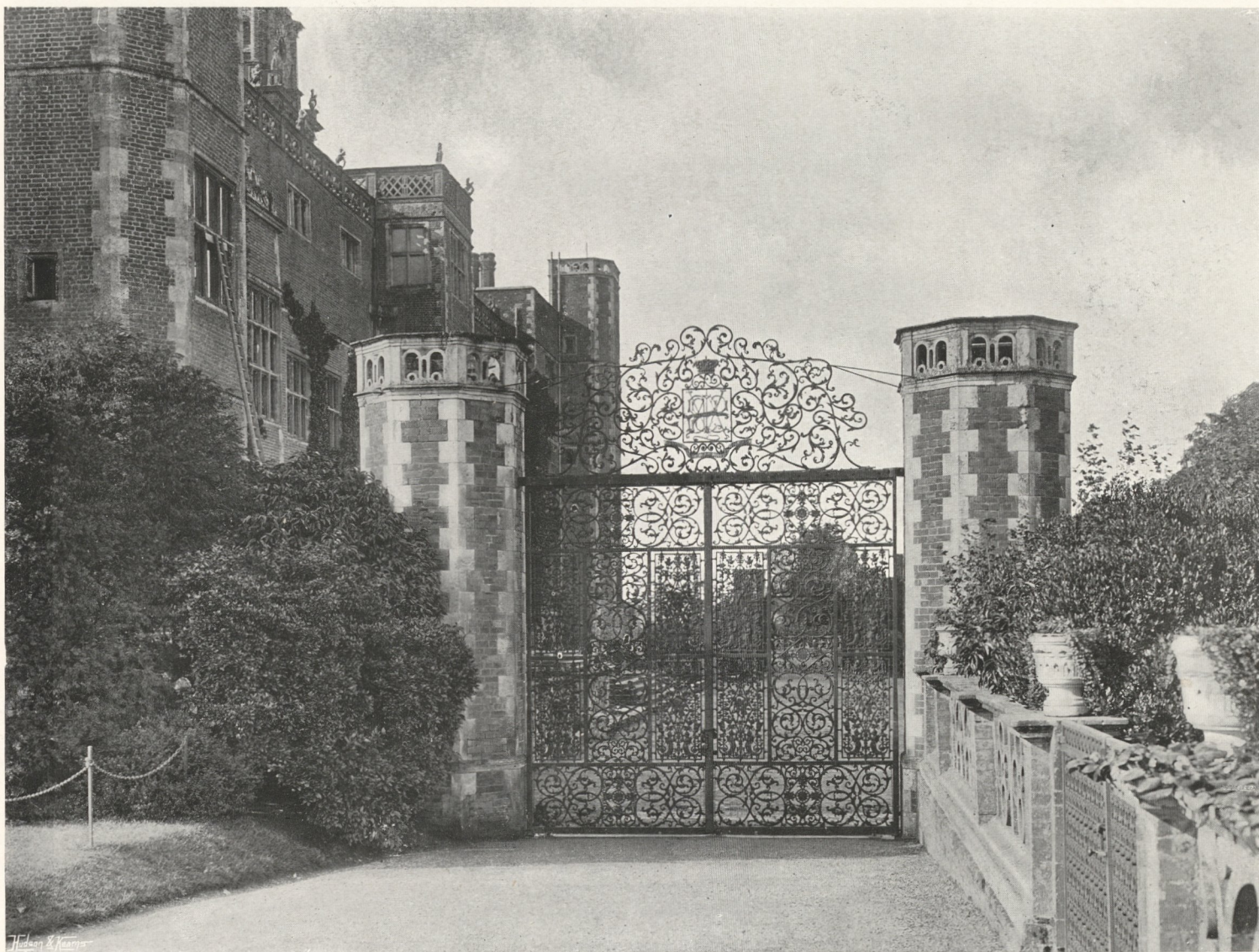


HATFIELD HOUSE, HERTFORDSHIRE.

THAT adroit statesman, the great Lord Burghley, who fills so ample a page in the annals of Tudor times, gave up the leisure of his well-filled life to the beautifying of his fine house at Theobalds. It was a goodly dwelling and a rich, invested with all those charms which were dear to the hearts of the Tudor Englishman, and surrounded by stately gardens very much to the mind of their creator. When James I. came South to take possession of that throne which right and fortune had given him, he found many things that took his fancy, and Theobalds among them. Some say, indeed, that it was his Queen who set her affections upon Lord Burghley's house. Sir Robert Cecil, younger son of the great statesman, who was raised by James to the earldom of Salisbury, had come into possession of Theobalds, and feeling, doubtless, that the wish

of the Sovereign was equivalent to a command, readily accepted the offer that was made to him. It was that he should surrender Theobalds in exchange for Hatfield, which was no mean place, nor in any way undesirable. The astute Secretary—"my little beagle," James called him, the "pigmy," "little man," or elf, as he has been styled—is said by some to have made a very good bargain. It would appear that he received in exchange more than double the value of Theobalds, and yet had the art to persuade the King and Queen that he had done them a considerable favour. It was in May, 1603, that James became enamoured of Theobalds, and, when the transfer had been made, the building of the new Hatfield began.

Bishop's Hatfield, or Cecil's Hatfield, as the Lord Treasurer would have called it, had been a possession and residence of the Bishops



THE EAST GATEWAY ON THE NORTH FRONT.

of Ely, but Henry VIII., in a way that was common with him, had converted it to his own uses, and it became a residence of Prince Edward, who, indeed, was living there when news was brought of his father's death. The Earl of Hertford with a train of nobles came to escort him to the metropolis, and thereafter Princess Elizabeth made it her customary abode. She

removed to Hatfield Place in 1555, and was placed under the charge of Sir Thomas Pope. There were professors for her education, and she employed herself in playing on the lute or the virginal, in embroidering with gold and silver, or in reading Greek and translating Latin. Sir Thomas Pope was all for blending recreation with serious employment, and at Shrovetide, in



THE MARBLE HALL, EAST END.



