

greatly, for no lampes did I see, nor could I picture to myself ye reason for such doings. But one kicke given to me from behinde did explain ye reason and clear up my hesitation, and I did sally forth in quest of ye oil. We did go to ye house of Mr. Coxe, ye shoemaker, but from him we could find neither oil nor newes whither to repaire for it. At length when we returned home with bad success we found all ye laddes gone within, and for having gone away without ye leave of ye prefect we were sentenced to muche learning of lines, to ye amusement of those who had made us fooles. Never mind, I shall remember ye oil next year and ye argument from behinde to show ye necessity of fetching it."

We remember well the legend of this wild-goose chase but as we always heard it told, the errand to Mr. Coxe was for *strap-oil* and *pigeon's milk* and the argument alluded to by Pip's junior came from Mr. Coxe himself and his own strap. We refrain from a play upon the words of the striking expression used by Master Pips. This contemporary account of an ancient custom is, we cannot doubt, of the highest historical interest.

Another custom the boy also alludes to now perhaps fallen into disuse. It is that of "partridge shooting." How many will recognise the expression and remember the meaning of what was once a long established usage? We confess at first the mention of it rather confused us, but a vivid recollection soon returned of the dreary sport in which we ourselves had more than once had to take a solitary part. Mr. Pips, as an anxious parent is naturally somewhat nervous at the mention of this sport, "for fear lest my sonne might lose his braines whereof he has not much to spare" but he is consoled at finding that "'tis more likely to give brains than to take them away."

THE NEW CHURCH.

It is with great pleasure that we present our readers with a ground plan of the eastern portion of St. Gregory's magnificent new church. There may be some to whom a plan of any sort is a mystery. To such the accompanying plate will be of no interest: but we trust that to the majority it will convey much meaning and some little pleasure. If, as the *Athenæum* lately remarked, "it is difficult to overrate the value of ground plans to antiquaries" so is

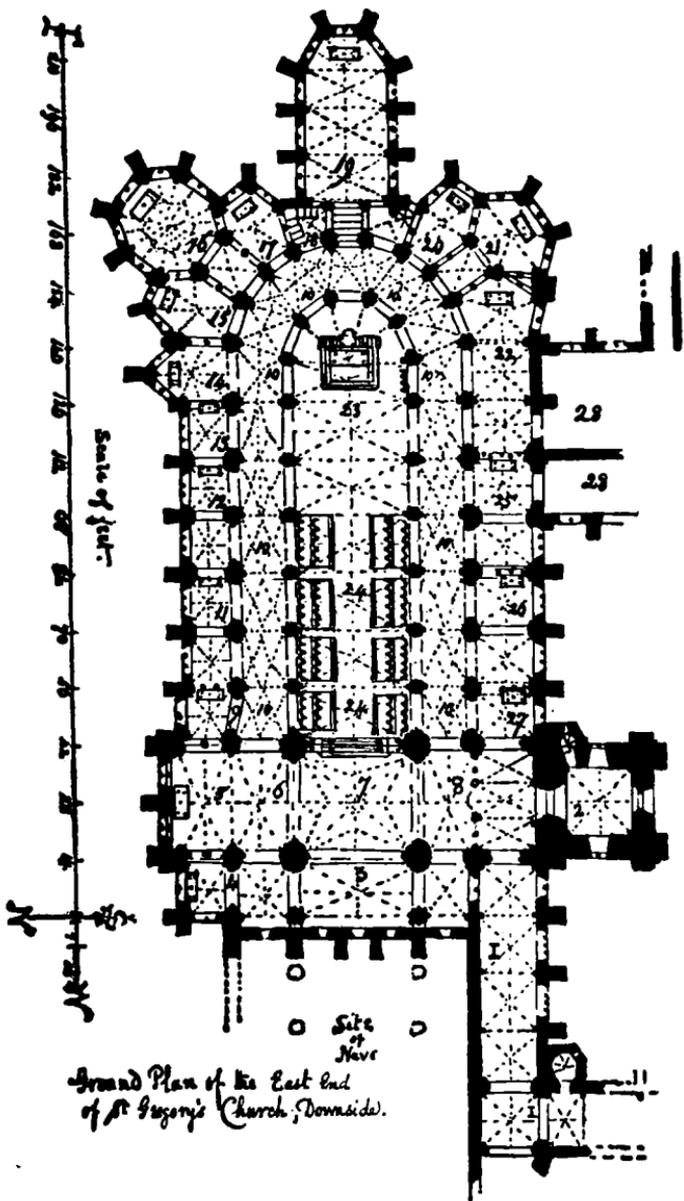
it, we think, not easy to over-estimate their interest to those who, happier than antiquaries, are not seeking to retrace the ruins of the past, but to build up in imagination the promised glories of the future.

