparent weakness is perpetual offence against our artistic and unthinking sense.

The question here always is, and will be, this : not whether it 'is,' or 'is not' stable, but 'does it,' or 'does it not,' appear stable and strong? To say the least, this is a small thing for one to have done who was great enough to build Paul's dome. But judgment seldom errs without misleading taste, and we must admit that detail and finish of this steeple are not what we should have expected from the architect of St. Michael.

The tower, however, is fine, and hardly less beautiful in detail than Wren's best work ; the windows, like those of St. Alban, exquisitely delicate in mouldings and broad in their traceries ; the lower windows with their glass failing somewhat in effect from the perfectness of those above them filled with wide louver boards. Yet how delicate are the hood moulds of these windows ! Again, the sinking of panels in these pinnacles and parapets may well be compared with panel and parapet added lately to the tower of St. Alban, referred to in mention of that steeple.

When looking at the doorways below, we should

specially note the original beauty of the carving. These crockets over the label are quite exquisite, so bossy in their form, so pearly in their light and shade—very unlike the crudely-formed and broken crockets of mediæval work, with its poor imitations—as, for instance, crockets over door of St. Michael's Church, Cornhill. Then, how beautiful is the sculptured finish of the finial, as of the label, which is rarely rendered with so much design and thought; for generally it comes to a sudden stop, and is treated very abruptly. The bosses of clustering leaves that close nestle in the foot crannies of these door jambs are unequalled—certainly the boldest and beautifullest bits of foliated sculpture in London.

A good view of the upper portion of St. Dunstan's steeple may be had from St. Dunstan's Hill.

The church was rebuilt in 1817. In old engravings we may see how grand in fearless originality of treatment were windows and porch of church as rebuilt by Wren; and we have double source of regret for its loss when what replaces it is so obtrusively small, and its borrowed poverty so objectionable in spoliation of our enjoyment of what yet remains from Wren's so complete and splendid work.

St. Edmund the King,

LOMBARD STREET: *rebuilt* 1690.

One of the most original among the lantern towers:

a design that no other than Wren could have conceived—one that has no precedent, and can have no copy, but must stand alone as Wren has stood alone.

The conception is one that requires extraordinary skill to work out, even satisfactorily, and here there is not a hair's breadth amiss.

To set an octagonal structure of so different construction immediately upon a square stone tower; to treat a cone with concave sides, of such a scale, so that in the centre it shall not look weak, nor at its base heavy, is so extremely difficult, and a problem that requires a Wren to solve. Here the eye is prevented from feeling a void at the angles of the octagon by the vertical range of louver boards that run from face to face, also by the urns that sentinel the spire, and, as you look up, come in between the other urns of lantern, which, with leaping tongues of flame, playfully sport the eye as it wanders up and around this steeple top. Again, these simple horizontal lines at centre of spire unite the cap with its base mould, just as the elliptic forms give sense of quiet motion to these decorative features above and between them. The lantern base having a good deal of interest in itself, Wren does not pierce the parapet, but merely panels it in simplest manner.

In this important street, the architect was obliged to give his church a good façade, yet he wished to have a lantern above. This introduced a great

difficulty in design; but Wren has managed to give great interest to both façade and lantern, without detriment to either, or without violation of its unity in design.

St. George,

BILLINGSGATE: *rebuilt* 1679.

A square stone tower; foil to the rich structures of St. Magnus, St. Margaret Pattens, and St. Dunstan, that surround this. To give height to the tower, without bringing its parapet up to the shoulder of St. Margaret Pattens, seen on the horizon next to this, Wren has made the walls slightly to incline inwards, the mouldings of belfry-window being kept vertical on face, so that the head projects farther from the front of the tower than the foot, thus producing a not unpleasant effect.

The main cornice looks exceedingly well, as seen from George Lane below; but, when seen from a distance, it looks unsatisfactory and poor: the reason to be found in that huge 'cima' moulding under the full shadowing fascia mould above. We may note, when looking at this tower, how essential a feature are these low urns that finish the tower, and how inappropriate, where height is not the dominant idea of a tower, are pinnacles such as those usually placed on fourteenth-century towers, and aptly likened, by Professor Ruskin, to the legs of a table topsy-turvy in the air.

There is some good carving to be seen on the doorway of this church.

St. James,

GARLICK HITHE: *rebuilt* 1682.

A corresponding character of design to St. Stephen, Walbrook: yet not of quite so severe treatment; nor is the detail here so fine as in St. Michael Royal; but the effect of the whole is more pleasing from a distance. In the steeple there is perhaps a redundancy of lines, and it would have been better had the louver boards in the openings been omitted. However, the louver boards in belfry-window are especially nice, and not to be wished away.

St. James,

PICCADILLY: *built* 1683.

The tower is by Wren; but the belfry is the work and design of the 'King's Carpenter,'—who, by an estimate £5 cheaper than Wren's, ousted the architect from chance of completing his work.

Were he alive, there are not a few well-meaning people who would now ask Michael Angelo and Tom Mason to tender for a 'job,' and think they had done a good stroke of business in accepting the estimate of the latter.

But the sharp man of business was not born yesterday!

St. Lawrence,OLD JEWRY: *rebuilt* 1680.

This tower and lantern is a design full of individual character; the lantern most original in its stern strength of treatment; and when seen from close below, giving, with angle pyramids of tower, a richly broken outline. The balustrade is especially beautiful, as is also the square panelled treatment of tower-windows, that keep and accentuate the rectilinear character of the entire design.

The tower, from exigencies of site, is not square, but the lantern is so: hence, when seen from a little distance, the lines of lantern and tower come somewhat awkwardly.

The string-course between windows is very rich and large in design.

St. Magnus the Martyr,FISH STREET HILL: *built* 1680, *tower* 1705.

