A SERIES OF

MANUALS

OF

GOTHIC

ORNAMENT.

CROCKETS

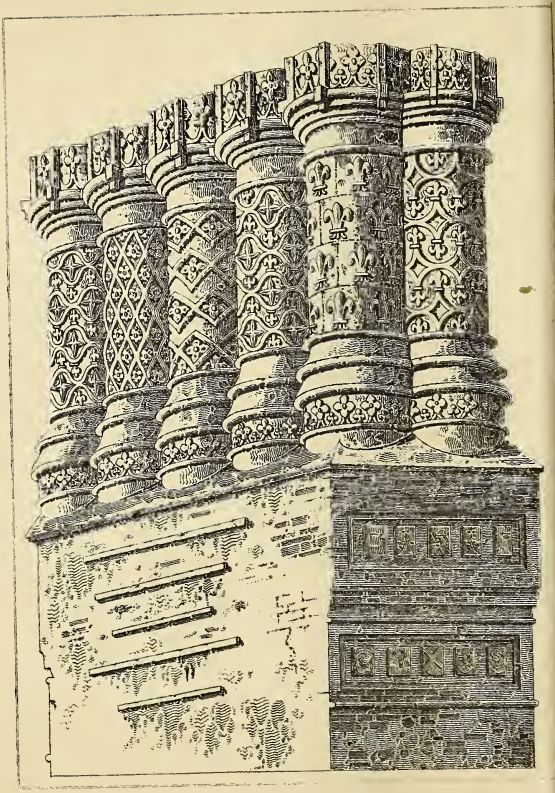
CROSSES

FINIALS.

No. I.

STONE-CARVING.

OXFORD and LONDON:
PARKER AND CO.



CHIMNEY SHAFT, E. BASHAM HALL, NORFOLK.

A MANUAL

OF

Gothic Stone Carving.

FORMING No. I. OF A

SERIES OF MANUALS OF GOTHIC ORNAMENT.

Published under the authority of the department of Science and Art, and recommended in its List of Publications.

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PREFACE.

Thanks to the numerous Societies which of late years have been instituted for the purpose of diffusing the taste for Gothic Architecture, and thanks also to the various illustrated works which have been published on the subject, and which have thus laid before our architects many choice and elaborate details from the finest buildings of our ancestors, a great change and improvement has taken place in the architecture of our ecclesiastical edifices.

But at present our architects have alone been influenced by the revival of this study; for they only have been benefited by the researches and labours of the Societies, or have been able to purchase, for the most part, the expensive publications. Those who work under them, such as the draughtsmen, the builders, the masons, and more important

than all, especially with regard to the ornament of the fabric, the stone-carvers, have up to the present time been without these advantages; they are still, as they were before the revival, entirely ignorant of the principles which should guide them in their works. And it is this which we assign as the chief reason of the many defects in details which we so constantly notice in modern buildings. These defects arise from various causes, and are of various kinds; but there is one which we notice above all, on comparing the works of these days with those of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, namely, the absence of that *spirit* which is so observable in ancient carving.

This spirit, we believe, can only be imparted by the carver himself. It cannot be caused by the architect's design or the draughtsman's geometrical copies; it must be the work of the hand which guides the chisel. "When, as in the middle ages," (writes a learned antiquary,) "architects as distinct practiti-

oners were scarcely known, and but little more than the general forms and arrangements of a building were prescribed by those who superintended its erection, much of its beauty must have depended upon the skill of the workmen, to whose control the subordinate parts were entrusted; the masons therefore must have had the power of largely influencing the appearance of the structures on which they were employed."

For the purpose of placing within the reach of workmen such designs and models as may be serviceable to them in directing their minds and talents in the right course, these little manuals are published.

As the more expensive publications have found their way into many an architect's office, and have produced their effect, so may we hope that these little manuals may find their way into the workshop, and not lie there without effect also; for we are satisfied that until more attention is paid to the

details of our architectural edifices, and that attention given which the carver only can give to his work, we shall never arrive at the satisfactory results which we behold in the works of our ancestors.

The present manual is confined to the treatment of the carving of what may be termed *complete* ornaments, such as capitals, crockets, finials. Another manual, containing the *continuous* ornament, or the various mouldings, whether ornamented or plain, will follow it.

INTRODUCTION.

In the following manual it has been thought expedient to commence with the Norman style, as, although not included in the general sense of the word Gothic, it was the root from which the latter sprang, and is therefore in a great measure inseparable from it. Moreover, as the manual is intended for the practical use of those engaged in the building or repair of churches, and as those erected in this style will be found very numerous, if not in equal proportion to those of any other style, it is obvious that its value would be materially lessened if the Norman style were omitted. We shall therefore consider the word Gothic as in its wider sense, and synonymous with medieval.

In the Introduction we wish to say a few words with regard to the Norman style, both as to its

history and its employment in building. It is without doubt an imitation of the Roman, but not a developement of it, for during the long interval between the fall of the Roman empire and the eleventh century, the people of the western countries had fallen into such a barbarous state that they had ceased to build in stone, and thus the art of stone carving was lost.

In what manner the art was revived, it is not for us here to enquire. It is generally assumed to have taken its rise in Italy, and after passing by various routes through France, and possibly deriving some influence from the Byzantine school, which had already spread to these parts, at length found its way to England, a few years before the Norman Conquest. But whether we copied the remains which we possessed of the works of the Romans or whether we were dependent on the designs brought from France, is a question difficult to solve.

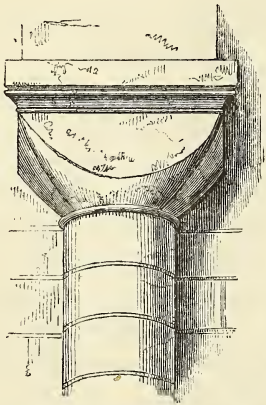
When the Norman style had once made its appearance it soon spread to all parts, and we find

as fine examples in the cathedrals of Durham and Norwich as in Canterbury or Winchester.

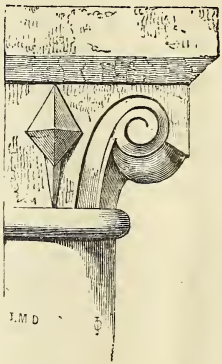
It is not often perhaps that the student will have occasion to direct his attention to this style, as although possessing many features of great beauty it is not to be recommended as a model. The great massiveness required renders it alike an expensive style, as also one totally unsuited to the requirements of modern times; and lastly, however carefully and skilfully the designs may be carried out, they never can vie with that architectural beauty which graced a later period.

It is probable that a knowledge of this style will be principally required of the student in the work of restoration, and it should therefore in no wise be neglected, for it is as important for an architect or mason to be able to repair carefully and properly an ancient fabric as to design or build a new one.

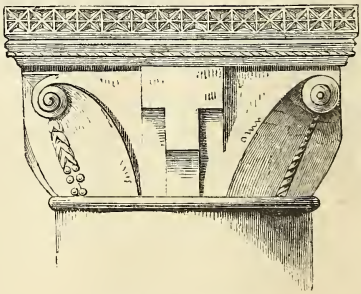
GOTHIC STONE-CARVING. PL. I.



North Transept, Winchester Cathedral



Whitby Church, Yorkshire.

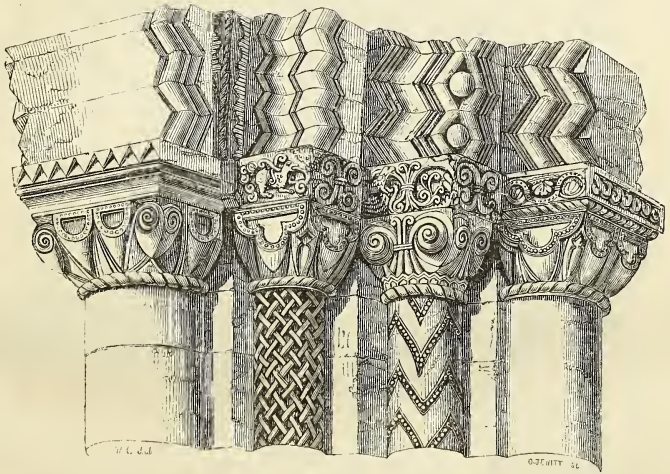


White Tower, London.