THE WEST SCREEN OF THE MARBLE HALL.

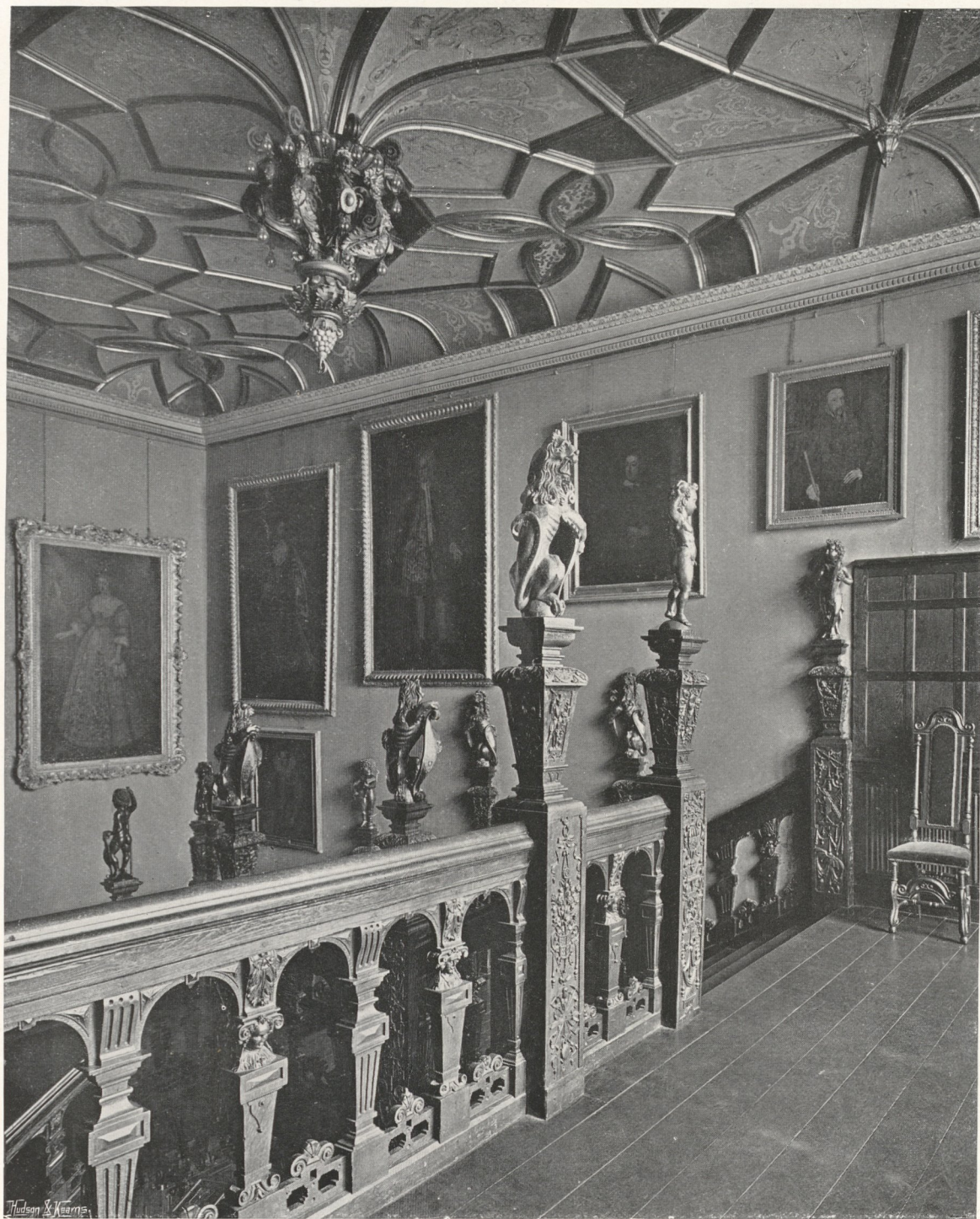
1556, he organised a great masque for her entertainment, with pageants "marvellously furnished," and the play of "Holophernes." But Queen Mary greatly disliked what she described as "these folleries," and so they came to an end. It is stated that Elizabeth, on a dark day in November, was seated beneath an oak—now shorn of its splendour, but still putting

forth its green, and of which Queen Victoria is said to have brought away the last acorn—when news was brought to her of Mary's death. The leading men in the country immediately gathered about her, and, with Cecil as her principal secretary, she held her first Privy Council at Hatfield, and three days afterwards set out for London with 1,000 gentlemen for her escort.

Lord Salisbury's magnificent house is not that in which Elizabeth dwelt. Some part of the old palace, however, still remains, and is carefully preserved, the central gateway now serving as the strangers' entrance to Hatfield House and park. Robert Cecil, like his father, and like most great men of the time, was a splendid builder. Some say that in his new Hatfield he was his own architect. Others have ascribed the building to the famous John Thorpe, and it is certainly in

that Leicester had added his "lodgings" to Kenilworth, that Sir John Thynne was engaged upon Longleat, and that the great house of Audley End was building. The work went on energetically, and the impressive majesty of the structure, its lofty grandeur, and the richness of its windows and adornments, and, not least, the fine grouping of its parts, giving rich play of light and shade, place Hatfield among the most notable of all the great mansions of that very remarkable time.