This tower occupied a very important position in Wren's time; for as you passed from over the water to London, by the old bridge, it was the first and most prominent building that gladdened the eye, standing as it did at the head of London Bridge,—thus suggesting to the architect strong reasons for

bringing it out from the body of the building to which it belongs; for treating it with a not too boastful majesty, and also for giving it a suavity, consistent with such stateliness of form, as might sample, yet not overlaud the beauty and richness of its companion buildings. While giving it strength and mass by repetition of horizontal bands about its centre, Wren has added to its actual elevation by the treatment above, where lightness is given by the two open lanterns, and vertical impetus to the whole by the high-sweeping curve of the crowning cupola roof. The variety introduced by these two curves of lower and upper lantern is quite charming, and prepares one for the bold sweep and delicate finish of Paul's dome, while the upper stage of tower foreshadows St. Mary-le-Bow's even more magnificent design.

In Spain and in France similar types of tower-roof are found, built a little earlier than this; but none show such a complete absence of the fantastic, none such grace in moving dignity, none such calm mastery of design. In rebuilding this church, the architect, foreseeing a need of widening the road and bridge for increased traffic at some future day, built his tower on arches that the footway might pass underneath, and so the tower avoid its own destruction. But the churchwardens overruled in this; which obliged Wren to conceal the existence of these arches he was determined to build by bricking them up. And

it was not till the foreseen alteration took place,* and the workmen were making the footway, that the arches were found, ready for the path to pass under.

But this building of the arches required careful adjustment above, lest the open character of the lower part should contend with the lighter stages above. Each flank Wren accordingly binds, just above the arches, with many massive bands of moulding, that at once counteract the appearance of lightness likely to mar the unity of so fine a design.

When seen from Gracechurch Street, opposite Talbot Court, this steeple is brought into juxtaposition with the Monument, to the benefit of both: the monumental column bringing out the richness of the tower's architecture, and its finial, by boldness of changing outline, showing to greatest advantage the steeple's softness of finish. Again, this tower taken away from beside the column, that with like fiery ambition to the flames it commemorates, springs straight to the heavens, and thereupon the Monument drops a sixth of its height, so helpful are these to each other.

As you walk down Fish Street Hill, and near the tower, you may see again how valuable in composition of outline are these dormers of the dome.

* In 1760, when the church was undergoing repair, its roof having been destroyed by fire.

It is interesting to compare this tower with that of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, built during Wren's lifetime : how like in general form ; how marvellously unlike in 'character.' As with man's make, so also with man's work.

St. Margaret,

LOTHBURY : *rebuilt* 1690.

Not so satisfactory this. The outline too bold, the proportioning of parts forming lantern too similar, thus depriving it of character. Here again, as in St. Benet, we have an example of Wren's setting aside his general principle about use of carving, by sculpturing the surface. But its necessity in this case is evident, since a definite form linking door, portico and cornice, would have distributed too equally the architectural features, beside marring the concentration of interest above,—and hence the only possible thing here was carving.

St. Margaret Pattens,

(District of the patten makers,) LITTLE TOWER
STREET : *rebuilt* 1687.

Here we have an example of what may be done with severest Gothic form, by one whose strong individuality makes adamant seem plastic, easily impressionable to the softest touches of a master's

genius. Many and many a time have we seen this same form, and felt its hardness, harshness and coldness; as many times have we found grave fault with the form, as cause of our displeasure; but here, for the first time, we find we have unreasonably wronged the form. It is not the 'form' that pleases or dissatisfies, but the 'treatment.'

But look at this tower and spire, and see its strange simplicity; square window, straight top, and inclined roof. Who could use more simple elements in architecture? No builder of meanest shanty had been content with such restricted features—yet how fine, supremely fine, is this design,—so exquisitely chaste in its purity of line, so gentle in its uprising motion, as it lifts itself, with conscious air of queenly superiority, above the meaner buildings, low dwarfed, around. The sense of stern height that is thus expressed by view of this spire, is much accentuated and multiplied by these four obelisk pinnacles that companion it, and to an extent far greater, and in a way more beautiful than is usual, when pinnacles of the ordinary Gothic form—tops studded over with crockets—crown the parapet. Here their pleasing effect in intensification of towering height, as also their complete harmony with spire, is due to the fact that from their base these pinnacles taper to their top, and maintain their oblique angle lines unbroken by carving.

The delicate panelling and varied forms of open

ing that decorate the cone, make this spire appear much larger than it actually is; thus deceiving the eye into enjoyment of seeming magnitude, without risk of realizing actual massiveness. The tower, likewise, in just harmony with the sentiment of its spire, is kept very flat and simple, the eye, after resting awhile on the soft lines of that square belfry window, turning quickly to the parapet, on its unhindered sweep to the summit of spire, following the quiet yet strong upward impetus of the whole design.

The mouldings of the tower are worth careful study, for they are of unusual proportion, being very fine in section and thin in depth; but with an extraordinary boldness of projection that makes them doubly effective.

The tower is best seen from bottom of St. Mary's Hill, where it looks quite queenly in its courtly grace and dignity.

(Lately this spire has been re-covered with lead.)

St. Martin,

LUDGATE: *built* 1684.

Referred to in essay, pages 28 and 54.

St. Mary Abchurch,ABCHURCH LANE: *rebuilt* 1685.

Here, in Abchurch Yard, we see the sympathetic grouping of steeple and church. We marvel at the strange simplicity of means employed, to produce so grand an effect. For what could be more devoid of ornament, or fancy of architectural feature; yet what look more splendid in its largeness and breadth of character, than this? Here is a lack of richness that is not the begging want of poverty, but the reserve of bridled power; since, with the slightest expenditure of means, and simplest use of material, this prince of builders will yet be magnificent in outlay of surface, and show not less his power by just a sweep of hand in rounding of an arch.

For resoluteness of character, and simplicity of conception, this church and steeple is unparalleled: its deep ruddy tower, as seen from Sherborne Lane, set about with quoin and girdles of pale silvery stone, twice deepening the dark of its lantern roof above, producing a most telling effect in pleasing change of tones.