Sect. 1.—Capitals.

The Norman Style.

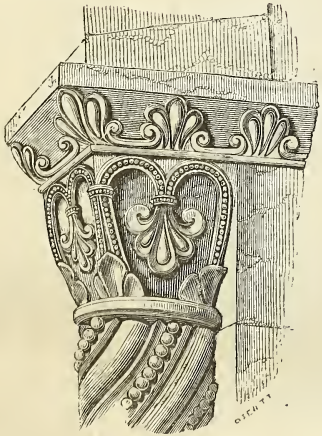
The earliest Norman capitals are quite plain, usually of the form called the cushion capital, which consists merely of a square block with the lower angles rounded off, as in the north transept of Winchester cathedral, built in the time of the Conqueror, being part of the original fabric before the tower fell. The next style of capital is a rude attempt at imitating the Roman, with the volutes at the angles, and a plain piece of stone left projecting in the centre, as if for the purpose of imitating the caulicoli. The capitals in the White Tower, London, of the time of the Conqueror, and in Whitby church, Yorkshire, probably built about the same time, are good examples of the kind.



St. Peter's, Northampton.

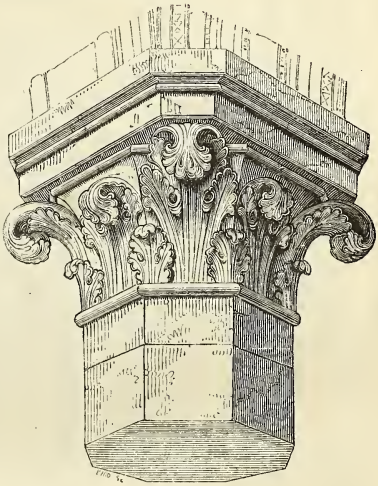
Widely contrasting with these rude capitals is the noble cluster from St. Peter's church, Northampton, built about the middle of the twelfth century. Yet on examination it will be found that many of the prominent characteristics of the capitals from Winchester and the White Tower are scrupulously preserved. The cushion shape is the one adopted throughout, and though the ornament is of an elaborate character, we find in the first and third capital the volute or curl at the angle as perfect in the example from St. Peter's as in those of earlier date. These elements should be carefully examined by the student in carving, for they form as it were a basis to work upon. The ornaments vary to an infinite degree, but the form in nearly all cases remains the same, and therefore should be kept in view when we wish to give to our work the character of the twelfth century.

In this example also the feature of an ornamented abacus is to be noticed, which is not of frequent occurrence, and then only occurs in very rich examples, such as the one before us.



R.B.

Wootton, Gloucestershire.



Christ Church, Oxford.

In the capital from Wootton in Gloucestershire, not only the volute has disappeared, but the caulicoli as it were have been entirely made subservient to the ornament, in fact have become a portion of it. In this example we have also to notice the connection between the abacus and the capital; in former examples they have been quite distinct, and might have been separated from each other, but in this instance the ornament of the capital is continued on the abacus, and thus the two are connected together; this should be observed, as in later times we often find the capital and abacus blended into one.

Thus far have we treated of the "developement of ornament," as it were, of the Norman style, and we are on the eve of its "transition" into the next style, or the Early English; here it will be well to introduce an example to shew the power which by this time the artist had acquired over his chisel. We have explained the developement, the example from Christ Church, Oxford, proves the progress. We have shewn that the Norman style was

a copy of the Roman, but we have seen that in the earlier examples it was a very rude one. Now that we have advanced in the century we find that the artist has succeeded in carving his work with a delicacy and power that might well vie with some of the finest examples of the styles from which he took his model. They are no English forms, and bear no part in the history of English architecture, but nevertheless they stand as proofs of the care which our ancestors bestowed on their work, even to the minutest details; that they condescended to copy, and that they persevered till they arrived at perfection in copying *before* they trusted to their own invention.

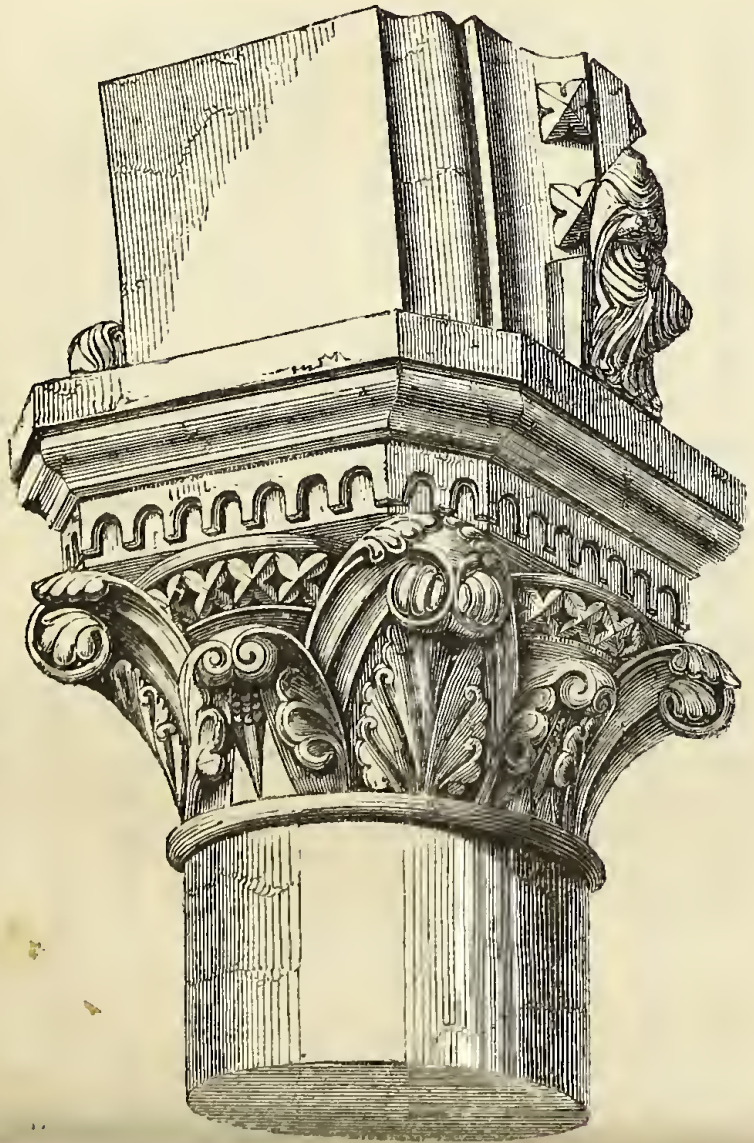
To describe the different ORNAMENTS belonging to this style would occupy more space than we can allow; and moreover the subject could not be consistently treated without introducing too prominently the ornamental mouldings, and to these we hope to allot a larger space in another manual.

The few following observations may perhaps however be not out of place. The chief element

of the Norman ornament was the circle, or rather the semicircle; which, in combination, by being varied in proportion and in position, will be capable of forming many different patterns. Moreover it is to be noticed that their carving was shallow and flat, but to avoid the meagre appearance which otherwise their work would assume, they often relieved the surface of their pattern with a bead, such as may be noticed in the capital from Wootton. This "beading" is also to be observed on many of the patterns from the capitals at St. Peter's Northampton, where the semicircle occurs, and in the same plate are instances of the zigzag, hatched, and cable mouldings, three of the most common ornaments in this period.

Animals are often introduced, and though they are carved with much spirit, there is always a grotesqueness attached to them, arising principally from the entire absence of any thing like proportion. Sacred emblems are not so often employed as other devices, the signs of the zodiac being perhaps the most popular; and in the buildings of

GOTHIC STONE ORNAMENT. PL. IV.



the time of King Stephen it has been remarked that the representation of the "Sagittarius," or a mounted archer, occurs far more frequently than any of the others. Heads are often introduced, but are generally of so wild and rough a character that it is sometimes impossible to say whether they are intended for those of man or beast. The few flowers and leaves which they attempted were of a very rude nature, and always marked with conventionality, oftentimes degeneratiug into simply a fan-shaped ornament. The few figures which occur over Norman doorways in the portion called the tympanum, belong rather to the subject of Sculpture and Wall ornament.

