INTRODUCTION.

FROM the state of society represented in Saxon Aelfric's "Colloquium," where the carpenter "makes houses and bowls," to that where, as in our day, every portion of our elaborated dwellings is the product of a specialised trade, is a far road to travel. In a mere Introduction, such as this, we cannot linger in its byeways or turn down into its field-paths, however fascinating they may be. We must, in modern traveller's fashion, rush along the highway, and notice only the most striking changes and the most salient features of architectural evolution.

Architecture, if we include in that term the inward fitting as well as the outward walling of our houses and public buildings, is, of all arts, the one which most closely concerns us, as it plays so large and constant a part in the circumstances of our lives and surroundings. Those who do not build houses buy and alter or rent and redecorate them. Or, if not even so much as the latter, they at least have the outlet of complaining how badly it has been done for them, and of asserting how much better they would themselves have performed the operation. Interest of some sort in some phase of architecture, if it be but a question of wall-papers, exists widely—almost universally. But is that interest, at all generally, of an intelligent and informed kind? Has it led to some study of the principles and practice of this art? Has it resulted in some capacity to differentiate, broadly and roughly, between the good and the bad? Often, yes, and increasingly so. And yet we should not over-plume ourselves on our superiority; we should hesitate before we compassionate our fathers and grandfathers for having lived amid Early Victorian ideals, and for having relished Early Victorian art. "Physician, heal thyself," is a maxim which must still stand at the head of our copy-books. The other day we came across a house of considerable historical and architectural interest. Its large set of Jacobean plaster ceilings was quite remarkable and unusual; original woodwork of the same period was well and amply represented. It was changing tenancies, and the landlord was permitting the incomer to do it up. His taste went into papers of the richest crimsons in florid patterns, and these he liked to "throw up" by painting the woodwork to "imitate maple," which was done by putting on a brilliant coat of chrome and dragging over it a brush dipped in a hot, foxy colour.

The country that still allows the surviving masterpieces of one of its most original and interesting periods in decorative art to be thus degraded must not boast of its æsthetic advance; rather must it sit in sackcloth and ashes and seek to amend its ways. And how can it do this better than by spreading wide a knowledge of such masterpieces, by placing them before the eyes of all who can and will see in a life-like presentment, and in a form which admits of a clear and rapid understanding of their merits, their peculiarities and their varieties? Much good endeavour to reach this desirable end is made in these days, and this volume, like its predecessor, will, we trust, take its place as a worthy and welcome member in the deserving and praiseworthy band of publications which exhibit pictorially, and explain critically, past and present examples of the architecture of our land. In this volume, half a hundred of the remarkable country places in which England is so rich pass under review. They are drawn from many counties, they represent many styles and they are offered in chronological order. In this there is often some difficulty, and there must, in any case, be occasional anomaly. Many of our finest buildings belong to several ages, and exhibit several styles. They are the resultant of frequent alterations, additions and subtractions, and their interest is often heightened thereby. But it leads to some confusion in affixing the labels, and the plan has been adopted of not invariably placing them according to the time of laying the first stone, but according to the most marked character which our views of them exhibit. Broadly speaking, they fall into four groups, to which the names of Gothic, Renascent, Classic and Modern may be given for the sake of brevity and simplification. There are, of course, subdivisions and overlappings of the groups, and there are points of dissimilarity as well as of likeness in the most cognate examples. All these matters are frequently alluded to in the account of each place, and a general but succinct exposition of them is the object of this Introduction; glancing, however, very rapidly at the classic and modern periods, as it is hoped to deal more fully with these important groups in a future volume, specially arranged to contain a notable selection of their best examples.

Alterations in the character of our buildings spring as often from change of habit as from change of taste. A hall, and a room or two off,

accommodated a great mediæval municipality for official purposes. How many hundreds of rooms for office and business requirements are needed by the London County Council to-day, those architects who are now puzzling out the intricate arrangements in the plans they are preparing for the new County Hall best know. But so complete a change of scheme and requirement needs so essentially different a form and character of building that the whole style alters, and new proportions and different details are forced by convenience as much as they are developed by taste. This is equally true of domestic buildings. The hall, and a room or two off, was also what the mediæval baron or knight needed for his dwelling. Development of wealth and of ideas of comfort and elegance modified the hall, multiplied the rooms and revolutionised the arrangements. With such matter-of-fact alterations waves of æsthetic change were concomitant, but not independent; and only in so far as the æsthetic changes did, or in the present day do, take into consideration the practical requirements, and intelligently and thoughtfully weld the style and the needs into an honest and harmonious composition, shall we find the architectural result really satisfying. There may be much quaintness and cleverness without this, but not a living and a wholesome art, and we purpose keeping these principles well in view during our survey.

Of the age when "houses and bowls" were the product of the self-same craftsman we need say little. Saxon kings and earls no doubt had their primitive hall, and even a chamber or so off it, but the Saxon of lesser degree was hutted rather than housed. No Saxon dwelling remains as an example, and even of the Norman period few domestic edifices are preserved. Such as there are, are essentially military, as these alone have had strength and substance to live through the centuries. But military use implies special forms and conditions, and the Norman keep is not a typical dwelling of its age. Single, or at most double, storeyed buildings, loosely knit together, or even separately grouped, formed the mediæval type whenever the utmost defensive strength was not the first and principal desideratum. The condensation of plan and multiplication of floors of Rochester Castle—to give one instance—with its 100ft. of height and its hall up on the third floor, tightly fitted with other rooms into a parallelogram, was a design forced upon its builders by the danger which constantly threatened a small conquering class in a hostile country, and was abandoned whenever and as soon as conditions of greater security or of more elaborate and extended systems of fortification prevailed; but where constant petty warfare and local armed affrays continued as a normal state of things—as on the Anglo-Scottish borderland—the plan of the Norman keep long survived, and was the type dictated by necessity even for smaller houses. The peel-tower of Sizergh (page 103), dating certainly not earlier than the latter half of the fourteenth century, was a complete four-storeyed house of two or more rooms to a floor, loopholed merely in the lower half, as the ground floor still is, and as the first floor also was until modern conditions replaced the ancient aperture with a broad four-light window, modelled on the original ones of two lights, which the height of the top floors rendered safe. The Sizergh peel-tower is quite typical of its own district; but elsewhere in England, in the fourteenth century, very differently planned houses prevailed.

The Norman baron who could afford to build on a large and expensive scale was of the class that needed most protection, and so dwellings, other than keeps, of considerable size and of durable material were infrequent, and the survivals are too few and imperfect to delay us. But even before the style changed, expansion had set in, and Bishop Pudsey at his great Castle of Durham stretched out from his predecessor's keep and built the long building, with its upper and lower halls of immense length, which survives, much mutilated, indeed, yet affording us, in the great doorway and in the window arcadings, some of the most beautiful and elaborate Norman domestic work extant. A hundred years later Pudsey's conception of the house plan was as much superannuated as his style of architecture, and Bishop Anthony Bec filled in the lower side of the great quadrangle with his splendid and lofty Gothic hall 100ft. long, and with other accompanying rooms and offices, forming the typical dwelling of his age, and such as, on a small scale and with less powerful defences, the country knight was erecting in many parts of the land for his better accommodation. Ightham Mote (page 1) offers an example, somewhat altered in its form and grouping by the many extensions and changes which various subsequent generations have made, yet retaining its essential features. The older parts appear to have been built in Edward III.'s time by Sir Thomas Cawne. Here we have the moated parallelogram, and on the side opposite to the drawbridged entrance was placed the residential building, composed of a central hall, with kitchen and buttery attached at the lower end, and at the upper end a building containing partly-underground vaulted cellarage, and above a solar or chamber and a chapel. This in Early Plantagenet times often completed the accommodation; offices, stables, farmery and such-like annexes to a self-supporting and self-defending family occupying part or all of the remaining sides of the quadrangle. At Ightham the hall door seems to have opened straight into the room, and not, as usual, into a screened entry; but the kitchen and buttery doors are there, and at the upper end is the arched doorway giving into a space whence was reached the vaulted cellarage and the newel stair—now replaced by

an ampler one of the seventeenth century—leading to chapel and solar, whose position and character subsequent alterations have not obliterated.

Entries in Royal accounts and such-like documents show us that even the manor houses which our kings possessed scattered over their many estates in every part of the country, and which they were apt to occasionally visit in person for a few days, were devised on this same simple and exiguous plan. Such was the house built at Woolmer in Hampshire in 1285 for Edward I. The hall and the kitchen were of timber plastered over, but the upper chamber—whether over cellars, stables or what, we do not know—was stone built, as were also the little accompanying chapel and the wardrobes. Though the arrangement was the same as in the habitation of a mere knight, the size, of course, where a large retinue had to find roof room, was largely increased. The Woolmer chamber was 72ft. long, and the hall was probably of proportionate size—as large, perhaps, as Edward's trusty councillor, Bishop Bec, was adding to his Durham Castle. Again, as the chamber was of such great length and had two fireplaces, it may well have been boarded off into compartments, whereof the king would have the innermost. Wainscoting was already in use, but of the plainest kind, merely boards fixed side by side and painted in bright, simple patternings. Even this primitive style of fitting rooms was probably, at this time, somewhat regal, and did not find a frequent place in the homes of lesser folk. Neither then nor much later was a chimney usual in the hall—that at Ightham is a later introduction—where the fire burned on a central hearth, as we find at Stokesay and Penshurst, the smoke escaping through a louvre in the roof. But the chamber had a chimney from fairly early times. The fire was placed against an outer wall, and a hood, resting on columns or brackets, was built forward over it. Where the slanting roof of the hood merged into the wall, the flue sometimes was taken straight out through the wall and there ended. This primitive fashion, however, was probably never at all general, and was soon superseded, and the flue ascended the wall to its top or above it, terminating in a pierced spire or other Gothic motif. Of the thirteenth century hooded fireplace the gatehouse of St. Donats (page 16) gives us a good example, and original, except that part of the hood has been renewed on exactly the old lines. It and the gatehouse which contains it are the only portions of this castle which are so early, the main part of it showing, as also do the still rather later manor houses of Athelhampton (page 33) and Cotehele (page 43), the developments



GOTHIC WORK AT ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

which took place in the later Gothic times. For though at Maxstoke (page 9) we have an excellent example of fourteenth century architecture, so far as its gatehouse and the corner towers of its *enceinte* are concerned, the house itself has suffered too much from repeated alterations to afford a picture of how the Earl of Huntingdon housed himself in 1340. It does, however, still shed a light on the early clumsiness of planning, and the little feeling there was for the sanctity and aloofness of the chapel, which is here placed between the hall and the kitchen, and was, so far as its west end was concerned, the service passage between the two. The hall being at a higher level, there was a flight of steps of easy gradient leading across the chapel against the west window, whose sill is sloping in consequence.