In the church roof we may note how pleasantly this elliptic dormer focusses and pulls together the whole composition of this side.

On the west side, next the tower, this large window has been filled in with mullions, and the

mason allowed to stop-chamfer the edges of Wren's window. These men who thus meddle with great work to spoil it, are too small of soul to appreciate the beauty of a simple surface—too frightened to leave a plain un moulded edge.

(The roof of church was formerly leaded.)

St. Mary Aldermary,

QUEEN VICTORIA STREET : *rebuilt* 1711.

The lower portion of this tower is ancient. How far Wren, in the rebuilding, kept to the general design of the original fabric is uncertain, but certain it is he remodelled all the details; for you can read his handwriting everywhere, especially in the delicacy of the turret panelling, in the treatment of uppermost string that stands for cornice, in the exquisite curvature of pinnacles, with their bold finial tops. The strong insistence on one leading idea may or may not be Wren's,—a true Goth might have done it; but none other than Wren could have combined, in carrying it out, so much delicacy with so much strength.

No one needs telling the church has been rebuilt by some modern, as devoid of character as of feeling. You may well compare windows, parapet and pinnacles of tower with like features in the church; and the different treatment will tell you just the difference there was between the man who saw

through his own soul's eye, spoke from his own great heart, and the man who could but mimic the tone of another's voice, and repeat a few of the commoner words picked out from the every day converse of the mind he aspired to possess.

St. Mary Aldermanbury,

ALDERMANBURY: *rebuilt* 1680.

The lantern of this tower may, perhaps, have been worked out from a sketch by Wren, but certainly was not erected by him. The east end of the church is a fine and exceedingly bold design, so evidently thought out as a whole; for those huge scrolls, that are drawn with so much character, would be out of all proportion to the window, were there not these doors and circular windows on either side. Thus their size is determined by position of these doors, just as their curves are determined by the shape of the circular windows beside them—a fact most will recognize on viewing this east end. However, the broad effect of this once fine façade has been much marred by the impudence of ecclesiastical vandalism, that has replaced the original round or oval windows, with their carved mouldings, by these with filled-in tracery; and has likewise filled in each window of aisle. If, however, she indeed have need to narrow her lights, she might at least do it with grace.

St. Mary-le-Bow,

CHEAPSIDE : *rebuilt* 1672-77.

Queen of city steeples, in bearing of ease, in lightness, and stately dignity of form, first among her fellows, pure to the soul, and pleasing to the eyes. Richer in design than any, it is more majestic than any. And excellent in unity of conception as are the others, this is the most perfect form, and figures but one harmonious thought. A work that is a true reflex of the cathedral, being an arrangement of the same design, in altered proportion, and diminished scale ; having all the elements of the composition, forming central portion of St. Paul's, one feature only being materially altered—namely, the cupola, that here finds its echo in this domical arrangement of truss, which supports the stage above that corresponding to the columniated drum of the cathedral.

This design is, indeed, so full of life and buoyant sentiment, that often, when looking up at the spire, these columns have seemed to be moving ; dancing round the drum in ordered and measured step, as the hours are often depicted dancing their ceaseless round.

Further : to draw attention to points of beauty.

How could there be given greater insistence on the vertical lines than is done in the upper portion

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of this steeple ; and again, what could be more resolutely horizontal in character, than the lower portion ; yet, how quiet the transition between these contrasting portions, where sleeping lines seem one by one to wake, and lift themselves up, till they climb each over other, in eager desire to lead the eye upward, to the dragon high poised in mid air above.

And, in no less able way, only to be appreciated by those who have experienced the difficulties of architectural design, has Wren united tower to steeple. The character of the two being radically opposed, —below all breadth of surface and horizontality of line, above all columniated and vertical,—yet these angle pinnacles over belfry stage are alone responsible for effecting the transition ; a fact patent to any who but look at the tower, whilst hiding the pinnacles.

Lastly, the growing richness of stage after stage, as the eye journeys gently up the tower, from the base to the dragon above, is a great source of beauty ; as is, no less, the concentration of chief interest in one portion of the design.

The effect, beautiful even when seen by itself, is, however, enhanced by its position and surroundings ; for, think how great variety of design you get given you, in the towers that surround Bow steeple. We have St. Stephen, Walbrook ; St. Matthew, Friday Street ; St. Vedast, Foster Lane ; St. Augustine,

St. Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside. 97

Watling Street; St. Mildred; Poultry; All Hallows, Bread Street, (now pulled down).

What a glorious company this! Each one full of character, and each only wanting the presence of its companions to bring this character out into fullest effect.

We may well ask here, when will London know what it owes to him, who has adorned her streets with such unparalleled monumental beauty? or where in the world can be seen such another cluster of so superb architectural grandeur?

This steeple was taken down by Gwilt in 1820, and when re-erected, the topmost columniated stage was built in granite, thus marring the soft silvery effect given by the Portland stone, as originally used, beside making unpleasantly hard all linear mouldings, where more than ever elsewhere they should be as softened as is possible.

In the rebuilding, Wren advanced the steeple about forty feet, erecting it on the walls of a Roman temple, some portion of the church being founded on the 'arches' or 'bows' of a Norman church, now to be seen in the crypt. Hence the name of the consistory court—'Court of Arches'—till quite lately held here.

St. Mary at Hill,THAMES STREET : *rebuilt* 1678.

This stout squat brick tower, with angle knit quoins and square machicolated parapet, was built at the end of last century, and is not worthy of any note. The only interest that attaches to this tower is in its doorway, which has some delicate beauty, and may be by Adams, as it has his grace and justness of proportion, yet wants the character and boldness of Wren, a portion of whose work alone remains in the east end of this church.

St. Mary Magdalen,KNIGHTRIDER STREET : *rebuilt* 1685.