The TRANSITION signifies the "passing from one style to another," and this occurred gradually, as in some parts of the country the inhabitants were naturally more advanced than in others. It cannot be called a style of itself, it is rather a period; and as such we shall treat it, not holding it out as a model for imitation, but rather as a subject for study, wherein the student will discover

the link which connects two styles, and which sometimes affords specimens of the combination of two most distinct and opposite characters of ornament carved on the same stone. In the specimen from Oakham castle the old form of the Norman capital is preserved, with its volutes and caulicoli, but they have now assumed the character of foliage; while protruding forth from the midst we may observe the *tooth ornament*, acknowledged by all as a chief characteristic of the Early English style. This capital is from the hall of Oakham castle, known to have been built by Walchelin de Ferrers nearly twenty-five years before the end of the century, or about the year 1180, and affords also a fine example of that progress which we spoke of with regard to the capital from Christ Church.

The capital from Bloxham church is a very early example of the departure from the conventional form of the twelfth century. Although the abacus is of an earlier character, the ornament is of far different workmanship to what we have before

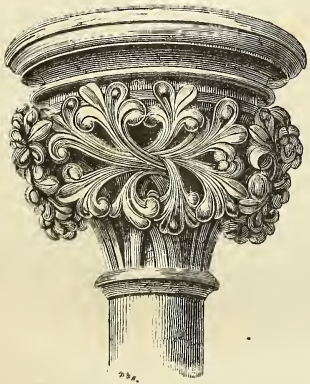
met with. It is the first appearance of true foliage, and in fact the first attempt at copying nature without regard to convention. It perhaps does not date later than the example at Oakham, but while the one is a specimen of the perfection and ending of the Norman style, the other is that of the rise and commencement of the Early English.

The Early English Style.

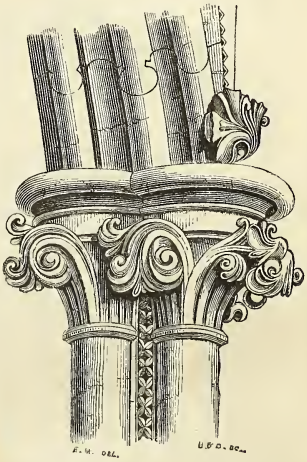
From this period we may date the commencement of true English Architecture. The Roman, and the imitation of it under the name of Norman, have now been thrown aside, and we come to a style which we may fairly call our own; for this reason Rickman has applied to it the significant name of Early English [a].

The capital from the north transept of Lincoln cathedral affords an admirable example of the free and graceful foliage which distinguishes this

[a] Not that Gothic is exclusively English, but that English Gothic has a character of its own.



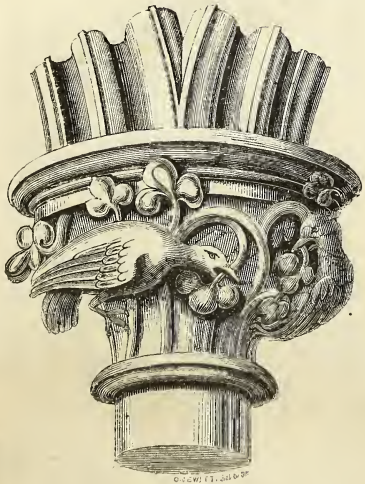
Presbytery, Lincoln Cathedral.



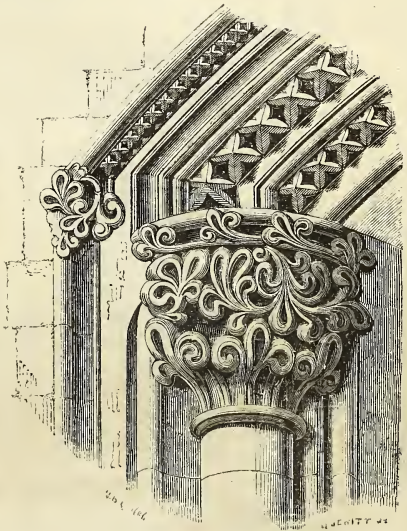
North Transept, Lincoln Cathedral

style, as well from subsequent ones as from its predecessors. We have already pointed out the rapid change which took place in the last quarter of the twelfth century, but there was still some lingering remnant of imitation of Roman work; we have now arrived at the period when all trace of this imitation is lost, when the architects of England and the north of France had the boldness to invent a new style for themselves, which is now generally known throughout Europe by the name of Gothic. Volumes have been written on the origin of this style, but it does not fall within our plan to enter into the question; we will only observe that it originated in these northern countries where there were few if any remains of Roman stone-carving to be found. There can be no doubt that as the architects and the workmen improved in skill and practice they eagerly sought for some better style of sculpture than the rude and clumsy imitations of the previous generation.

The example from the presbytery of Lincoln cathedral is a somewhat different, later, and richer



Tomb of Abp Walter Grey, York.

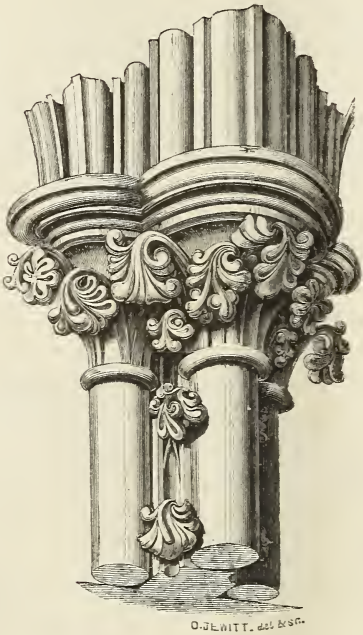


North Transept, Romsey Abbey.

specimen of the same style; in both the same boldness of under-cutting, the same freedom and elegance of the overhanging volutes, or rather of the carved foliage, for the form of the volute is lost; in both also it will be observed that the stalks or stems of the leaves appear to spring from the neck moulding, at first in a stiff upright manner, until by the stiff stalk the leaf is carried up to the abacus and then curls over in the free graceful manner which is so much admired. From this circumstance this kind of foliage is sometimes technically distinguished by the name of stiff-leaf-foliage; it would perhaps be more correctly called stiff-stem-foliage.

The example from Romsey abbey, Hampshire, is of rather later character, and has almost lost the stiff stem and the curling over of the earlier examples, the leaves are more numerous and more thickly clustered together, and though still very rich, even richer than the others, they are not quite so free and elegant.

The example from the tomb of archbishop

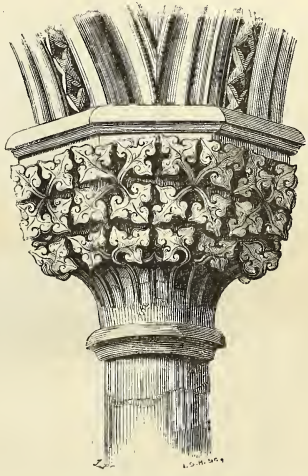


Presbytery, Lincoln Cathedral.

Walter Grey, in York cathedral, partakes more of the earlier character, although the moulding of the abacus shews it to be not so early as the two from Lincoln. The bird which is introduced biting the stalk of one of the leaves is very beautifully executed, and testifies to the skill which the workmen had by that time acquired; the bird has been said to be biting a bunch of grapes, but a more careful inspection shews it to be only the usual trefoil leaf with a sort of knob upon it, which is very characteristic of the work of the thirteenth century.

In the second capital from the presbytery of Lincoln, we have an instance of perhaps one of the most effective and pleasing results of which this style is capable. Here is all that grace and elegance so peculiar to the workmanship of the end of the thirteenth century, combined with the most profuse luxuriance of carving. Neither are the mouldings inferior with respect to boldness and power of execution. And before quitting this example we should call attention to the device of

Dorchester, Oxfordshire.