With the fifteenth century, we reach a period in our domestic Gothic of great importance, since we have abundant surviving examples, and the accommodation shows such development in size, arrangement and decoration that it offers a style which lovers of Gothic may not unfitly or unsuccessfully use for modern building; whereas the attempts to use Norman and Early English forms for villa residences have been, and must continue to be if again attempted, offences against both taste and reason. The spirit and the needs of the two periods are too divergent to permit of the reasonable translation of the architectural terms of the one into the housing problems of the other; but though this is in some measure also true of the fifteenth century, to those who are prepared to imitate late mediæval modes of life, late mediæval architecture presents a possible style to copy, for the necessary modifications made in original examples of the time have, in clever and capable hands, brought them sufficiently within modern conditions without destroying the essence and soul of the age which produced them.

Local circumstances largely dictated the substances used in mediæval building. Transport was too difficult to encourage the normal builder to get his materials from afar. Stone buildings are general only in stone districts, and where fine freestone is handy the building is more elaborate, as at Athelhampton, than where the neighbouring quarries supplied a hard limestone, as at St. Donats. Where stone was lacking, oak trees might be abundant, and though timber-framed buildings appear in many districts, such as in Kent, Surrey and Sussex, they are finest in Lancashire, Cheshire and Shropshire, as Samlesbury (page 81), Adlington (page 71) and Park Hall (page 135) show. In early times oak framing largely supplemented the chalk and flint of the Eastern Counties, but in the fifteenth century all of these were brushed aside by brick. Freely used by the Romans, brick-making ceased in Britain with their departure; but it remained the chief medium in the Low Countries, and the close connection of Flanders with our South-Eastern Counties led to its reintroduction there. Even in a thirteenth century house like Little Wenham in Suffolk, brick—Flemish in pattern, if not in make—enters largely into the walling, and though this is exceptional at so early a date, yet the great majority of the fine late Gothic places in Norfolk and Suffolk are of brick, often beautifully and elaborately moulded. Often where stone is abundant brick appears in the chimneys. These were rapidly multiplying in the fifteenth century. Most of the now fairly numerous chambers had them, and even the hall fire is moved from the centre of the room on to one of the exterior side walls, whose thickness permits the hearth and flue to be built within it, so that the hood gives place to a depressed arch flush with the wall, sometimes unadorned, but more often surmounted with a mantel of carved panels of geometric tracery or heraldic shields, as at St. Donats (page 25). Though the hall chimney, from its position, stood alone, those of the chambers in a storeyed building would naturally now rise together from the roof in a cluster; and it was for this clustering, carried out with much design and elaboration as a leading feature of the skyline, that brick was found so amenable a substance. The hall in the fifteenth century is still the "house place," and St. Donats affords us a good example of both its exterior and interior arrangement. It is entered at one end through a porch, which very frequently has a small bay-windowed room over it, which opens on to the screens off which are the offices, and these now may have important chambers over them. The hall goes up to the roof, which offers a fine field for elaborate workmanship and clever structure. That at St. Donats is a simple example, but those at Adlington and Samlesbury exhibit much more detail and carving, while the Athelhampton one is an example of the later "hammer-beam" style, which reached its greatest perfection under Wolsey at Hampton Court and Christchurch. At the upper or dais end of the hall, there were one if not two recesses of considerable size. To these the name of oriel is rightly applied, even where, as at Lytes Carey, they form almost a separate room with its own fireplace. The origin of the word is obscure, but as, in 1237, Henry III. orders a "fair private chamber well vaulted" to be made "as well in the upper and in the lower story of that oriol," it was then, clearly, something more than the bay window to which it is now limited; and in the fifteenth century it was the word generally applied to such square or octagonal fronted recesses as were entered by a large archway from the upper end of the hall, as we see in the views of St. Donats (page 24) and Athelhampton (page 35), and which by another arch or arches, fitted with doors, gave access to the other rooms, now perhaps several in number, on the ground floor beyond the hall, and to the staircase leading to those above.

The increasing desire for both space and privacy is well shown in the case of Caister. Very little of this fine brick-built Norfolk

castle—or rather fortified mansion — remains; but from the inventory made after its builder's death in 1459 we get some idea of its arrangement, accommodation and furnishing. Sir John Fastolf (whose connection with Hever and Blickling is mentioned under those places), soldier, landowner, money-lender and merchant, was also

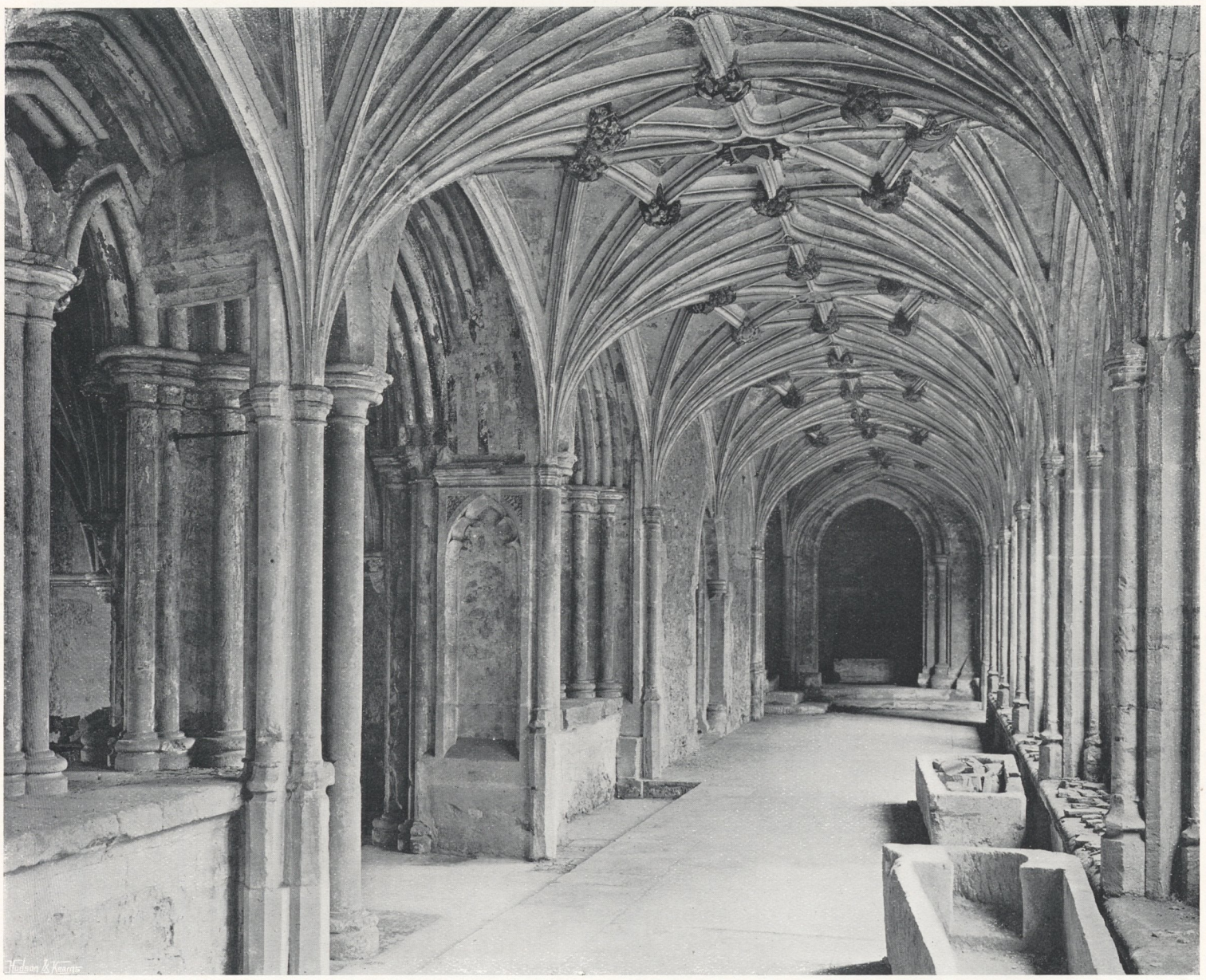


IN THE OLD DIVINITY SCHOOL, OXFORD.

a great builder. Though, after he had returned from the French wars and was of the King's Council, he lived principally at his house in Southwark, yet he was for years building and occasionally visiting at Caister, one of his inherited estates, and finally established himself in the completed mansion in 1454. Twenty-six chambers containing one or more "fedderbeddes" are mentioned, and there were beds—each with "materas, payre of shetys and coverlet of blewe and rede"—in both the "grete" and the "sumer stabull." The porter, cook and gardener each have their chamber, though the last is not quite so much of a personage as the others, and sleeps on a "materas" and not a "fedderbedde." Sir John's own chamber has arras hangings to the bed, tapestry coverings to the benches, and worsted curtains and wall hangings. In the great chamber, the subjects of the hangings are

described. There is a "cloth of arras of the Schipherds," a "coverng with j geyaunt smytyng a wild bore with a spere," and a "tester with one gentlewoman in grene taking a mallard in hir honde." Most of the arrases, however, are scheduled separately, being probably put away in the wardrobes or storerooms. They are in quantity, of all sizes and subjects, religious and lay, and include a "blewe hallyng," that is, a set of arras cloths for the walls of the hall. Though there are no chambers without a bed, no parlours are mentioned, unless it be the "toure parloure," whose "pece of rede worsted" is included in the movables in the "great or summer hall." The custom of sitting, receiving and even taking meals in the bedrooms continued long after this. The great chamber beyond the summer hall, though bedded, was no doubt much used as a reception-room, and a "winter hall" which is mentioned would often serve as a family dining-room, as the fashion of dining apart from the retainers was now obtaining with people of position and fashion like Sir John. As the hall still habitually had its sides clear of other buildings and went up to the roof, the house was thereby completely divided into two, and at least two stairways were necessary even in small manor houses; and where there was an upper storey to the buildings set round the great quadrangle, and even extending into the outer bailey as at St. Donats, the number of stairways was large, and the general mode of access from one set to another and to the hall and chapel was across the open court, as is still the case in an Oxford college. That the chamber accommodation was large and well fitted at St. Donats is clear by the number of carved fifteenth century chimney-pieces scattered all round the court on the upper floor; it may almost have rivalled Caister in their number.

