TREASURER'S HOUSE, YORK.

UPON the site of Treasurer's House, in the venerable city of York, there has stood a building wherein men have conducted weighty affairs, from a time "to which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary." The great Roman road passed the very door, the soldiers of Cæsar have often marched by, and there are those who think the famous Sixth Legion had their barracks on the spot, foundations of walls and columns having been discovered 12ft. below the level, between the Aldwark and the Minster, where the military buildings are believed to have stood. The situation of Treasurer's House is unique indeed, and its Jacobean frontage rises in the angle of the city walls, under the shadow of the great Minster which it views in admirable perspective from the north-east, surveying the magnificent range of the walls, buttresses and windows of the choir, and having, perhaps best of all, the fair prospect of that wonderful chapter house—*ut rosa flos florum sic domus ista domorum*—which is the delight and admiration of all lovers of English architecture.

We might, perhaps, search England vainly through to find a parallel for this magnificent grouping of splendid architecture. The surroundings of mediæval buildings — including St. William's College, probably the most interesting Edwardian ecclesiastical lodging in the North—constitute a truly exceptional setting for the house, which contrasts well with the great fabric under whose shadow it stands. We cannot forget that here has passed much of the strenuous history of former times, nor that many great kings, princes and prelates who have made history have received hospitality and shelter during 800 years at this very place. The oak



THE GREEN PARLOUR.



A GEORGIAN STAIRCASE.



THE TAPESTRY DRESSING CHAMBER.

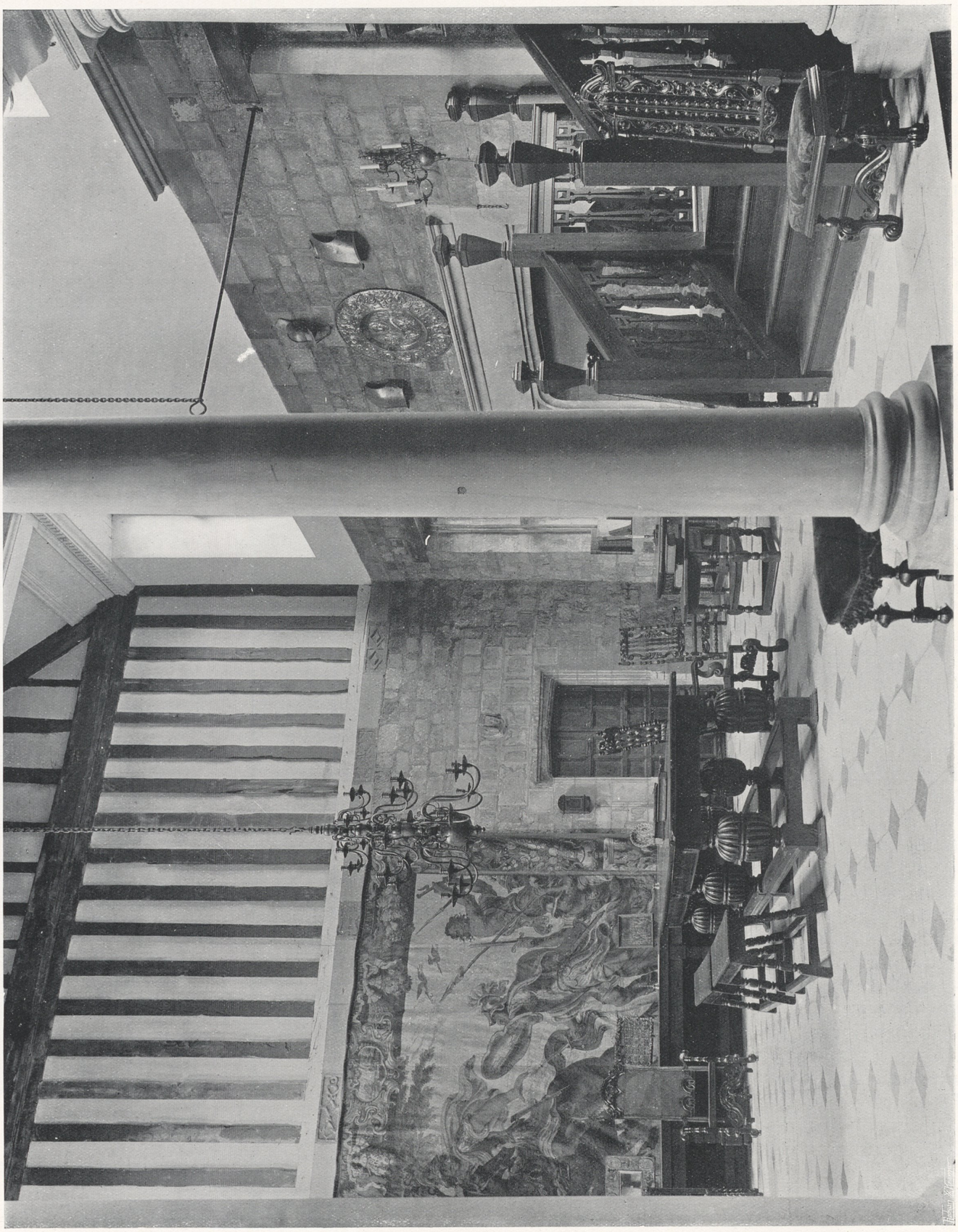
timber out of which the beams of the house were hewn must have been growing even a thousand years ago in the great forest of Galtres, which up to the seventeenth century extended even to the walls of York.

