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by Geo. S. Tyack**

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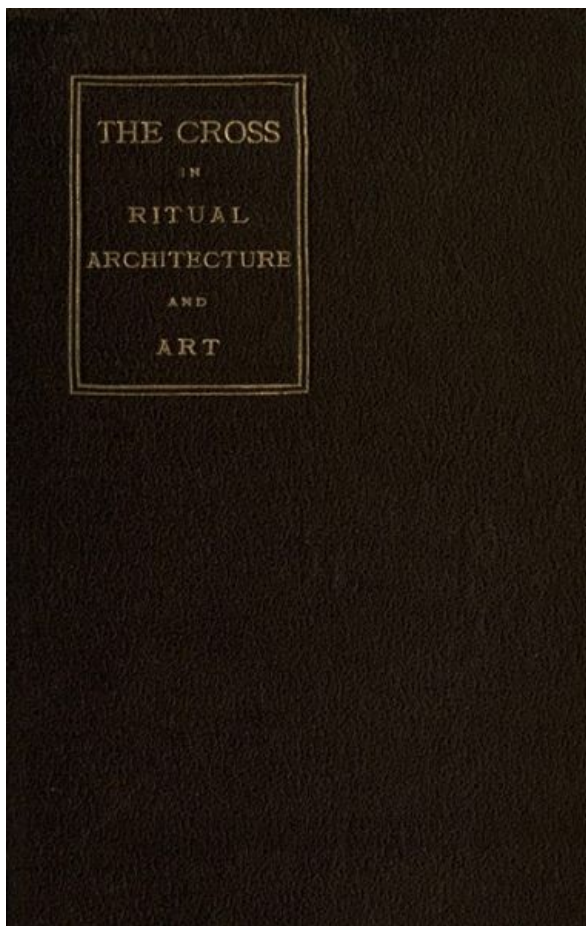
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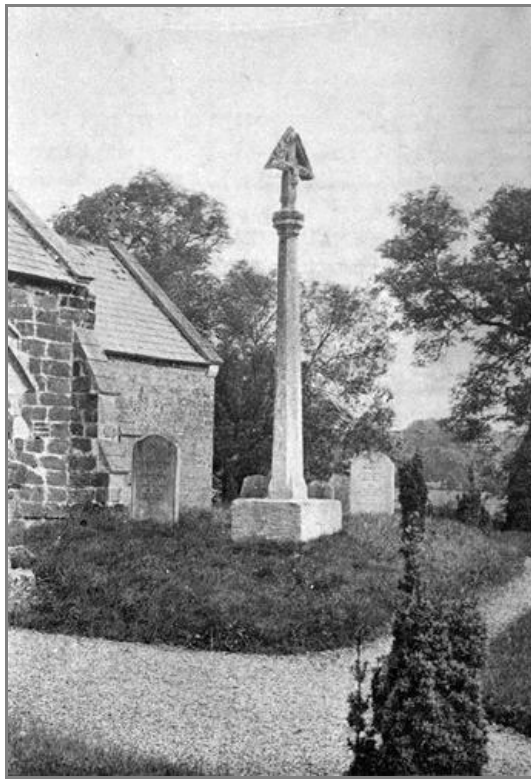
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE CROSS IN RITUAL,
ARCHITECTURE AND ART ***



THE CROSS.



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SOMERSBY CROSS.

The Cross
IN
Ritual, Architecture, and Art

BY THE
REV. GEO. S. TYACK, B.A.

LONDON:
WILLIAM ANDREWS & CO., 5, FARRINGDON AVENUE.



Preface.

IN this work my aim has been to deal in a popular way with the manifold uses of the Cross as the symbol of the Christian Faith. The attempt necessitates certain limitations; to give prominence to controversial points, to go to foreign lands for illustrations and examples when so many apt ones are to be found at home, or to load the pages with references—any

of these things would have been opposed to the object which I have set before myself. If my outline be sufficiently broad and clear, and the details, so far as they go, accurate—and to attain this no pains have been spared—I shall be content.

Before closing this brief preface, it is to me both a pleasure and a duty to express my grateful thanks to my friend and publisher, Mr. William Andrews, for the use of his collection of works, notes, and pictures relating to the Cross, and from his own productions I have gleaned some out-of-the-way information.

GEO. S. TYACK,

CROWLE, DONCASTER,
August, 1896.

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THE CROSS

IN

RITUAL, ARCHITECTURE, AND ART.

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CHAPTER I.

Introductory.