Though the hall roof was always of wood, rooms with storeys over were often vaulted, at first plainly, then, as wealth and fine building increased, elaborately ribbed, bossed and panelled. The archway through the gatehouse was an opportunity for exhibiting good work of the kind, as we see at Maxstoke (page 13) and at Cotehele (page 46), though the latter shows the simplicity and plainness which characterises Cornish granite work. The roof of oriels, either the great hall oriel, as at Athelhampton (page 35), or the smaller bays of upper rooms, as at St. Donats (page 20), was another choice spot for the mason's craft. Neither in this nor



THE EAST CLOISTER AT LAYCOCK ABBEY, WILTS.

in any other Gothic form and feature was there any difference of style between ecclesiastical and lay work The gargoyles at St. Donats Castle and at St. Donats Church are identical. The cloister at Laycock (page xviii.) gives us an excellent example of fifteenth century vaulting. Laycock was, when the cloister was built, an Augustinian nunnery, and at the Dissolution it passed into the hands of Sir William Sharington, who used most of its domestic buildings, with but small alteration, for his own habitation, and thus preserved for us this good bit of Gothic work as applied to the purposes of a religious house. The Oxford Divinity School is an example of a hall with a stone vault, as it is a ground floor with the most ancient part of the Bodleian Library over it. The building was begun in 1429, but proved too costly for the University resources, and operations were so frequently intermitted that it was not completed till 1489. The whole design, including the vaulting, is one of much splendour ; the lines are graceful and the carving (as of the little niched figures in the pendants) is exquisite. But the unusually wide span must have taxed the skill of the master builder until he evolved the principle of transverse supporting arches, and so introduced the "fan" vaulting which, a little later, reached its climax at the sister University and in Henry VII.'s chapel at Westminster, and of which a delicate little example appears in the bay window of the Abbot of Gloucester's house at Prinknash (page 336).

As the mediæval hall, by its position and requirements, dictated the interior arrangements, so did it control the exterior design. Except where there were gate or other towers, its gabled roof, with its central louvre, was the highest point of the skyline. Its tall traceried windows, its projecting porch and oriel, its massive and shapely chimney rising from an outer wall, were the main features of the elevation. On either side of the hall the other buildings were grouped with much variety, freedom and looseness ; so that the inward purpose of the various parts of the house received outward recognition from the detachment of the roofage and the character and disposition of the windows. Often they were added to or altered to suit changing habits and increased requirements ; but even in a case of synchronous building no special effort at symmetry was made, and probably no complete design was preliminarily drawn out, or afterwards followed. Design, indeed, was little needed until symmetry was demanded. The parts were thought out by different minds and created by varying hands, and the whole came together as best it could, the result proving fully satisfactory, owing to the instinctive sense of proportion possessed by the mediæval craftsmen, which produced sufficient and satisfying balance, while the haphazardness of grouping gave much picturesqueness. These conditions are of the essence of Gothic architecture, and add to the difficulty of a successful return to it. To-day, a single mind plans the whole and settles every detail, a system essential to the classic style ; but with the Gothic, the modern architect is seldom able to steer a clear course between the Scylla of iron-bound symmetry and the Charybdis of over-studied and intentional quaintness, while the modern craftsman is too subservient to another man's mind and model to avoid a measure of mechanical lifelessness in his work.

Large habitations in the fifteenth century fall into two groups : that where strength against attack was still the first consideration, and that where some reliance has come to be placed upon the reign of law. We have the manor house, moated, perhaps, and certainly with solid gatehouse, and with its principal windows opening on to the security of the courtyard, as was the case at Athelhampton and Adlington ; and we also have the castle with rampart, machicoulis, portcullis and the general apparatus of fortification, as at Hever (page 53) and St. Donats. Often there was local reason for this ; St. Donats, indeed, was "between the devil and the deep sea," with pirates on the latter, and native restlessness, sometimes successfully headed by an Owen Glendwr, representing the former. Yet such castles were not in their essence military structures ; they were dwellings on the same plan, and admitting of the same general mode of life, as the manor houses, but with some additional means of repelling onslaughts in the shape of stone bulwarks and armed retainers. And during a great part of the fifteenth century such accessories had much to be said in their favour. The frequent risings against the usurpation of the first Lancastrian king were followed by the still more tempestuous times and lack of governance which mark the long quarrel between the Houses of York and Lancaster, when the baron once more sought to make a law unto himself and set up force as the arbiter between himself and his neighbour. The Paston letters show the difficulties and dangers which beset a prudent lawyer and business man like Sir John Paston in his attempt to retain the properties he was legally acquiring. He had purchased from the son of the poet Chaucer the manor of Gresham ; but the powerful family of Hungerford disputed his title, and in 1450, while Paston was in town but his wife in residence, sent "a riotous peple, to the nombre of a thousand persones, arrayd in maner of werre with curesse brigaunders, jakks, salettes, gleyfes, bowes, arows, pavyse, gonnes, pannys with fier and teynes brennyng therein, long cromes to drawe doun howsis, ladders, pikoys, with which thei myned down the walles and long trees with which thei broke up yates and dores." This weirdly armed array drove out the household of twelve persons "and cutte asondre the postes of the howses and lete them falle, and broke up all the chambres and coferes within the seid mansion." Gresham was clearly a timber-framed group of buildings—though one mansion, it was several "howses"—and its walls

could easily be reached and undermined, and its great oaken gates battered down with the "long trees." Later on, the inheritance and trusteeship of the Fastolf estates proved to be by no means a bed of roses to the Pastons. In 1461, the Duke of Norfolk took possession of Caister and held it for a time. In 1465 the Duke of Suffolk set up a claim to the lordship of Hellesdon. "The Duke's men took possession and set John Paston's own tenants to work, very much against their wills, to destroy the mansion, while they themselves ransacked the church, turned out the parson and spoiled the images. They also pillaged very completely every house in the village. As for John Paston's own place, they stripped it completely bare; and whatever there was of lead, brass, pewter, iron, doors or gates, or other things they could not conveniently carry off, they hacked and hewed them to pieces." The Eastern Counties were, at this time, among the wealthiest and most prosperous in England, yet, even here, the age of the unfortified house had clearly not yet been reached. It came, however, with the Tudors; but with it also much else came, for under the new dynasty were to be developed new views and methods in politics and in religion, in art and in learning, in social institutions and in habits of life; and every one of these changes was to react on the fashion of the Englishman's home. It ceases, not only in the case of the noble and magnate, but of the squire and merchant, to be a simple hall and becomes a complex dwelling; no longer centring in a great room where all live in common, but having a series of apartments, where not merely is the master more differentiated from his retainers, but where the various phases of daily life and the various sections of the family have separate allocation. If the hall lessens in size and importance, the parlour, the withdrawing-room, the gallery and even the library one by one appear and acquire specialised purpose and function.

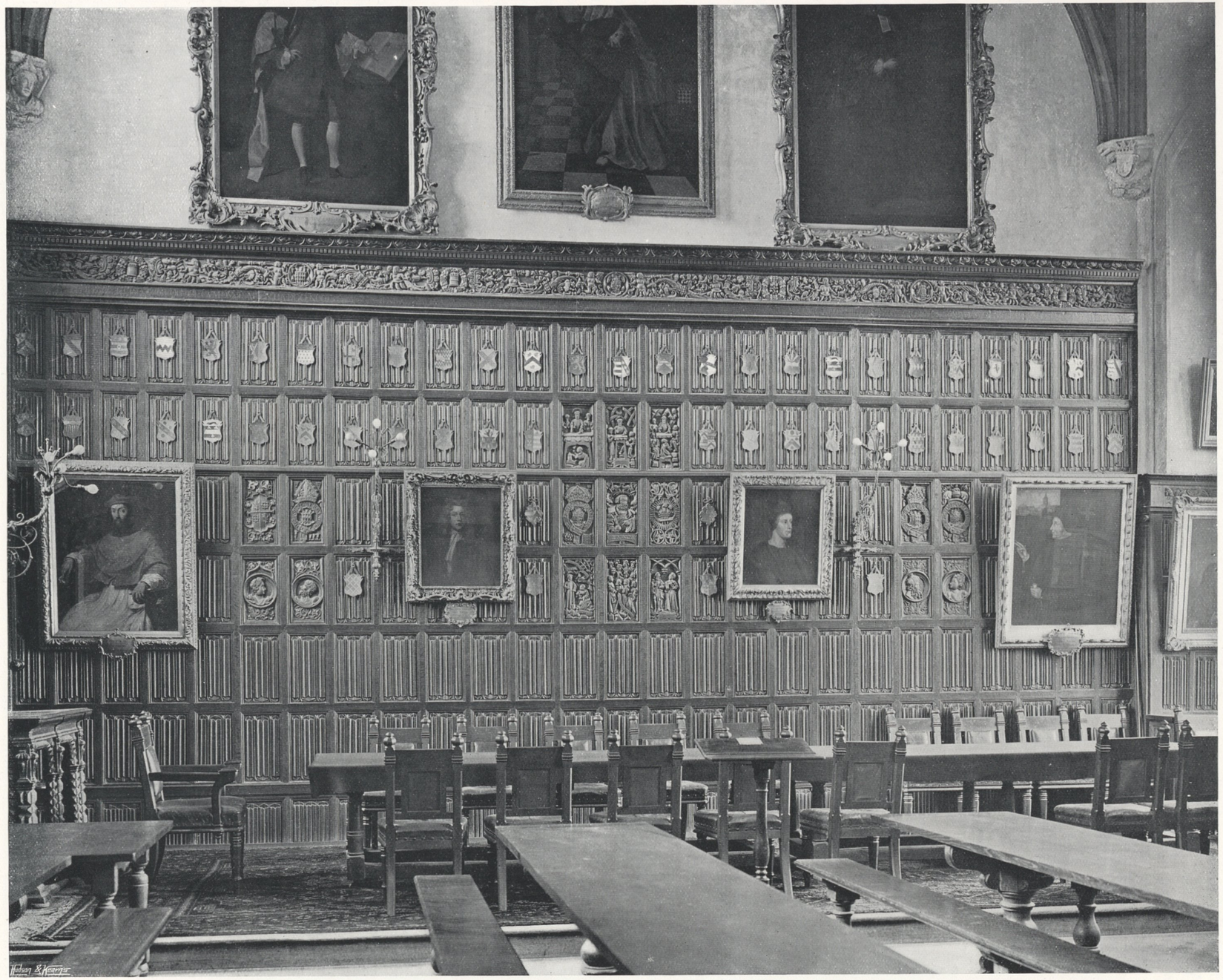
Although the impression which Cotehele, built in Henry VII.'s time, creates is one of full mediævalism, we find here a late rather than an early arrangement; for the hall (page 47) is entered somewhat centrally, and, therefore, there is no screen or gallery at the lower end; nor is there a dais or oriel at the upper end. Whether accidentally and from local causes, or from intention and novel purpose, it already leans towards the entrance rather than the living hall. But it still goes up to the roof, still is lit on both sides, and, therefore, still divides the house into two sections, still is a leading feature—its position clear and noticeable as one enters the courtyard. At Barrington (page xxi.) such is not the case. Not only does the hall fail to impress itself as a distinct part of the elevation; it is not, at once, evident where it is or whether there is one. Its windows are neither larger, higher nor of different design to many others. The porch is the central feature of the house, not a side adjunct to the hall. The corner excrescence is no longer a hall oriel, but a stairway, and is balanced by a similar one at the other corner, so that they help to mystify rather than mark the house plan as it was then known. Thus, though in form and detail Barrington belongs to the old order, its framework is entirely influenced by the new. Built early in the sixteenth century, its angle buttresses, its arch-headed window lights, its twisted chimneys, its crocketed finials all take us back to mediævalism. But its even line of roofage, its regular and abundant fenestration, its symmetry of wings, its open front make it the forerunner of a type which was to last till the Tudors had ceased and the Stuarts reigned, and give it complete kinship with Quenby (page 247) and Temple Newsam (page 251), which were not finished till Charles I. was king.

