EAST SUTTON PARK, KENT.

THREE Kentish parishes of Suttcon lie together a few miles to the soutth-east of Maidstone. Earl Leofwine thce outlaw, one of the three sons of Goodwine who fell at Hastings, had lands here whichn came to Odo of Bayeux, who was lord of all three manors—Chart Sutton, Town Sutton andl East Sutton — Domesday recording Adam, son of Hubert, as his tenant at East Sutton. When Odo lost his lands for rebellion, the King took them to himself. After this the manors passed through many hands, never long abiding in the same name. At last, about the year 1546, the manor of East Sutton was bought by one Thomas Argall, and descended from him to his son Richard. The Argalls, though lords of the manor, were not sole landowners in the parish. Contemporary with Richard Argall was Robert Filmer from Otterden, who bought an estate in East Sutton. This gentleman's son, Sir Edward, married a daughter of Richard Argall, and bought the manor from her brother, John Argall of Colchester, in 1610.

Sir Edward Filmer, whose descendant is now lord of East Sutton, lies with his wife in the Filmer chapel in East Sutton church under a most curious brass, an oblong plate upon which is engraved his figure in half-armour—breastplate and tassets, pauldrons and brassarts—a high ruff, loose breeches and boots to the knee. A rich sword-belt holds up a long broadsword with finger-guard and quills. His lady prays beside him in a wide coif, veil and ruff, with ribbon bows at her bodice. Below her are her nine daughters, and as many sons are ranged below their father, the eldest being armed, and the fourth having a skull above his head to show that he went to his grave in his father's lifetime. The inscription shows that at his death, in 1629, Sir Edward had been forty-four years married.

Robert Filmer, the eldest son, the little gentleman in armour at the foot of this brass, was knighted by King Charles early in his reign. Never did king reward a more faithful servant, for Robert Filmer, in his "Patriarcha; or the



HOUSE AND STABLES.

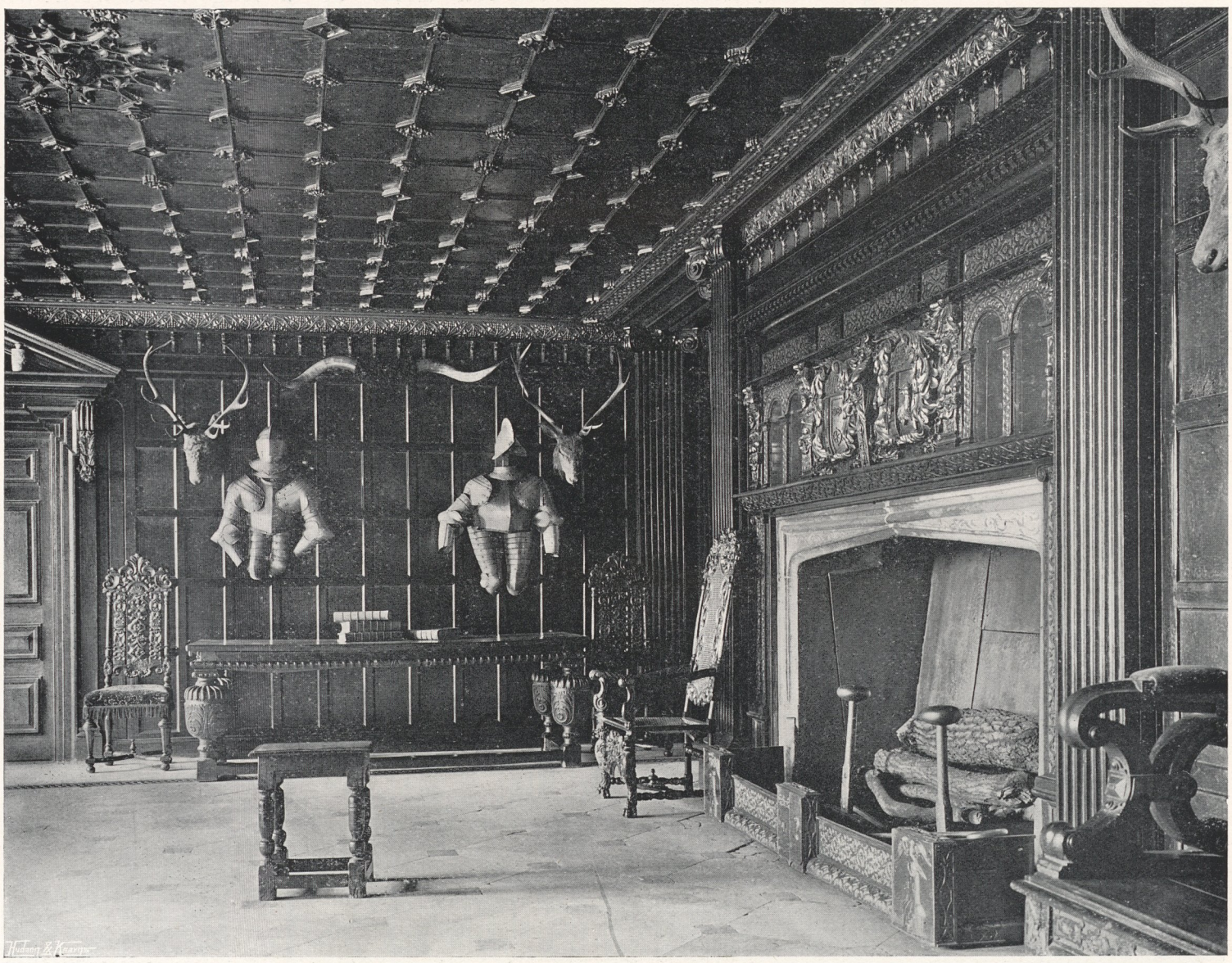
Natural Power of Kings Asserted," and in his "Power of Kings, and in Particular that of the King of England," put forward the sacred books of the divine-right party. Hobbes had contended for the sovereign power while urging that it was derived from a contract with the people; but stout Sir Robert Filmer would have no such paltering with sacred things. For him the King enjoyed his absolute and sovereign rule by right of hereditary descent from Adam, the king-patriarch; his rights were inalienable and absolute, although they might be limited by his own consent with a limitation which his will might break at any time.

