



I. TRIAL OF THE BAPTIST.



## SOME UNDESCRIBED ENGLISH ALABASTER CARVINGS.

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The various alabaster carvings alluded to in the following pages are worthy of being described in some detail, since not a few are of subjects hitherto unknown as English alabaster carvings.

In the collection of the writer are three remarkable panels which have recently been found in Genoa, and which in all probability formed part of a St. John Baptist reredos in the cathedral of Genoa, where are preserved notable relics of the saint. The panels are as follows :

1. St. John Baptist reproves Herod Antipas.

The saint, who stands on the left holding a closed book in his left hand, is clad in a camel's skin, from which trails the hoof, and over which is an ample cloak. Behind the Baptist is a sergent bearing a mace. In front of the saint, seated on a throne beneath a canopy is Herod, whose legs are crossed and whose left foot rests upon a cushion. He holds in his left hand a long faulchion and beside him is Herodias, who wears a horned head-dress,<sup>1</sup> and also a necklace from which depends a rose-pendant. In the background are four attendants, one of whom wears a sugar-loaf hat (plate 1, 1).

2. The Burial of the Baptist.

The body of the saint, completely wrapped in a shroud, is being lowered into a moulded tomb by two male figures. Behind the sarcophagus are three other mourners, one of whom, a female, wears a barb and veil, the others wear respectively, a sugar-loaf hat and a chaperon. In the foreground is a triple-branched shrub. It is remarkable that the head appears as still on the shoulders, no other example of this is known to me (plate 1, 2).

<sup>1</sup> 'She is horned like a kowe.'

3. Quenching the ashes. This unique panel probably represents the final act in the burning of the bones of the saint by order of the emperor Julian the Apostate.<sup>1</sup> In the centre is a pile of logs, upon which two women appear to be casting water from large shallow basins. They wear respectively, a horned head-dress and a veil. To the left is a man holding a shovel, whilst above to the right is another man. The background has painted upon it pads of foliage (plate II, 1).

St. John's Head.

This panel, which measures 10½ inches by 8, was formerly at Scarisbrick Hall, Lancs, but is now in the collection of the writer.

Upon the discus, which is inscribed,

**Caput sci iohannis (sic) baptiste i disco.**

lies the head of the Baptist, the hair and beard of which are forked, and over the left eyebrow of which is the cut made by Herodias.

Beneath is the Agnus Dei, above which is the flag and beneath which is a scroll, flanked by two kneeling angels who support the dish. To left and right are seated the crowned and veiled figure of the Virgin, who holds The Child and the crowned figure of St. Katherine, who holds in her right hand a wheel and in her left a drawn sword. Above them are St. Peter, who wears a tiara and St. William, who blesses with his right hand. At the top are two angels, who lift up the soul in a napkin, on either side of whom was an angel in an attitude of adoration. This panel retains much of its original polychromatic decoration (plate II, 2).

<sup>1</sup> 'Sebastia, quæ quondam Samaria est appellata. Post longum vero tempus monumentum ejus Pagani invaserunt, & ossa per campi planitiem disperserunt, & postea per agros projecerunt. Postea vero advenerunt quidam Monachi viri religiosi de Hierosolymis ad locum ejusdem monumenti; qui audientes ea quæ Joanni acciderant, & quidquid potuerunt ex ossibus illius colligentes ad Patrem suum Philippum detulerunt Hierosolymam.'

*Acta Sanctorum* Bollandists ed: Tomus Junii, p. 757.

'quod (caput) Herodias a saltatrice

susceptum, non est passa cum reliquo corpore sepeliri, metuens ne integrum sancti corpus cum omni facilitate resurgeret: hoc autem fieri posse non putavit, si Caput cum corpore uni non traderetur sepulturæ. Ideo illud intra septa palatii infossum, occulta sollicitudine procuravit custodiri. Corpus autem apud Sebastem, quæ quondam Samaria dicta est, legitur humatum, & a barbaris usque ad Julianum Apostatum intactum.'

*Acta Sanctorum*. Bollandists ed: Tomus Junii, p. 760.



I. BURNING THE BAPTIST'S BONES.

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PLATE II.

2. ST. JOHN'S HEAD.



[Photos by P. B. Chatwin.

AP-THOMAS TOMB, ABERGAVENNY. (1) S. SIDE, (2) N. SIDE

Upon the reverse of the panel is a location incised mark.

