

## Gothic Architecture in England.\*

By the REV. J. CHARLES COX, LL.D., F.S.A.

**I**N the Society's *Journal* for 1902, I was allowed to give some account of a notable work by Mr. Gotch on "Early Renaissance Architecture in England," paying particular attention to those parts illustrative of Derbyshire examples.

The like permission has now been granted to me with regard to a still more notable and most important work that has just been put forth with regard to Gothic Architecture by Mr. Bond. There has been such an advance of late years in the comparative study of the architecture of England's old churches that the works of Rickman and Parker are now out of date, although invaluable at the time they were compiled. Those who desire to possess in a single volume an authoritative, most genuine, and detailed history of the evolution and development of church-building in this country cannot possibly be disappointed with this fine work. The story of each part of the building, and the reason for its construction in the form it assumed, is told consecutively, without being broken up into different periods.

The illustrations are most lavish and admirably selected; they comprise 785 photographs, sketches, and measured

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\* *Gothic Architecture in England: An Analysis of the Origin and Development of English Church Architecture from the Norman Conquest to the Dissolution of the Monasteries.* By Francis Bond, M.A. Price 31s. 6d. net. B. T. Batsford, 94, High Holborn.

We are indebted to Mr. Batsford for the loan of two Derbyshire blocks.

drawings, as well as 469 plans, sections, diagrams, and moldings. Many of the photographs are from Mr. Bond's own camera, and there seems hardly a nook of England which he has not visited in search of striking examples.

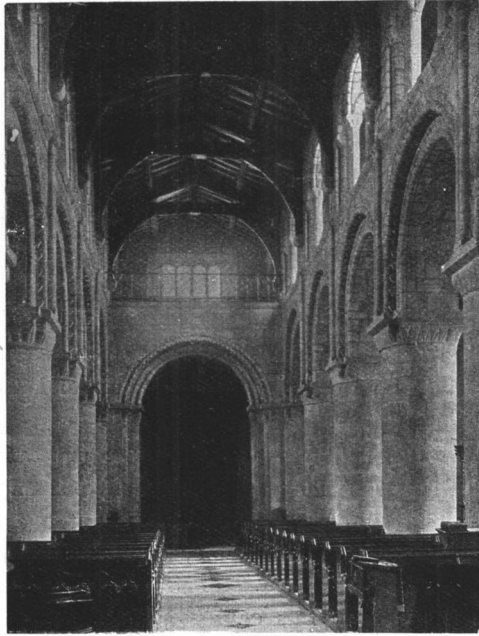
The book is a perfect delight to the experienced ecclesiologist, and yet written so clearly and on such practical lines that its teaching can readily be grasped by the novice. It is a book that cannot fail to be of real service to a University Extension lecturer, or to an advanced architectural student; at the same time, it is exactly the work that could with much advantage be put in the hands of intelligent senior school boys or girls who may be beginning to take a wholesome interest in the history in stone of their native land.

Derbyshire, notwithstanding its limited size and comparative paucity of ancient churches, supplies Mr. Bond with several useful examples and details when discussing the component parts of church fabrics; and his opinions are of almost authoritative value to the ecclesiologist in the study of this Midland shire.

Repton is naturally cited as a famous and exceptional example of a pillared crypt of pre-Conquest date; its monolith lath-turned columns are referred to in several places. When discussing early piers, the two Anglo-Saxon piers, in drums, so unhappily displaced in 1854 from the east end of the nave, are named as remarkable, only one other instance of like remains being quoted. The original occurrence of pre-Norman transepts in this church is mentioned in the discussion of cruciform plans. Again, in the fine chapter on the origin of window tracery, Repton is the solitary instance cited of a group of six lancets in a single window.

The fine Norman church of Melbourne also claims, as might be expected, no small amount of attention. Lindisfarne is coupled with Melbourne, in discussion of plans, as having originally central apses, but no lateral apses, as their choirs were without aisles. An illustration is given, showing, from a view of the south side of the choir, how this central apse

was subsequently squared. From about the middle of the twelfth century apses were of very rare occurrence in England, and many of those that existed seem, like Melbourne, to have been squared. Mr. Bond has not overlooked the original apse terminations of the transepts of this church, for they are mentioned in another place. In the larger Romanesque churches both of Normandy and England two western towers



Melbourne. Interior from East.