IT is strange, yet unquestionably a fact, that in ages long before the birth of Christ, and since then in lands untouched by the teaching of the Church, the Cross has been used as a sacred symbol. The Aryan tribes, ancestors of most of the European nations, so regarded a cross of curious form, whose four equal arms were all turned midway at a right angle. The excavations of Dr. Schliemann on the site of ancient Troy have brought to light discs of baked clay stamped with a cross. It is well known that the *crux ansata*, or Tau Cross (T), sometimes with the addition of a ring, as if for suspension, at the top, is found in Egyptian inscriptions. The Greek Bacchus, the Tyrian Tammuz, the Chaldean Bel, and the Norse Odin, were all symbolized to their votaries by a cruciform device. The Spanish conquerors of Mexico found the cross already an object of reverence among the Aztecs, carved on temple walls, on amulets, and on pottery; so, too, in North America, specimens of shell-work, engraved with crosses of various forms, have been unearthed from mounds raised by the native Indian tribes.

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It is further interesting to note that the sign was frequently regarded as an emblem of deity, or as a symbol of favourable import. To the Egyptians it spoke of a future life; to the Aryans of fire, itself emblematic of life; the Mongolians lay it, drawn on paper, on the breasts of their dead; and the Buddhists of Thibet see in it a mark of the foot-print of Buddha.

In all this the Christians of the first age would have rejoiced, claiming it as a world-wide prophecy of the Cross of the Redeemer, just as they drew a similar lesson from the frequency with which the cross forms, more or less roughly, the shape of the ordinary implements of man's handicraft. "Consider all things in the world," writes Justin Martyr, in his apology addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, "whether without this form they could be administered or could have any community. For the sea is not crossed except that trophy which is called a sail remain safe aboard the ship; nor is the earth ploughed without it; diggers and mechanics do not their work except with tools of this shape. And the human form differs from that of brute beasts in nothing but in being erect, and having the arms extended. The power of this figure is even shown by your own symbols, on what are named 'vexilla' and trophies, with which all your processions are made, using these, even though unwittingly, as signs of your authority and dominion."

Although we should be unwilling to-day to accept as argument all that a pious, yet simple, fancy, or the warmth of a fervid rhetoric, suggested to men of former times; it would, nevertheless, be equally, or more absurd for us to follow others, who have endeavoured to trace the mere survival of heathen custom in the Christian use of the Cross. That such is not the case is clear, in spite of a few parallels in teaching as curious as those above referred to, from the fact that the Cross amongst us symbolizes the Faith, not as an arbitrary or mystic sign, but as the natural expression of an historical fact.

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The Christians of the first two centuries, however, seldom employed any material image of the Cross, and never the Crucifix. This is only what, under the circumstances, was to be expected. To erect crosses in their houses, or to wear them on their persons, was impossible in the times of heathen ascendancy, without risking insult to the holy sign, and danger to themselves. Moreover, in days when crucifixion was still in use as the most degrading of all forms of punishment, and the cross to the world at large a more infamous figure than the gallows is now to us, it must have been difficult even for the followers of the Crucified to rise entirely above the common sentiment of their age. The absolute horror with which the "accursed tree" was regarded before hallowing associations ennobled it, is well illustrated by the exclamation of Cicero in one of his orations: "Let the very name of the cross be banished, not from the bodies only, but from the eyes, the ears, the thoughts of Roman citizens!" The earliest known attempt to depict the Crucifixion of the Saviour illustrates the fact that it was the worship of a Crucified Man which struck the contemporary heathen as especially incomprehensible. In the year 1857, a wall in the Palatine Palace at Rome, which had been hidden from sight for centuries, was laid bare, and displayed a rude sketch, which has been named the "graffito blasfemo." Stretched on a cross is a human figure with an ass's head, before which stands a man in a short tunic with his arms upraised, while beneath, in very roughly-formed Greek characters, runs the inscription: "Alexamenos adores

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his God." The work, scratched on the wall, doubtless by some palace slave in ridicule of a comrade, is assigned to the end of the second century, and obviously alludes with blasphemous scorn to the manner of the Saviour's death, and to the strange calumny, first flung by the Gnostics at the Jews, and then by the heathen at Jews and Christians alike, that they paid divine honours to an ass.