Long after Filmer's death, the Royalist party hurried his works into print as an antidote for the troubles of the times, and English republicans met the Kentish knight's fancies with angry derision. Another gentleman of Kent, surly Algernon Sidney, "true rebel and republican," trampled among Filmer's conclusions in his "Discourse concerning Government," a book whose remorseless logic takes Filmer for a butt and a text. The great name of Locke was with the adversaries, and it was agreed that "so much glib nonsense was never put together in well-sounding English." Eight years after the publication of "Patriarcha," divine right in England was swept away for ever by Filmer's opponents.

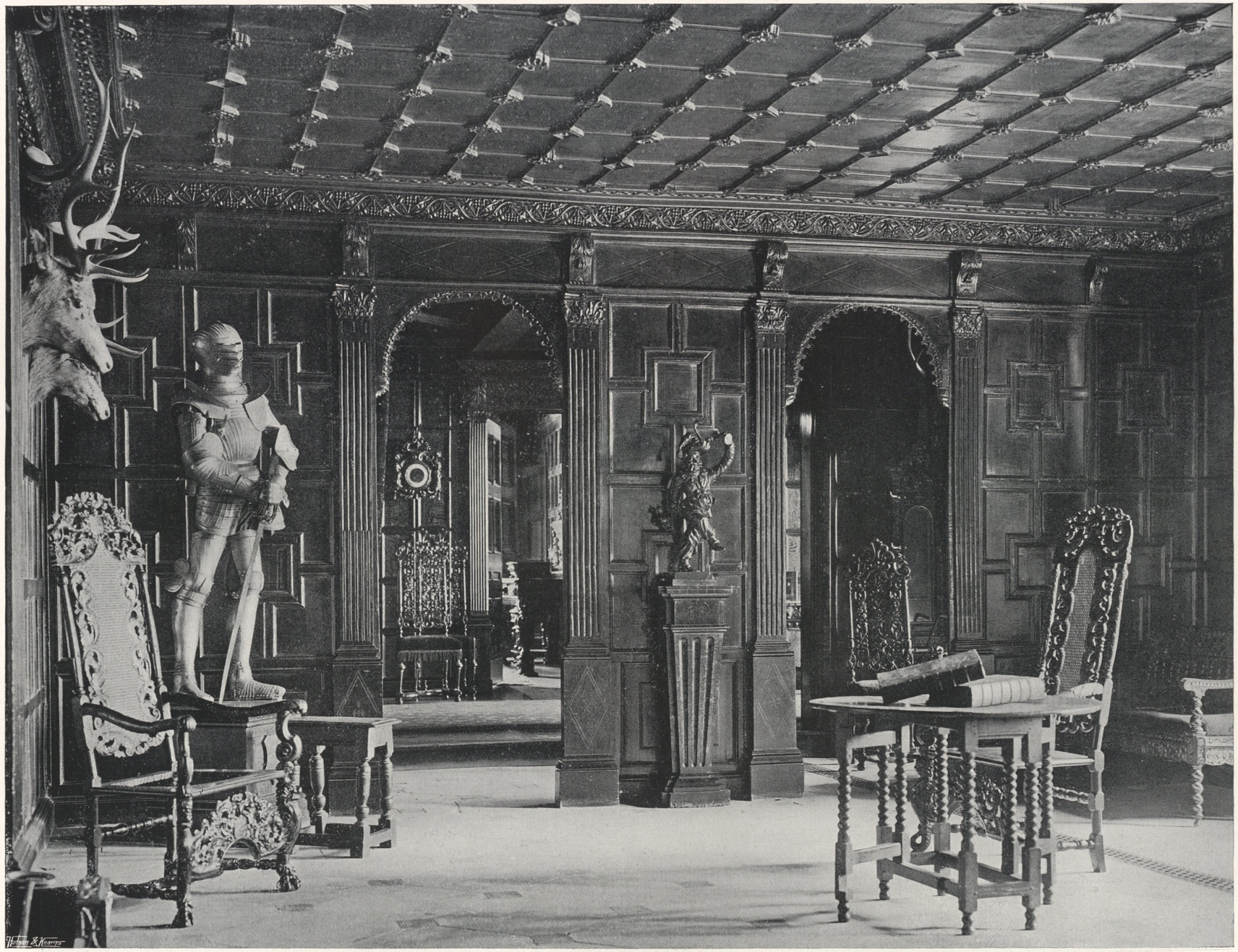
The critics were too late to harm the knight, who was safe from controversy in the Filmer vault at East Sutton; but in his lifetime he had his share of suffering for his opinions. His house is said to have been ten times plundered by the Parliament's troopers, and the owner prisoned in Leeds Castle. But his lands remained with his name; he does not seem to have been forced to "compound" for them, and he died at home in 1653, leaving the reputation among his fellow-Royalists of one "affable, learned, and orthodox." His elder son died unmarried, and the younger became, in 1674, the first of the line of the baronets of East Sutton, of whom the present Sir Robert Marcus Filmer is the tenth. After the Civil War times the family had peace, and its history is that of a house of country gentry living at home in peace with their neighbours, one of those Kentish houses whom Ingoldsby mustered to the "Ingoldsby wedding" with

Fagges and Finch-Hattons, Tokes, Derings and Deedses.