But the fact that this type of house first appears in Gothic guise is a reminder that change of habit of life had as much to do as change of architectural taste with the contrast in character and appearance presented by our mediæval and our Renascence houses. As hall dwindled and parlour and chamber multiplied, the elevation of the house ceased to show in its composition any overwhelming feature; the windows increased in number and became more equal in size and similar in proportion; the same line of roof could be carried through, and the entire edifice thus exhibited, not a set of parts more or less connected together, but a single composition divided into compartments. The arrangement favoured a more symmetrical and balanced design, and fashion was ready to accentuate this by imposing on it classic details. Yet it did not preclude certain late and qualified Gothic forms, as Barrington shows us; and how well these forms could exist and combine with the later taste we see at St. John's College, Oxford. The classic spirit in architecture arriving with the new learning, with the freeing of men's minds from the old ecclesiastical bonds, with their determination to build for their own grandeur and not for God's glory, stamped the new style as a lay style, and gave a certain sanctity to Gothic models. And so, when Laud moved towards an ecclesiastical revival, he leant also towards Gothic forms. Though built by him in the seventeenth century and associated with much Renascence work, the garden front of St. John's (page xv.) might date from the early Tudors. It has no greater symmetry than Barrington, no more abundant Renascence detail than Layer Marney. It so thoroughly enters into the Gothic spirit that it delights in peopling its upper string-course with grotesques, and in breaking its lower one in order to raise it over the irregularly-spaced windows of the ground floor. It is a somewhat extreme case of survival, amounting, indeed, almost to a revival, and yet it is one of a large class. The native Gothic met the Italian invasion firmly, and gave



THE ENTRANCE FRONT, BARRINGTON COURT, SOMERSET.

ground only step by step. It was not overwhelmed by a single Senlac, but fought on till it could effect a treaty of peace and partition, an amicable division of the disputed territory. Indeed, a marriage alliance took place, leading to a race of buildings which so absorbed and combined the divergent qualities of the parents as to produce a new and original style, wherein, though the trappings and accoutrements were Continental, the live body remained essentially native. There are few cases in Tudor England of any close imitation of an Italian palazzo; and where, as at Wollaton, some such attempt was made, the result was one of the least agreeable of the great mansions of the Elizabethan age. What, therefore, we have to note is not revolution, but evolution; the very gradual and spasmodic growth of the classic idea; its large introduction here, its resolute rejection there, according to the foreign journeyings or leanings of one builder, or the insular and home-loving prejudices of another. Barrington, as we have seen, has already discarded the predominance of the hall and the enclosure within courts; it has declined the fourth side to its quadrangle and adopted the new H shape. But fifty years later Hoghton Tower (page 115) adheres to the old plan. The defensible courtyard is retained. There is no symmetry in its principal elevations; the hall door is not central, the hall oriel is not balanced, the hall windows do not consort in size or arrangement with those of the other rooms. The same is true of interior features and ornament, though these, which rapidly developed in quantity and elaboration, took on the new garb more readily and completely. What is chiefly noticeable in the Caister inventory—or any other of the fifteenth century—is the abundance of the produce of the weaver's and silversmith's crafts, and the scarcity of that of the cabinet-maker. Furniture there must have been in this rich man's new house, yet scarcely any is mentioned. The feather beds and mattresses, the blankets and sheets, the coverlets, hangings and testers are numerously listed and often described, but there is no word of the bedstead. There are many tapestry covers for benches and cupboards, and scores of cushions or pillows of silk or velvet, of cloth or damask, white, green, red and blue. There are cloths of Arras for every sort of hanging, and pieces of canvas and linen stocked for future use. There are thousands of ounces of silver plate, including much variety of salt cellar, candlestick and pricket, of ewers and gallon pots, of standing cups and goblets, of bowls and basins, of platters and dishes, of chargers and saucers. But the only furniture that finds mention in the whole house are one folding table and seven chairs. The rest was either fixed, such as cupboards built into walls, or benches, of stone in the windows, of wood along the sides of the hall, or it was mere carpenter's work, as the plain frame of the bedsteads, or the trestles and boards of the great tables, such as still survive at Penshurst, or the framework of the dressers, which were draped with rich stuffs ere the silver was exhibited on them. But for the richness of these easily stored, packed and moved materials, the pictured arrases on the walls, the embroidered curtains on the beds, and even on the windows, which at this date were filled with glass, the silk and velvet of the cushions, the tapestry bankers, and the carpets and covers of tables, dressers and cupboards, the halls and rooms were somewhat bare and cold, for even the fixed woodwork was not either plentiful or elaborate. We have seen that wainscoting of plain boards was not unknown, in Royal houses anyhow, in Early Plantagenet days; but even in the fifteenth century rooms of framed panelling must have been rare, or the remaining fragments would be more numerously found in houses, and not so exclusively in churches. We offer in this volume no examples of panelling of Gothic tracery known to be of lay origin, our earliest examples being of the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the Renascence was already tincturing the Gothic style. Such is the famous panelling at The Vyne in Hampshire, of which we illustrate a section (page xxviii.). Its date is 1515, and it is still essentially Gothic, of a crisp linen pattern with twisted and foliated rods; above and below this are carved coats of arms and badges in great variety—pomegranates, fleurs-de-lys, Tudor roses for the King and Queen, emblazoned shields for the owner and his kin, cardinal's hats and bishops' mitres for Wolsey and his brethren. Yet every now and then, at the base of two panels under the side table for instance, are devices that betray the new school, while the great carved panel over the doorway of this room is frankly Italian in treatment. Of the same character is the panelling in the hall of Magdalen College (page xxiii.). Again the linen pattern is Gothic, but there is a strong Italian infusion in the cornice carving, and also in such panels as have profile heads in medallions. The medallion was almost the first Italianism introduced into England, Torrigiano having used it in Henry VII.'s tomb, and soon after began the importation of terra-cotta heads of Cæsars in wreathed roundels, such as Wolsey used at Hampton Court, and of which two are at St. Donats (page 18). The idea was readily transferred to native panelling, and it is the most characteristic, though now, alas! rare, motif of our Henry VIII. carvers. A good sample of such is in the movable screen at Speke (page xxiv.), where the Renascence spirit has got complete hold and the wreathed medallions are surrounded by Italian scrollwork wherein the dolphin plays a conspicuous part. The admirable ironwork, however, is purely Gothic, as it is on the cupboard of the same character at Rothamsted (page 309), under which head further remarks as to such work will be found. Although it is now scarce in houses, a good deal may yet be found in churches, especially in Cornwall and



TRANSITION PANELLING IN THE HALL OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD

Devonshire. In the former county, Lanteglos and Tallant have good Renascence bench-ends ; at Swimbridge in Devon the remarkable panelling which encloses the font has medallioned profiles and dolphin arabesques as its chief features, while the rood-screen in the same church is wholly of the late Gothic type so prevalent in this county. At Atherington, near by, the rood-screen is likewise Gothic, but the spandrels of its fan vaulting



SCREEN AT SPEKE HALL, LANCS.

are filled in with detail of the purest Renascence type—scrolls, dolphins, amorini—and it is therefore of the highest interest as a fine and perfect survival of the transition period. Considering the original prevalence and considerable present survival of this prominent fifteenth century feature in churches, and the great splendour and elaboration of the decoration bestowed thereon, it is somewhat remarkable that hall screens of this date are almost wanting. One was retained at Great Chalfield until nearly the middle of the nineteenth century, when the hall was cut up into rooms and the screen destroyed. That at Samlesbury has been wrecked beyond recognition. A simple one of late Gothic work is retained at Haddon. But almost the only surviving one of importance is at Compton Wynyates, and is of Henry VIII.'s time, with strong Renascence leanings. These examples seem to show that, whereas the rood-screen, in order to carry the loft above, was fitted with a deep cove or vaulting, the hall screen, which merely carried one end of the rafters, the other being supported by the wall, had no projection, and the introduction of this feature by Mr. Pearson into his fine new screen at Hever (page 58), which in other respects resembles that at Compton Wynyates, gives it a somewhat unreal and unsatisfying appearance.

Of furniture of the latest Gothic and earliest Renascence period, survivals are as scarce as of fixed woodwork. It never, as we have seen, was abundant, and the percentage that has lived through four centuries of use and abuse is naturally very small. The cupboard at Rothamsted is the finest example in this volume, but St. Donats has a considerable collection of it in its various habitual forms, such as the chest and the credence, the livery and standing cupboards, the panelled or the turned wood chair, the joynt stool and the trestle-table.