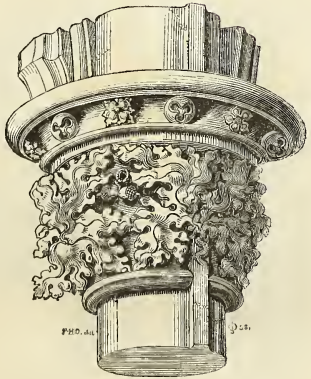


Transept Beverley Minster.

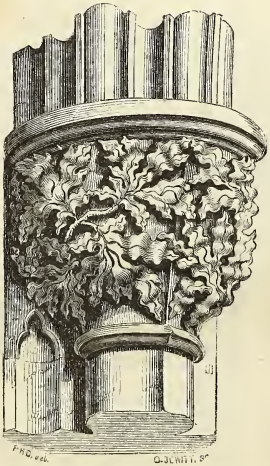
continuing the foliage of the capital, in the form of crockets, down the pillar, in the hollow formed by the shafts at the angles: though not of common occurrence in the works of this period, there is no reason why it should not be taken for a model.

The specimen from Dorchester abbey church, Oxfordshire, belongs to the last quarter of the thirteenth century, when the second great change of style took place, and this example shews the change in the character of the foliage, which is here of five lobes instead of three, and has almost lost the knobs which we have just mentioned as one of the distinguishing marks of the earlier style.

The example from Beverley displays foliage that belongs rather to the next style, but the mouldings above stamp it as belonging to this period, it may be therefore well considered as also of transitional character.



Lincoln Cathedral



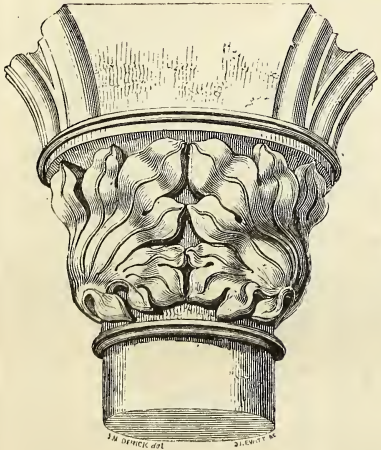
Southwell Minster.

The Decorated Style.

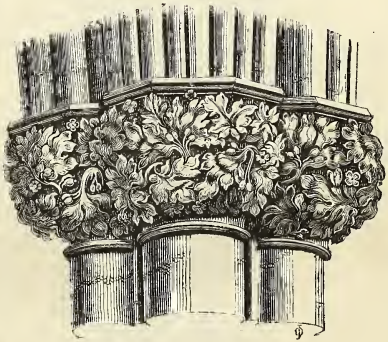
We have now arrived at a style where ornamentation is made more essentially a part of the structure than at any other period, and a marked difference may be observed between the specimens of this and the previous styles.

"It is extremely difficult," says Rickman, "to describe in words the different characters of Early English and Decorated foliage, yet any one who attentively examines a few of each style will seldom afterwards be mistaken, unless in buildings so completely transitional as to have almost every mark of both styles. There is in the Early English a certain unnatural character in the foliage, which is extremely stiff, when compared with the graceful and easy combinations, and the natural appearance of most of the well-executed Decorated foliage."

An examination of the two examples from Lincoln cathedral and Southwell minster, and a comparison



Beverley Minster.



York Cathedral.

of them with some of those of the last century, will fully bear out the words which we have quoted. In the earlier style the form of the leaves is conventional, or copied one from the other, and it is often impossible to say what particular leaf is intended to be represented; but in the Decorated style it is easy to distinguish the leaves of the oak, the vine, the ivy, the maple, the rose, and other plants, and these are often carved so accurately that it is impossible to surpass them. York cathedral and Beverley minster afford two specimens of the usual style of carving of the period; the one, of excessive luxuriance and delicacy, the other comparatively plain; nevertheless in the latter we detect equally the master-hand, not only in the skilful arrangement of the leaf, so that no unsightly gap in the carving is left unfilled, but also in the manner of its execution even to the minutest detail. The undulations produce lights and shadows, affording the most pleasing effect, while the sprays of the leaf are carried throughout with an accuracy which could only have been obtained from a close study and examination of the

natural model. The example from York can hardly be surpassed for the elegance of the grouping or the fineness and delicacy of the workmanship.

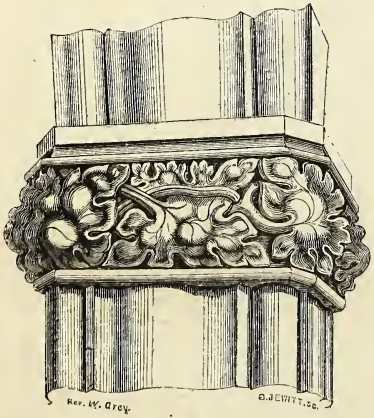
But this perfection of the art did not last long. Half a century had scarcely passed away before it began to decline, neither can we define any period of the transition of the two styles, the one gave way to the other almost imperceptibly. But although the decline was so gradual, nevertheless it was general. It may perhaps be possible to find isolated examples of the work of the last few years, equal in display of art to those of the commencement of the style, but they are very rare; the change soon spread through the whole of the country, and the once flowing and free foliage assumed stiff and regular forms.

The Perpendicular Style.

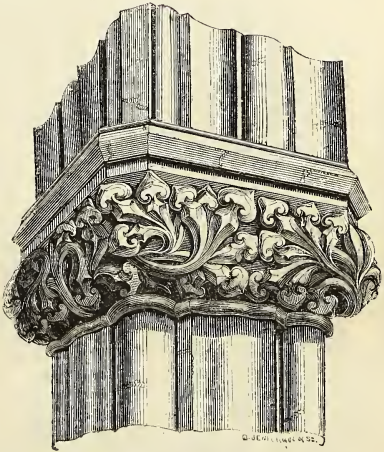
As *gradually* the art of carving had freed itself from conventionality, till, in the style which we have just left, it had probably reached its most natural and therefore highest state, (when, in other words, it may be considered to have arrived at its perfection,) so *gradually* in the present style it seems again to have taken up its cast-off bonds, and to have bent its models to the laws of rule and compass. In fact, the chief element of this style is the straight line, and the name "Perpendicular" was assigned to it on account of the most striking portions of Gothic buildings, the windows, having the principle of "perpendicularity" carried to the farthest extreme; for oftentimes in the tracery of this period the mullions are carried straight from the base to the top of the window, without a single curve to break their monotony.

In this manual, however, we must confine our remarks to the carving of the period, and principally with respect to foliage, as during the thir-

PL. XI.



Kenton, Devonshire.

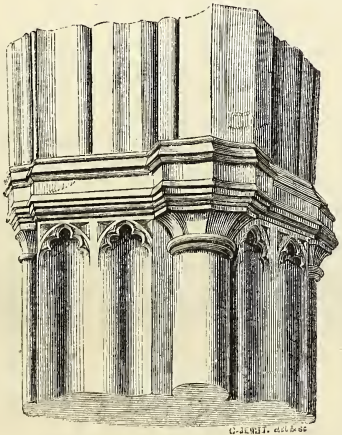


Stoke in Teignhead, Devonshire, c 1840.

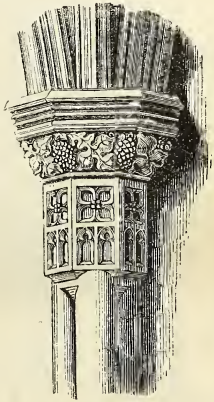
teenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries the leaves of trees and plants formed the chief objects for models in decoration; the introduction of fruit, flowers, and figures being rather the exception.

The two examples from Devonshire afford fine specimens of the carving of this period, but the foliage projecting beyond the abacus is a local peculiarity. It is generally more flat, and square forms predominate more than in the earlier style, and the natural character which distinguished the previous century was lost in this. The art of carving, in common with architecture itself, was in a decaying state. The energy, piety, and zeal which were characteristic of the earlier ages had fallen asleep, and though the workmen retained their manual skill, which is not easily lost when once acquired, and consequently much of the carving of this period is very minutely and carefully executed; yet for want of the spirit of their ancestors, and the master minds to direct them, it generally has a poor and monotonous appearance in comparison. Moreover, as the carving became

PL. XII.