At this time the faithful contented themselves with a mere suggestion of the sign, such as the combined X and P, the first two letters of the name of Christ in Greek, sometimes indicating the X with a transverse stroke across the P. Nothing more definite than this, and dating from primitive times, is to be found in the many inscriptions in the Roman Catacombs, where the Christians worshipped and buried their dead down at least to A.D. 260. In their private devotions, however, and in public also if occasion demanded an open profession of the faith, they early adopted the habit of making the sacred sign. They prayed, as is shown in the caricature just described, with arms spread crosswise, and amid the tortures of martyrdom, when the savage uproar drowned their voices or their failing strength denied them power to speak, their arms crossed above their heads bore their mute testimony to the steadfastness of their faith. "In every undertaking," writes Tertullian in the second century, "on coming in and going out, on dressing or washing, at the bringing of lights, on going to bed, in whatever occupation we are engaged, we imprint our foreheads with the sign of the Cross." To this testimony of the universal use of the practice in the primitive ages might be added that of many of the most eminent of the fathers, as, for instance, Lactantius, S. Athanasius, S. Basil, S. Ephrem, S. Cyril of Jerusalem, and his namesake of Alexandria, S. John Chrysostom, S. Ambrose, and S. Augustine of Hippo—all writers flourishing in the fourth century of our era.

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The growth of the use of the material cross was greatly accelerated by two important historical events, the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, with which we may put the claim of the Empress-mother, S. Helena, to have discovered the true Cross, and the outbreak of the Crusades.

The story of the first of these events has been recorded for us by Eusebius, the friend and biographer of Constantine, as it was told to him by the Emperor himself; and the account is too well known to require repetition in detail here. It will be sufficient to recall the fact that in the year 312 A.D., as Constantine was marching against Maxentius, a vision of the Cross, with the legend "In this sign conquer," was vouchsafed to him, and that a dream subsequently instructed him to inscribe that symbol on the imperial banners. In obedience to this command a splendid banner was made, consisting of a cross-staff, from which, embroidered in jewels on a silken square, hung the sacred monogram; and under this standard, the *labarum*, the army marched to victory.

From this time Christianity was not only tolerated, but placed under imperial protection; crucifixion, moreover, ceased to be employed as a form of punishment, and the Cross began to be treated with honour. A cross of gold, adorned with precious stones, was placed, by Constantine's orders, in the chief hall of the palace; and the imperial coinage is found to bear, with increasing frequency, the holy sign. Sometimes, as in a coin of Constantius II., the Emperor is depicted holding the *labarum* in his hand, or, as on those of Jovianus, he carries a globe surmounted by a cross; while later emperors stamped their coinage with the cross itself, often surrounded by a laurel crown.

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The fear of insult to sacred places and religious emblems being thus removed, the Christians began to build themselves churches more worthy of their holy rites than the rooms or the catacombs with which they had formerly been compelled to be content, and in the decoration of these the cross began to take its appropriate place. A couple of centuries later, in the reign of Justinian (527-565), it was even ordered that every church should have a cross surmounting it.

Closely connected with the conversion of Constantine is the alleged discovery of the true Cross by S. Helena.

It was in the year 325, the year of the first General Council of the Church, which met at Nicaea to condemn the heresy of Arius, that the Empress, endowed with ample means and with the fullest authority, went to Jerusalem and began the search for the instrument of our redemption. The site of the Crucifixion having been preserved in tradition, excavations were made on the spot, which first disclosed the Holy Sepulchre, over which, both to conceal and to desecrate the spot, a temple had been erected to Venus; and afterwards was brought to light, in a pit hard by, those venerable pieces of wood which Christendom hailed as "the very Cross," to one of which was still affixed a board with an inscription in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

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To determine the exact value of the story thus briefly summarized, is not so easy a matter as many have assumed it to be. On the one hand, no one questions the sincerity of Helena herself, nor the fact that she actually did find the wood in the excavations which she had made. S. Cyril of Jerusalem, writing from that spot no more than twenty years later, refers to the event, and most of the fathers and chroniclers of the Church who follow him notice it, both he and they evidently accepting as facts the claims made on behalf of the wood. Moreover, it is not without its bearing on the matter that the date of the discovery coincides with a great crisis in the Arian controversy, when the eagerness of the heretics to attack and discredit the Catholics in any and every way would present a special difficulty to any

attempt to pass off a fraud upon Christendom. And, finally, it is not easy to see who could plan and carry out so vast a deception in the face of all the persons of authority both in Church and State, who were then in Jerusalem; nor the object which the deception would be intended to attain. The great argument on the other side, and one difficult to overcome, and impossible to ignore, is the silence of Eusebius on the subject; yet he was present in Jerusalem at the actual time of the discovery, or very shortly afterwards, and in his life of Constantine he records others of the works undertaken in the Holy City by that Emperor through his mother, such as the erection of the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is impossible but that Eusebius knew of the assertion with which Jerusalem and the world rang, that the wood discovered was the true Cross, yet he makes no allusion to it.