It is a remarkable circumstance that, so far as one can discover, no English play of St. John Baptist has come down to us, though that such a play must have existed in England in the later middle ages is certain.

As early as the eleventh century we meet on the Continent, The 'Convivium Herodis' and in France, *circa* 1410, in the 'Passion d'Arras,' of Mercade, we find the dramatic incident of Herodias thrusting her knife into the forehead of the Baptist. 'Cy apporte la fille le chief saint Jean-Baptiste à sa mere à la table Herode, et Herodias frappe le dit chief de son coûteau, sy qu'elle lui fist une plaie descure l'œil.' The same scene also occurs in the Passion of Jean Michel, 'Ici frappe Herodias d'ung cousteau sur le front du chef de saint Jehan et le sang en sort,' and no doubt the cut over the left eye which occurs on the Nottingham alabaster heads of St. John shows the influence of an English Miracle Play.

There is no ancient authority for this mutilation of the head of the Baptist but, it is interesting to remark that the skull preserved at Amiens Cathedral, formerly in Constantinople, has a small hole over the left orbit, which circumstance probably originated the story.

Herodias, so it is stated by St. Jerome, in his 'Apologia contra Rufinum,' pierced the tongue of St. John with her bodkin, this no doubt being a later application of the story of Livia so abusing the tongue of Cicero.

The popularity of the saint in England in the middle ages, may be gathered from the fact that in the diocese of Norwich alone there were no fewer than one hundred and twenty guilds in conjunction with the Baptist, whilst a dance of the sisters of the guild of St. John Baptist occurred annually at Boston, on Midsummer-day.

#### *Abergavenny.*

Upon the south and north sides of the Ap-Thomas tomb, 1446, are alternate figures of prophets and apostles beneath canopies, all of whom carry long scrolls, which the former carry in their left hands, the latter in their right. The prophets point to the scrolls with their right hands, whilst the apostles, in most cases, support in their right hands their appropriate emblems. The scrolls would originally



be inscribed, the former with verses prophetic of the coming of the Messiah, the latter with verses from the Apostles' Creed. Upon the east end of the tomb is a group of the Annunciation, flanked by censing angels, who rest upon clouds, all beneath canopies. The order of the Apostles follows the sections of the Creed, as traditionally assigned to them and each is preceded by his appropriate prophet. This grouping of figures implies Prophecy and Fulfilment.

The series of nimbed figures commences at the west end of the south side and terminates at the west end of the north side, their order being as follows :

1. Jeremiah. He wears a low full round cap, a long robe, a mantle and hood and is girt with a diagonal belt.
2. St. Peter. He wears a long robe and cloak and holds in his left hand a key.
3. David. He wears a sugar-loaf hat, a long robe and a mantle.
4. St. Andrew. He wears a long robe and cloak and holds in his left hand a saltire cross.
5. Isaiah. He wears a long robe and cloak.
6. St. James Major. He wears a long robe and cloak and a mitre-like hat on which is a scallop shell. Hung across his body on his right side is his scrip and in his left hand is his bourdon.
7. Daniel. He wears a long robe, a mantle buttoned on his right shoulder with three buttons and a sugar-bag hat.
8. St. John. He has long curly hair, and wears a long robe and cloak. He carries in his left hand a palm branch.
9. Hosea. He has no hat and wears a long cloak and robe.
10. St. Thomas. He has upon his head a sugar-bag hat and wears a full-sleeved robe. In the background on the right is a spear standing erect.
11. Amos. He wears a long cloak and robe but no hat.
12. St. James Minor. He wears a girded albe over which is a full cloak. He strokes his long beard with his left hand.

The sculptor would appear to have made a mistake in his work when he reached no. 9 and to have done his best to rectify his mistake (plate III, 1).

*North side.*

1. Zephaniah. He wears a long robe girt diagonally.
2. St. Philip. He wears a long robe and points to the scroll with his left hand.
3. Joel. He wears a long robe, a straight belt and a full cloak.
4. St. Bartholomew. He wears a long robe and cloak. His knife which he held in his left hand is lost.
5. Micah. He wears a long robe, girt with a diagonal belt, from which hangs an anlace, a hood and a conical hat.
6. St. Matthew. He wears a long cloak and robe, and carries in his left hand a halbert, whilst from his right arm depends a purse. St. Matthew was of course a Publican or tax-gatherer.
7. Malachi. He wears a mantle, a long robe girt transversely, and a chaperon.
8. St. Simon. He wears a long cloak and robe, and carries in his left hand a boat.
9. Zachariah. He wears a long robe, girt with a diagonal belt, a cloak and a chaperon.
10. St. Jude. He wears a girded albe, a cloak, and carries in his left hand an oar.
11. Ezekiel. He wears a long robe with full sleeves, girt about the waist with a belt transversely, and a conical hat.
12. St. Matthias. He wears a long robe and cloak and carried in his left hand an axe (plate III, 2).