As when the fleetest and fieriest of Arab steeds, reined to marching pace, shows speed and spirit no less in action of neck, nostril, and limb ; so this master architect, wealthiest in store of original conceptions, shows his richness of imagination in so unassuming reserve of its full achievement ; feeling evidently the greater majesty of hard-bridled speech—words few and simple—because of their weight of thought-burdened import.

Perfect, as only a few choice things in all the world's work are perfect, is this little gem of mind-wrought work. Pure also as perfect ; and

clear of any alloy of erring thought, or faulty temper. For not so much as a hair's breadth anywhere, could the proportions of these parts be altered with improvement; nor in smallest conceivable way could any of the forms be bettered.

It is beyond praise; and its beauty too subtle to bear criticism.

St. Mary Somerset,

THAMES STREET: *rebuilt* 1695.

Fortunately, when the church was demolished, this noble tower was left to memorialize the beauty of its bride. Lovely widower, looking much forlorn and not a little the worse for being thus left to stand alone; since here and there fragments of moulding have been broken away, and no seemly care keeps it safe from ruffian hands.

As a whole, one can imagine improvements; but, considered in its details, nothing could well be finer. Every feature is subtly chastened into perfectest form: each part nicely adjusted to every other. For example, in series of cornice and strings, there is an order of decreasing proportion in projection, determining magnitude of each, from boldest cornice of door, (now broken away,) to faintly projecting string just under main cornice. This decreasing order is counterplay to inverse order formed of door head

and main cornice, which, crowning all, is greater than all.

Then, again, the mouldings of windows gradually grow less as stage mounts above stage, till in belfry window the chasing of mouldings becomes as soft as the lining of a brow.

But we find another feature in this tower showing the extraordinary care and finish bestowed upon it. The walls are not straight : they are given a parabolic form, whose soft and varied curvature endows the whole with rare grace and vitality of form, nowhere else in the same degree realised.

Wren knew when he had designed this, he had done a great work : saying to himself, as he wrought out his thoughts into one welded whole of glorious fashion,

"This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion . . ."

In his joy of success bursting out into this laugh over all ; and letting his fancy free to sport itself in quaint devising of these crowing pinnacles that play on the parapet, while business gloomily drudges below.

St. Mary Woolnoth,

KING WILLIAM STREET: *rebuilt* 1719.

Here, one cannot refrain from referring to this mass of piled up plagiarism, put together by a pupil

of Wren; whose training never was able to refine his native coarseness, that some, in their criticism of this composition, have glorified by the name of boldness: yet the gulf between this and Wren's work is too broad to need critical measurement. I mention it, only because it has been thought by some worthy of the praise it has received by archæologists incapable of discriminating between what is fine and what is eccentric,—a praise likely to depreciate, while it lasts, all good work of this time.

St. Matthew,

FRIDAY STREET: *rebuilt* 1685.

Posted all over with placards inviting tenders for purchase of its materials. By the time this comes from the press, one stone, I fear, will not be left on another, and instead of a deserted church, we shall find, on visiting its site, a superbly ornamented warehouse, standing staunch and strong on its cast iron legs, proud of its "practical" office and shoplike display of cheap art, deign it to have any show of art at all. The exigencies of trade!!!

The simple brick tower, clear of any kind of architectural feature, though not by Wren, has at least for so many years done humble service to its richly designed companions, by ministry of inoffensive simplicity. Wren was often extremely simple and severe,

but there was always "character"; always, too, a delicate touch somewhere, like the one extra word that good grace impels in simple order to menial; and so shows life of soul—the man, not master only. This character, this touch for the sake of the soul it satisfies, we do not find here—and this my reason for saying it is not Wren's work.

With regard to the church proper, its destruction will indeed bring a loss, for this splendid range of five repeated windows, with their carved archivolt, sculptured caps and cherubic keystones, is very fine, having an elegance rare in these churches, and withal crowned by a cornice of very individual design and speaking boldness of moulding.

However, in the case of a people that dare not use a building, originally and heretofore set apart to worship in, for any kind of commerce rightly serviceable to man, we must be pardoned once for all when thinking either its idea of mundane life wretched indeed, or its trade not as honest as it might well be.

St. Michael Bassishaw (Basing's Hall),

BASINGHALL STREET: *rebuilt* 1680.

This tower looks best when seen from the north-east corner, so as to get in view two of its sides. The lantern is full of character, and of an originality which, with familiarity, is found very beautiful. From

this standpoint, we may see the fine double sweep that is given to the coping of nave and aisle roof at east end ; and should then also note the way in which the buttress is brought up against the curve. A lesson here, if they will receive it, for the moderns, who repeat so slavishly the angularities of steep gable outlines on the façades of their churches.

St. Michael,

CORNHILL : *rebuilt 1672 ; tower 1722.*

On entering the City from one of the chief gates,—that of Bishopsgate—this was the first tower to be seen ; hence its large gift of dignity and importance.

Not so refined as St. Alban, but bolder and stronger, it is a truly grand conception, wrought out with all the might and the soul of a great man, a work having all the “go” and glory of Gothic art, without its wanton fantasy, or chill apathy of sentiment : the tower lifting itself aloft with all the pride and importance of classic grandeur ; with all the vigour, too, and pleasant play that enliven mediæval architecture.

The type of design was suggested by that noble tower of Magdalen, Oxford ; but the old type becomes a new creation after having passed through a mind such as Wren’s.

The bold treatment of the tower windows, with their very original tracery, and jambs scooped into

such telling mouldings, is very fine; as finely designed as are the angle buttress turrets which mount up so strongly, growing richer and richer in fulness of detail, as they get free of the church, till well above the parapets they burst out into flower of gracefullest form,* adding as much height as richness to the tower.

With true artistic propriety, the parapet keeps and accentuates the vertical character of the whole design, the pierced tracery being as light as fretted stone may well be, without appearing weak. Indeed, there is no weak point, nor unstudied part in the whole work; for where its prototype has been feeble, this is strong; where it has been hard, this is made soft, as in the curves over belfry windows, which become under Wren's hand soft and full, such as those that give so great dignity and repose to Romanesque architecture.

