

THE DEANERY GARDEN, SONNING.

IT has been said of the house we depict that it might be studied with interest from two or more points of view—first as the house of one who loves his garden, and particularly his wall and water garden, and secondly, as a characteristic specimen in external form and interior adornment of the style of Mr. E. L. Lutyens. That style is now very well known, and nowhere could a more characteristic expression of it be studied than in the house we illustrate.

As we approach from the neighbouring village we are at once attracted by the aspect of the external wall, with its touches of grey, red, and green, and the slope of its crest gay with splendid clumps of stonecrop, wallflowers, white tufted arabis, golden alyssum, and other beautiful things. We have divined at the outset that this,

above all things, is a garden house. In this wall is a fine arched doorway, with an excellent gate of hammered iron, forming the entrance, and ere it opens we have had a glimpse of the features within. We have seen that the house is of red brick, with a light, pleasing, and not quite familiar tone, and that all is simple, domestic, and beautiful, high tiled roofs and bold stacks of chimneys cresting the structure, with a curious and characteristic vane. A cloister-way, with round arches of plain character, excellent in brickwork, and lightsome through the use of chalk in the inner walls, leads to the doorway, which is of fine English oak.

Before, however, we enter the house, we are tempted into a little courtyard on the right, which fills a space between the house, the

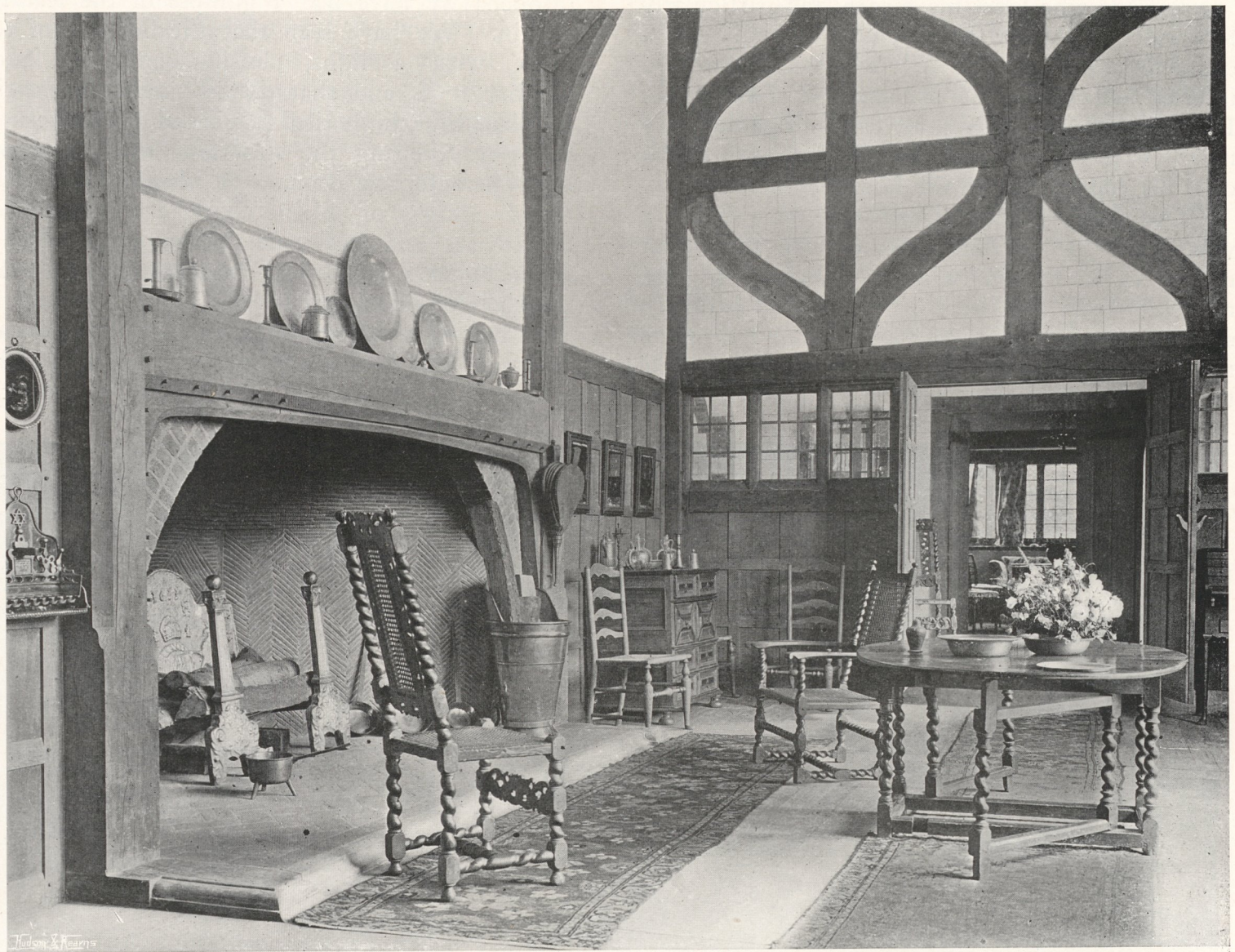


THE FOUNTAIN COURT.