This arrangement of alternate Prophets and Apostles is, so far as I know, unique, and the tomb, which may be of Burton work, would appear to represent a 'Processus Prophetarum,' in association with the Twelve Apostles.

*Tong.*

Upon the four sides of the tomb of Sir Richard Vernon, circa 1451, are figures of twelve apostles arranged without any special order and separated by angels, who hold before them shields with both hands. All the figures stand beneath canopies, and are clad in long robes and cloaks save when the contrary is specified beneath (plates IV, V, VI).

*East end (plate IV, 1).*

St. Philip, who carries a 'paternoster' in his left hand and in his right a closed book.

*North side (plate v).*

1. St. Thomas carries a spear in his right hand and a book in his left.
2. St. Bartholomew. He held in his right hand a knife and carries in his left a closed book.
3. St. James Minor. He holds with his left hand a fuller's bat, and in his right a closed book.
4. St. Matthew. He holds in his right hand a closed book and in his left a halberd.

*West end (plate iv, 2, 3, 4).*

1. St. Peter. He holds in his right hand two keys and in his left a closed book.
2. St. Andrew. He holds in his right hand a saltire cross and in his left a closed book.
3. St. John. He holds in his right hand a cup and in his left a palm branch.

*South side (plate vi).*

1. St. Simon. From his right arm hangs a large anchor and he holds in both hands an open book.
2. St. Jude. He holds in his right hand an oar and in his left a closed book, whilst from his arm hangs a barrel-like wallet.
3. St. James Major. He wears a long full-sleeved robe over which passes a strap from which, upon his right side, hangs his scrip, a scallop on the flap. He has on his head a mitre-like hat also adorned with his emblem. He holds in his right hand a closed book and with his left he supports a bourdon upon which are strapped two rods, fasces-wise.
4. St. Paul. He holds in his right hand a sheathed sword, point down, and in his left a closed book.

As early as the eleventh century the 'Prophetæ' appeared at Lincoln and we find later, both at York, Chester and Coventry that 'Prophetæ' are introduced.

At Coventry 'The Prophets' testify to the miraculous birth of Christ and they precede the Conception of Mary, and, no doubt like the Apostles in the 'Crede' play at York, they would carry scrolls suitably inscribed with prophetic verses.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah. 'Patrem invocabitis qui terram fecit et condidit cælum.'

David. 'Dominus dixit ad me filius meus es tu.'

Isaiah. 'Ecce Virgo concipiet et pariet filium.'

Daniel. 'Post septuaginta hebdomadas occidetur Christus.'

Hosea. 'O mors, ero mors tua, morsus tuus ero, inferne.'

Amos. 'Qui ædificat in cælo ascensionem suam.'

1. ST. PHILIP. E. END.



2. ST. PETER. W. END.



3. ST. ANDREW. W. END.



4. ST. JOHN. W. END.



VERNON TOMB, TONG.

(Photos : 1, 3, 4, F. H. Crossley ; 2, F. T. S. Haughton.)

I. ST. THOMAS.



2. ST. BARTHOLOMEW.



3. ST. JAMES MINOR.



4. ST. MATTHEW.



VERNON TOMB, TONG. N. SIDE.

(Photos : Dr. G. G. Buckley.)

At York, William Revetour, in 1446, willed a '*Crede play*' to the Guild of Corpus Christi, which appears to have been given at intervals of ten years till 1535.

In an inventory of 1465 we find the following very interesting items:

'et xij rotulæ nuper scriptæ cum articulis fidei catholicæ,<sup>2</sup> apprec' iijs, iiij d.'

'et una clavis pro sancto Petro cum ij peciis unius tunicæ depictæ, apprec' xij d.'

'et x diademata pro Xp'o et apostolis cum una larva et allis novem cheverons, vj s.'

A remarkable incident occurs in '*The Parliament of Heaven*,' in the Ludus Coventriæ, in which Mercy and Truth, Righteousness and Peace, plead before the Deity, concerning the salvation of mankind.