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Whatever conclusion we moderns may come to on the matter, it is beyond question that all Christendom at that time accepted the story as true, and greeted the sacred wood with unbounded enthusiasm; and the devotion thus excited cannot fail to have had a marked influence on the use of the figure of the Cross.

A new chapter in the development of this use is begun at the Crusades, and to these the subsequent history of this world-famed wood naturally leads us.

The greater portion of "the true Cross" was kept at Jerusalem, in the church reared by Constantine, and dedicated with great solemnity in 335. It was in time richly adorned with gold and jewels, and was exposed for the veneration of the faithful every Easter Sunday. Nearly three centuries later, in 614, Chosroes, King of Persia, after victorious campaigns in Asia Minor and in Egypt, descended on the Holy Land with a tumultuous host of barbarians. The City of Jerusalem was taken and sacked, after ninety thousand Christians had fallen fighting in its defence; and the Cross was carried off in triumph by the heathen conqueror.

So bold an assault both on the Faith and on the Empire could not be brooked, and in 629, at a great battle on the plains of Nineveh, the Persian power was destroyed by the Emperor Heraclius, and the Cross recovered. With all solemnity the sacred relic was borne back to its former resting place, the Emperor himself, bare of head and foot, carrying it on his shoulders into the city.

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Again was Jerusalem captured in 637, now by the newborn Mohammedan power, but the Cross was not molested, and for four hundred years it was the object of Christendom's special devotion, pilgrims from every country in Europe, and of all grades of society, coming in countless numbers to kneel before it, and in many cases to die within reach of it. But in the year 1009, a Caliph of Egypt arose, in the person of El Hakim, to whose fierce and fanatical spirit the toleration hitherto granted to the Christians was hateful, and in the name of the prophet he invaded Palestine and took Jerusalem. The churches built by Constantine and Helena over the sacred sites were utterly destroyed, and the Cross barely escaped the same fate; faithful bands, however, succeeded in carrying it off and concealing it, and for almost a century it was but rarely and cautiously exhibited.

At last the trumpet call of Peter the Hermit rang out across Europe, and an army, full of enthusiasm, and led by a band of almost ideal heroes, started up in answer. Whatever faults marred the actions of the Crusaders, and however soiled by human ambitions and personal jealousies later expeditions might be, the first Crusade was inspired by a genuine zeal for a cause that all held to be holy—the rescuing of the places sanctified by the Saviour's life and death from the pollution of unbelievers, and especially the bringing back of the Cross to its place of honour. On Friday, July 13th, 1099, the Christian armies entered the city, and the Cross, uplifted on Calvary, became the centre, almost the *raison d'être*, of the new kingdom of Jerusalem.

But the time of its disappearance from the earth was not far distant. Godfrey, the first king of that almost mystic kingdom, was buried beside it on the right, and Baldwin, his successor, on the left, and the guardianship of the holy places had fallen into hands less conscious of the sacredness of their office, when Saladin invaded the land in 1187. The last stand of the Christians, under Guy, the unworthy successor of the early kings, was made at Hattin, and the sacred wood of the Cross itself was borne into the camp to inspire them with courage and devotion; but the spirit of the old Crusaders was dead, and the infidel was completely triumphant.

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A few years later, in 1192, we hear of the Cross as still in Saladin's possession, and as shewn by his permission to some favoured pilgrims, among whom was the Bishop of Salisbury, and then it disappears from history; the sacred wood that thousands had braved the perils of seas and Alpine passes to gaze upon, that myriads had gladly died to protect, vanished from the eyes of men, whither none can say.

Nothing now remains of the most highly-prized relic which the world has ever held, except numerous fragments of the wood preserved in cathedrals and elsewhere throughout Europe, some score or more of nails purporting to be those which fixed the hands and feet of the Lord, and the board with its trilingual inscription. The sneer that there is enough wood of the true Cross to build a man-of-war has become a common-place, but it proves only the ignorance of those who repeat it; the fragments being all of the smallest dimensions, few as large as a pin, many no larger than a pin's head. The nails were probably most of them made as copies of the originals, and in course of time have come to be regarded as genuine. The famous iron crown of Lombardy has been said to enshrine a holy nail, but the claim is no

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older than the sixteenth century. The inscription is in the church of Santa Croce at Rome, and the question of its genuineness stands exactly on a level with that of the Cross itself: whether or no it be the veritable board which hung above the head of the Crucified, there can be little doubt that it is the one unearthed by S. Helena more than fifteen hundred years ago.