With this magnificent largesse in art, compare the doorway lately added to the church by the Gothic revivalists, who have here caricatured, unconsciously we fear, all the faults of Gothic art, as the classic revivalists have caricatured, in such buildings as the Bank and the British Museum, the common faults of classic art; neither being able to give so much as a feeble suggestion of the energy the one possesses,

* Compare these tower pinnacles, in grace of line, with the fairest you can find built previous to those, and mark well the difference.

nor so much as the slightest sense of the refinement found in the other style, to redeem the dryness or coarseness of their mimic composition. Who would not shrink back from this churchyard Gothic, that would fain cover its ghastly skeleton of a dug up design, by thin tapestry of inane ornament—ornament whose thinness and meagreness is made more apparent by the way the decoration is smeared in even degree over the entire surface; even not sparing the buttress—that feature which, of all others, should look solid and broad, but which in this case must have its greed of carving satisfied, its surface broken, its mass weakened by panelled sculpture in its midst.

Above, we see the core; below, the crust of Gothic art.

Thus, with this smallness and this largeness in contiguous presence; with this life and this death in one building, we get the completest contrasts it is possible to get in art, as no less in individual character. The porch, like the mealy verbosity of one dull of brain and dead of heart, who masks his sterility of ideas by loose redundance of words; while the upper portion of the tower is as the simple language of a great soul, large of heart and resolute of purpose,—one whose full-burdened ideas, destined to move and to stir well-springs of thought, need only clear statement and exactness of language to give them effect, and thus turn commonplace talk

into perfectest oratory. But each, we must allow, has his audience—the dead to the dead, the quick to the quick.

From the little garden of Bell Yard, both church and tower may well be seen; and here you will not need to be warned against attributing the side windows to Wren, for they are so evidently out of harmony with the conception of the building as a whole—and so different from the simple circular windows which were originally placed here: the tower being jealous of more than simplest entertainment below.

Some day when the sun is on this tower, it should be seen from London Bridge, whence it looks most magnificent.

When Scott and Williams added porch, they repaired and slightly altered second stage of tower, by introduction of this west window.

St. Michael,

WOOD STREET: *rebuilt* 1675.

This tower was recased by Wren, the lower window being shortened and receiving a new arch, while above a circular window was added, and the low tower surmounted by simplest of spires. But there are two things to note about this spire: first, its form, which is of no ordinary plan. The cardinal sides of the octagon are larger than the obliquely set sides, that

are recessed back, thus giving greater complexity to the conical form, and varied strength to its light and shade. In the second place, the spire is terminated before its point gets so thin as to look weak, by this square blunt top, which makes the whole cone appear thicker, without giving it appearance of undue heaviness ; a treatment likewise notable in the case of St. Mildred, Poultry, and St. Swithin, Cannon Street.

St. Michael Royal,

COLLEGE HILL: *rebuilt* 1694.

A design of like character to Christ Church, Newgate Street ; this being circular in treatment, while the latter is square. Considering the steeple by itself, its proportions are as perfect as its design ; but when seen from some distance (from opposite Cannon Street station, for instance), where its relation to the tower is shown, the effect is decidedly unsatisfactory ; here looking as though the tower had been built to one scale, the steeple to another too diminutive for the tower.

However, when seen from below, in College Hill, the whole looks grand, rich in form, and perfect in proportion, the steep perspective of the top of tower greatly helping the upper portion. This, along with St. Stephen and St. James, aids in distributing among the sister churches the general design of St. Paul's west portico towers.

St. Mildred,BREAD STREET: *rebuilt* 1683.

An obelisk lantern, forming pleasant change from St. Augustine, Watling Street, before its curved spire was removed. How beautifully the lower curve ripples up to the base of this obelisk, its wave-crests forming feet and cornice of angle buttress above, where by delicate moulding and ranging-order of louver boards the eye is arrested to linger upon this central point of interest,—an interest nowhere excelled!

Standing on opposite side of Cannon Street, the west façade of the church—so magnificent in its breadth—is seen at an angle that makes the harmony of its curves very telling. Above, in the centre, we get a bold convex pediment swooping down to the sides, with wings of reverse curvature; below, a window head of similar curve, less strong, uniting a still quieter curve over door, with the pediment above.

On either side of the door is a circular window of recent insertion, not belonging to original design.

St. Nicholas, Cole Abbey,KNIGHTRIDER STREET: *rebuilt* 1630.

Much the same type as that of St. Edmund the

King, yet not nearly so fine an example; although a bold design, and one which Wren would hardly have worked out so grossly. The curve is very hard, both balcony and crown heavy and ill-proportioned, so that one is forced to think this is the work of a pupil, following a sketch by his master.

The tower, however, is very beautiful: so calm and grand a base for the concentrated interest above,—an interest that dawns first in the cornice, by the happy introduction into its horizontal lines, of the window's angular pediment. The surface of the tower is kept quiet and unrelieved by mouldings, delicate facets doing office for these with less obtrusiveness, while the arched head of belfry window is left of slightest surface relief, and so left to cut clean against the shadow of its opening.

The face of the tower being kept so quiet, the cornice must needs creep very gently out from the surface. First, a few finely projecting facets; then a retiring back, before it boldly thrusts its head moulds forward, to cast a deep set shadow below them, as base line for the dark of lantern above.

St. Olave,

HART STREET, MARK LANE: *restored* 1693.

No one who had become familiar with Wren's work, could pass this church and not see that he

had also been here. For the simple windows of that tower are surely Wren's; the exquisite lantern above without question. Its niceness of finish, no less than its "character" and just proportion, betray the hand that designed it. [As I walked from this church to-day I passed St. Helen, Bishopsgate, and looking long at its bell-cot above, thought how beautiful was this that heralded the lanterns of Wren. From its early date and distinctive character it becomes very interesting to us Londoners. In the doorway of this church (1633) you see from what vulgarities and unmeaning vagaries Inigo Jones and Wren purged English architecture.]