Once, however, we are beyond this period, once we reach the middle of the Tudor age, when the various foreign influences have so grafted themselves upon English work, so entered into the nature of native craftsmen as to produce a special style, we find a great outburst of house-building with much-increased elaboration and luxury of internal work, fixed and movable. Yet this style did not quite follow the path of development that the work of Henry VIII.'s time foreshadowed. Italy never completely lost touch of its classic age even during the Dark Ages. It continued to draw inspiration from Byzantium, and never fully adopted the mediæval forms of the more Northern nations. With the revival in the fifteenth century it plunged back into pure classic waters ; not imitatively, however, but with originality, with the impregnation of more recent influences retained. Cinquecento art is



THE HALL SCREEN AT TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

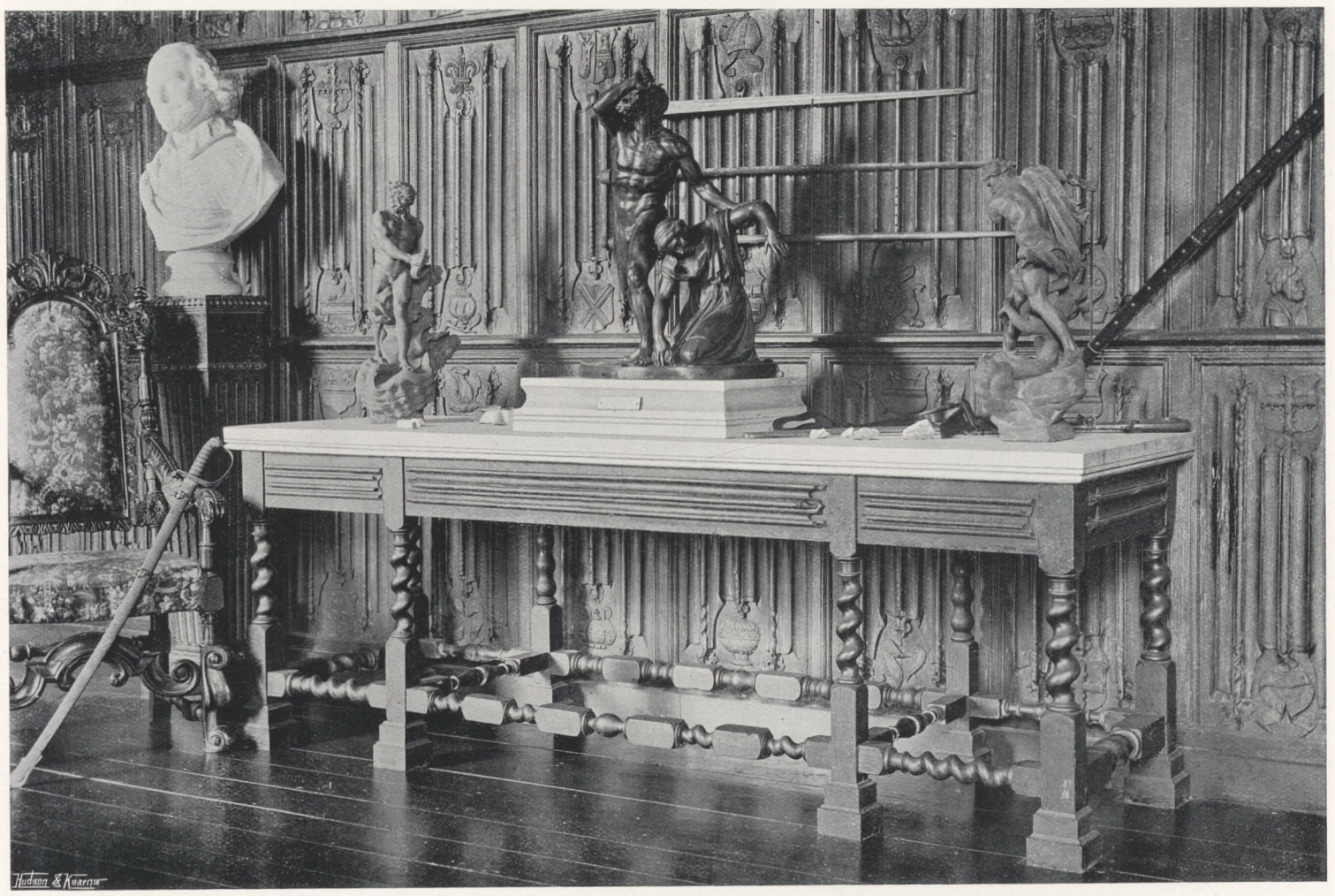
not the art of Old Rome; it is freer, warmer, richer, more imaginative. From Italy it soon spread Northward. French, German and Burgundian sovereigns made Italy their battle-ground, but took home with them its art. The native craftsmen of each country to which it spread moulded it into new forms, and it reached England considerably modified by its journey across the Continent. Marrying his sister to Louis XII., and then entering into rivalry with Louis's successor, Henry VIII., while encouraging the advent of Italians direct from their own land, leant towards the French edition of the Renascence; but after his time it was with a strong Flemish tincture that it spread in England. The Low Countries were the nearest possessions of Queen Mary's husband, whose sister ruled for him in Brussels, and thus Court influence for a time favoured the Fleming. But under Elizabeth the invasion was popular; the Alva persecutions drove many a capable craftsman to the now Protestant England, and when the Northern provinces rose in open revolt, English sympathy and English aid drew close the social bonds. Nor was this more than an old influence revived. In the high days of Burgundian ascendancy, when Philip the Good reigned, or when John Paston witnessed the wonders of the wedding of Charles the Rash with Edward IV.'s sister, the Flemish craftsman had equalled the Italian in all other branches of art, and in the matter of tapestry had excelled him. Of all fifteenth century movables, the pictured cloths of Arras were, as we have seen at Caister, the most in request in England; they were an entirely foreign product, it being late on in the reign of Henry VIII. before we hear of Robert Hicks as "the only auther and beginner of tapestry of Arras within this Realm." Upon fifteenth century Flanders England depended for such fine cloths as now hang in the Rothamsted drawing-room (page 319), and also for most of its rich fabrics, while from there also was introduced into the South-Eastern Counties brick architecture, wood rood-screens and the art of fine weaving in wool and linen. At that time Flanders gave us of its own Gothic; but now, in the middle of the sixteenth century, the architectural and decorative mode which blossomed out as England's native style was an adaptation of the Flemish interpretations of Italy's original reconstruction of the arts of ancient Rome. It is because this style reached a Northern nation through another Northern nation that so much of Northern forms was retained. Symmetrical elevations, round-arched doorways, the whole Renascent tribe of pilaster and pediment, caryatid and cartouche, garland and arabesque, become universal, certainly, but only as adjuncts to the mullioned window, the high gable, the broken roof-line, the chimney as a structural feature, which still contrive to play a leading part in our architecture until Inigo Jones twice went to Rome to drink his fill at the uncorrupted source of the original waters of pure classicism. Under Elizabeth and James there appear, in the plans of houses, but few examples of the concentrated block of the Italian villa or palazzo. The old Gothic expansiveness and looseness of design continue, and if, on the one hand, there is the restraint of symmetry, on the other there is freedom from the limitations of defensive need—of restrictive moat and encompassing wall. The single-span roof runs its long course as before, but not now, of necessity, round the complete circuit of the square. A small house will be L shape, a centre with a single wing; the next size will be E shape, that is, the fourth side of the court is removed, and a porch projects from the centre of the main elevation. A large house, such as of old would have enclosed two quadrangles, is now H shape, as are Quenby (page 245) and Temple Newsam (page 251), while the immense edifices required by Elizabeth's magnates—the Dorsets at Knole, the Cecils at Theobalds, the Hattons at Holdenby—still needed two or three courts, but the main rooms were no longer windowed within but without them. Whether from such need of accommodation, or because Hobart built on old Boleyn foundations within the moat, is uncertain, but Blickling (page 259) presents the form of the double court and not of the H. Though, as a rule, the new love of light and outlook removes the fourth side as a range of view-blocking buildings, yet some enclosure is still liked for shelter or for appearance, if not for protection, and an archway or gatehouse generally admits to an ample forecourt bounded by high or low, solid or perforated walls. Opposite to the entrance is the porch, now made the most ornamental feature of the exterior, and the one which the most fully decks itself out in the imported trappings. The idea of placing it centrally in the elevation and of making it the one conspicuous ornament of an otherwise plain exterior, arose while still the Gothic style prevailed, as at Hornby (page 93). But the new fashion seized upon it early, and imposed on it the classic pilaster and rounded arch in houses which otherwise retain much of Gothic spirit and proportion. How largely the English country builder adopted the pilaster and column from Italy as mere ornaments sufficient in themselves, and without due regard to their architectural truth and function as supports, is seen at The Treasurer's House (page 201), where they laboriously tower up two storeys to support nothing at all. At Newburgh (page 341) the three tiers of columns are given the excuse of finials for their presence, but at Ragdale (page 299) the two pairs, of single-storey height, have a considerable weight of heraldic achievement and tall obelisks above them. The native designer, however, seldom reached the excellence of design and right sense of proportion shown by the foreigner whom he copied. The porch at Cobham (page xxx.) is the work of the Low Countryman, de Witte—



THE HALL SCREEN AT WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD.