Cromer Church, Norfolk.



Winchester Cathedral.

more feeble and meagre, the employment of foliage gave way to that of more simple designs, such for instance as at Cromer church, Norfolk, where the capital has almost ceased to exist, consisting only of a few horizontal mouldings, with some cinquefoil cuspings introduced to terminate the upright mouldings of the pillar. It is true that the effect is not altogether displeasing, and there are many admirers of this style of architecture, but surely this example will not bear comparison with those which we have given of the Early English and of the Decorated styles.

In our last example, that from Winchester cathedral, it is possible that the sculptor was aware of the meagre aspect of his carving, even after he had introduced the series of mouldings above; for, to give an appearance of richness to his work, he has introduced panelling beneath.

This introduction of panels is quite characteristic of the manner of working in the fifteenth century. It covers very easily a very large space, and with very little outlay of labour, either

in design or execution; in the one case consisting of endless repetition of most simple forms, it requires no study, and little time in preparing the drawings; in the other it being so flat and shallow, and the greater part being straight and even cutting, it requires a small amount of manual labour or of dexterity. With this principle predominating there is no wonder that art waned and perished.

Section II. Bases.

From the Capitals we naturally turn our attention to the Bases, and though they are generally quite plain, or at most adorned with one or two plain mouldings, yet there are many instances of carved ornament being introduced, and this with very good effect.

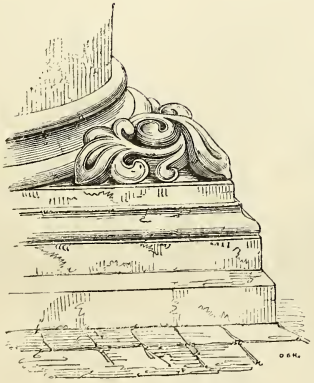
As far as we can judge, it was during the thirteenth century that it was most common to sculpture the bases of the pillars; we find a great many

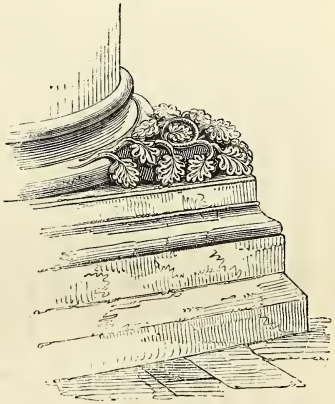
attempts during the twelfth century, but very few examples during the fourteenth; in the fifteenth we do not remember a single specimen, unless the perpetual panel, spoken of in the last chapter, be considered as an ornament, as we now and then find this carried round the bases of the pillars in the Perpendicular style.

The Norman examples have seldom more than one small ornament at the angle, oftentimes in the shape of a beak, sometimes more that of a leaf, at others we have found the foot of an animal as it were protruding from between the round pillar and the square space[b]. If any ornament is introduced over the square base, it is generally shallow, and beaded, and similar to that which we treated of under the subject of Capitals.

[b] In the crypt at St. Peter's, Oxford, (and we believe also we have seen it elsewhere,) a head is introduced on one side, so that it appears as if some animal (a tortoise the one at St. Peter's is supposed to be meant for) was bearing on its back the weight of the pillar, with its paws stretched out, and appearing on the four angles of the square basement.

PL. XIII.



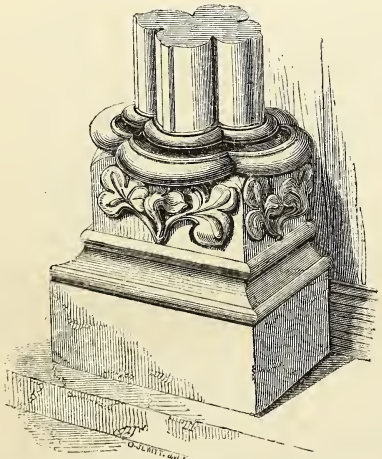


St. Cross, Winchester.

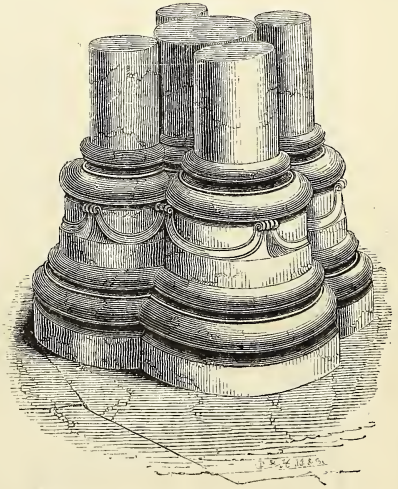
The examples of the Early English style are particularly fine, and well deserving of attention. In this, as in the capital, foliage is the chief element, and whether introduced at the angle, or in the hollows formed by the shafts, or on the surface of the stone work, it seldom seems out of place, and gives a degree of finish to the pillar which could not well be otherwise obtained.

The two examples from St. Cross, near Winchester, afford as suitable specimens of the period as we can wish to give. They are both of this period: in the first will be found the same form of leaf as in the example from Romsey abbey, given in Plate VI. The foliage in the second base is of so different a character from that of its neighbour, that it is curious the two should be found together of the same date in the same building. The only conclusion that we can come to is that they were designed and worked by two different hands, and that while the one followed the conventional style of carving of the period, the other chose some different model, but we can hardly decide what

PL. XIV.



Chapter House, Lincoln Cathedral



Canterbury Cathedral

plant the subject of the second base is intended to represent.

The base from the chapter-house, Lincoln, exhibits the same kind of ornament as the first of the examples from St. Cross, but instead of its being placed at the angle, it is carried round the lower portion of the base. Perhaps the most suitable kind of ornaments for this position are such as we find in Canterbury cathedral, where it seems intended to imitate drapery hanging round. It may possibly have derived its origin from this custom, which is still kept up on certain saints' days, in some parts of Italy, to the present day.

The feature of an ornament on the base of itself is a good one, and should nowhere be omitted, where occasion permits; but in most cases, and this is the reason why we do not find it so often adopted, it would be of no effect, as it would be concealed from view by the seats or other furniture of the church.

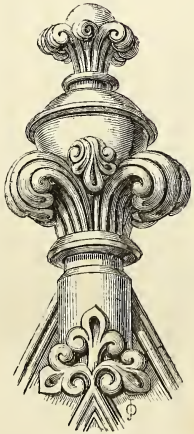
Section III. Finials and Crosses.

Finials, as their name implies, are employed to give a finish to the points of turret-roofs, buttresses, pinnacles, canopies, and other parts of a Gothic building, which without them would have a bald, unsatisfactory appearance. Every body who has walked up Regent-street has remarked the bad effect of the spire at All Souls church, Langham-place. This effect arises from the spire in question having no finial. Finials have also a tendency to lead the eye upwards when scanning any building or part of a building; they help to carry out that tendency to vertical lines so observable in all Gothic buildings, and to counteract the effect of the horizontal lines of the structure. Without them straight-sided canopies over windows and doorways would have too much of a classical air, as may be seen in some Norman doorways; but by enriching the sides of a canopy with crockets, and

its summit with a finial, it assumes at once a Gothic dress, and scarcely reminds one of a Grecian pediment. And another reason for the use of finials, (especially in the Decorated and Perpendicular styles,) is this—that they finish that system of ornamentation by means of foliage, which we see so continually applied to the outer edges of pinnacles, canopies, &c. And here we may observe how closely the old Gothic architects studied nature; for as there is no more beautiful finish to an elegant plant than a rich head of flowers, so they could desire no better finish to a canopy or pinnacle along the sides of which they had caused a garland of leaves to trail, than a bunch of foliage, fruit, or flowers.

In the Norman style finials rarely occur. The Norman architects, accustomed to copy much from the classical style, rarely thought it necessary to give any particular finish to their turrets, buttresses, or canopies, when they had been taught to admire the pediments of Roman or Grecian temples, which had no such ornament.

PL. XV.