It is from the period of the Crusades especially that we must date the wide-spread erection of crosses and use of cross-forms throughout Europe. Worn as a badge or charm, worked in silk or chased in metal, towering in stone by the wayside or overshadowing the busy market, gleaming on banners, or resplendent in jewels in the solemnity of the Church,—everywhere the holy sign met the eye.

One use of the Christian emblem was directly due to Crusading influence. The union in the expeditions against the infidels of knights of many lands and different languages gave its origin, or at any rate its organized form, to the science of heraldry; and the spirit which presided at its birth is shown in the immense variety of crosses recognised in its vocabulary. We have the Latin Cross, the ordinary cross of suffering; the Greek Cross with its equal arms; the Cross of S. Andrew, or the saltire (**X**); the Maltese, or eight-pointed cross; the Tau, or Egyptian Cross (**T**); and others which a persistent ingenuity of invention has almost endlessly varied.

It is well known that every Crusader of whatever rank had a cross of some material stitched to his tunic; but three great orders of knighthood arose during the "Holy War," who made it their peculiar badge, as they were pre-eminently the champions of the Cross. The Knights of the Hospital of S. John at Jerusalem, or Knights of Malta, or of Rhodes, commonly called simply the Hospitallers, were founded in 1048, and were habited in black mantles with a white cross on the left breast, scarlet surcoats with similar crosses on back and front, and each wore the same emblem in gold suspended by a black ribbon from his neck. The Brethren of the Temple at Jerusalem, or Templars, founded in 1128, wore white mantles with red crosses, and carried banners of black and white charged with a cross in red. The Teutonic Knights, more properly the Knights of the Hospital of our Ladye of Mount Zion at Jerusalem, assumed a black cross as their badge.

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In this connection it is interesting to note how prominent a place the emblem of the Christian Faith still holds in the ensigns and honourable distinctions of the world. The decorations of the British orders of the Garter, the Bath, the Thistle, and of S. Patrick, all consist of, or comprise, a cross, as of course does the coveted Victoria Cross. The same is true of the French Legion of Honour, the Prussian Black Eagle, Red Eagle, and Iron Cross, the Russian orders of S. Andrew, S. Alexander Newski, and the White Eagle, the Austrian orders of Maria Theresa, and of S. Stephen, the orders of Fidelité of Baden, of S. Hubert of Bavaria, of S. James and of the Calatrava of Spain, and of the Annonciade of Italy. Similarly the arms, or ensigns, or both, of Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, and Switzerland, all display the sign of our Redemption, the most conspicuous of them all being the Union Jack, with its combined crosses of S. George of England, S. Andrew of Scotland, and S. Patrick of Ireland. It is not a little remarkable that during the brief period of the Puritan ascendancy, when the royal arms were discarded, although the Church was overthrown, the crosses of the patron saints were kept, and from them were formed the shield of the Commonwealth.

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Evidence of the triumph of the Cross is given by the regalia of almost every Christian kingdom, where the jewelled cross surmounts the monarch's crown and sceptre, stands on the orb, and is engraved upon his signet; but no more universal recognition of the sign is to be found than in the coinage of Christendom. We have seen that shortly after the conversion of Constantine, the Christian symbol began to appear on the coins of the Empire, and the practice afterwards became general throughout Europe. This arose, probably, partly from a wish to testify to the faith of the sovereign and of his people, but partly also in the hope that those who were tempted to deface or to clip the coin might be deterred by the sight of the holy sign. The English silver pennies and nobles were almost all stamped with a cross on the reverse, reaching from edge to edge: the deniers of France, the pistoles of Spain, were similarly marked; but fully to illustrate the fact would be to catalogue a great portion of the mintage of mediæval, and some of modern Europe.

Thus wide and varied in interest is the field over which the Cross of Christ has flung its illuminating influence.

CHAPTER II.

The Development of the Crucifix.