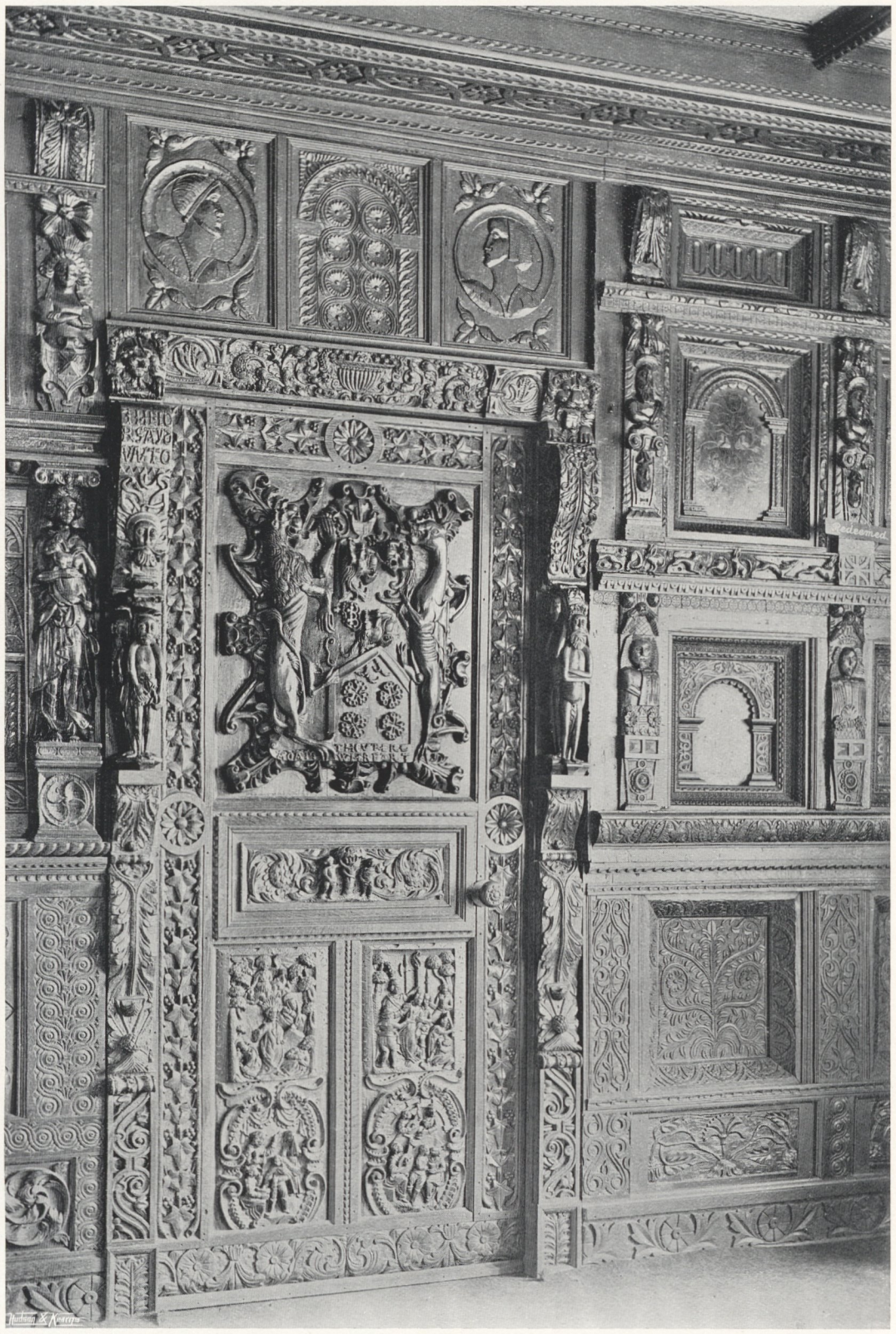
Giles de Whitt, as the contemporary ledger writes him—and bears the date of 1594. Its full classic character and the richness and delicacy of its carvings are in strong, but by no means disagreeable, contrast to the Gothic feeling which still reigns over the high-pitched roof and plain mullioned windows which environ it. The example from St. John's College (page xii.) is later, part of the fine Renascence work which Laud associated with the Gothic survival which we have already mentioned (page xx.). Tradition assigns the design to Inigo Jones, but documentary proof is wanting.

The central porch tended to modify the house plan, yet English conservatism shows strongly in the lingering adhesion to the old arrangements. The porch still opened on to the screens, but while retaining much of its old purpose and importance, the hall was thrust, by the position of the porch, on one side of the main elevation, and its windows could be of no greater size than those of the offices or secondary rooms which opened out from the other side of the screens, unless symmetry was thrown to the winds, as at Methley (page 174), which, though built in full Elizabethan times, exhibits an older form, although even here the hall has not got an open roof, but has rooms over it. In great houses the hall would still go up two storeys and have a gallery, and even at Woollas (page 171) there is just height for this feature. But in the typical manor house of Elizabeth's time the hall is a large rather square room of single-storey height with the great withdrawing-room occupying an equal space over it, as at Stockton (page 131), the screen, however, being retained, as we find at East Sutton (page 291) and Sizergh (page 108). If surviving Gothic screens are rare, Renascence ones are frequent enough. Some of the finest are in college halls, such as the examples we give from Trinity, Cambridge (page xxv.) and from Wadham, Oxford (page xxvii.). The former dates from 1605, at the time when Dr. Nevile as master and Ralph Symons as architect were so greatly rebuilding and extending the college. Francis Carter and Andrew Chapman were its chief craftsmen, but the scheme and detail were largely taken from that erected in the previous reign in the hall of the Middle Temple. It is a fine and elaborate example, fully typical of its age. Yet excellent as the work is, there is a slight solidity and clumsiness about the design and execution of the great panels of the gallery front which mark even the highest flights of the English school founded on the Flemish rendering of Italian decorative art. The flat unmodelled strapwork of the lower entablature frieze and the jewelled cartouches of the upper one are thoroughly native emanations of the style, and we shall meet them, especially the former, constantly in the houses of the period pictured in this volume. The elaborate cresting of open strapwork pediments and carved obelisks which surmounts the gallery front, is of a kind then much in vogue, in stone, as well as in wood, for screens in both houses and churches—as at Croscombe



PANELLING AT THE VYNE, HAMPSHIRE.

in Somerset—and also for chimney-pieces and tombs. We find much the same at Wadham, a very similar, if somewhat smaller and simpler, screen to that at Trinity. Wadham, like St. John's, is another example of good Gothic work continued into the seventeenth century and associated with Renascence work. The date of the screen is about 1612, and is much the same as that of the similar screen at Dorton (page 287), an excellent though humbler example, suited to a moderate-sized manor house. The pushing of the hall to one side of the main front drove the parlours into one wing and gave too much space and too prominent a position to the offices. The result was the placing upstairs, as at Stockton, of the great withdrawing-room of the manor house and the gallery of the great house. Galleries were essentially of Italian origin, and did not get any real hold in England till Elizabeth's day. Then they rapidly gained favour, and all new houses of any pretension included them in their design, while in older structures they were adapted by extending a solar, as at St. Donats (page 25), or by ceiling a Gothic hall and other rooms, and using the roof space, as at Hever (page 64). The new ones were of great length, fine proportion and elaborate decoration, as being the chief reception-room. The finest ceilings, chimney-pieces and wainscoting were reserved for them, and they were the most marked Renascence feature of the interior, as the porch was of the exterior, as the examples at Blickling (page 267) and Aston (page 279) show. At the latter house, which was not finished till Charles I.'s time, there is a step forward in the house plan. The hall is essentially an entrance and not a living-room. The door is central, and therefore there is no screen. The chimney-piece is in an end wall where, of old, the lord's seat would have stood. The hall is no longer windowed on both sides, for the back wall is only an inside partition, though of thoroughly old-fashioned thickness, and a row of rooms are behind it. In place of the wings of the **H** the block plan is beginning to appear.



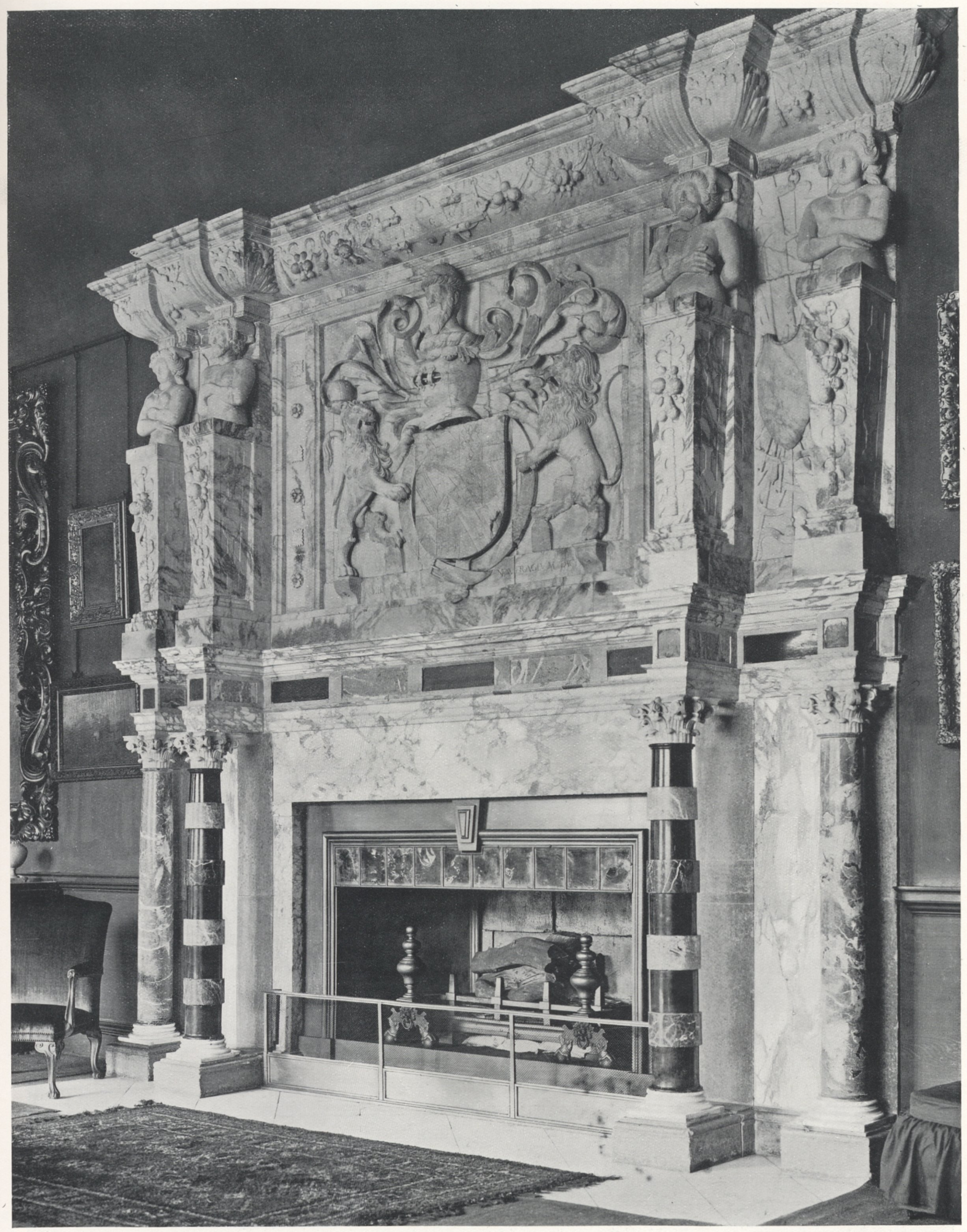
PANELLING AT SMITHILLS HALL, LANCS.