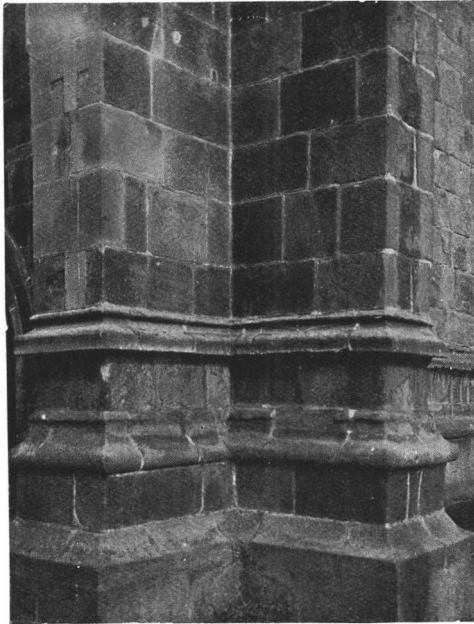
were common. Among instances of this Melbourn is enumerated, but these small towers have lost much of their original appearance through the addition, in 1862, of lofty pyramidal slated roofs. In another part of this exhaustive volume, where the narthex, or western, transept of churches is under discussion, Melbourn again comes to the front. Attention is drawn to the nave aisles ending at the west in

towers with groined vaults, and also to their having between them a third groined vault, "the upper surface of which provides a gallery." A small but effective plate from Mr. Bond's camera shows this gallery in a view of the nave looking east.

In the chapter on roofs towards the end of the volume the same photograph serves to illustrate the four-centred arches formed by the arched braces supporting the tie-beams of the nave.

The characteristics of English Gothic from 1300 to 1350 are discussed in Chapter V. Here, in the second paragraph, Tideswell is given as an instance of the continuance of the cruciform plan in larger churches, with aisled naves; and it is named further on in the same chapter in a list of eleven specially noble churches of the reign of Edward III. Attention is drawn in Chapter XV. to the excessive breadth of the pier fillets of this church. It is, however, when treating of curvilinear window tracery that Mr. Bond makes so much use of Tideswell. The five-light south transept window (of which there is not a very good illustration) is named as one in which the five bottom pointed arches are united "into four intersecting pointed arches, and the two central of these into one ogee arch." He does not consider this window of a very high standard, for "the pointed arches and the flamboyant tracery are discordant, whereas in the best curvilinear windows the mullion fuses into tracery without the slightest break of continuity." But it does not require a very practised eye to detect the general striking effect of Tideswell church, or the dignity of the choir and transept windows. Mr. Bond's particular and exceptional methods of showing the meaning and special effectiveness of all the component parts of a good Gothic church lead him not only to note, but to illustrate a part of Tideswell church that would have been overlooked by ninety per cent. of the usual run of church photographers, and would probably escape the attention of a considerable percentage of intelligent ecclesiologists. In his chapter on

"The Protection of the Walls from Rain," Mr. Bond shows the *raison d'être* of ground-courses, strings, dripstones, hood-molds, and labels after an original and interesting fashion. In the explanation of the ground or basement course, the reason for chamfers on such a course to prevent the rain dropping from the projecting eaves resting thereon is set out; and it is further shown how great became the amount of



Tideswell. Ground-course.

basement-course projection in the fourteenth century. Artistic reasons then caused the straight chamfer to give way to the subtle ogee curve." Of this Tideswell offers an admirable example, where there is such "a nice gradation of high light, half light, and shadow."

In the very next chapter, on foliated capitals, an admirable illustration of a Norman example is taken from an arcade in

Youlgreave; and in another place remarks will be found on the plan of Bakewell church.

When writing on the third or cruciform type of the planing of a parish church, Mr. Bond considers the different ways of extension when enlargement became necessary. One was to add aisles, and another (which did not involve so much difficulty of construction) was to add transepts. But a different process would be required when applied to an early church that lacked a central tower. In such a case "it would be easy to enlarge the church eastward by pulling down the sanctuary; building on its site a central tower; and projecting from the central tower transepts and a new sanctuary." This is the process through which Mr. Bond thinks that the interesting old churches of Bakewell, Derbyshire, and of St. Nicholas, Leicester, have passed.

In treating of Romanesque piers, Mr. Bond points out that the Norman abacus is always square-edged, and that its under-surface is usually a straight chamfer, as at Youlgreave. One of the Youlgreave capitals serves as an example of this on the plate at page 421.