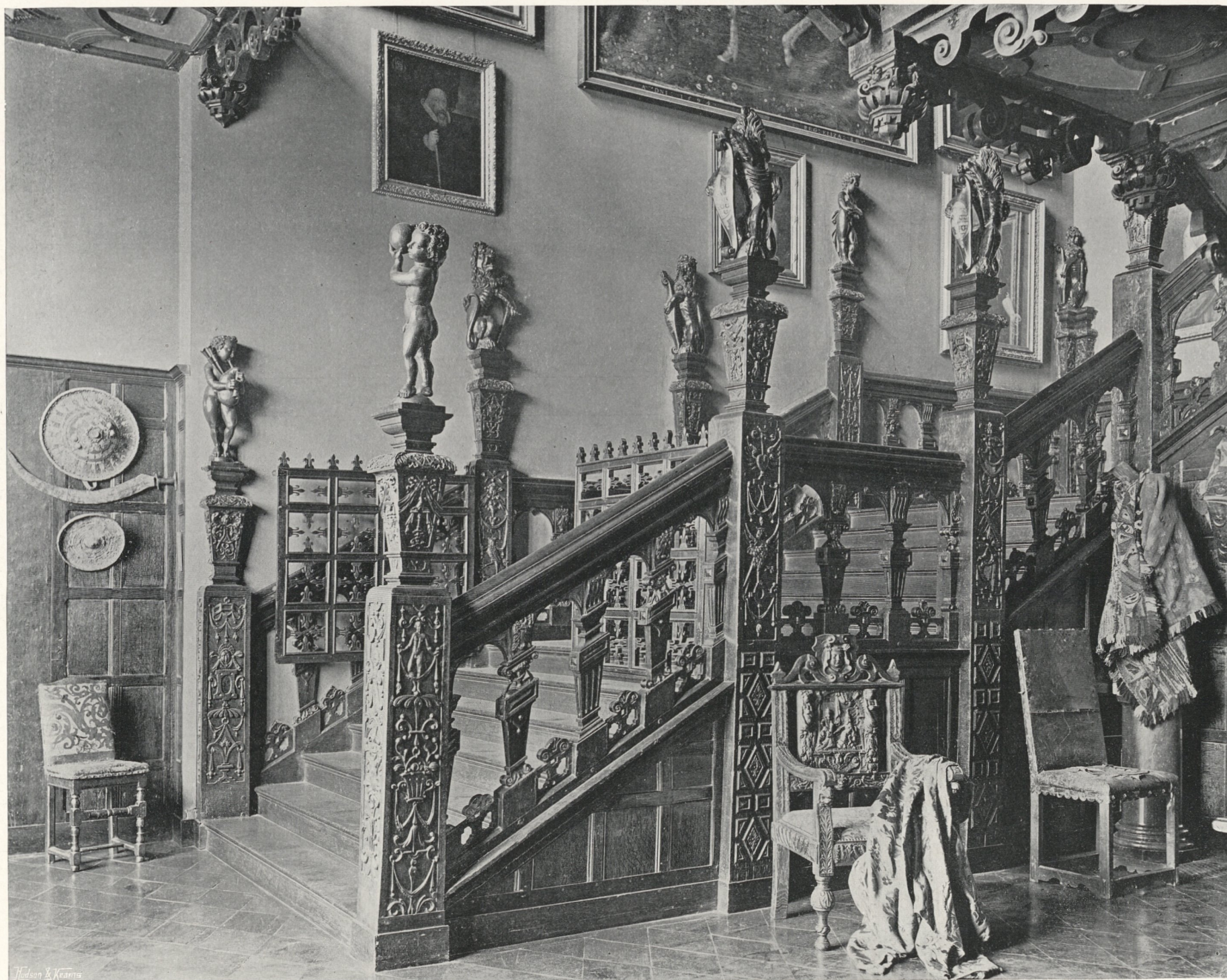
The finest of English craftsmen, brick-carvers from Flanders, inlayers and plaster-workers from Florence and Venice, were engaged in the work, while Cecil earned something of the ill-will of his neighbours by enclosing a part of Hatfield Chase. Early in 1610 very substantial progress had been made, and a woodworker named Janivere, from France or Flanders, was engaged upon the wainscoting, chimney-pieces, and other woodwork, which still are chiefest among the internal beauties of Hatfield House. There is noble panelling, and the friezes, mouldings, and strap-work patterns are very rich, while the embellishments, especially of the staircase, are not surpassed anywhere in England. It is interesting to know that the house was built for what would appear to be a comparatively small sum. Of course, the change in the purchasing power of money explains the



THE GRAND STAIRWAY DESCENT.

Thorpe's style, but is not named in the list of his buildings in his book of plans. Cecil, no doubt, cast regretful looks upon Theobalds. Indeed, he told Sir Robert Lake that he "borrowed one day's retreat from London" to visit it. But he immediately set out to build the Hatfield which still stands, and in order to do so demolished three sides of the old quadrangle. It has been pointed out that, when Cecil built, Sir Thomas Lucy had already erected Charlecote, which presents interesting analogies to Hatfield,

fact. From accounts still preserved we learn that the expenditure was £7,631 11s. 3d., and some of the particulars are very interesting, since they throw some light upon the value of fine handicraft at the time. "Item, for cuttinge of 48 stone lyons, which stande in the openworke of masonrye about the house, for 11 tafferils more, for the carving of the pew heads in the chappell, the stone pedestalls in the openworke before the house, the chimney-piece in the upper chappell, and the Corinthian heads which stand



HATFIELD HOUSE.

THE GRAND STAIRWAY ASCENT.



THE FOOT OF THE GRAND STAIRWAY.

on the top of the stayre case, on the northe side of the house, all which comes to £130 14s. 2d."