This '*Proces du Paradis*,' owes its origin to the poetic conception of St. Bernard and was subsequently incorporated into the '*Meditationes Vitæ Christi*,' of the pseudo-Bonaventure. The idea is introduced into a work of Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, ob. 1228, and also into the '*Chateau d'Amour*,' of Robert Grosseteste, ob. 1253, from which the following is an extract from a fourteenth century translation.

'For now I chul tellen of þe stryf  
þat a-mong þe foure sustren lip.'

### *The Parliament of Heaven.*

We find but one example of this subject in alabaster, apparently the tall centre-piece of a Virgin reredos of which two other panels, the Assumption and the Coronation of the Virgin still survive, and these which came from Italy

Zephaniah. 'Ascendam ad vos in iudicium et ero testis velox.'

Joel. 'Effundam de Spiritu meo super omnem carnem.'

Micah. 'Invocabunt omnes nomen Domini et servient ei.'

Malachi. 'Deponet Dominus omnes iniquitates nostras.'

Zachariah. 'Educam te de sepulchris tuis, popule meus.'

Ezechiel. 'Evigilabunt alii ad vitam, alii ad mortem.'

<sup>2</sup> Peter. 'Credo in Deum omnipotentem creatorem celi et terræ.'

Andrew. 'Et in Jesum Christum filium ejus.'

James the Greater. 'Qui conceptus est

de Spiritu Sancto, natus est ex Maria Virgine.'

John. 'Passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus et sepultus est.'

Thomas. 'Descendit ad inferna, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis.'

James the Less. 'Ascendit ad cœlos, sedet ad dextram patris omnipotentis.'

Philip. 'Inde venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos.'

Bartholomew. 'Credo in Spiritum sanctum.'

Matthew. 'Sanctam Ecclesiam catholicam, sanctorum communionem.'

Simon. 'Remissionem peccatorum.'

Jude. 'Carnis resurrectionem.'

Matthias. 'Vitam æternam.'





I. ST. SIMON.



2. ST. JUDE.



3. ST. JAMES MAJOR.



4. ST. PAUL.







I. THE PARLIAMENT OF HEAVEN.  
(By courtesy of the Soc. of Antiquaries.)



2. MARTYRDOM OF ST. LAWRENCE.

[Photo : Rev. H. Hudson.]

- God is ryghtfful and ryghtfulnes lovyth,  
 Man offendyd hym that is endles,  
 Therefore his endles punchement may nevyr sees ;  
 Misericordia. Syster Ryghtwysnes, ze are to vengeabyl,  
 Endles synne God endles may restore,
- Pax. To spare zour speches, systeres, it syt,  
 It is not onest in vertuys to ben dycscencion,  
 The pes of God ovyrcomythe alle wytt,
- ffilius. I thynke the thoughtys of Pes and nowth of  
 wykkydnes,  
 This I deme to ses zour contraversy,  
 If Adam has not deyd, peryschyd had Ryghtwysnes,  
 And also Trewthe had be lost therby.  
 Trewthe and Ryght wolde chastyse ffoly,  
 ziff another deth come not, Mercy xulde perysche,  
 Than Pes were exyled ffynaly,  
 So tweyn dethis be zow fowre to cherysche,  
 But he that xal deye ze must knawe,  
 That in hym may ben non iniquyte,  
 That helle may holde hym be no lawe,  
 But that he may pas at hese lyberte.  
 Qwere swyche on his prevyde and se,  
 And hese deth for mannys dethe xal be redemp-  
 cion,  
 Alle hefne and erthe seke now ze,  
 Plesyth it zou this conclusyon.
- Veritas. I, Trowthe, have sowte the erthe withowt and  
 withinne,  
 And in sothe ther kan non be fownde,  
 That is of o day burth withowte synne,  
 Nor to that dethe wole be bownde.
- Misericordia. I, Mercy, have ronne the hevynly regyon  
 rownde .  
 And ther is non of that charyte,  
 That ffor man wole suffre a deddly wounde,  
 I cannott wete how this xal be.
- Justicia. Sure I can fynde non sufficyont,  
 ffor servauntys unprofytable we be eche one,  
 Hes love nedyth to be ful ardent,  
 That for man to helle wolde gon.
- Pax. That God may do is non but on,  
 Therefore this is be hys avyse,

He that zaff this counselle lete hym zeve the comforte  
alon.

ffor the conclusyon in hym of alle these lyse.

ffilius. It peyneth me that man I mad,  
That is to seyn peyne I must suffre sore,  
A counsel of the Trinite must be had,  
Whiche of us xal man restore.