cloister-walk, and the external wall—a cool and pleasant retreat, indeed, in the hot days of summer, with a basin in the centre. A faun pressing a wine-skin feeds this with water, and forms a tiny poem in himself. On one side of the court is a splendid leaden tank, finely worked, and bearing the date 1778, from which water runs in a zigzag course cut in the flagging on its way to the basin. There various water plants flourish, and disposed about the enclosure are magnificent pots of agapanthus, the blue African lily, which, in due season, proudly lifts its azure crowns in sun or shade. There is something peculiarly satisfying to the eye in this cool and

of the garden beyond. On the left as we enter is the oaken staircase, with an excellent balustrade and newel-posts, all admirable, plain, and substantial, and strongly characteristic of the reserve and repose that reign throughout the house.

On the right is the Great Hall, a spacious and beautiful apartment, with a lofty open roof, framed with massive beams of oak, and braces and other structural timbers cut from the curved boughs of the trees. The same framing is seen at the ends of the Hall, where the spaces between the timbers are filled in with chalk, the effect being admirable. The great fireplace is widely arched, and the walls within it are of herring-bone



THE HALL FIREPLACE.

tranquil place, and, as we look across and through the cloister, we see another court, lying to the east, which has the garden on one side and on the other a multitude of roses fringing the ancient exterior wall.

We now enter the house itself, and through the open door an admirable vista is disclosed. The cloister-like air is preserved by the succession of round arches in the Entrance Hall, and there is the same aspect of coolness and repose arising from the use of white chalk and red brick, contrasted with the delicate brown of the oak. Right through the house runs this passage-way, and through the entrance at the other end we have a fine outlook over the terraces

brickwork. The iron fireback, dated 1611, has the arms and garter of James I., and doubtless came from one of the old Sussex foundries, in which, for a century and a-half at least, the hammer of the craftsman has ceased to ring. Opposite to the fire is the lofty bay, or oriel, of many lights, with oaken mullions and transoms and leaded panes, through which we gain a lovely prospect of the garden. Here, in the Hall, and afterwards in the other rooms, the visitor divines that all has been planned with wise forethought, and that each window is placed so as to give a view of the garden. There is much oak-work and panelling in the Hall and other apartments, and old, excellent, and appropriate furniture,

and pewter and brass, and a hundred things to delight the collector.

Entered through the Hall is the Dining Room, which has a long carved table of ancient date. As elsewhere in the house, the pegged

from the lobby we came in by, is the Parlour, likewise furnished and plenished with oak, and having a quaint fireplace and windows. The stairs lead up to the Long Gallery, which runs east and west behind the upper part of the Hall, and



THE HALL FROM THE ENTRANCE.

structural oak-work shows in the walls, and the whole is finished in simple and admirable style. Here it may be noted that the beams still bear the adze-mark of the carpenter, and thus we are brought face to face, as it were, with the craftsman. Then, at the other end of the Hall, entered

has an open roof, with substantial beams and braces curved in the natural crook of the oak, and a fireplace as attractive as that below. The bedrooms are in appropriate style, and the mind of the architect has directed the character of the furniture.

And now, this being first and foremost a garden house, we are to glance at the garden which adorns and is a part of it. We see that in its features there has been the planning of an experienced mind, and that fancy and imagination have had their scope in moulding the character of the ground. Here are terraces where one can loiter and recall his Chaucer :

"Now was there maid fast by the townes wall
A gardyn faire, and in the corneres set
Ane herbere grene, with wandis long and small
Railit about; and so with trees set
Was all the place, and hawthorn begis knit,
That lyf was non walking there for by,
That myght within scarce ony wight aspye."

Here is a pergola sweet with flowers and clambering roses, a flagged bridge-terrace with a sundial overlooking a lawn, descents of segmental stairways leading to lower gardens, a bowling green and a tennis lawn, water and

wall gardening in perfection, and the orchard beyond. Much wise planning was required before the garden could actually be begun. There were to be terraces of simple sort, with low retaining walls, which would give the fullest opportunities to the wall-gardener, and these low walls, some of brick and some of stone, should be laid in earth only, so that plants would find congenial rootage in the interstices. Provision should be made also for the beauties of water gardening, and there was a further outlook to the time when a bog garden should be created at the lower end of the orchard, fed by the drainage from the water effects higher up. All this has been accomplished, and now the house and garden are one, the exterior of the structure being but the vesture of its beautiful interior, and the garden the environment and the real significance of the whole.



THE GALLERY.