Before we enter the house, it will be desirable to say something of its external character. Its plan is a parallelogram, 280ft. long by 70ft. wide on its south or principal front, with two wings, each projecting 100ft. and 80ft. wide, thus forming a hollow quadrangle. At the end of the noble avenue the visitor enters through admirable iron gates between lofty brick piers, the smaller portals on either side being in a very unusual framework of perforated brickwork, taking the form of quatrefoils. Through these gates the enclosed garden or forecourt is reached, with

arcade the pilasters run up, and there are beautiful windows, which light the Long Gallery, while above are gables of Flemish character, behind the perforated cresting. In the midst of this façade is the great porch, which has Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian columns in its three stages, and bears the date 1611, with the Cecil arms. The turrets with cupolas terminating the many-windowed wings of the house have all the Tudor character, and there are glorious bays, rising tier after tier, which have a noble effect both without and within. The usual entrance to the house is on the north front, which also is singularly attractive. It is plainer in character than the south front,



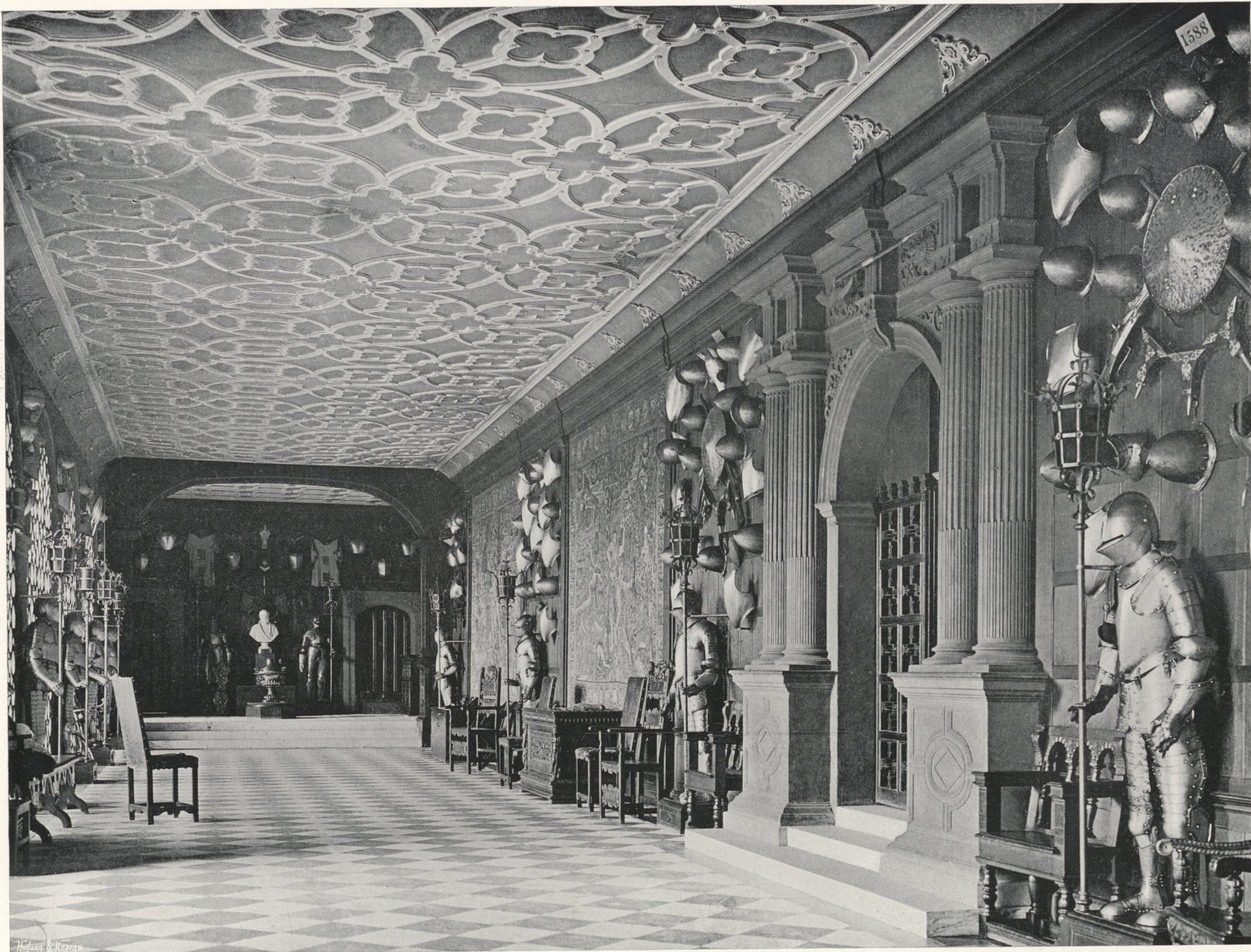
THE LIBRARY.

the magnificent façade of the house in front. The great central block is very noble, and has the character of the Italian Renaissance, freely and richly treated. There is a grand arcade on the ground level, its frontage being divided by fluted pilasters, with arabesque panelling, and the arches closed with perforated screens of stone, whose apertures are filled with glass. These enclose that long corridor known as the armoury, which is adorned with magnificent tapestry and has a grand strap-work ceiling. Upon its walls are fine pieces of sixteenth century armour, and there are armour-clad figures holding cressets on either side.

But to return to the exterior, above the

and its chief charm is in the fine colour of its brickwork, with stone facings, and in the magnificence of its windows and porch. On every side, indeed, the house has like attractions, and none can gainsay that it is one of the finest of such houses in the land.