Lincoln Cathedral.

Merton College Chapel, Oxford

In the Early English style, as all other essentially Gothic features began to be much more freely used, so finials also take a more prominent position. We give on the opposite page two of the thirteenth century, the one from Lincoln cathedral, belonging to the commencement, the other from Merton college chapel, to the end of that century. In the first we see the plain round knob of the Norman style in the midst of the Early English foliage. And we may observe here the same character of this foliage which we have before noticed under the head of Capitals, viz. the employment of stiff stalks to the leaves, and of an elegant curl of the foliage above. The second finial belongs rather to the Decorated style, i. e. to the early or geometrical phase of that style, which in many of its proportions and details bears as much resemblance to the Early English as to the later or Flowing Decorated. Here we see a complete bunch of foliage; and though the stiff stalks remain, yet the character of the leaves is quite altered, and much more attempt is made at imitating the natural forms of particular leaves.

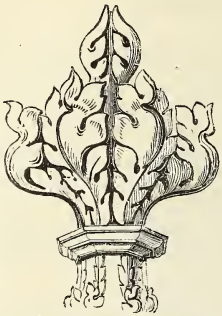
PL. XVI.

Bawton Nottinghamshire.

It will be observed that these leaves are made to clasp the cone on which they are placed, and do not curl away from it, as in the earlier examples. Already we are beginning to lose some of the conventionality which characterized the earlier efforts of Gothic art, and have greater fidelity to nature, and a higher style of sculpture, more elaborate and more highly finished.

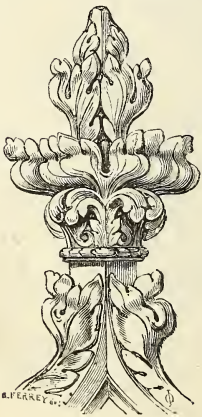
The next example (from Hawton) is a remarkably fine example of a rich Decorated finial. Here the stiff stems no longer form any feature, the leaves have entirely lost their conventionality, and represent very accurately the elegant crumpling and notched edge which characterize the vine, while a cluster of grapes is introduced among the leaves. It will be observed here that this finial is merely an assemblage of the same vine-leaves which form the crockets below. Another circumstance we may remark here is, that the leaves which form this finial are arranged in two divisions: the lower one projecting considerably, and the upper composed of smaller leaves and more compressed.

PL. XVII.

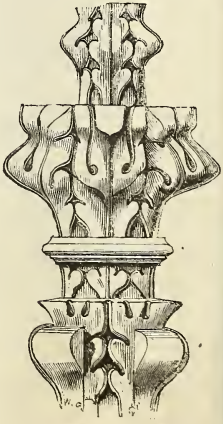


King's College, Cambridge.

Dronfield Church



Wimborne Minster

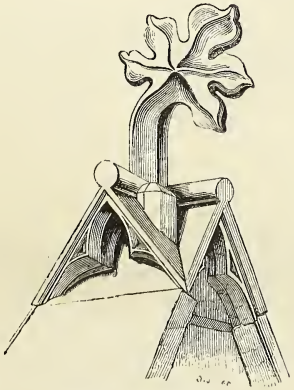


Chittlehampton, Devon.

This arrangement becomes more apparent in our next examples, and indeed in work of the fifteenth century becomes almost the conventional form, giving an appearance of great stiffness and formality.

The examples on the opposite page shew the style of finial in use at the end of the fourteenth and during the fifteenth century. That from Wimborne Minster partakes somewhat of the character of Decorated work; but there is a certain conventional contour of the leaves composing it, viz., two sorts of knobs with a deep dent between them (see also the example from Chittlehampton), which shews a very near approach to Perpendicular work. We may observe in each case that the leaves are set down upon the neck-moulding of the finial, and have no stiff stalks, as in the preceding styles. The leaves at King's college, Cambridge, partake of a more natural form than in most examples of this date;—thus at Chittlehampton we find them much degenerated, being executed in a coarse style, although the tower from which this example

PL. XVIII.



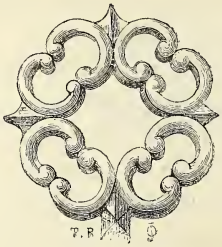
Barn, Bath Hampton.

Wolverton Hall, Dorset

is taken is anything but a common country tower, being highly enriched in all its parts.

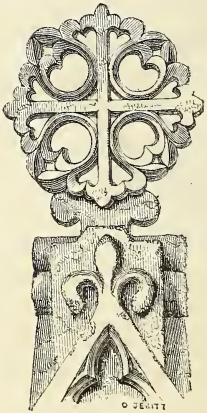
In proportion as the fifteenth century advanced, we find finials much degenerating, until (as we see in some of the buildings at Oxford) they were mere knobs of stone, with little or no attempt to make them look like bunches of foliage or flowers. At the same time their proportions became ungraceful; often appearing too large for the pinnacles on which they were placed.

There is another class of ornaments, which for convenience sake may be called finials, chiefly found on the points of gables of domestic work. The examples here given shew two different types of them. They are often found on abbey barns, country houses, &c. Sometimes, as at Bath Hampton, a gable is finished by a leaf; sometimes, as at Wolverton hall, by an animal, probably the crest, badge, or cognizance of the builder. Sometimes (as at the abbey barn at Glastonbury) a statue of the builder himself is found crowning the gable. These ornaments seem to make the best finish for

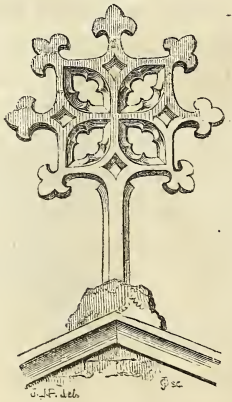


Morton, Lincolnshire.

Peterborough Cathedral



Warkton, Northamptonshire.



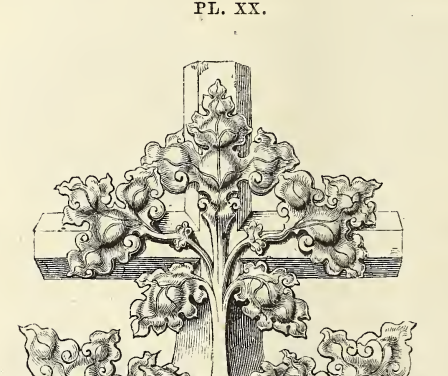
Morton, Lincolnshire.

domestic work, instead of crosses, which are more appropriate for churches.

Crosses are found in each of the four styles of Gothic architecture. But Norman crosses are for the most part very plain, a mere flat stone with its edge cut into a circular form and some cruciform object cut in low relief upon it, or four holes pierced through it, so as to leave the stone between these piercings in the form of a cross. But in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries we find some very elegant examples.

We may notice two distinct types of these, viz. the ordinary cross (more or less ornamented) and the cross with the open centre. Of the latter we give two varieties from Morton and Peterborough cathedral. The latter, besides the open centre, has the extremities of the arms pierced, which gives it an appearance of great elegance. In both we observe the curling foliage of the Early English style, as well as in the cross from Warkton; which with the second example from Morton are good instances of the ordinary cross, but enriched in one case

PL. XX.

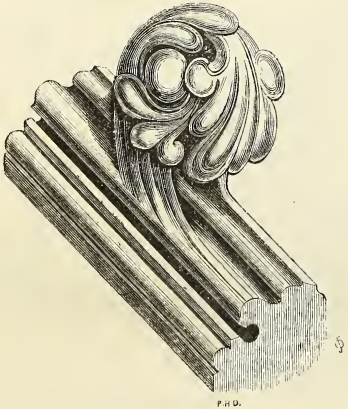


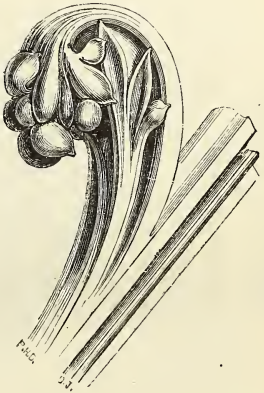
Winchester Cathedral.

with foliage curling between the arms, in the others both with tracery and foliage. While speaking of that from Warkton we may notice the trefoil finish to the edges of the coping stone just under the cross, which adds much to its effect. Our last example, from Winchester cathedral, though the mere cross is a very simple one, with its edges chamfered off, has a high degree of enrichment imparted to it, by an exquisite spray of foliage, admirably executed, which spreads over it.

