

A LETTER FROM G. G. SCOTT, ESQ.
ON THE
SUPPOSED SAXON WORK AT IVER AND AT WING.

" 20, Spring Gardens,

March 27th, 1850.

"**MY DEAR SIR,**—In reply to your inquiry about the supposed ante-Norman remains discovered at Iver, I will give you such particulars as my memory affords, as I have no distinct memoranda; but will, at the same time, mention that a more detailed account has been drawn up by my friend Mr. **E. H. FREEMAN**, and will, I believe, appear in the *Archaeological Journal*.

"The Church is of the ordinary plan of a Parish Church, having nave and aisles, chancel, and western tower, and its present aspect is that of a Church of the fifteenth century. There are, however, remains of nearly every period of English Architecture.

"There are two or three late decorated windows in the chancel; there are early English or lancet windows both in the chancel and in the lower part of the tower, and the tower and chancel arches, with the sedilia and piscina, are of that period. There are Norman arches on the north side of the nave, and the west window of the north aisle is in that style. And, finally, there are the remains in

question of decidedly earlier work, which I will briefly describe. These remains are limited to the walls now occupied by the two arcades of the nave, and go to prove that before the Norman arcade was made on the north side, and the much later one of the south side, the Church was without aisles, and in a style not agreeing with what is usually found in buildings subsequent to the Norman Conquest.

"The proofs, however, are very scanty. They consist, externally, of a quoin of brick, resembling Roman brick, forming the eastern termination of the wall containing the Norman arcade. This, of itself, would prove nothing; but, internally, we found in the middle of a wide pier, between two Norman arches, the jamb of a doorway, which must have existed before the Norman arcade was made; and higher in the wall we found a window which had been cut away to make room for that arcade. This would not of necessity prove more than that there were two ages of Norman work in the Church, but there is a peculiarity in the appearance of the window which indicates its belonging to a distinct style. I cannot describe it from memory, but I am sure that this is the impression it would produce on the mind of any one accustomed to Norman work. We know Norman windows of the earliest date, and know that they differ from those of later date chiefly in rudeness and coarseness of workmanship and detail. This window, however, differs less in this respect, but strikes one as belonging to *another style*, just in the same way as we find in other Saxon work, such, for instance, as the doorway of the Church at Barton-on-Humber, which not only is clearly not Norman, but seems to have scarcely anything but the round arch in common with it.

"There are indications also on the other side of a wall of earlier date having existed before the present arcade was formed. I may mention that the earlier work also differs in *material* from the Norman parts.

While on the subject of Saxon work, I may perhaps mention that, the Church at Wing contains remains apparently of that date, though perhaps not so decidedly so as to be capable of proof. The arcades are of the simplest character, being in fact only semicircularly arched perforations in the walls, having plain masses of wall between them, without capitals, but with a kind of impost

on the sides facing the openings, formed by courses of brick overhanging one another.

"The chancel arch is also semicircular, but the arch is relieved by a projecting archivault—a feature I do not recollect seeing in any Norman building, though very usual in work of supposed Saxon date. The chancel is apsidal of an irregularly polygonal form, the eastern face being much the widest. Internally it presents no early features, but externally it has narrow projecting pilasters at each angle, which are continued in projecting archivaults on each side. These are all plastered, and on examination I found the pilaster to be formed of rough stone of the country, but the archivaults of tufa, a material common in works from the Roman period to about the time of Henry I. These narrow pilasters and archivaults do not, however, appear to me to accord at all with the Norman style.

"Beneath the chancel is a crypt, now walled up. I had an opening made into it, and found it to be of a very singular and most rude construction; it is so arranged as to divide the chancel into three widths, like the choir and aisles of an apsidally finished cathedral. There were external arches or windows in the alternate sides of the apse; and on following the aisles westward I found them each to terminate in a doorway. There can be no doubt, as the floor of the chancel is considerably raised above the nave, that there were, as was frequent with very early crypts, two entrances descending by a few steps from the nave on each side of the steps ascending to the chancel. The crypt is at present filled with earth to within three or four feet of the top, but by excavations I have had made, I find it to have been about eight feet in height. The whole of the material is the roughest stone, with here and there a piece of tufa or brick, all of which have been plastered over.

"I am sorry to give you so very vague a notice of these two supposed Saxon remnants, but I give you the best I can, and such remains are usually not very susceptible of distinct description.

"I remain, my dear Sir,

"Yours, very faithfully,

"GEO. GILBERT SCOTT.

"THE REV. A. BAKER."