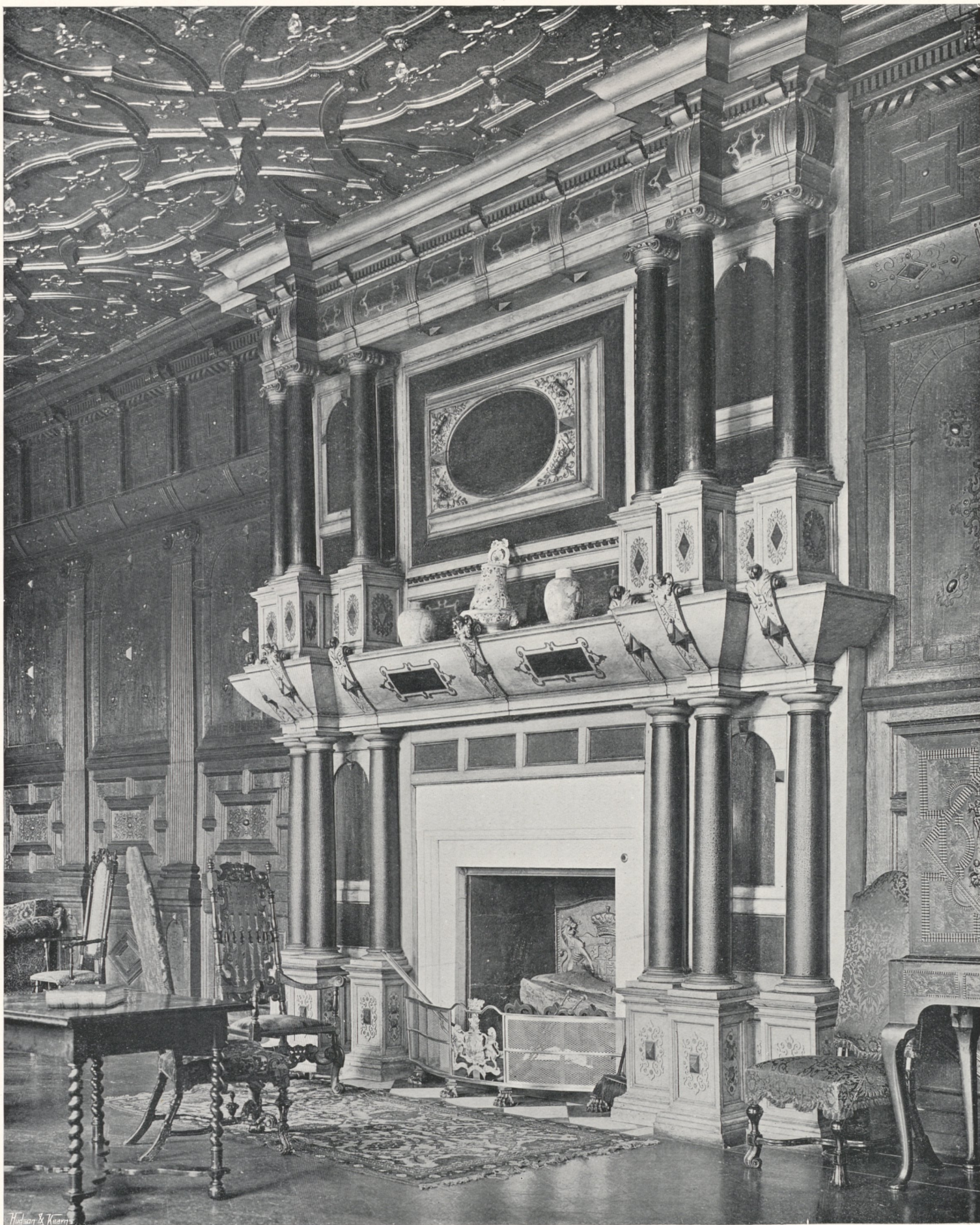
Sir Robert Cecil, the builder of Hatfield, did not live to witness the completion of his work. He was looking on, peopling his new house in imagination with the friends of his choice, and welcoming the Royal and the great at his portals, when Death touched him on the shoulder, and it was his son, William Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, who saw the full rounding of his hopes.



THE CLOISTER OR ARMOURY.



THE LONG GALLERY, LOOKING EAST.



A CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE LONG GALLERY.

How the house was built has been related, and what is its architectural character has been described. It belongs to that period of our history in which the full sunlight was welcomed into English abodes. The great windows bespeak the new spirit in the land. The older Englishman had lived more retired. The necessities of defence, the need of setting a strong barrier against the unwelcome stranger, the protection of moat and wall, the narrow loopholes, the steep-angled embrasures, the machicolated gateway and port-

cullis, had all given a somewhat forbidding aspect to the mediæval mansion. It was grand and imposing in its strength, and within was as beautiful as the old worker could make it, with carvings, tapestries, and hangings. Where that old worker excelled was in lavishing his reverent skill upon some tabernacle in stone, and when he depicted the human form, it was as an angel hymning the celestial praises, or a saint with up-raised eyes, or a mail-clad warrior sleeping his last sleep undisturbed. There failed in the house

of his creation the more ample charm that came with Renaissance and Tudor days, as we see it exemplified at Hatfield. It was not only that the times were more settled. The vast movement of thought, the restless spirit of enquiry, which gave us the art of printing, and sent men out to explore and evangelise, or it might be to pillage, the world, broke down many an old ideal. Austerity had vanished from palace and city. Dante, outcast and an exile from his beloved Florence, was the type of what had gone,

and Petrarch and Boccaccio were the exemplars of the neo-Paganism which had come.