The rough plan, then, which we here offer to the kind notice of an indulgent public, does not profess to be a work of art, but is merely intended as an aid to the right understanding of what is to follow in the way both of description and illustration of the minster church of Downside.

Perhaps the simplest method of explanation will be to take the figures of reference, as shown on the plan, one by one, and say a few words about the portion of the building which they indicate.

But first of all a word must be said about the scale of our church. As may be seen by the plan the internal length of the eastern portion, exclusive of the long nave, but including the easternmost bay of the nave which is already built, is two hundred and twenty feet. The extreme breadth across the transepts is between eighty-five and ninety feet; the clear breadth of nave and choir is twenty-eight feet; of the transepts twenty-five feet. The internal height to the top of the groining in the centre of the building is sixty-six feet. As figures do not always convey much meaning, it will perhaps be as well to say that the church will have a nave and choir as broad as that of Norwich minster, and considerably higher than the venerable cathedrals of Chichester and Lichfield, and higher in proportion than the neighbouring cathedral of Wells. We may add, for the satisfaction of persons of liturgical tastes, that the orientation of the building is almost perfect, and that the general plan is faithful to the spirit of the best ages of mediæval church building. The transepts of two bays each are indeed more true to the general proportion of French than of English churches, and if we may compare small things with great, there will be found to be more than a superficial resemblance in the general plan between our church and that unrivalled fane which Bishop Everard de Fouilly began at Amiens. The contemplated eastern end of St Gregory's is somewhat after the Spanish type, as those acquainted with the ground plans in Street's "*Gothic Architecture in Spain*" will readily perceive. And now at last to our figures of reference.

Number 1 indicates that portion of the new cloisters which connects the church with the monastery and college. In our April number we spoke of this part of the cloister as serving for a



temporary *choretto* for the community ; in the immediate future, when the handsome carved oak stalls have found a second temporary resting place in the transepts, it will probably serve as a sacristy. The belfry tower (2) has now reached the height of one hundred and ten feet, and will probably be proceeded with in the coming spring. The small portion of the nave (one bay only) which has been erected (3), will in all likelihood remain the westernmost part of the church for many a long year. The substantial stone wall, pierced with two ranges of lancet windows, which closes in the church on the west, does not convey the idea of being merely a temporary makeshift. Who can say however, how quickly the nave may be built? Let us trust that it may come sooner than the prior and convent seemed to expect when they built so thorough a protection against the south-western gales. The chapel of St. Lawrence (4), and the altar of the Blessed Sacrament in the north transept (5) have been already spoken of in a previous number, and will deserve, for the completeness of their fittings, and for the artistic carving and sculpture in which they will be so rich, to be separately illustrated in our pages. The north transept (6) will be, if we can judge of what is to come by the actual show which it makes in its present rough and unfinished state, not unworthy of the ages of Faith. As the altar is dedicated to the honour of the Blessed Sacrament, the sculptures in the reredos and the storied windows of rich stained glass will all bear reference to the great mystery. The design which has been decided upon for the glass of the great rose window represents the adoration of the Lamb as described in the Apocalypse ; the Lamb in the centre, angels with censers in the radiating lights of the window, and in the outer circle of twelve cinquefoils, the twenty - four Ancients whom the evangelist beheld in vision casting down their crowns before the Lamb. The subjects of the two windows below the rose, will be taken from the history of the English saints of the Benedictine Order, and will represent scenes from their lives wherein some special lesson is taught with regard to the great object of catholic devotion. Thus we shall have St. Mellitus refusing to give the Holy Communion to the pagan princes ; St. Aldhelm's device to attract our rude forefathers to mass ; St. Elphege ministering the viaticum to the dying during the plague which ravaged his cathedral city of Canterbury, and so on. The crossing (7) and the south transept (8) are already built and only await their stone vaulting to be ready for use.

