

the south with cloisters, and the Long Gallery above. Jones was also employed upon the east side, and is said to have been interrupted by the events of the Civil War, in which he took a part. His hand is upon the place, and the structure is quite characteristic of his style and skill. There is picturesqueness, indeed, from whichever side we regard the house. Its projecting bays and mullioned windows in the older portion are contrasted with the classic features of the later additions, and there is great variety and picturesqueness owing to the use of a perforated

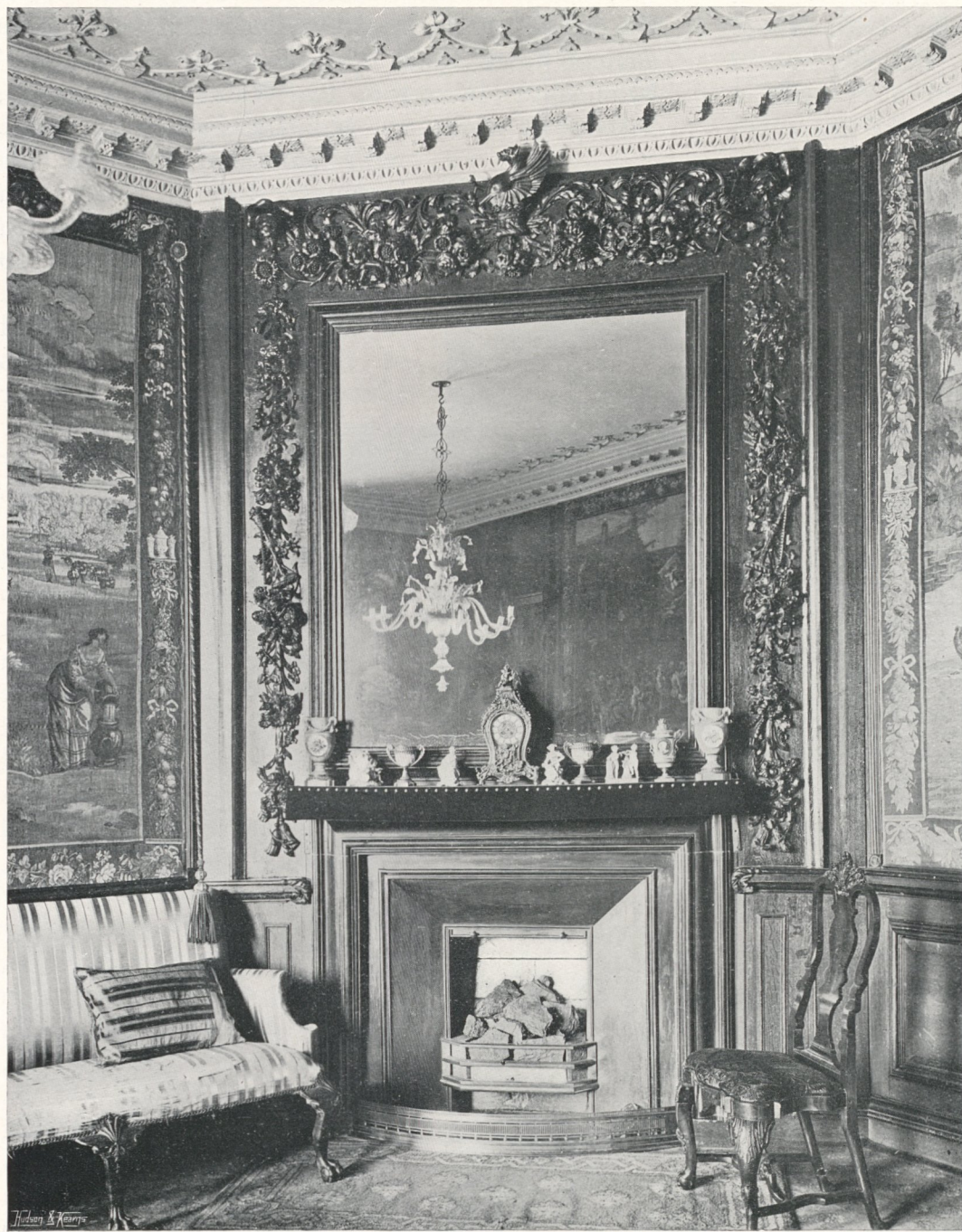
wealthy Alderman of London, who had a great house at Canonbury. There is a noble fireplace in the Drawing Room (called "King William's Room"), brought from Canonbury Tower, which was the entrance to Sir John Spencer's country house.

It may here be permissible to say as much as is necessary concerning the noble family of Compton. Spencer Compton, second Earl of Northampton, was a great favourite with Charles I. and a notable cavalier, killed on the Royal side at the battle of Hopton Heath, March 19th, 1643, and James, the third Earl, paid a heavy composition for his estates. Spencer, the eighth Earl, who wasted his property, lost very heavily in what was known as the "spendthrift election" for the borough of Northampton in 1768, and it appears to have been due to this circumstance that Castle Ashby was denuded of many things that had beautified it.

Mr. Robinson, in his "*Vitruvius Britannicus*," said that in his time it had "little internal beauty," the ceilings, especially in the Drawing Room and the old Library, being the principal attraction. The Great Hall had been modernised, and a plain plaster ceiling filled the space occupied with striking effect by the original roof. It appears, however, that the roof had fallen in, that temporary repairs were effected, and that the late Marquess completely restored the apartment. We are thus able to measure the great work of regeneration which must have been done to make Castle Ashby the beautiful place that it is now.

In the plan of the house the Great Hall and Staircase are on the

north side, with the Drawing Room at the north-east corner, while on the east and west sides are the smaller living rooms and bed-chambers, the Long Gallery and Chapel, as well as a chamber which is known as "Queen Elizabeth's Bedroom," being on the south side. The Great Hall is 65ft. by 28ft., the Drawing Room 51ft. 6in. by 24ft., and the Long Gallery 91ft. by 15ft. 6in. The Hall, now happily restored, is a very noble and imposing chamber with beautiful enriched panelling, a screen at one end with an organ gallery over it, and a



THE TAPESTRY ROOM.

crested, with sentences to be read against the skyline, adding much to the originality and charm of the structure. The Psalmist's words, "Nisi Dominus ædificaverit domum" are used, and elsewhere, as one goes in or out, is seen the pious greeting or speeding, "Dominus custodiat introitum" (or "exitum") "tuum." In more recent additions such phrases are repeated.

Much was done to beautify Castle Ashby by the son of the builder, William, Lord Compton, afterwards Earl of Northampton, who married the daughter of Sir John Spencer, a