What the porch was to the house, the chimney-piece was to the room; it concentrated the bulk of the ornamentation on itself. It was no longer, as in the fifteenth century examples at St. Donats and Athelhampton, a few traceried panels over an arch. It had the same structure and elaboration as the porch, the same columns or pilasters or caryatides, single or in pairs, and in one, two or even three tiers, enclosing carved panels or niches with figures and supporting entablatures and pediments. Both porch and mantel were favourite features on which to exhibit the owner's arms, as we see at Cobham (page xxxi.), where de Witte's chimney-piece is almost the counterpart of his porch, except that, an internal feature permitting more detail, the upper columns are replaced by caryatides. In both cases the

structure gives chief prominence to the shield of the Brookes with Cobham quarterings, surmounted with the crested helm, encircled with the garter and supported by lions. In contrast with the ambitiousness of design and the depth and boldness of carving at Cobham is the Hardwick House mantel (page xxxii.), where the flat English strapwork is largely used ; shelled niches, holding statues of Faith and Hope, occupy the upper part, with a square panel bas-relief between them representing Abraham, in classic garb, flourishing over Isaac a curved falchion whose blade an angel stooping from a great crescent of cloud-bank catches in his hands. Again above, standing in front of the plaster frieze and almost touching the ceiling,



DE WITTE'S PORCH AT COBHAM, KENT.



DE WITTE'S CHIMNEY-PIECE AT COBHAM, KENT.

are figures of Justice and Charity on each side of a strapwork achievement supporting the Lybbe arms. Hard chalk is the material used, obtained locally, in place of the foreign marbles which the foreign craftsman had wrought upon at Cobham. A very similar mantel-piece to that at Hardwick House is in the drawing-room at Quenby (page 249). Again we have the flat strapwork and the niches headed with a shell. The fire-arch here, however, though every other portion of the mantel is completely Renascent, retains the Gothic form. This was a favourite survival, and in this volume will be found many examples. The strapwork in these two stone mantel-pieces is carried out in the woodwork of the rooms, the same decorative design being preserved. At Hardwick House the very

usual scheme of plain panelling relieved by wrought pilasters is resorted to; at Quenby there is the richer treatment of arcaded panels, the arcading having sometimes the flat strapwork and sometimes the jewel patterning which we found on the Trinity College screen. Woodwork at this period is both plentiful and elaborate, whole houses being often wainscoted throughout; the type being of small, almost square panels of thin oak, framed into rather narrow stiles, wood pegged, with mouldings worked in the solid even where, as in the St. Donats dining-room (page 27), the mouldings are of the raised or bolection kind. The panels themselves generally have their surfaces left plain, richness being given in rooms of importance by pilastering, which is more often fluted than carved, as at Stockton (page 129), or by arcading, of which other



CHIMNEY-PIECE AT HARDWICK HOUSE, OXFORDSHIRE.



BEDSTEAD FORMERLY AT GREAT TANGLEY, SURREY.

examples than those already mentioned appear in the drawing-rooms of Langleys (page 204) and Lyme (page 214), in the latter case the arcading being interlaced. Below the band of arcading at Lyme, the panels show another favourite device, that of putting a panel within a panel and connecting the inner and outer stiles. Such inner panels were square or diamond shape, both occurring in the example from Burton Agnes (page xxxiv.). The comparative simplicity of the wall lining served as a background for the excessive carving which the more prominent features of the room very often exhibited. Wood mantelpieces were much more frequent than those of stone, while marble was quite exceptional. Wood lent itself to rather different treatment; but the scheme remained the same whatever the material was, the most favoured model certainly being that of pairs of columns, pilasters or caryatides in two tiers, such as we find in much variety at Lyme, associated with good and elaborate carvings of arabesques and heraldry. A very reserved and

elegant example of the same type, showing thought in design and dexterity in execution, is in the drawing-room at Prinknash (page 335). It is in strong contrast to the meaningless over-ornamentation of which the period is frequently guilty, as at Maxstoke (page 11), where scarcely an inch of space is left plain to give effect to the carving. That is perhaps hardly an error in such cases, for the carving is clumsy in design and coarse in execution, and the bewildering mass of ornament gives a certain barbaric splendour which is the best effect such work can offer. With the mantel-pieces at Sizergh (pages 104-6-9) it is a different matter. They are fine both in arrangement and handling. The straight, simple lines of the pilasters, entablatures and pediments set off the richness of the panels, whose ambitiousness of design has not been beyond the dexterity of the craftsman to adequately render. There were wood-workers at Sizergh in Elizabeth's time who, if not themselves foreigners, had fully seized the best foreign methods, and those of Italy rather than of Flanders, since Italy was the home of such inlaid panelling as that of the room from Sizergh now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which has been the model taken for similar work recently executed in the Hever withdrawing-room (page 61). It is seldom that native products of this age show the ordered richness and refined conception which we find at Sizergh. The examples at Langleys (pages 204-5) aim at more splendour, but they are exuberant rather than refined; yet they are full of charming vitality, and reflect an evident joyousness on the part of craftsmen weltering amid the wealth of newly-seen books of design, newly-realised fields of ornament, newly-felt outlets for their skill, but regulated by little knowledge of principles, little mastery of technique, little training of either head or hand. Although every closer assimilation towards classic ideals demanded deeper grounding in the grammar of art, and greater restraint from undisciplined fancy, yet, in these very qualities, the craftsmen of Elizabeth and James often showed inferiority to their Gothic predecessors. There was enough of the old spirit of independence from all-controlling design to ensure much of the old spontaneity and picturesqueness of treatment; but it was at the sacrifice of that intelligence of composition and sureness of hand which the new style was demanding. Hence, while much of the Italian and French work of the time is truly fine, the English was habitually merely quaint. A glance at the bedstead recently at Great Tangley (page xxxiii.) will at once make this obvious. We do not exactly know the history of this made-up piece, or understand the condition of mind which brings together such glaringly contrasting odds and



AT BURTON AGNES, YORKS.

ends. But, educationally, we welcome it as an epitome of the woodwork of its age. The caryatides which serve as the upper part of the posts are of excellent Italian—or more probably French—workmanship. Their lower halves show full knowledge of proportion and balance in ornament. Their upper halves reveal a trained sculptor's handling, both of the anatomy of the human figure and of the lie and fold of drapery. The whole is an example of mastery in the technique of wood-carving. Associated with these products of realised art are some figures, glued on to the panels of an arcading singularly out of place as the footboard of a bed pretending to date from Elizabeth's time. These figures are of ethical value as showing the cousinship of man's primitive efforts at all times and in all places. A carpenter, trying his hand for the first time at a higher flight than sawing or planing, would turn out such



THE LIBRARY OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD.

stuff whether he lived in the sixteenth or the twentieth century; and the Solomon Islander would not do very differently. In between these extremes we see good foreign work in the figures placed at the bed-head, whose arcading shows the simple patterning and slight modelling of the English school, while the favourite flat strapwork fills every atom of the surface of the canopy. This love of quantity rather than quality appears even in so good a bedstead as that in the Brown Room at Rothamsted (page 314). It is an entirely genuine, rather early and exceptionally well-carved specimen. But it exhibits the native lack of intellectualism, of ambition to think and do finely and grandly. The only attempt it presents of work beyond the simple bounds of geometry and conventional foliage is in the figures of the bed-head, which are of the usual "primitive" type. All the rest needed little skill in drawing or modelling, but such as it is, it shows a sure and crisp touch. In design it is pleasant and picturesque, yet uneducated. There is no due relation of plain and ornamental surfaces—there is, indeed, no plain surface whatever, for even the inside of the entablature is carved, and not a single member of the cornice offers an unbroken line. The posts are in every way exaggerated. Though the bedstead is a small and low example of its type, they are Cyclopean; from the sides of the great square bases protrude giant jewellings, and from their summit start columns commencing with immense bulbosity and ending with mere spindles, which look as if the greedy bulbs had incorporated all the substance and left them starving. The excessive carving on the small cornice gives it an air of frivolity, so that the brackets with which the entablature is set felt themselves *de trop*, and instead of supporting the cornice fade away below the dentals. The beds at St. Donats (page 29) and Athelhampton (page 40), if somewhat coarser in execution, are more satisfying in design. They are large and lofty, and therefore carry off their massiveness. In both cases, though ornament is still superabundant, the value of plain surface has been remembered. The various sections of the posts are duly related and well knit together, and the adequate cornices sit securely on their brackets. We have criticised these beds at some length because they are very representative, not merely of the furniture, but of the whole decorative woodwork of their age. Reception in the bedroom was still a frequent practice under Elizabeth, and the bed was an object of state as well as of utility. It was, therefore, quite as much as the chimney-piece, a worthy object for sumptuous treatment. The doorway also received almost equal attention. That from John Langton's House (page 304) rising from floor to ceiling, and inlaid as well as carved, is the most elaborate in this volume; but the one in the dining-room



OAK STAIRCASE AT GOLDSBOROUGH HALL, YORKS.

at Temple Newsam (page 255) is of the same general design, though simpler in treatment and more restrained. Often a doorway, opening into an apartment of importance from a narrow stairway or landing, would be panelled forward into the room, forming a porch. An early example, with linen panels and Gothic cresting, is in the old drawing-room at Cotehele (page 48). Another of full Jacobean type, with strapwork pilasters and arcaded panelling, occurs at Ragdale (page 301), while the one at Maxstoke (page 10) matches the chimney-piece in the character and abundance of its ornamentation.



THE STAIRCASE AS IT STOOD IN THE OLD HOUSE AT ALDERMASTON, BERKS.

From a Drawing by Nash.

The richness presented by the much-decorated stone and wood features which we have

been describing was often enhanced by the elaborate plaster-work of ceiling and cornice. Mediæval rooms, as we have seen, were not infrequently vaulted; but the vaults with Renascence detail at Bolsover (page 238) are very much of a survival. Even in the Gothic period the ceiling was more often of the beam and rafter type, the rafters being laid with thick oak boards as a flooring to the room above, and either left open below, or, in fine rooms, panelled in wood. But when plaster came into use for this purpose, it was soon recognised as offering a fair field for ornament. The methods of the earlier materials were adopted with gradual modification. The curved ribs and pendants ribs showed a tendency to differentiate from their prototypes, and assume a broader, shallower form, the centre being filled with a flowing pattern, as at Stockton (page 134), Langleys (page 206) and Blickling (page 267). Though in these and many other cases in this volume, we find much similarity in the sectional design of the ribs, their arrangement on the ceilings exhibits a large variety and great ingenuity. They encompass every shape and vast intricacy of panel—curved, square, angular and interlaced. The panels are most variously ornamented: allegorical scenes and illustrated proverbs, as at Blickling and Park Hall (page 138); signs of the zodiac, shields and badges, heads of the Cæsars, as at Sizergh and Hardwick



EARLY VICTORIAN GOTHIC AT TODDINGTON.

of stone vaulting and the flat rectangular ribbing of wood panelling were the fundamental ideas, which developed into infinite variety as the possibilities of plaster became more understood. At St. Donats, in the painted chamber (page 29) we find a simple ceiling closely imitating the mouldings of wood ribbing and the bosses usual at the intersection of the panelled ceilings of the Gothic period. This ceiling is original, dates from the time of Philip and Mary, and bears much resemblance to some of Wolsey's simpler work at Hampton Court. The same character of ribbing occurs at Sizergh (page 107), where the idea is clearly taken from fan vaulting. But the House; strapwork and foliated scrolls, as at Langleys, Stockton and Canons Ashby (page 284). The latter is a fine example of the coved type of ceiling, and of the great central pendant from which to hang a lamp.

