

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE RECENT ADDITIONS
AND ALTERATIONS IN THE CHURCHES
OF HOLY TRINITY, WOLVERTON, AND ALL
SAINTS, CALVERTON.

The Chancel of the former Church, which is of the quasi Norman type, built at the commencement of the century, has been entirely decorated in polychrome. The west side of the Chancel-arch is enriched with two circular medallions, containing dignified figures of angels with outstretched wings: that on the north side, carrying the cross and crown of thorns in one hand, and the sacramental emblems of the chalice with wheat-ears rising from it in the other; the angel on the south side bears the palm-branch of victory, and the crown of glory. The space above the east window (which is of the "rose" type) is occupied by a painting on the plaster, representing "The Worship of the Lamb." This subject is treated in a manner resembling in some respects the celebrated painting by Van Eyck. The Lamb slain, but living for evermore, stands upon the heavenly altar, blood issuing from the neck, and bearing the flag of the resurrection—a rainbow dividing the circle in which it is enclosed—and greatly enhancing the general effect. Below and around the Lamb are the company of angels; some in silent contemplation of the Beatific Vision, and many holding the emblems of our Lord's Passion. The draperies, features, forms, and even the nimbi, are very dissimilar, but in beautiful harmony (as all flat decorations should be) with the space at the artist's disposal. All the figure-drawing, both in this Church and at Calverton, was executed by Mr. Bell (of the firm of Bell and Almond) with his own hand; the diapers and other wall decoration being designed by him, and executed under his direction. The effect of these wall-paintings is especially pleasing, both on account of the very happy harmony of refined colouring, and still more because the artist, while showing a thorough knowledge of mediæval precedent, has kept his work as free from stiffness or contortion on the one hand, as from partaking of a monumental character on the other. The drawing is free and bold, without being naturalesque, and the colouring rich and harmonious, and at the same

time cool and refined. The altar has been enlarged to suitable dimensions, and a reredos of English oak (designed by J. Swinfin Harris, Esq., of Stony Stratford, and London) erected over it. This is divided by cusped arches into three compartments, with shafted pinnacles flanking the whole on either side. The central arch contains a panel enriched with angels censing and adoring around the cross, which is of polished brass, raised upon a base of wood. The two side arches contain a representation of the Annunciation, St. Gabriel occupying the north panel, and the Blessed Virgin the south. These paintings are executed on slabs of very old mahogany on a ground of gold, which has been toned with a luminous brown colour, in the manner of ancient work, and diapered down with appropriate patterns.

At All Saints, Calverton, the work partakes of a somewhat different character. The Chancel has been decorated with polychrome, so far as the two surfaces of the arch, splays and shafts, etc., to the windows, are concerned; but the main walls had been previously made ornate by the use of stamped plaster. The western face of the arch has powderings of an appropriate character, interspersed with shields containing emblems of the passion within quatrefoils. The arch, leading to the vestry and organ chamber, have likewise been effectively decorated. The old East Window, which had a female of secular character—probably representing “Prudence,” or one of the Virtues—together with two figures of SS. Peter and Paul, has been removed. In place of these, a medallion of the Crucifixion now occupies the central position, flanked on either side by the Entombment and Resurrection; the remainder of the window being filled with quarry grounds, of simple and appropriate character, interspersed with six medallions at intervals, representing Our Lord, St. Mary the Virgin, St. John the Evangelist, St. Stephen, St. Peter, and St. Paul. A new sill of decorated character has also been added to the window, with a bold cornice, having a reredos inserted beneath of Italian glass mosaic work, representing the “Adoration of the Magi.” On the right of the picture are represented the Blessed Virgin, having the Holy Child on her knee; St. Joseph in the background; and a kneeling figure of St. Anne. To the left are the “Three Kings,”

holding their various offerings; while the Altar Cross comes in the midst, well relieved by the deep tones of the conventional herbage of the foreground, and enhanced by the lily and other accessories breaking the dado behind it. The figures, though quaint, may all be described by the term "religious." The pulpit panels have been decorated with sitting figures of four great preachers—St. John the Baptist, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. Barnabas—painted on a gold ground. The cornice and other architectural members have also been relieved with bands and diapers, in gold and colour. A septum wall has been formed out of the old altar-rails on a base of Mansfield stone, and a new oak rail has been provided in their place mounted on standards, made by the village smith from the designs of Mr. Harris, the architect, who is responsible for the whole of the work at both churches. The west door, which had been for some years built up, has been re-opened, and the Font is now placed at the extreme west end of the nave, where the tower forms a suitable Baptistry.