St. Olave,

OLD JEWRY: *rebuilt* 1679.

A simple tower of small size, though great beauty, from a peculiar treatment given to it by Wren for accentuation of its height. From the lower string course that forms cornice of church, the walls of tower slope gently inwards, producing an effect in which the panelled obelisks above play chief part; for their stronger obliquity makes the inward inclination appear curved-parabolic-wise, thus bringing these apparently converging curves to a common point, and forming a sort of invisible spire. You will

notice how pediment of clock unites the two side pediments by its similar angle and well adjusted position, forming at same time pleasing complement to the low curved pediment of door beneath.

St. Peter,

CORNHILL: *rebuilt* 1682.

Uniquely beautiful, giving in a terse and pronounced form the cardinal features of Wren's architectural conceptions. In the simplicity of its circular-headed openings, undraped by mouldings—single and large below, at once multiplied and divided above,—in its pleasing reiteration of horizontal bands of moulding, increasingly weighty and prominent as they mount,—and how exquisite these at the top,—in its quiet contrast of pilasters above, with broad unbroken wall space below, this example accentuates in an unusual degree, Wren's love of repose, of horizontality, and fond insistence upon simplicity of surface decoration.

The whole is a masterpiece of gravity and simple dignity in architecture. As matter of detail, note how the corners are treated: not so as to lose the angle, as would have been done in mediæval times, but so as to accentuate surfaces meeting at each corner. Again, how beautifully connected are the openings of lantern with those of belfry, by this full swollen cupola between, whose round dormer

light finds response in the circular opening of third stage, as does the cupola its echo in the golden ball tossed on top of all.

The tower's warm colour, kindling itself into a fiery red against the cold sky—sympathy of earth making the heaven seem chiller than ever—produces a beautiful effect in this little dull brick court of St. Peter's Alley. And, when walking out of this alley into Gracechurch Street, you feel you have left the companionship of a mighty mind, as you compare the stately dignity and force of this one concept of its brain life with the cast-iron frippery of Leadenhall Market, in its pigmy conceit of intellectual idiocy.

St. Stephen,

COLEMAN STREET: *rebuilt* 1680.

Here, belfry is but sheltering cot for the bell, and being very small, is broken in form. It is, however, rigid, stern, and strong, the best view being obtained from steps of 17, King's Arms Yard.

From a distance the lantern looks better, and may be seen well from King William Street.

St. Stephen,

WALBROOK: *rebuilt* 1681.

This tower was from the first covered by shops, that close gathered round its feet, and has accordingly

been treated merely as a support for the rich composition above, giving Wren as real occasion as welcome, for that concentration of effect he liked so much.

The square form of the steeple is here insisted on, to give value to the circular treatment of St. Mary-le-Bow; a treatment that gives it a peculiarly masculine character, in which rigidity and lightness are combined to an unusual degree. There is more thought given to this steeple in arrangement of its parts than is evident; and it is not till we come to study its proportions that we find out how exquisite they are, or how nice the balance of the whole.

For these columns and cornices are not tossed up against the sky in mere child's play, nor piled column on column as the Goth shot up his spire, or, again, as the Chaldees built Babel tower. But all is controlled by just principles of proportion, and determined by appropriateness of position.

Can any mediæval tower or spire compare with this for richness of form, for nobility of structure, and sensitiveness of proportion? Can any other example be found which in so small a space has so much interest, so much thought?

The sculptor Canova so greatly admired this church (though probably thinking mostly of the interior), that when asked if he wished again to visit England, replied, "Yes; that I might again see St. Paul's Cathedral, Somerset House, and St. Stephen's, Walbrook."

114 *St. Swithin, Cannon Street.*

The outside of this church has been generally, and up to the present day, deemed very inadequate in dignity and beauty to the exceeding grandeur of the interior, and from time to time architects have gone so far as to prepare plans for the fit glorification of the exterior. Happily their schemes have come to as little as their capacity of appreciation.

The steeple is best seen through the opening of Bucklersbury, in Queen Victoria Street.

St. Swithin,

CANNON STREET: *rebuilt* 1680.

Seen best from the quiet little garden of Salter's Court. One of Wren's severe foils to his finest compositions; not pleasant to those unfamiliar with its gentler and more richly endowed companions, but beautiful to those whose minds vision the remainder that complete its harmony.

The whole is severe and original, especially the inward sweep of the tower's square shoulders, that, though severe, have no uncouthness; for see how true is that curve at these angles, and how delicate the projection of the oval windows that peep out from each alternate flank of the conical spire: a spire whose finish is especially worth noting,—no weak needle-point, with bristly finial balanced on its point, terminates it, but a ball set in very obtuse

point completes spire, an arrangement adding more than many will credit to the strength of the whole design.

There is something very grim and strange about this steeple!

The windows of this fine façade have all been filled in of late years; the mullions, etc., being finished by the usual chamfers, that with carpenter and quarry mason stand for moulding.

St. Vedast,

FOSTER LANE: *rebuilt* 1677; *steeple* 1695.

Referred to in Essay, page 44.

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS.

NO. I. ABSTRACT.

Important mechanical inventions at home ;—International commerce ;—World-wide travel, and brain tempests abroad ; bring within our reach extraordinary powers and new experiences ; producing great mental changes, that eventually show themselves in a more accurate and humanistic science—a more refined and varied art.

No. 1. CONCRETE.

Telescopes first used, *c.* 1590.—Printing comes into common use.—Favourite enterprise is travel: Drake's first voyage round the world, 1545-96; J. Davis's voyages in search of north-west passage, 1585—1605; J. Hawkins, 1520-95; R. Hakluyt's collection of voyages by Englishmen still further stimulates nascent desire for travel, 1589.—Perfection of mechanics gives impetus to industries that are further stimulated by advent of Dutch refugees, 1567.—Formation of English colonies in North America and elsewhere, 1550—1600.—Trading companies formed; East India Company, 1600.—Importation of immense stores of ancient literature.