Both Finials and Crosses form no unimportant part of Gothic ornament. The latter generally surmount the highest points of churches; the former crown pinnacles, turrets, canopies, and other subordinate parts. And it is not difficult to perceive that the finish gives a certain character to the work. The eye, on looking upon any building or part of a building, naturally glances upwards, beginning from the base and finishing its scrutiny at the summit; and it is generally the last glance which determines our opinion of the object under examination.

PL. XXI.





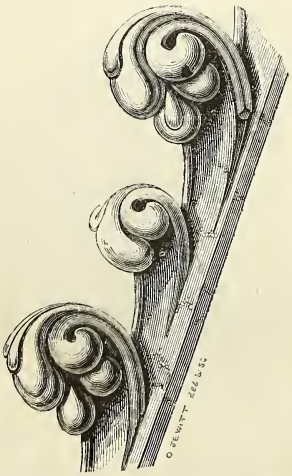
Salisbury Cathedral.

Section IV. Crockets.

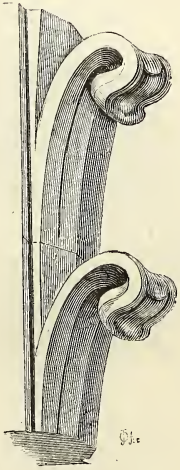
In the Norman period, before Gothic, in the more defined sense of the word, had its birth, there were no such ornaments as crockets. Even during the period of *Transition*, when we find so much attention paid to profuse decoration, no examples occur; and it was not till in fact Gothic was fairly established in this country, that the crocket made its appearance.

We have therefore to pass over the Norman and commence with the Early English, of which style two very good examples may be given from Salisbury cathedral. In the first we find an instance of that truly thirteenth century ornament the *lobed* leaves, and we see with what facility the same model which formed such elegant capitals, and of which we treated in the early part of this manual, is applied to those ornaments which we have now under our consideration. What we have therefore chiefly to observe, is its application, and

PL. XXII.



Crocket, Tomb of Walter de Grey.



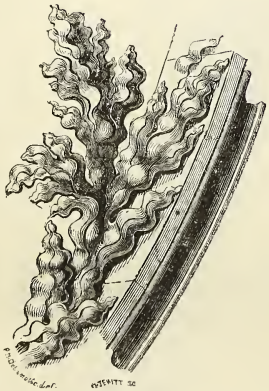
Choir, Lincoln Cathedral

the manner in which it is combined with the portion of the fabric which it is employed to decorate.

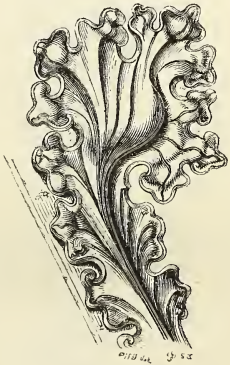
On examination, it will be seen that it has evidently been the endeavour of the sculptor to render the crocket as much as possible an actual part of the rest of the work, so as not to appear as simply an addition; and to effect this, he has carried three or four of the mouldings into the crockets, thus rendering the two inseparable.

The tomb of Archbishop Grey at York affords a fine example of the beauty acquired by judicious employment of crockets, and we have given an engraving of a portion of the work, to shew the position of the crockets with respect to each other; moreover, it will be observed in this example that every alternate one is a size smaller. This is an ingenious device, to destroy the monotony which might possibly exist from the repetition of a number of the same ornament one above the other, and all of the same size. Unfortunately our engraving from the choir of Lincoln does not shew the position of the crockets. They are placed between the mould-

PL. XXIII.



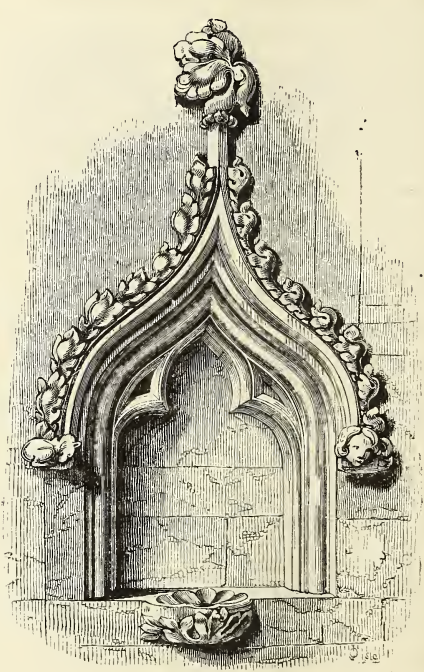
Hawton, Notts.



Lincoln Cathedral.

ings of a large pier, in the same manner as the ornament (which also might be considered as crocketing) on the pillar from the presbytery, Lincoln, of which we have given an engraving under the subject of Capitals, (Plate IX.) This does not seem to be a legitimate use of the crocket, but we consider it right to introduce an example, as it is of occasional occurrence during the thirteenth century.

We now come to the Decorated period, where crockets exist in greater abundance and variety than at any other. We could not find two examples more fairly illustrating the general style of crocketing of the period than those given in Plate XXIII., though at the same time the one from Hawton displays a freedom of style and a power over the chisel which is not always met with. How great a contrast this example affords to the conventional *lobes* of the previous style; although we must confess we would not willingly give our verdict, as to which should bear off the prize for beauty. The leaf which is copied in the specimen



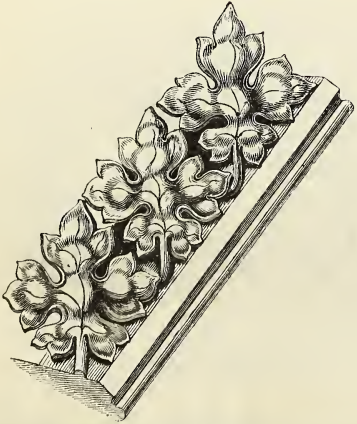
Piscina, Great Bedwyn.

from Lincoln cathedral is perhaps the one most usually employed in crocketing during this century.

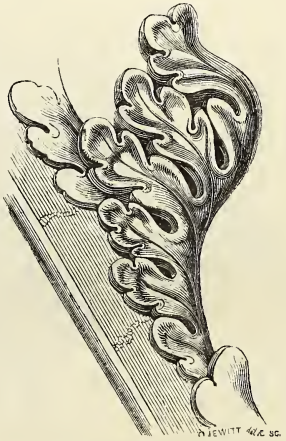
Before we proceed farther with the designs of crockets, as ornaments by themselves, it will be as well to shew their use, and their effect when in use. We have taken as an example a piscina from Great Bedwyn, Wilts, and here we see the crockets enriching the external ridge of the arch. How meagre in comparison would be the appearance of this piece of architectural construction, if only a plain arch were described over it, instead of one adorned with the well-wrought crockets, and terminating in the elegant finial, as we now see it. Moreover, the contrast could not possibly be so great in this instance as in one where the arch was detached, and had no wall or flat surface behind it. We should also draw attention to the little basin of the piscina, which is made a receptacle for ornament in an ingenious manner, though it does not belong exactly to our present subject.

The varieties of crockets during the fourteenth century are almost endless, so that we must con-

PL. XXV.



Guisborough Yorkshire.



Southwell, Notts.

tent ourselves with giving only a few general examples. The most usual type is that of a broad leaf laid over the angle, with its back and point raised, as at Southwell: in some instances one edge only of the leaf is attached, the other stands free.

We find at Guisborough, Yorkshire, a succession of crockets following close upon each other, so as to form almost one continual moulding, but the shape of the leaves is so elegant, and carved with so much care and precision, and the curves and undulations introduced with such taste and clever management, that there is no appearance of crowding; on the contrary they seem to unite together, in the formation of one whole design. The example from Southwell is principally remarkable for its boldness in design and execution, and is of a different sort of leaf to any we have yet given specimens of.