Pater In zour wysdam, son, man was mad thore,  
And in wysdam was his temptacion,  
Therfor, sone, sapyens ze must ordeyn herefore,  
And se how of man be salvation.

Filius. ffadyr, he that xal do this must be bothe God and  
man,  
Lete me se how I may were that wede,  
And sythe in my wysdam he began,  
I am redy to do this dede.

Spiritus Sanctus. I, the Holy Gost of zow tweyn do  
procede,  
This charge I wole take on me,  
I love to zour lover xal zow lede,  
This is the assent of oure unyte.

Misericordia. Now is the loveday mad of us fowre fynialy,  
Now may we leve in pes as we were wont ;  
Misericordia et Veritas obviaverunt sibi,  
Justicia et Pax osculatæ sunt.  
Et hic osculabunt pariter omnes.

*Ludus Coventriae.* Shakespeare Society, 1841, p. 106.

Pater. ffrom us, God, aungel Gabryel, thou xalte be sende,  
Into the countre of Galyle,  
The name of the cite Nazareth is kende,  
To a mayd, weddyd to a man is she.  
Of whom the name is Joseph se,  
Of the hous of Davyd bore,  
The name of the mayd ffre,  
Is Mary that xal al restore.

ffilius. Say that she is withowte wo and ful of grace,  
And that I the son of the Godhed of here xal be  
bore.  
Hyze the thou were there apace,  
ellys we xal be there the before.



I. THE BLESSED TRINITY.



2. THE CRUCIFIXION.



ST. GEORGE.

I have so grett hast to be man thore,  
 In that mekest and purest virgyne,  
 Sey here she xal restore,  
 Of zow aungellys the grett ruyne.

Spiritus Sanctus. And if she aske the how it myth be,  
 Telle her I the Holy Gost xal werke al  
 this,

*Ludus Coventriae.* Shakespeare Society, 1841, p. 109.

In the collection of the writer is a tall panel of The Trinity, which came from Spain and measures  $23\frac{1}{2}$  inches by  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

In the centre, clad in a long robe and a voluminous cloak, nimbed and wearing a tall crown, is The Father, Who, blessing with His right hand, uplifts His left, and holds between His knees a tall cross. From the cross hangs The Son, Who wears the torse and loin-cloth and above Whose head is a dowell-hole for the attachment of The Sacred Dove. At the foot of the cross are two kneeling angels, clad in albes, who lift up a chalice, whilst on either side of The Father is a censuring angel, standing on an architectural bracket. At the top of the panel are the remains of an attached triple-gabled canopy, the gables being flanked and separated by buttresses (plate VIII, 1).

*St. Lawrence's Martyrdom.*

In the church of Llanteglos-by-Fowey, is the lower half of a panel of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence in alabaster of English workmanship. The carving is as follows: Across the upper part of the scene, stretched upon a frame, lies the recumbent figure of the saint, whose hands are bound cross-wise before him and whose feet are secured by a rope. Beneath is a fire of logs, the flames from which are fanned with bellows held by a figure seated upon the right, whilst on the left, *vis-a-vis*, is a seated figure, holding in his left hand a flagon (plate VII, 2).

At Lincoln, in 1441, there was produced a "*Ludus Sancti Laurentii.*"

A remarkable panel of the Crucifixion in the possession of Mr. Lionel Harris varies considerably from the usual type and is as follows:—

Upon the transoms of the thieves' crosses kneel two small figures with raised hands, that over the good thief

supporting a scroll, whilst to our Lord's side an angel holds a chalice. On either side of the cross is a figure on horse-back, one a soldier, the other a civilian, and at the foot is a demi-angel, his back to the spectator, who lifts up a chalice with both hands.

This panel, which measures 31 inches by 14, evidently came from such a large reredos as that preserved in the museum at Naples (plate VIII, 2).