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WE have already seen that the Christians of the first centuries were deterred by circumstances from any general use of the figure of the Cross. It follows naturally that the Crucifix was still later in coming into existence. Indeed, long after Christianity had become the acknowledged religion of the empire, there were reasons which made its use inexpedient. The faithful, though now protected from insult and persecution, were still a minority surrounded by the adherents of paganism; and as the influence of the Church gradually spread to the barbarian tribes beyond the confines of the empire, she was constantly being brought face to face with fresh forms of idolatry in Northern Europe, in Africa, and in Asia. It needs but little acquaintance with folk-lore to recall illustrations of the fact that heathenism died hard; even when active opposition had been overcome, and the bulk of the people had, perhaps, as was not seldom the case, almost by whole tribes at a time, outwardly accepted the faith, yet old customs, old superstitions lived on. Thus to the present day the druidic regard for the mistletoe has a traditional existence in England after eighteen centuries of Christian teaching, and in Cornwall and elsewhere mid-summer night sees the hilltops ablaze with bonfires that, meaningless now, once proclaimed the fire-worshippers' devotion. If such things are still found amongst us, innocent indeed now of any idolatrous intent, but eloquent of the vitality of the customs of idolatry, it is easy to divine the result that would have followed the introduction of the Crucifix into a world almost wholly heathen. It has been alleged that the Roman Senate offered to admit the Christ to the pantheon of the state, and similarly the Crucifix might have simply become the companion of the hammer of Thor, or the sun-crowned Phoebus, of the sacred ibis of Egypt, or the winged monsters of Assyria; or at best a mere substitute for them. Guided by a Divine instinct, the Church showed a wise self-restraint; and it was only as the decay of idolatry in the West removed this danger, that she allowed herself to contemplate the image of the Redeemer.

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From the first, nevertheless, a yearning for the help towards devotion which the eye can give was felt, although the necessity of prudence and caution confined the faithful to the use of symbolic, rather than of historic, figures. Thus even in the days of the catacombs the Vine, the Dove, the Lamb, the Good Shepherd are found, with a meaning obviously Scriptural in origin; and again the Fish, specially recommended with the above emblems by S. Clement of Alexandria as a device for seals and rings, was frequently employed, as setting forth in an anagram, by means of its name in Greek, the words Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour. These were all common forms, calculated to suggest Christian teaching to the believer, without exciting comment from the heathen. Meanwhile the simple cross was growing yearly more familiar to the people as the emblem of the Christian religion. Its earliest form seems to have been that known as the fylfot, like four Greek gammas joined at the base; a design that served, equally with the emblems just described, to suggest the sign to the Christian without offending others. But so rapid was the change that took place consequent on the conversion of Constantine, that so early as the papacy of John I. (who died in the year 400) crosses were carried in the processions of the Church.

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The next step was the natural one of combining with the cross one or other of the emblematic figures which were already accepted as referring to the Crucified. The Lamb with the cross, therefore, became a common symbol of the Crucifixion during the first six centuries. In its most restrained form we find simply above the head of the Lamb the sacred monogram as used on the labarum of the Christianized empire; and occasionally the figure becomes not so much a type as a representative of the Saviour, by having five bleeding wounds in its feet and side. Later the same emblem appears, often with a cruciform nimbus about its head, carrying a slender cross on a tall shaft, or a banner charged with a cross. Similarly a long cross-staff is sometimes placed, instead of the pastoral crook, in the hand of the Good Shepherd. In all these the emblem of Christ is the prominent feature of the assign, the cross being entirely subordinate. As it became possible to be less guarded in displaying the "ensign of the faith," this order was to some extent reversed. On the tomb of Gallia Placida at Ravenna, of the fifth century, the Lamb stands on a mount—the "Lamb standing on Mount Sion" of the Apocalypse—with behind it a cross, from the arms of which depend the Alpha and Omega. Again, the Lamb lies at the foot of the cross, an arrangement apparently referred to by S. Paulinus of Nola in the words, "Christ in the lamb stands 'neath the Cross all gleaming with His blood."

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AN EARLY CHRISTIAN TOMB AT WIRKSWORTH

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A more decided approximation to the Crucifix was made when the sacred Lamb was placed on the cross at the joining of the arms and the shaft; a most interesting example of which occurs on a slab unearthed at Wirksworth during the restoration of the church in 1820; it is part of a tomb, supposed to date from the seventh century.^[1] In the sixth century we begin to meet with the Crucifix properly so called. Fortunatus gives us the first undoubted reference to one made in relief about the year 560, and S. Gregory of Tours, some thirty years later, refers to a painted one at Narbonne. The famous Vatican cross, said to have been given by the Emperor Justin (elected 519) to Pope Gregory II., exhibits an interesting stage in the transition from the emblem to the figure of Christ. The sacred Lamb still keeps its place on a medallion in the centre, while a half-length figure of the Saviour in the act of benediction is on the upper limb of the cross, and another, probably S. John Baptist, is on the lower one; on the arms, with a curious lack of reverence and taste, are effigies of the Emperor and his wife Flavia. A book of the Gospels in the library at Munich, supposed to have been executed in this same century, has a cross which terminates above in a kind of arch, under which is a bust of Christ, while the Alpha and Omega hang from the transverse beams.