NO. 2. ABSTRACT.

These changes stimulated and directed by fresh influences of the many cultured peoples thus brought into contact with us ; giving rise to general imitation of foreign manners and styles.—“Euphuism” in literature and architecture, each characterised by the quaintness and fantasy that belong to the “romantic” period, yet with introduction of classical metaphor into the one, of classical ornament into the other. —All authors and designers sedulously study ancient works of art and literature.

No. 2. CONCRETE.

Refugees from Holland, seat of classic learning.—Hanse and Florentine merchants live in London.—Intimate connexion with courtly and luxurious France.—Expulsion of Huguenots, 1685.—Dispersion of monastic orders, followed by dissemination of their knowledge of natural history and dead languages, initiating system of popular education.—Travellers to Italy and Greece publish drawings.—Italian influence at Paris with Catharine de Medicis comes to England through court connexions, aided by Charles' Continental tour.—French classicism imported, along with the exuberance, triviality, and show, native to everything Parisian.—Through advent of Flemish scenic painters, who bring here anomalous art, Flemish architecture and Dutch gardening become fashionable: Zucchero, 1543—1616; Holbein, designer of porch at Wilton, 1559—1641; Rubens, painter of roof, Banqueting Hall, Whitehall, etc., 1577—1640; Vandyke, 1598—1641; Rembrandt, 1606-74.—Romantic architecture: Wollaton House, 1591; Gateway of Herriot's Hospital, Edinburgh, 1628; Hatfield House, 1611.—Romantic literature: Lyly's "Eupheus," 1579; Sir P. Sidney's "Arcadia," 1580; Spenser's "Faerie Queene," 1595.

No. 3. ABSTRACT.

These new powers stimulating study, research, and experiment, lead to discovery.—These new influences from abroad inculcate catholicity of thought and taste: conjointly evolving the critical spirit and initiating fervent desire for learning and love for art.—The new world-knowledge awakening minds to consciousness of general laws, to truer sense of “position” and “being” of man; favouring system, wedding art to science, and laying foundation for “history” and philosophy.

NO. 3. CONCRETE.

First public schools : Eton, 1440 ; St. Paul's, 1509 ; Christ's Hospital, 1553 ; Westminster, 1560 ; Merchant Taylors', 1561 ; Rugby, 1567 ; Harrow, 1571 ; Charter House, 1611.—First Greek lecture at Oxford, by Fox, 1517.—Art academies : French Academy, 1635 ; Académie des Beaux Arts, 1648 ; Académie d'Architecture, 1671.—Scientific societies: Royal Society, 1662 ; Académie des Sciences, 1666.—Kepler discovers his three laws, 1571—1630.—Laws of motion discovered by Galileo, 1564—1642.—Laws of gravitation by Newton, 1642—1727.—National law defined by Grotius "*De jure belli et pacis*," 1625.—"Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity," by Hooker (first "finished" prose work), 1594.—Sir P. Sidney's "Defense of Poesy" (first critical essay on laws of the drama,) 1581.—Palladio's "Treatise on Classic Orders of Architecture" becomes text-book, 1570.—Bacon's Essay "Advancement of Learning," 1605.—Laws of prosody studied.—Rigid adherence to the "unities" in all compositions.—Anatomy now first generally used as an aid to science and art.—Difficult architectural construction undertaken, as enormous domes: St. Paul's, 1675 ; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1683 ; Church of Carignano at Genoa, *cir.* 1550 ; Ste. Maria della Salute, Venice, by Longhena, 1632 ; Redentore at Venice, and Basilica at Vicenza, by Palladio, 1518-80 ; Les Invalides, Paris, 1680 ; and outlines necessitating complex construction ; St. Mary-le-Bow, 1677 ; St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, 1698 ; Contini's steeple, Zaragosa, 1685 ; Escorial, 1563, etc.—After accession of Charles I., every gentleman acquires a knowledge of art ; architecture becoming favourite "accomplishment."—First English newspaper, *Mercury*, by Lord Burleigh, 1588.

No. 4. ABSTRACT.

This fresh acquaintance with creations of the past—through translations, discoveries, and introduction of Italians—brings about strong reversion of the mind to antiquity, resulting in marked development of historical, archæological, and critical spirit. As fruit of these conjoint influences, we have appreciation of pagan philosophy and ethics, critical exactness of method and close imitation of classic models in all forms of analysis, in literature and architecture, both these passing from the “romantic” to the “scholastic” stage; quaint and flowery fantasy giving place to severe gravity, profound simplicity and largeness of manner. This pomp of life and pride of style contrast with, and at length destroy, that restraint of intellect and popular form of unreserved expression common to manners and ideas prevalent when the aristocracy was as untravelled and untutored as its thralls.

NO. 4. CONCRETE.

Chapman's Homer, 1598; Fairfax's translation of Tasso's "Jerusalem," 1600.—G. Gascoigne's translation of plays from Euripides and Ariosto, 1566.—G. Douglas, translation from Ovid, and Virgil, *Æneid* (first metrical translation from any Latin work), 1513.—Sir T. North's translation of Plutarch's Lives.—Bodleian Library, Oxford, 1597.—Translations from Demosthenes, Cicero, and numerous Greek and Latin plays.—Sloanean collection: commencement of British Museum, *c.* 1700.—Earl of Arundel makes collection of antique marbles, etc., at Oxford, *c.* 1600.—Italian artists in England: P. Torrigiano, tomb of Henry VII., 1519; terra cottas at Hampton Court Palace.—John of Padua, architect of Clare College, Cambridge, and Longleat, 1565-74.—Havenius of Cleves, Old Somerset House, 1549.—Bernini, architect of campanile and colonnade, St. Peter's, Rome, sculptor of monument in Old Chelsea Church (possibly responsible for conversion of Gothic capital—south arcade—into Renaissance capital), 1598—1680.—Inigo Jones goes to Italy for study; is court architect at Copenhagen; introduces into England pure elements of classic architecture, 1572—1652.—G. Buchanan's History, 1506-82.—John Stowe's English Chronicles, 1525—1605.—W. Camden's History and Antiquities, 1551—1603.—W. Raleigh's History of the World, 1552—1617.—H. B. Cotton, antiquarian, 1570—1631.—Dugdale, historian and antiquarian, 1686.—S.