We can form the best idea of the general richness of the interior from this part of the church, as for some weeks past the carvers, under the direction of Mr. Wall of Cheltenham, have been engaged in bringing to light the varied beauties of fruit and flower which had lain hid in the shapeless blocks of stone. There is a freshness and variety about the carvings already executed which promises well for the future. Visitors cannot help being struck by the excellence of the heads which terminate the outer moulding of the triforium arcade. By a coincidence it was found that the number of heads provided for in the inner surface of the walls of nave, transepts, choir and presbytery, exactly corresponded with the number of saints in the calendar of the English Benedictines; and so it was resolved to embody in stone a representation, and were it possible (as in the case of modern saints) a likeness, of the holy personages whose memories we hold in benediction.

Thus, commencing (in anticipation at least) at the western bay of the north side of the nave, and rising from aisle-arch to triforium, and thence to the clear storey, and descending in inverse order, and so advancing procession-wise from west to east, and returning round the apex of the presbytery along the south side of choir, southern transept and nave, reaching the western wall once more, we have a long series of heads two hundred and sixty eight in number. The portion of the Kalendar represented in the south transept embraces the latter part of September and the beginning of October; so that we have St. Damian, (his brother and fellow martyr, St. Cosmas, is the last in the monks' choir), St. Wenceslaus, St. Michael, St. Jerome, St. Remigius, St. Thomas of Hereford, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Placid, and his companion martyrs, SS. Eutychius, Victorinus, Flavia, Donatus, Faustus and Firmatus. The other heads in the south transept represent SS. Bruno, Justina, Bridget, Denis, Rusticus, Eleutherius, Paulinus and Francis Borgia. The north transept, where the works are not so far advanced, will in like manner contain representations of the saints which occur in our calendar between the feasts of St. Francis de Paul (April 2nd) and St. John of Beverly (May 7th).

Returning to our figures, the chapel of the Holy Angels (9) next calls our attention. It stands in the angle between the north transept and the northern portion of the aisle round the choir (10). The chapel of St. Scholastica (11) twenty eight feet by fourteen will, we hope, soon be commenced; as for it, as well as the succeeding chapels those viz., of the Holy Cross (12) and (13) St. Isidore of Seville, the necessary funds have been provided by

generous benefactors. We are happy to be able to add that the same may be said of the little chapel of St. Sylvia (14), the mother of our patron, St. Gregory the Great. Of the chapels round the apse, those to be dedicated to St. Augustine, Apostle of England (15), St. Joseph (16), the English Martyrs (17), the Lady chapel (19), St. Placid's (20), the Sacred Heart (21), and St. Benedict's (22), all except St. Augustine's and St. Benedict's have been promised; so that there seems every hope of our seeing the eastern part of the church completed before many years have rolled away. Below the Lady chapel, a crypt or undercroft will be constructed, and in it will be the altar of the Holy Souls.

The position of the high altar (23) and the future choir (24) are plainly marked on the plan as likewise is the upper range of chapels above the cloister on the south side of the choir aisle. In this "upper church," so to call it, will be the altar of the Relics, (25), that of St. Thomas of Hereford (26), whose head, has, we understand, been lately presented to St. Gregory's, and lastly (27), the chapel and altar of all the Saints of the Order of St. Benedict. The position of the sacristies is shown in the east wing of the monastery (28.)

The external appearance of the new church, so much as there is of it to be seen at present, is necessarily incomplete. The finest view undoubtedly is to be obtained from the gently rising ground on the north side, where the noble gable of the transept, ninety feet in height, the richly traceried lower windows and the great wheel window above form a very imposing façade. For a distant view, that obtained from the Holcombe road, about one mile to the east, is pronounced to be the best. From that part of the country the church and monastery are seen to great advantage, standing boldly up against the western sky, with the village, its churches, farms, and meadows grouped below.
