

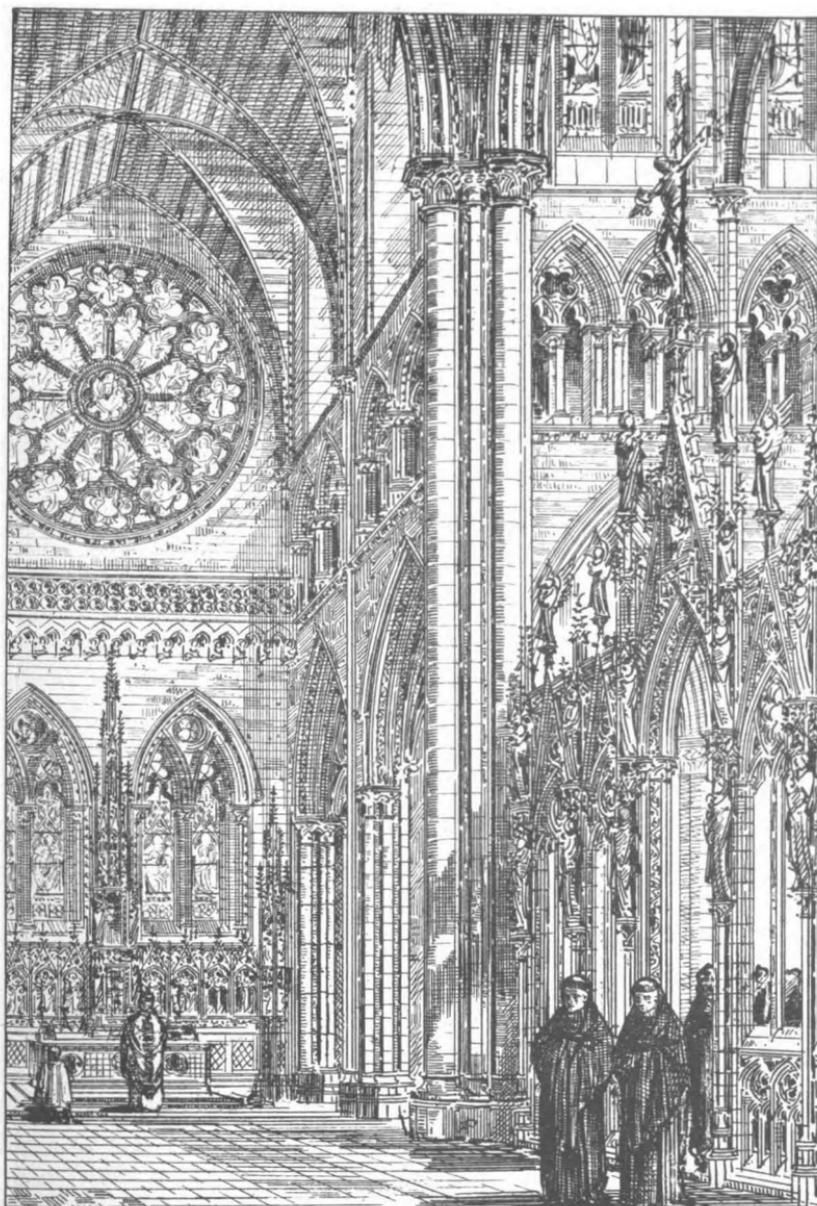
functus officio de hac luce raptus est IV. Non Maii, 1618, æt: suæ 42. Nutu necnon sumptibus præfati clarissimi Domini, pietatis atque gratitudinis ergo, ponendum curavit Frater Franciscus a Walgravio pii Patris humilis ex Habitu conversionis Filius, indignus in Officio Successor.

THE NEW CHURCH.

THOSE of our readers who have not visited Alma Mater during the past few months will be interested in hearing of the progress that has been made in our New Church. What others who have gone before us have longed for and prayed for, and what to us of a younger generation seemed almost a vain dream not half-a-dozen years ago, is now in a fair way of being realized, and what is more, of being realized in a nobler spirit—we say it in no disparagement of those who nobly began the great work—and on a scale more worthy of its purpose and of the associations of the spot, than was deemed possible at the time when plans were first drawn and the foundations laid for the Minster Church of Downside. Those massive foundations, at whose inauguration, (if we may use the term), His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster presided on St. Remi's day in 1873, have in part begun to fulfil their lasting destiny, and out of them are now rising the walls and columns of the House of God.

The first steps towards the building of the Church were taken the year before last, when four bays of the north walk of the cloisters were erected, and afforded, when completed, a charming chapel or *choretto*, about fifty-six feet in length by fourteen in breadth. The opening of this desirable addition to the Monastic buildings took place on December 17th, 1879. The north cloister, of which this forms about a third part, runs in an easterly direction from the north-eastern corner of the new Monastery, and though it at present stops short at the western wall of the south transept, it will, when funds permit, be continued eastwards beyond the transept to a corresponding length.

In the spring of last year (1880) the work of building the first portion of the Church, that is to say the transepts, north and south, and the "crossing" between them, was commenced in good earnest. One bay of choir and nave and a corresponding portion



IN THE TRANSEPTS—ST GREGORY'S—DOWNSIDE DUNN THOMPSON ARCHITECTS

J. Akerman, Photo-lith. London

of the north and south aisles of both were taken in hand at the same time, as were likewise the lower portion of the great tower which stands at the south end of the south transept, one bay of the north cloister, and the upper chapel over it, eastwards of the transept, and the side chapels which stand east and west of the north transept.