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In the course of time the Cross itself seems to have been looked on, not so much as a suggestion of the Crucifixion, but as a type or emblem of Christ. A striking and curious example of this is to be found on a tomb in the church of S. Apollinare at Ravenna, where the artist has depicted the Transfiguration in a strange union of realism and symbolism. Moses and Elias are on either side, and the hand above suggests the Father, but three sheep stand for the chosen apostles, and in the centre is, not Christ, but the Cross.

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It may, perhaps, have been the perception of such a tendency which led the Greek Fathers at the Council in Trullo, in 692, to feel that the time had come for a more emphatic assertion of the personality and human nature of the Redeemer in sacred art. Thus, at any rate, they decreed:—"We order that, instead of the Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ shall be shown hereafter in His human form in the images; so that, without forgetting the height from which the Divine Word stooped to us, we shall be led to remember His mortal life, His passion, and His death, which paid the ransom for mankind."

The alteration, however, was completed as cautiously as it had been begun, even the method of production partaking of the restraint exhibited in the development of the subject. The earliest crucifixes probably had the figure simply etched in outline, then it was painted upon the cross, and last of all it became a partial or complete relief. The last stage was not reached, unless in a few exceptional cases, until the ninth century.

The earliest crucifix in the catacombs is of the seventh or eighth century, and Pope John VII., in 706, dedicated the first mosaic example in St. Peter's at Rome. Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Jarrow (died 690), brought from Rome the first picture of the crucifixion of which we hear in the north of England. S. Augustine advancing with his monks to his first conference with King Ethelbert of Kent, was preceded by a silver cross and a crucifixion painted on a panel.

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Now and again an iconoclastic spirit revealed itself in opposition to the growing use, not only of the crucifix but of images of saints and patriarchs, but it made no headway in the west. Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles, having broken down some images in a church, was reproved by Pope Gregory, on the ground that "in paintings on walls those who are unable to read books can read what in books they cannot." In the east, however, the movement aroused much bitterness, and led even to persecution. Leo the Isaurian in 726, began an attack on all use of images, and a Council at Constantinople in 752, rejected them altogether. This decree was not accepted generally as final, but in the end the eastern church settled down under a compromise, which is still maintained, by which pictures in

painting, mosaic, or engraving, are permitted, but all reliefs and statues are forbidden.

Amongst the few crucifixes in the east which survived the destruction consequent first on the iconoclastic persecution, and then their final condemnation, is one that is probably the oldest in the world. It is in the Monastery of Xeropotami, on Mount Athos, and consists of an alleged fragment of the true cross with two transverse pieces, the upper and smaller one representing the superscription. On these lies a small ivory figure, and below is a representation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in gold and jewels. It is said to have been a gift from the Empress Pulcheria (414-453), a fact which may account for its preservation.

The history of the development of the crucifix does not end, when the Divine effigy assumed the place of the type upon it.

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The earliest artists made no attempt at realism in moulding or carving the figure. They on the contrary distinctly avoided it, and the crucifix continued to be emblematic. The truth which they aimed especially at setting forth was the voluntary character of the Lord's self-sacrifice. The Christ, therefore, is generally clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, the outspread arms do not hang but lie straight along the transverse beam, and the feet are placed side by side upon a supporting ledge; the head is erect, and the eyes frequently, if not usually, are open and look straight forward. The side is not pierced, and often the hands and feet show neither wounds nor nails. Others of these early crucifixes set forth the thought of Christ as king reigning from the tree, in unison with that line of the famous hymn *Vexilla Regis*, "Regnavit a ligno Deus;" and the figure is here royally crowned and robed. A crucifix that has become historical is the Holy Face of Lucca, traditionally ascribed to the workmanship of S. Luke, but really dating from about the eighth century. On this, by which William Rufus was in the habit of swearing under the name of the "Face of S. Luke," are combined the characters of King and Priest, the figure being crowned, and clad in a dark sacerdotal vestment.

In these crucifixes there is no appeal to the emotions, no petition for pity on behalf of agonised humanity; but an impressive declaration on the part of the artist of his strong faith in the deity of the Sufferer.

In describing these various stages in the development of the crucifix, it must not be taken to imply that step always followed step in a regular progression. As a matter of fact the different phases overlapped considerably, and now and again a rare specimen is found antedating considerably the age to which a strict classification of styles would assign it. There is, for instance, a very early pectoral crucifix,^[2] which while coinciding for the most part with the description just given, nevertheless represents the Christ as dead, with closed eyes and uncrowned head slightly inclined. A crucifix in the Treasury at Aix-la-Chapelle, known as the Cross of Lothario, though only of the ninth century, has the hanging arms, the fallen head, and the short cloth about the loins, much as we see them to-day.