Purchas, "Relations and Religions of the World," 1625.—Bossuet, 1617—1704.—Historical Poems of Drayton, Daniel, and Warner, 1595-98.—Bacon's Scholastic Essay, "Advancement of Learning," 1605.—Roger Ascham, Scholar, 1515-68.—Philosophy and Ethics of Plato and Aristotle studied.—Aristotelians: Melancthon, 1497—1560.—Revival of Stoicism by Just. Lipsius, 1547—1606.—Scholastic literature: Milton's Essays, 1640-60.—Lord Brooke's Poems, 1600-20.—Scholastic music: Palestrina perfects choral harmony, 1539-94.—Scholastic architecture: Fontainebleau, 1530; Louvre, early portion by Lescot, 1548; Tuileries built by Philibert de Lorme for Catherine de Medicis, 1564; Luxembourg, by De Brosse, 1611; Versailles, garden front by Mansard, 1681; Church of San Roch, and Palais Royal, by Le Mercier, c. 1640; Escorial, 1563; Library of St. Mark's, by Sansovino, 1532; Hotel de Ville, Amsterdam, by Van Camper, 1646; Somerset House, old river front, by Inigo Jones; Whitehall, 1619-21; Holland House, 1607; St. Paul's, Covent Garden, 1631; Gateway of the Schools, Oxford, by Holte, 1612.—Aristocracy come to live in cities, adding splendour to courts, learning to breeding, and vying each with each in pomp of architectural magnificence.

No. 5. ABSTRACT.

These social and mental changes, together with the commencing struggle between absolute and conditional power, between ancient right and modern might, give powerful impulse to politics, literature, and art, setting swing to general oscillation of old and new associations.

NO. 5. CONCRETE.

Struggle between people and king, Cavaliers and Roundheads: Edgehill, 1642; Republic, 1642; Restoration, 1660.—Between Papist and Puritan: Massacre of Protestants, 1641; Laud executed, 1643.—Antagonism between inductive and deductive reasoning: Controversies between “Materialists” and “Theosophists”; Aristotelians opposed by Bruno and Peter Ramus, founder of modern logic.—Battle of the “styles”: Classic and Gothic art; Doric columns and Pointed arches at Longford Castle, 1591; St. Michael’s, Cornhill, and St. Stephen’s, Walbrook, the work of the same man.—Political Tracts of Milton: “*Defensi pro populo Anglicano*,” 1651.—J. Hobbes’ “Leviathan,” 1651.—Sir R. Filmer’s “Patriarcha,” 1680.—J. Locke’s “Civil Government,” and “Letters on Toleration,” 1689-92.—Immense number of tractarians, critics, and dilettanti: Sir P. Sidney’s critical work, originating new form of literature, “Defense of Poetrie,” 1580-81; Ben Jonson, 1574—1637; Fletcher, 1575—1625.

NO. 6. ABSTRACT.

This general oscillation results in final beating out of the more vital impulses: in triumph of the new world wisdom, and establishment of political principles, which soon find means fittest to gratify the new love of earth life, and to call out the larger human sympathies now needing unrestricted play. The mind, set free from the metaphysical bands that till late have fast bound it, and the imagination excited by the treasures of the past it has acquired, together inaugurate the modern philosophic period, in which science becomes positive, literature social, art lyrical.

NO. 6. CONCRETE.

Bacon's "Novum Organon," 1620.—Newton's "Principia," 1686.—Materialistic philosophy of Thomas Hobbes, 1588—1679.—Locke combats notion of innate ideas, "Essay on the Human Understanding," 1690.—Spinoza introduces Pantheism, 1632-77.—Descartes initiates modern abstract philosophy, 1596—1650.—Michel de Montaigne starts hypothesis of "relativity of ideas," 1533-90.—Pascal, mathematician, 1623-62.—Boileau, 1636—1711.—Racine, 1639-99.—Corneille, 1606-84.—Molière, 1622-73.—Shakespeare's plays, 1564—1616.—Butler's "Hudibras," 1663.—Voltaire, 1694—1778.—D. Hume, 1711-76.—Algeron Sidney (republican), "Discourses upon Government," 1698.—G. Buchanan's tract, "*De jure regni apud Scotos*" (Essay upon public spirit), 1711.—Schools of international law in Holland and Germany, headed by Samuel Puffendorf: his "*Jurisprudentia Universalis*," and "*Jus Naturæ et Gentium*," 1632-94.—Locke's "Letters on Toleration," and "Essay on Civil Government," 1690; Liberty of the Press, 1692.—Cosmopolitanism: England takes chief part in European politics; J. Dennis' political play, "Liberty Asserted," 1704.—Philosophical poets: Milton introduces lyrics, 1608—1704; Dryden, 1631—1700; Pope, 1688—1744.

No. 7. ABSTRACT.

A school of architecture, painting, music, and literature arises, entirely national in character, philosophic in thought, free and spontaneous in sentiment; thus fully representing the spirit of the English Renaissance.

No. 7. CONCRETE.

English Renaissance architecture perfected by Sir C. Wren : City Churches, 1675—1711 ; St. Paul's, 1675 ; Greenwich Hospital ; Halls and Gates of London ; Theatre and Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1666—1723.—English School of Music founded by Purcell, 1658-95.—English School of Painting inaugurated by W. Hogarth, 1697—1764.—G. Kneller, 1648—1723.—Daniel de Foe, first of English novelists : “ Robinson Crusoe,” etc., 1663—1731.—J. Swift, 1667—1745.

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