The beautiful group of St. George, which I am enabled to illustrate by the courtesy of the late owner, Mr. Lionel Harris, dates from *circa* 1370 and was found in the north of Spain. The saint, who is represented on his charger, wears a pointed bascinet, from which hangs the camail, attached by a thong passing through vervelles, falling almost vertically to the shoulders.<sup>1</sup> Beneath the white jupon, which is blazoned with a cross gules, and crossed by the guige, is the globose breastplate, whilst the shoulders are protected by laminated epaulieres of three plates. Around the waist is a baldrick of embossed plates, which supports a long sword with drooping quillons, upon the hilt of which rests the saint's left hand which is protected by a gauntlet reinforced with gadlings. The lower limb is defended with cuissarts, a simple genouilliere and grieveres, whilst on the foot is a long solleret, having attached a spur with a large rowell. On his left arm is an oblong, slightly convex shield, with recurved edges, on which is emblazoned, arg, a cross gu. In his raised right hand was a long spear, which the saint, standing in the stirrup, has thrust into the dragon, which lies prostrate beneath the feet of the horse,—the latter appears to regard the monster more in sorrow than in anger. The saddle is fitted with a short saddle-cloth and in addition the head-stall, bit and bridle are clearly represented. Kneeling at the head of the dragon, clad in a close-fitting robe and a full cloak, is the Princess Cleodelinda, who has already encircled the neck of the creature with her girdle. Would it be too wild a flight of fancy to suggest that this magnificent example of native art was from the workshop of Peter the Mason, of Nottingham, and might originally have been the centre-piece of the great reredos, given 1367 to the

<sup>1</sup> Compare the brass of William de Audeley, 1365, at Horseheath, Cambs.





DOUBLE APOSTOLIC PANELS.

*To face page 44.*

PLATE X.





I. THE AGONY.

(By courtesy of the Soc. of Antiquaries.)



2. THE BLESSED TRINITY.

Chapel of St. George at Windsor Castle by Edward III? (plate ix).

In the possession of Mr. W. A. Probert are two interesting double-panels of Apostles, which are 16 inches in height. The saints, who are bearded, are clad in long robes and cloaks, and face each other, holding descending scrolls in their adjacent hands, whilst with their others they support their emblems.

They are as follows:—

1. St. Matthew holds in his right hand a halbert, with St. James Minor, who holds a club, spirally fluted.

2. St. Simon, who holds in both hands a boat, with St. Jude, who holds an oar (plate x).

In the possession of Messrs. Harding is a carving depicting the 'Agony in the Garden.' Of this subject only two other examples are known to me, namely, one in the triptych at Écaquelon, and that other in the Church of Hólar in Iceland. The panel is as follows: In the centre kneels a nimbed figure of Christ with hands upraised in adoration, before a chalice containing the wafer. Behind Him are two triple-branched trees outside a wooden fencing, whilst beside Him is a third tree, which like the others has polyhedral foliage. In the foreground are seated St. Peter, St. James Major and St. John the Divine, the first and last resting their heads on their hands. The background of the panel is studded with gesso knobs, each of which is surrounded by lesser dots (plate xi, 1).

In the Museum at Carcassonne is a tall panel, beneath a triple-windowed detached canopy, representing 'The breaking of the wheels,' formerly the centrepiece of a St. Catherine triptych. In the centre is a crowned figure of St. Catherine with hands upraised, standing between two wheels, which two angels from above are breaking with their swords. Between them is the Almighty, who bestows His blessing and at the bottom are four tormentors sinking to the ground, slain by the flying fragments. The canopy is very similar to that over the centrepiece in the triptych at Montreal, and like it, it has three four-light windows separated and flanked by buttresses. In the upper part of each window is a quatrefoil.

In the Minster Church at Emmerich, Germany, is a remarkable tall panel of The Trinity. At the foot of the

carving is a figure, nude, save for a linen head-dress, lying upon a bed covered by a sheet to the waist, the hands folded in prayer. At the foot of the bed stands a figure of an ecclesiastic with bare feet, wearing a girded albe and cloak, who holds in his left hand a closed book, whilst with his right he bestows the Benediction. Proceeding from this head towards the sick person is a curving scroll, formerly inscribed. Above the bed is a tall Crucifix bearing the figure of Our Lord which is supported between the knees of The Father, Who extends His blessing. On either side of The Trinity is a censing angel, clad in a girded albe. So far as I am aware this is the only instance in which a death-bed scene is depicted in English alabaster. In conception it appears to be closely related with the scenes depicted in the Xylographic Block-books of the fifteenth century (plac xi, 2).

My best thanks are due to the Society of Antiquaries for the use of blocks and to Dr. G. G. Buckley, Mr. P. B. Chatwin, Mr. F. T. S. Houghton, the Rev. H. Hudson, Mr. Lionel Harris, Messrs. Harding and to Mr. F. H. Crossley for their kind permission to illustrate their respective photographs.