The history of Treasurer's House goes back to Conquest time and to Archbishop Thomas of Bayeux. It was he who repaired the damage that had been inflicted upon the Minster, erecting new transepts and nave, with the aisles to the west of the small pre-Norman stone church, which he reroofed and utilised as the choir, thus making good the consequences of the neglect from which the sacred edifice had long suffered. He appointed a Chancellor, Treasurer and Prebendaries, building suitable residences for them, so that Treasurer's House, as such, was then first brought into existence. One Radulphus was appointed the first Treasurer in the year 1100, and there followed a long succession of Treasurers of York, among whom was that William the miracle-worker, who is the patron saint of the adjoining St. William's College. The duties of the Treasurer included the care of the Treasury, the charge of the fabric of the Minster, and the proper control of all persons therein, save that his authority did not extend to the charge of the choir, which was within the province of the Dean and Chapter. The Treasurer supplied lights to the altars, and in his care were the altar vessels and the valuable and costly vestments which belonged to the church.



IN THE DINING PARLOUR.

The office came to an end in the reign of Henry VIII., the last Treasurer being William Clyffe, who in 1538 resigned his dignities and some of his possessions to the King for a reason which seemed to be unanswerable—that the church, "having been plundered of all its treasure, had no further need of a treasurer"—*abrepto omni thesauro, desiit thesaurari munus.* Successive Archbishops purchased it in turn, until Thomas Young, Elizabeth's Archbishop, devised it to his wife, Jane, for life, and then to his son George. This George Young appears to have stood high in the favour of James I., who knighted him at Whitehall in 1603, and it is recorded that the King and Lord Sheffield, President of the Council of the North, were entertained by him at Treasurer's House, and that there eight Yorkshire knights were made. He no doubt did much to bring the earlier house into harmony with the taste and requirements of his time, and make it fit to receive his Sovereign. The south front is typically Jacobean in character, the chief classical feature being, as usual, the pillared porch, whose upper columns support nothing — not even a pediment as at Hanford.



THE HALL FROM THE EAST.



THE HALL FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

Treasurer's House had by this time lost all relation to the Minster, for whose service it had been raised. It was sold by Thomas Young to Sir William Belt, Recorder of York, and in Cromwell's time it passed to Lord Fairfax of Denton, and subsequently to Mr. Aislaby of Ripon, who is said to have been killed in a duel with rapiers by Sir Jonathan Jennings for having shut the gates of Treasurer's House upon Miss Mallory, daughter of Sir John Mallory of Studley, sister of his second wife. Mr. Aislaby and his wife are buried in the choir of York Minster. His son, John Aislaby, entertained at his house James, Duke of York, who came with the Duchess, and we read that the Lord Mayor and Corporation were deemed by the King not to have shown sufficient respect to these Royal personages in waiting upon them in the Presence Chamber of Treasurer's House, and it would appear that His Majesty showed his displeasure by taking away many of the ancient privileges and charters of the city, which were not restored until some time afterwards.

After 1698 the house was in the possession of one Mr. Squire, who redecorated much of it, the parlour being a fine example of this date. It was subsequently divided, and passed through several hands. The north-east portion appears to have been permanently separated, and was owned by the first Lord Middleton.