On the next page we have given three varieties from the same cathedral. The one represents a flower, the second the vine, and the third the oak. Of the vine there is not the slightest doubt, without even the presence of the bunch of grapes the

PL. XXVI.

Winchester Cathedral

Winchester Cathedral

Exeter Cathedral

leaf might readily be assigned to its model; and though the nature of the ornament requires it to be placed in rather an awkward and unnatural position, still on comparison the chief features of the vine will be found to have been scrupulously preserved.

With regard to the oak-leaf, the artist has not succeeded so satisfactorily; to a great extent many of the characteristics of the oak-leaf are preserved, but the general appearance bears great resemblance to the example of the vine. For the fourth example we have taken another imitation of oak, and this time the leaves will be found as correct and natural as the acorns themselves. This last clever piece of carving is taken from Exeter cathedral.

The crocket being so essentially a Gothic ornament, it will be found to be used in nearly all parts of a Gothic edifice, both externally and internally. It is therefore not only necessary to pay attention to the designs of crockets, but also to their application.

There are four points to which the student should pay attention.

1. That his crockets should not be too numerous, or placed in positions where they are not required.

2. That they should not be out of proportion in regard to the work to which they are affixed, neither too expanded nor too elongated, nor yet insignificant.

3. That there should be as great variety and as little repetition of the same forms as possible, as will be seen by the examples we have selected.

4. That he should be careful in applying them to make them appear as part of the design, (vide p. 63,) and not, as we have sometimes seen in modern work, the crockets appearing like isolated knobs, glued on, and waiting only to be broken asunder from the rest of the work, by some slight and charitable touch.

They are applicable to spires, (some of our finest derive their beauty from the arrangement of their crockets,) and are almost essential accessories to pinnacles, especially in later work. In the Deco-

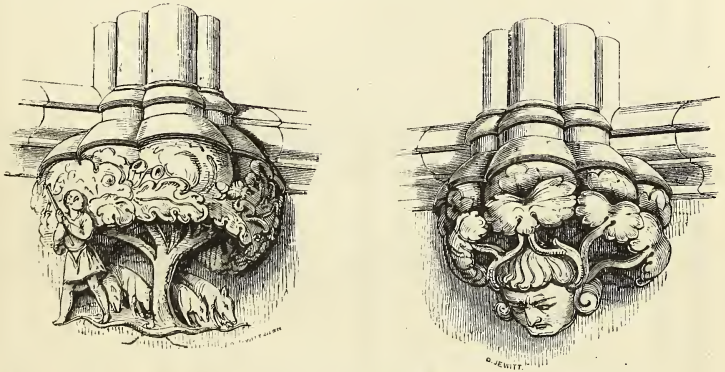
rated style almost invariably, and in the Perpendicular without exception, they are adorned with crockets.

Again, many of the dripstones round our large and fine doorways and windows are adorned with crockets. The chief ornaments of those beautiful tombs which exist in our cathedrals are finials and crockets; and what would become of the beauty of those numerous little niches, piscinæ, sedilia, &c. with which our Gothic churches are adorned, if they were bereft of their crockets?

Section V. Corbels.

Under the head of Corbels we class all those ornaments, which as it were end or terminate a design *downwards* in contradistinction to the finial, which completes or finishes the upper portion. Corbels are chiefly used to supply the place of pillars where these latter cannot be conveniently used; as in the case of a building which has no aisles, where the principal timbers of the roof,

PL. XXVII.

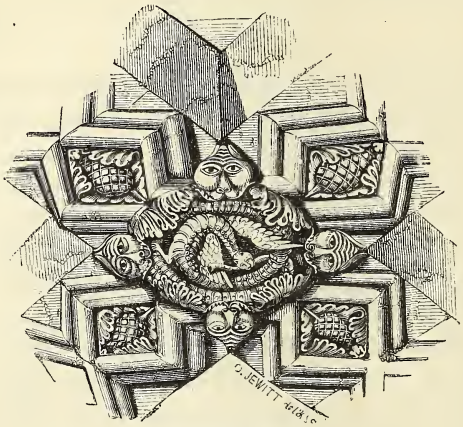


Merton College Chapel, Oxford.

the ribs of the groining, the vaulting-shafts, or the inner mouldings of the transverse arches, require some support to carry them. In such positions a stone is built into the wall, and projecting so far beyond its face as is necessary for this purpose. This stone is afterwards ornamented with carving to make an appropriate finish for the work above.

The corbels which we have given opposite are very pleasing examples of the last-mentioned class. They are of the Decorated style, from Merton College, Oxford, where they carry the vaulting-shafts of the chapel. Here we may notice the very elegant combination of mouldings, foliage, and figures, and the satisfactory treatment of each. The corbel which represents the prodigal son feeding his swine, is worthy of attention as being of an uncommon type, and producing a very good effect.

In all the different styles of Gothic architecture we find numerous examples of different sorts of corbels, each having the peculiar mouldings or foliage of its style. Some consist entirely of mouldings, others consist of an undercut abacus



Iffley, Oxfordshire.

St. Alban's Abbey, Herts.

and necking, carried by a few leaves, or by a head encircled with leaves. Others again consist entirely of a bunch of leaves, into which fruit is occasionally introduced. And sometimes we find a representation of the head of some remarkable personage, such as the reigning sovereign, the bishop of the diocese, the founder of the church, or its benefactors, employed as corbels, to which are assigned more or less honourable positions in the church, as they were more or less worthy of such honour. And lastly, we find, especially in the Perpendicular style, shields containing the armorial bearings of kings, bishops, founders, and restorers of churches so used, sometimes by themselves, at other times borne by figures of angels.

Section VI. Bosses.

Bosses are the ornaments which occur at the junction of the ribs in the centre of a vault, and are found throughout the four styles. Iffley, one of the most complete Norman churches, has a curious boss

in the centre of the vault over what was originally the chancel. The device upon it, meant for some animal (probably a dragon), is curiously introduced between the four heads at the angles, and the remainder is filled up with a very good attempt at foliage for Norman work. This example is very characteristic of the usual carving of the period. In the thirteenth century there are as numerous examples of fine carving of foliage on bosses, as on any other architectural detail. Our example of the Decorated style is from St. Alban's Abbey, and is again a proof of the high perfection of art at this period; the leaves are evidently intended for those of the oak.

The same directions which we gave in regard to the crocket are in a great degree applicable to the boss. Bosses should be proportionate in size to the vault, and the ribs, larger at the intersection of the principal ribs, and smaller at that of the subordinate ones, and so carved as to appear as much as possible part and portion of the work to which they are attached.

Section VII. Concluding Remarks.

Before quitting the subject of stone-carving a few concluding remarks may perhaps be not out of place.

In this little manual we have shewn that after our ancestors of the twelfth century had mastered the copies which they had received from the Romans, they found themselves capable of inventing a style of their own: we have seen that style in its infancy, we have watched it develope itself, we have seen it attain perfection. This zeal and taste for art decreased, and we have witnessed the commencement of its decline. In the course of this history, as it may be termed, we have introduced many illustrations, and we have called them examples, models, &c. Not that we have intended them merely to serve as copies to the workman, but rather to shew him the spirit in which the ancient craftsman laboured; his art was not servile, but the motive or object being given him, he sought the aid

of nature, and faithfully rendered the details he there obtained; in obedience to the laws of a prevailing style no doubt, yet at the same time with freshness and originality. Perhaps we also, as they did, must in the first instance attain like skill to theirs by the study of the labours of those who have gone before us, recognising in the past however those *principles* which are always to be found if diligently sought for, and seeking to work in accordance with those *principles* rather than slavishly imitating style. As with them, therefore, so with us, first the stone remains of olden times, then the freshness of nature to give vigour and originality, and when power and knowledge are thus obtained, then, but not till then, may we attempt new styles; and the time may not be far distant when instead of the diagrams, scrawled over with figures and arithmetical calculations, the sculptor will take boughs gathered from the tree, and, arranged to suit his construction, will copy them at once with his chisel. But at present our models must be of stone,—these first, and then nature.