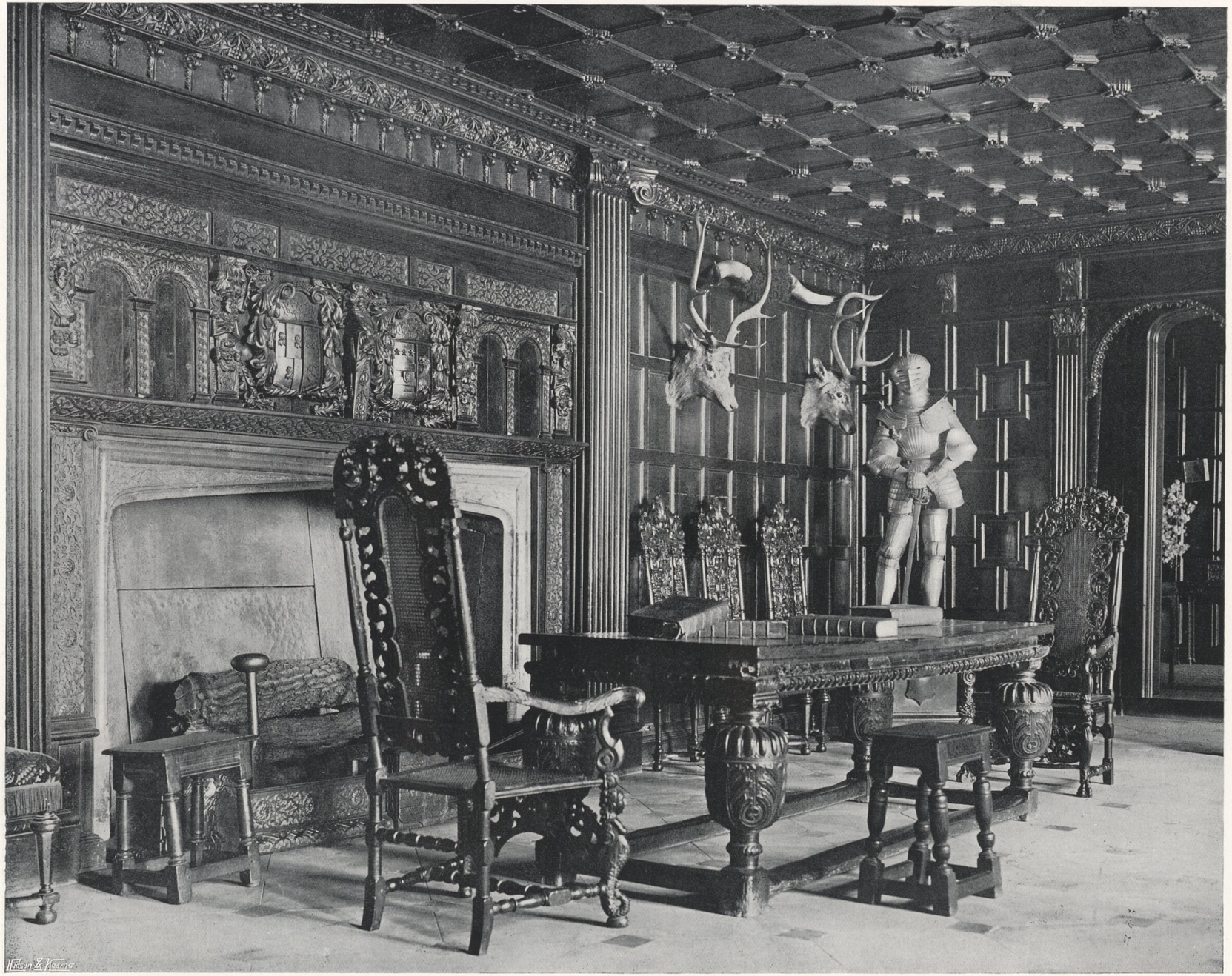
Their old mansion of Tudor and Jacobean buildings is in a beautiful park of seventy acres, a lake before it, hard by the church, and in sight of Little Charlton House, their seat before the Argalls sold them the park. It lies in a corner of Kent which still remains beautiful and remote, a country of woods and fields and hedgerows, of old cottages and roadside inns, of grey church towers and castle ruins. Its brick gables and tall chimneys might have served Ingoldsby as a model for his Ingoldsby hall, and its interior has oak panels and bossed ceilings worthy of their case



THE HALL.



THE HALL SCREEN, DATE 1570.



THE KNIGHT'S CHAIR.



NORTH END OF MUSIC-ROOM.

The modern oak carving over the great fireplace in the hall has the shield of Argall and Scott for the parents of old Sir Edward Filmer, and that of Filmer and Monro for the eighth baronet, who died in 1857. The screen is a good example of such a feature as the age of Elizabeth understood it. The arrangement of its openings and pilasters resembles that at Dorton, but, the hall being of single storey height, it has no gallery, as at Woollas or Methley. A tall armchair of the Restoration age heads the Elizabethan table, with its pillared legs and massive stretchers, facing the fine sixteenth century suit of fluted armour.