All through this period the stair was ceasing to be the obscure little winding way such as we found it in Gothic houses. It was gaining importance, becoming a feature and standing out in a roomy open space where it needed the support of a casing composed of string, newel-post, baluster and hand-rail. There seems little period of transition, when the stone stair in the turret, forming its own newel by the spiral superposition of block on block, ends,

the square wood stair with frequent landings comes abruptly into vogue. At first it is small and plain, rising in a somewhat confined area, as at Goldsborough (page xxxvi.). At Park Hall a measure of ornament appears on the strings and newel-posts. The very similar staircase at Methley (page 176) shows a little more elaboration, and the finials are hollowed out. But when we reach Jacobean times we find, in great houses, much development. Size, space and decoration are all increased, as we see at Temple Newsam (page 256). Delicate Renascence work appears carved in the newel-posts, and on them stand fine heraldic beasts. At Blickling (page 263) we reach a step further. The staircase is brought right into the hall, and, after the first central flight, divides into a double way, and well-sculptured figures stand on the posts, whose decoration closely resembles that at Temple Newsam. The balusters have ceased to be mere turned rods, and form an elaborately-modelled arcading. At Aston (page 275) we find another fashion of supporting the rail, the balustrading being superseded by pierced panels of carved strapwork. The same idea of pierced panels, but with a different decorative motif, appears at Hutton-in-the-Forest (page 233). Acanthus scrolls, fruit and flower garlands, masks, amorini and heraldic shields take the place of the strapwork in this mode, which had, perhaps, its finest exposition at the house which Sir Humphrey Forster finished building at Aldermaston in 1636. We reproduce (page xxxvii.) Nash's view of it as it originally stood. Part of the house having suffered by fire in 1843, the whole was pulled down, and the staircase was poorly adapted to the new house. Not only is the panel work bold, racy and original, but the figures surmounting the newel-posts are exceptional for English work at this time. There is no "primitiveness" here. They show knowledge of anatomy, mastery of attitude and expression, and perfection in the treatment of drapery, combined with the unerring and audacious craftsmanship which triumphantly leaves its tool marks as a desirable and sufficing finish.

The freedom and elaboration of the carving in the Aldermaston staircase are not, however, typical of the work of its time. The excessive and unreserved ornamentation upon which we have largely commented is characteristic of the time of Elizabeth rather than of James—of the first general outburst of Renascent ideas in England, and not of its maturer years. With the latter came much restraint, a stronger sense of proportion and design and an almost Puritanic reticence of ornament. The English seem to have realised that they were not a nation of artists, that the number of their craftsmen who could design and carve finely was small, and that it was, therefore, better for design to be left to a few master minds, and for ornament to be limited to such quantity as there were able hands to create; while the rest should be skilful carpenter's work of elaborate panel-work, with varied mouldings, dentals, turned details and the simplest incised carving. Such is the character of the drawing-room mantel-piece at Blickling (page 268) and of the whole of the woodwork in the Merton College Library (page xxxv.). No hard-and-fast rule as to date can be laid down. It would be quite erroneous to label all freely-carved examples as Elizabethan and all severer work as Jacobean. The plaster-work on the wall of Merton Library bears the arms of Archbishop Whitgift, who died very soon after the Queen, and so the work is likely to be of her time. On the other hand, the wilderness of pilasters and friezes, pediments and obelisks, niches with figures, and panels with pictorial carvings which we find at The Grange at Honiton (page 190), is in a house which was built in James I.'s reign. But the further we get from Elizabeth's days the more of the restrained work do we find, and this not in small houses in obscure parts, but in large work where the best craftsmanship could be insured. Holland House is an instance of this development. It contains no such ambitious carving as Sizergh, or such exuberance as The Grange. But the White Parlour (page 224) is a type of what was then becoming fashionable. The chimney-piece shows kinship with that at Blickling, though here a measure of carving is admitted, its full value being given by the preponderance of plain surface and the dignity of the whole composition. The central motif here and on the walls is a pedimental panel, a little temple front as it were, showing a stronger classical leaning than that possessed by most of the work which we have had under review. Inigo Jones, indeed, returned from his second Italian visit in 1615, and four years later he had made the design for the Whitehall banqueting hall.

Our present task is now practically done. The full triumph of the classic over the Gothic taste, of the exotic foreign over the indigenous Northern style, commences with the laying of the foundation-stone of Inigo Jones's masterpiece. Of this period we reserve our full review till a later date, and merely glance at it here. This glance will enable us to see that just as the looseness—the central weakness and local freedom—of mediæval polity was also present in Gothic architecture, so were the efforts at stricter organisation and more centralised power which European sovereigns were making in the seventeenth century reflected in the manner and style of house-building. Mr. Gotch has rightly pointed out that Inigo Jones was "the first Englishman who combined the functions of planner and designer of details." The days of individual licence, of independent action of brain and hand, on the part of the craftsman were drawing to a close. The discipline which was being introduced into the new standing armies appeared also in the domain of architecture. The architect posed as a commander-in-chief. He and his staff planned and

controlled the whole work down to the smallest detail, and the foremen and artisans, as sergeants and privates, carried out the orders without question and with mechanical exactitude. The house, as much as the army, was to be a compact, definite, co-ordinated whole, complete in itself, not to be added to or subtracted from without injury to effectiveness. For such a purpose the style of architecture evolved by the organising race of ancient civilisation would rightly serve as a model. Its severe regularity, its finished proportions, its restrained ornament, its repetition of authorised detail and selected forms were all to be settled and set down by the master mind and carried out by subservient hands. If the result was more finished and intellectual, it was also more cold and monotonous; what was gained in scholarly correctness and well-trained dexterity was lost in lack of entertaining variety and happy initiative. In the façade of Ribston Hall (page 347) we get a good example of this. The loss of feeling for former features is shown in the flatness of the roof and the meanness of the chimneys. The worship of regularity and of the adopted model appears in the long straight front, broken neither vertically nor horizontally, and in the monotonous line of fifteen similar windows. No regiment on parade could give greater satisfaction. Luckily, native instinct and Northern feeling declined to be shackled by complete subservience to the classic ideal, and created for that great outburst of building which marked the Restoration era a modified classic style of much originality and local colouring. We see this at Chicheley (page 353), and still more in the Queen Anne refacing of the Elizabethan Hill Hall (page 361). The latter is a charming composition, showing the style at its best. The somewhat restricted array of permissible forms and details are all there in their pleasantest aspects. The sash windows are well architraved and aproned. The columns break the horizontal lines, give relief and shadow and carry cornice, parapet and pediment, which are all adequate in proportion and ornament. The change of colour and texture afforded by the careful and well-spaced admixture of stone and brick give an ordered variety and a restrained richness which are thoroughly satisfying.

The disciplining of internal features and decoration to a scholarly standard is well shown in the halls of Chicheley (page 356) and Drakelowe (page 373), while of the perfection and dexterity which craftsmanship reached at this time under the influence of Grinling Gibbons we give an example from Ribston (page 349). A statelier classicism, joined to a more ceremonial and artificial richness, is reached as the eighteenth century progresses, and is seen at Beningbrough (page 378) and in the Red Withdrawing-room at Welbeck (page 389). Decorousness of deportment and restraint of feeling were the keynotes of conduct in the eighteenth century. Ceremonial display, a keeping up of appearances at all hazards, a modest translation into smaller compass of the elaborate parade of the Court of Versailles, entered into English habits of life, and the plan and appearance of the house followed suit. But there arose some restlessness at the restraint, some kicking against the pricks of classic authority and conventional formality. The "return to Nature" showed itself in the garden before it influenced the house; but the spirit which swept away the terrace, the parterre and the canal soon showed itself in details of the dwelling if not in its mass. The "Chinese" style became fashionable in furniture, as we see in the Welbeck Swan Withdrawing-room (page 395), while the "Gothick taste" began to show itself tentatively in decoration. Visiting Welbeck in the middle year of the century, Bishop Pococke saw the "grand hall which is now ornamenting in the Gothic manner," whose crude endeavour at fan vaulting in wicker-work and plaster we illustrate (page 396). This artificial age "returned to Nature" artificially. Its romance, its emotions, its aspirations were in accordance with rule and order; they were but the elegant play-acting of a tired society seeking something fresh, and whose highest achievement was Strawberry Hill. Greater seriousness followed. The romantic school in literature, headed by Walter Scott and Byron, stirred English imagination, and produced in architecture the full Gothic revival. But it was not a healthy, vital movement, seeking its own original method of realising its new ideas and wants. It was sentimental without being truthful, antiquarian without being informed. It gave us plaster battlements and gimcrack turrets, as at Knebworth (page 397). It set modern grates and looking-glasses into mechanical copies of traceried windows, and used the idea of Gothic choir stalls for modern bookcases, as at Toddington (page xxxviii.). A somewhat better school sought to copy the Elizabethan style, with poor result at first, but with some understanding of the principles and proportions which underlay it before Westonbirt (page 407) was built. Still, however, we suffer from having lost one style without gaining another. We still flounder amid ill-adapted copyings and misunderstood restorations; still lack the vigorous determination to give an honest and a living architectural setting to our modern mode of life, our modern domestic habits, customs and requirements. It is true that neither the age of Elizabeth nor the age of Anne wholly invented a new style of architecture. But they so moulded to their domestic purpose, so impressed with their genius, the models which they took for their guidance, that they produced an original result, a house that typified in stone and wood the character and lives of its inmates. Such should also be our aim—is indeed our aim, already on the way to realisation under the guidance of some of the clever architects of to-day, as our pictures of Marshcourt (page 425) will show.