All which may seem to have little relationship to Hatfield House, but the relationship was intimate none the less. Without the interchange of thought between Italy and the rest of the world, we should not have found the features that distinguish the Marquess of Salisbury's noble abode. The influence of the Italian Renaissance is found there, mostly externally in the southern façade, but in the chimney-pieces and pilasters

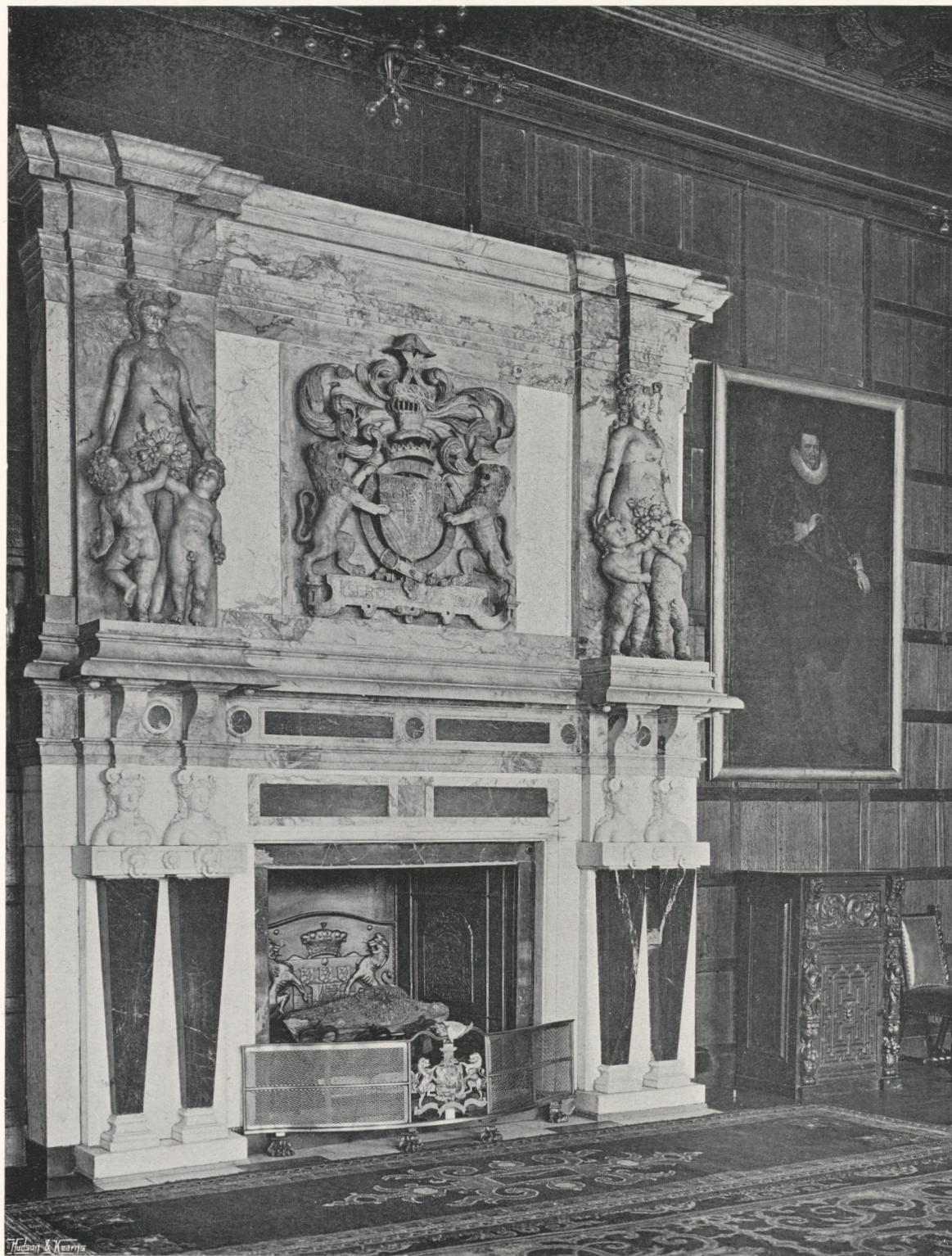


THE SUMMER DRAWING-ROOM.

within a classic character is given to the work also. The state rooms are, indeed, magnificent and imposing, and have probably no rivals in the land. The Marble Hall is very splendid. Spacious and lofty, it has a great coved and enriched ceiling, divided into panels by elaborately-worked ribs, and adorned with the heads of the Cæsars, and with much labour of the brush. The noble chamber is amply lighted by

there is a very fine gallery on the east side, with the Cecil arms boldly carved. Here the minstrels assembled to discourse sweet music to the guests gathered below. War-worn flags hang from the gallery, with their touch of human and national interest, some of them being relics of the Great War and of the Grande Armée.

The Marble Hall leads to the Grand Staircase, with its five landings, its wicket-gates to prevent the dogs from ascending, its massive carved balusters, its naked figures, its heraldic lions, its splendid carvings, and its pictures by Zuccherò, Van Dyck, Lely, Kneller, Beechey, and others. The staircase brings us to the Long Gallery, that characteristic apartment of the great houses of the time, wherein the gallant gentlemen and gay ladies of Elizabethan society walked through the stately minuet and enjoyed many diversions of the times. The Long Gallery at Hatfield is of unusual proportions, being 163ft. long by 20ft. wide and 16ft. high. Fluted Ionic pillars divide it into three sections, and the magnificent carved panelling is enframed between pilasters of the same, while the two grand fireplaces, with overhanging mantels, are notable architectural works, executed in lovely materials, the marbles being richly inlaid. The gallery has a flat fret ceiling of very complex pattern, and the floor is of dark



THE DINING-ROOM CHIMNEY-PIECE.

a great oriel at the upper end, and by three fine windows on the south side. At the lower end is a glorious carved screen, massive in its character, and extremely rich in its work. The features are such as specially characterise Elizabethan art, and the panels and strap-like patterns, and the enrichments of pillars, brackets, and finals, are extremely good. The doorway in the middle of the screen is of particularly excellent work. The walls are wainscoted with oak, and

oak. The furniture here is all very good, and quite typical of the time, without a single jarring note.