The dimensions of the work—we must be pardoned these figures, which are perhaps dry and uninteresting to some, but none the less necessary to the right understanding of what is being done—are as follows:—The extreme internal breadth of the Church, that is to say, the distance between the south wall of the south transept and the north wall of the north transept is eighty-four feet; the clear width of each transept is twenty-five feet; the internal height sixty-five feet. The nave and choir will be twenty-eight feet between the walls, and of the same height as the transepts. The outer roof will give a sky-line of between eighty-five and ninety feet.

It is difficult to convey an idea of the external appearance of this instalment of the Church to those who have not seen the work in progress, on account of its very complex arrangement and the unfinished and constantly varying appearance which it presents. But to those who, living on the spot, have had the opportunity of

“ Watching, with upward eye, the tall tower grow,
And mount, at every step, with living wiles
Instinct—to rouse the heart and lead the will,
By a bright ladder to the world above—”¹

no description will be necessary; while to those who have not been so privileged we can only say, “Come and see.” And those who do come will see in the lowest storey of the tower, on the southern front opening on to the cloister garth, a noble doorway set in the thickness of the six foot wall, well and deeply moulded, supported on clustering shafts, and crowned by a crocketed canopy. The delicate carving and statues for the niches of this canopy and for the rich niche-work and canopies which cover the surface of the buttresses flanking the great door are still wanting. Above the archway and canopy of the tower door the massive wall rises in stern simplicity for about fifty feet, unbroken save by two graceful lancets with cusped heads which afford light to the ringing chamber within. About ten feet above these windows the clock chamber begins, and by the time this number of our *Review* is in circulation, will probably be completed. The tower will have on

¹ Wordsworth.

its east, south, and west sides, if not a clock, at least a clock face, about ten feet in diameter. However, at present, ambition hardly dares to contemplate the possibility of enjoying the clock and its *carillon* of silvery bells, or of seeing the completion of the lofty belfry stage in which that *carillon* is to hang.

Looking from the south, the spectator will also see, and cannot help admiring, the two traceried windows which are already *in situ*—the one in the south aisle, the other in the upper chapel above the incomplete north cloister.

The northern front will present the lofty gable of the transept on that side of the Church, supported by the lean-to roofs of the side chapels already alluded to. The north transept gable is divided into three stages—the first contains two traceried windows of two lights each, between which windows a buttress crowned by an ornate niche and canopy rises to the height of about thirty-five feet. Then comes a simple but effective arcading of trefoil-headed arches, and, lastly, the great wheel window of about twenty-one feet in diameter. The highest portion of the gable will be pierced by a simple two-light window to light the space between the two roofs. The windows on the north face of the side chapels are similar in character to those in the lower part of the transept.

Of the interior of the Church the accompanying illustration will afford an excellent idea. The lofty proportions of the whole, the rich mouldings of pillars and arches, the graceful triforium and clearstorey, all help the general effect. The Altar of the Blessed Sacrament—the result of a bequest made many years ago for this purpose—will stand against the north wall. The reredos of this Altar, which is already in preparation, must be separately described in a future number: for the present we can only say that it bids fair, both in design and execution, to be one of the handsomest in the country.

West of the north transept stands the Chapel of St. Laurence, a loving offering to the memory of one whose untimely death cast such a gloom over the Pentecost of 1876. Those who had the happiness and privilege of knowing Father Laurence Vrignon, as only his own brethren could know him, will rejoice to see so fitting a memorial of one they loved so well. The Chapel of the Holy Angels, to which we are indebted to the piety of a true son of St. Gregory's, will correspond in its general character to that of St. Laurence. It is matter of congratulation that the generosity of our benefactors has enabled us to make these chapels as complete

as well can be. May we soon be in a position to go on with what has been so well commenced!

The arch openings into nave and choir and aisle will be temporarily closed, and, till the choir is erected, the transepts will be fitted up with stalls and benches arranged stall-wise for the accommodation of the community and school. The Altar of the Blessed Sacrament will serve as the temporary High Altar, and the north transept as the Sanctuary, till the choir is ready for use.

The organ gallery will stand in the south transept, which is, at our time of writing, the most advanced portion of the Church. As there are no windows opening into the tower, as was once proposed, the triforium arcade is continued with wonderfully successful effect along the southern wall; above it an arcade of five arches carries the eye to the apex of the groined roof.

Our readers will not need to be told that what has been done has been well done, and more than realizes the expectations that were long ago raised by the taste and talent of our worthy architects,, Messrs. Dunn and Hansom.

THE MONKS OF OLD.

[This article, by a former student of St. Gregory's, Mr. Joseph T. Harting, appeared forty years ago in "The Catholic Magazine" (May, 1841, p. 257.) So many years having elapsed since its publication, it will probably be new to the majority of readers; and as the subject is one of much interest, the Editor has obtained the Author's permission to reprint it. In subsequent numbers it is proposed to re-produce other articles, by the same writer, of a series of which this is the first. Amongst these may be cited:—

"Eadmer, the Monk and Historian."

"A Memoir of William Selling, Prior of Christchurch, Canterbury."

"The Last Abbot and Monks of Faversham," and

"A Glance at Monasteries distinguished in the Earlier Mediæval Period as Places of Education."—Ed.]

"Me quidem non fugit, vulgo credi, optimarum artium studia media ætate fuisse sepulta; nihilo tamen secius res est extra omnem controversiam posita, per plura sæcula literas, alibi fere exterminatas in monasteriis asylum invenisse, atque in illis bonas artes excultas fuisse."—Gerhardus Tychoen, *Testamen de variis codicum Hebraicorum veteris Testamenti MSS. generibus*, p. 28, 8vo, 1772.

"Early and late have I kept vigil here :

And I have seen the moonlight shadows trace

Dim glories on the missals blue and gold,

The work of my monastic sires, that told

Of quiet ages men call dark and drear ;

For faith's soft light is darkness to the world."

FREDERICK W. FABER.