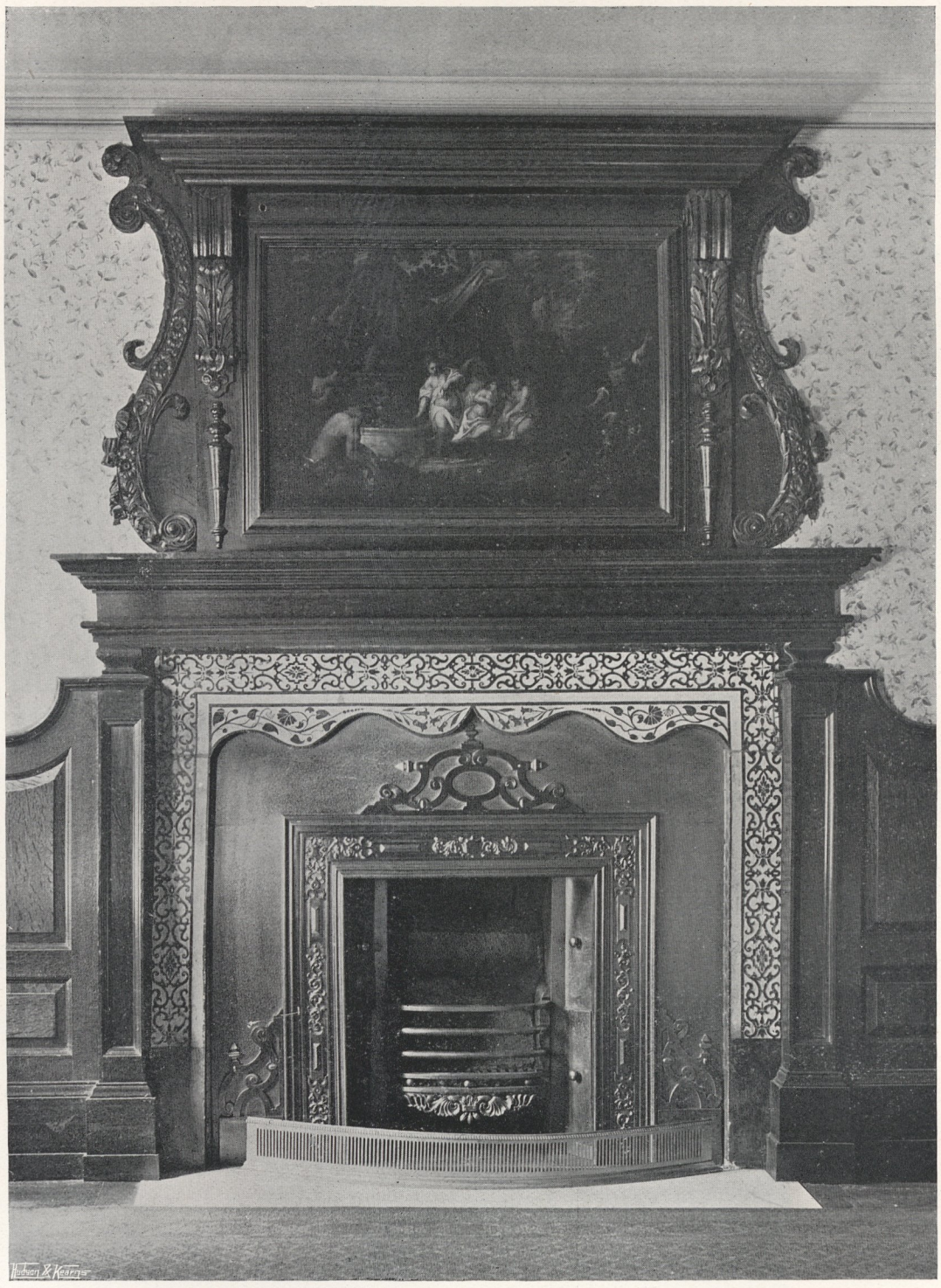
THE DINING-ROOM.

East Sutton church, seen on the high ground across the grass lawns of the house, is a fourteenth century church with later additions. The beautiful east window of a chapel on the northern side

is, perhaps, its best feature, the shields of Valence, Hastings and St. Leger remaining in the stained glass of its cinquefoils ; and among other pieces of old glass we have a head and shoulders of Our Lady, above whose glory curls a scroll with "Ecce ancilla d'ni." It is matter for wonder that such a figure should be here, for when, in 1643, Cornet May of the Parliament's army came to search the tower for arms, he broke screen and painted windows, as well as tearing the surplice in strips and carrying away the prayer-book.

The south chapel is the old burying-place of the Filmers, and was that of the Argalls before them, a tablet commemorating Richard Argall of East Sutton, esquire, who died in the Armada year, leaving five sons and six daughters alive.

The house may after this be fairly described as one of the ancestral homes in which no country is so rich as England. This country has been fortunate in one respect ; since the landing of William the Conqueror in 1066 no hostile army has marched across its fields, and the various civil wars, though destructive of much which, had it been preserved, would have been precious treasure to-day, nevertheless spared the country mansions.



IN THE STAIRCASE ROOM.