King James's Room, or the Great Chamber, is at the east end of the gallery, and is a superb apartment, 59ft. by 27ft., very lofty, gorgeous in carving, gold, and colour, and lighted by three tall bay windows. The great feature of the chamber is the grand chimney-piece, which is 12ft. wide, and of coloured marbles, the supports

being Doric columns of black marble. Between two such columns, and in a round-arched niche in the second tier, stands a life-size bronze statue of James I. in royal robes. Here are silver dogs for the fire, richly

the Emperor to the late Marquess of Salisbury.

At the west end of the Long Gallery, corresponding with King James's Room, is the Library, which is a very fine chamber, famous



THE MARBLE HALL, SOUTH SIDE.

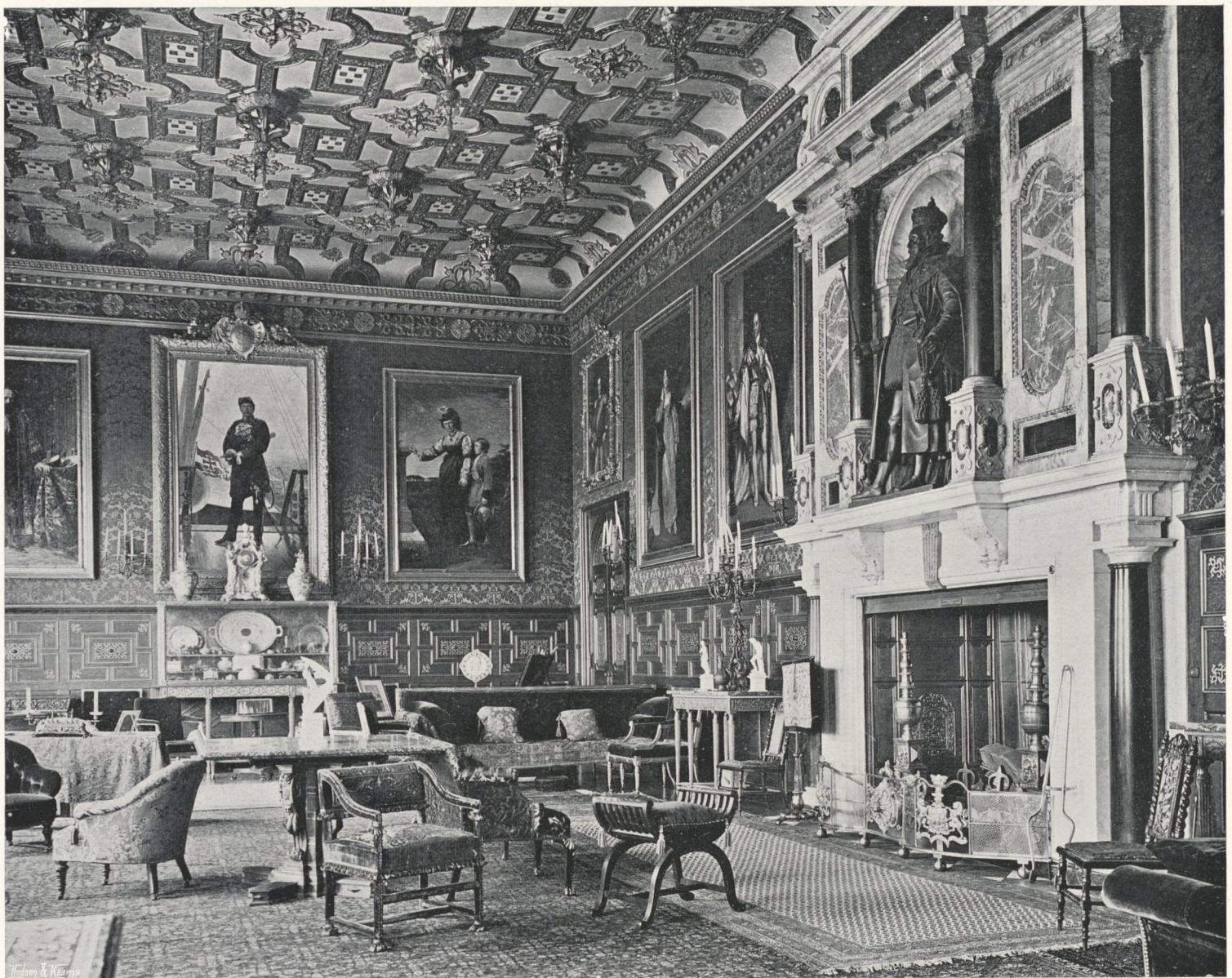
worked panelling, and a glorious ceiling. The family portraits are extremely interesting and of great merit, and a fine picture of the German Emperor in naval uniform is a comparatively recent addition, presented by

for its printed and manuscript treasures. There is a glorious collection of printed books, and the manuscripts are extremely interesting, and many are choice in their illuminations, while the historical papers and letters constitute a mass of

documents of the utmost importance for the history of the reign of Elizabeth and James I. The letters of the Cecils, extending from Henry VIII. to James, number upwards of 13,000, and Lord Burghley's Diary is one of the principal treasures. The Marquess of Salisbury rightly values this priceless collection, which is carefully arranged, classified, and catalogued.