The city of York must deem it a fortunate thing that a house so intimately connected with its history has fallen into the hands of those who value it. Future generations may be led thereby to realise that, despite the modern improvements which are daily going on in the ancient city, they have a precious heritage to treasure and preserve. As citizens they possess in their ancient buildings priceless remains, and they should be encouraged not lightly to destroy anything, remembering that, in order to gratify some sudden and fancied idea of progress, we have no right to injure or remove the wonderful and irreplaceable work which has been fashioned with such infinite pains and loving care by dead Englishmen, whose names have been prominent in history, and some of whose deeds are embodied in legend and romance.



DOORWAY IN DRAWING-ROOM OPENING ON TO THE RESTORATION CHAMBER.

The house has been re-created and restored, as was inevitable, if it was to be made a dwelling-place suited to the needs and comforts of modern times. When Mr. Green first saw the house it was in three portions, much of it being built round, and he bought one of the portions as a residence, but found so many interesting structural features and remains of former times that he was encouraged to purchase the two remaining houses, and was thus enabled to bring back the house into something like its original condition. The restoration is not put forward as faultless, but



THE SOUTH FRONT FACING YORK MINSTER.

nothing was done without authority from evidences left. It is right to leave all old work untouched, if possible; but this cannot always be done, and it was found that in some portions of the house alterations had been made, as in the insertion of sash windows, that seriously interfered with the stability of the old structure. It was, therefore, deemed best to replace the mullions and transoms, of which evidences were clearly traced. The banqueting hall is of the late fifteenth century, but another room, now removed, had been placed in the upper part of it, probably by Sir George Young about 1620. The fireplace and base mullioned windows on the east side apparently belonged to the time of Henry VIII., but they were bricked up, and have only recently been uncovered. The basement has two early doorways, and a fourteenth century head of Queen Philippa, now in the hall, was found there in the excavations. Owing to the house having been divided from time to time, it was almost impossible to put it back exactly into its original condition, and it is a happy feature that the evidences of various periods rest upon it. The main object was to give an idea of the rooms and furniture of various periods, while it was also endeavoured to make the house inhabitable. The restoration took place in 1897, Mr. Temple Moore being the architect, and there is an added interest of the old structure in that it was occupied by King Edward and Queen Alexandra, then Prince and Princess of Wales, in June, 1900.

The hall has necessarily undergone much reconstruction. At the south end the half-timber work is the original repaired, but the windows are modern insertions. Of the north screen only the upper portion is original, and the stone classical columns are modern reproductions of broken and unusual columns which were found *in situ*. The fine arched fireplace is original, but part of the architraves have been restored, and the stone blocks represent the original level of the floor, while the brick herring-bone work at the back of the fireplace is original, and probably of the fifteenth century. The head of Queen Philippa, which has been referred to, will be seen over the doorway in the view of the hall from the east. The main doorway is original, but the door itself is a reproduction, while the staircase is a copy of one in St. William's College. Much fine furniture is in the hall, and the long Jacobean oak table was brought from Bradfield Hall, Slough, while other pieces of furniture belong to the times of Charles I., James II. and William and Mary, and there is much else in the fine apartment to interest the visitor.

The Green Parlour—a typical seventeenth century apartment—is thoroughly suited to the good and unusual chimney-piece which it now contains, it having been moved from the hall, where it had been placed in front of the original Tudor arch. The staircase in the inner hall is of good design, and the William and Mary mirror, standing on an elaborately carved Chippendale console, harmonises well with it. The oak panelling and tapestry of the dressing-room, which we illustrate, were found under the wall-paper. The Blue Drawing-room—a good example of the Queen Anne style—is, no doubt, another result of the Squire occupancy, and its furniture, some of which came from Bradfield Hall, has been admirably chosen to suit it. Many other features of interest does this beautiful old house contain, such as the apartments occupied on the occasion of the Royal visit in 1900. Indeed, it has become a model of careful preservation and tasteful furnishing, with notable pieces of the cabinet-maker's art during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The city of York owes to Mr. Green's zealous and informed care the preservation of one of its most historic and picturesque domestic buildings, which, but for him—degraded into separate tenements—would have sunk into inevitable decay and destruction. Long may it now be preserved as a memorial of his good work and a valuable exemplar of the homes of our ancestors.