Below the Long Gallery is the great Armoury, which has been referred to. It contains many interesting Spanish relics and objects from the wreck of the Armada, thrown on shore and sent as trophies to Burghley by Elizabeth. Space is wanting, however, to describe all the

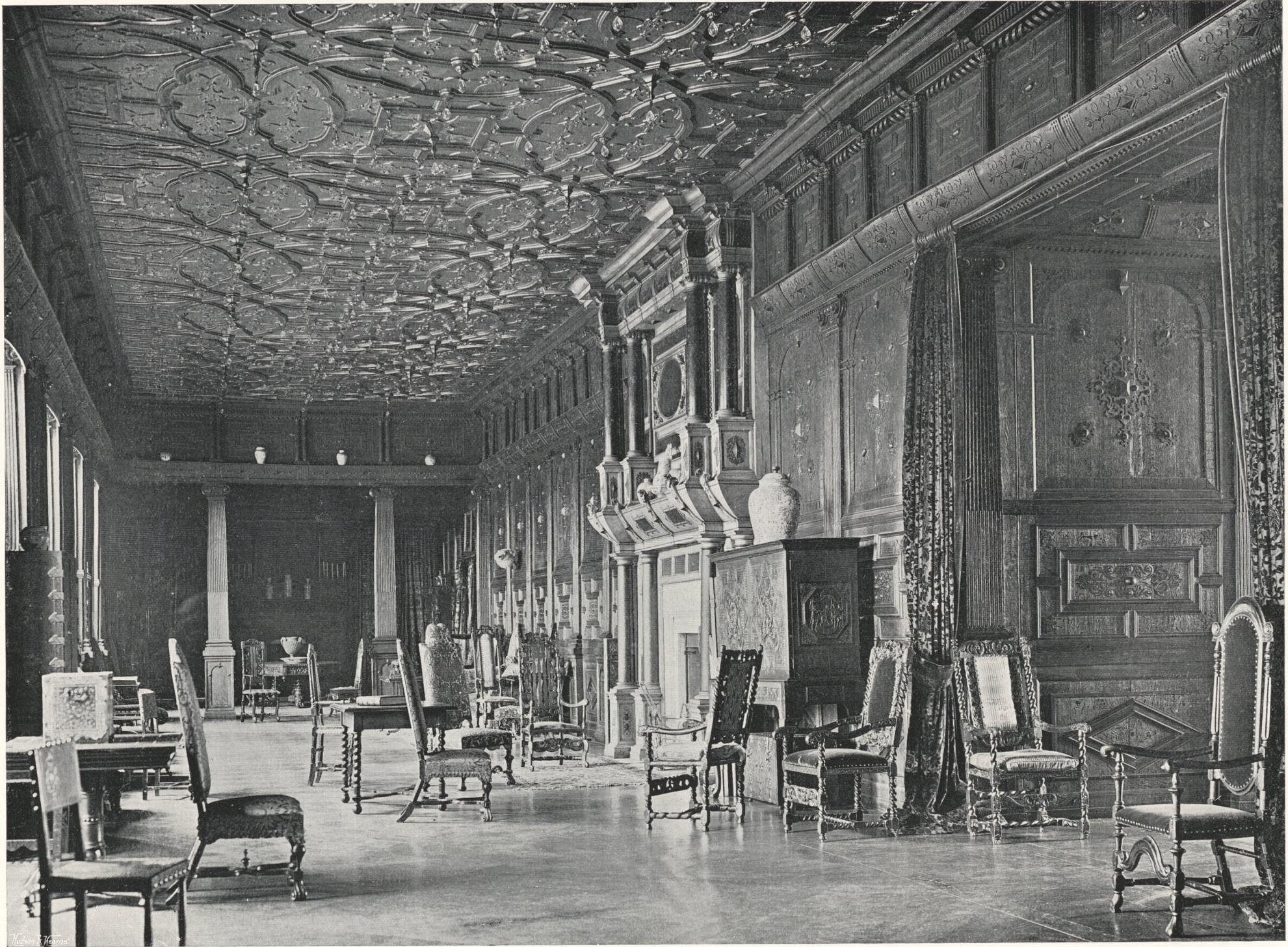
yellow gown, embroidered with mouths, eyes, and ears, and having a serpent on her sleeve. There are also fine portraits of James I. by Mytens, of the Duke of Suffolk, father of Lady Jane Grey, of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, of William III. by Kneller, and many more. The Cecil portraits include Thomas, Earl of Exeter, and his half-brother Robert, Earl of Salisbury, from whom sprang the two great Cecil houses. James, first Marquess of Salisbury, is by Beechey, and Mary, the first Marchioness, who died sadly through fire, is a charming whole length, with a garden background, by Reynolds.



KING JAMES'S ROOM.

fine chambers of Hatfield House. The Summer Dining Room is under King James's Room, and there is a Winter Dining Room containing many curious and valuable pictures. The Drawing Room is indeed beautiful and lightsome, and the Chapel contains King James's organ in a very rich case. The whole of the ground floor of the east wing is occupied by private apartments. The portraits and pictures are of the utmost interest and value, and include two of Mary Queen of Scots, and not less than five of Elizabeth, including the famous half-length by Zuccherò, in which she is represented in a remarkable jewelled headdress and a marvellous

The mention of a garden reminds us that from the windows of these splendid chambers many delightful garden scenes are surveyed. Bacon had said that "without a garden, buildings and palaces are but gross handiworks," and Cecil, who was Bacon's kinsman, devoted himself unremittingly to beautifying the surroundings of his house. His chief gardeners were Montague Jennings and John Tradescant, afterwards horticulturist to Charles I., and father of the more famous Tradescant who founded the Tradescant or Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. The levels and terraces at Hatfield were carefully laid out, and, through the wife of the French Amba-



THE WEST END OF THE LONG GALLERY.

sador, Cecil procured 25,000 vines for £50, and expected 10,000 more, while the French Queen sent him 500 other fruit trees, with men to see to the planting of them, and his friends presented to him nectarines, peaches, cherry trees, and vines from their own gardens. More beautiful than the gardens Cecil saw are those now beheld from the windows of Hatfield House, and they give the final charm to one of the greatest houses in the land. It is a house full

of history, associated with the lives of many famous men, and extraordinarily rich in its architecture, its sculpture, and its adornments. They were master-minds that conceived it, and master-hands that wrought it. Their work is not excelled in England, and the princely abode, a veritable treasure-house of art, is the visible embodiment of all that was best in the time of its creation, with the added charms and interests of later days.



THE SOUTH FRONT.