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Moreover as art in some lands was later in ripening than in others, so in some it clung for a longer period to the older art forms; while several of the primitive emblematic figures have become parts of the Church's permanent teaching for the eyes of her children. The builders of our Norman churches had a special fondness for the *Agnus Dei*, the Lamb bearing the Cross, and we find it worked into their carvings in various ways. Amongst the most curious examples may be quoted the ancient fountains of Ilam and Tissington in Derbyshire.

Another peculiarity of the early crucifixes which sets them apart from historic representations of the crucifixion, is the attempt made to bring within the narrow limits of a cross other details, actual or mystical, of the atoning sacrifice. Many of them have on the upper limb, or on the arms, of the cross more or less conventional signs for the sun and moon. Sometimes, as on the pectoral cross noticed above, these are simply a circle, with or without rays, and a crescent; and in this case they are merely emblems of the powers of Creation witnessing the death of the Creator. Sometimes they are more fanciful, as when they are suggested by male and female figures within circles, wrapping their faces in their mantles; and here they are symbols of the supernatural darkness of the first Good Friday.

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The Blessed Virgin and S. John the Divine are frequently placed on the arms of the Cross beyond the hands of Christ, as in a beautiful enamelled crucifix in the Museum at Copenhagen, which was once the property of Dagmar, the "darling queen" of Denmark, on whose breast it was buried in 1212. At the top, again, is often found a hand in the attitude of benediction, a symbol of the Father, and at the foot writhes the vanquished serpent. Many of the more elaborate examples had the reverse side enamelled or engraved, usually with appropriate Old Testament types, such as the fall of Adam, or the sacrifice of Abraham. Almost the only emblematic additions to the crucifix which have survived in use to our day are the apocalyptic symbols of the four evangelists, still often found on large crosses, especially those on rood screens; and the skull placed at the foot, sometimes with cross-bones, as a symbol of death. This last is much more modern in introduction than the others.

Crucifixes of this full and elaborate type are found as late as the fourteenth century, but as pictorial art advanced, and the whole scene of the passion was treated by artists with increasing frequency and fullness, the extraneous details dropped from the crucifix, and it became the simple, yet dignified expression of the crucified Redeemer, as it is this day.

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Almost the same phases that we have noticed in the formation of the crucifix show themselves also in early representation of the crucifixion-scene. There is the same restraint in depicting the central figure, the same use of conventional forms and of symbols. There are examples in which, while the two thieves are shown as crucified, the Lord stands in the midst with outspread arms, but with no cross save that in the nimbus above His head. The persons introduced, as a rule, are few in number; almost always we have the Blessed Virgin and S. John, with emblematic signs for the sun and moon. Sometimes also the two thieves, and less frequently two female figures, personifying the Jewish and Christian Churches. The long robe, instead of the loin-cloth, on the Crucified, and the hand symbolising the father, are both common forms in the earliest paintings or carved ivories. There is a curious example in the chapel of S. Silvestro, at Rome, in which soldiers with a spear and the sponge on a reed are introduced, while a small angel is seen removing the crown of thorns and substituting a regal one. All the three crosses are shown in this fresco, the two lesser ones of the usual type, but the Saviour's in the form of a **Y**, the cross that appears on the back of a Gothic chasuble. The date of this work is said to be 1248. The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries witnessed the rise of the great Italian schools of art, and with the artists' growing mastery over their materials Crucifixions became fuller of details and less rigidly conventional, though not less devotional and scarcely less symbolic. A host of angels throngs about their dying Creator, wringing their hands in helpless grief, offering him their lowliest worship, or catching in chalices the sacred blood. At the foot of the Cross, also, is sometimes found a crowd of figures, representing not the hostile multitude that surged with blasphemous taunts before the failing eyes of Christ; but monks, bishops, virgins, kings, the saintly and devout of later ages, who stand in wrapt attention or kneel in homage.

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In those days, when every art found its highest expression in the service of the Church, every encouragement was given to the painting of sacred subjects; and the artists, loyal sons for the most part of the Church, sought their highest ambition in realizing their ideal of a Crucifixion, a *picta*, or a *madonna*. To these feelings we owe the splendid frescoes of Cimabue, and of Giotto, the friend of Dante, at Assisi, the paintings of Duccio, the first, it is said, to represent our Lord on His Cross with the feet laid one upon the other; and above all the wonderful works of Fra Angelico, who embodied, if ever man did, his whole faith in his pictures, with reverent devotion and tenderest purity.

But it would be wandering beyond the limits, both of our subject and of our space, to examine in any detail those sacred canvases and frescoes by which the artists of the Italian Renaissance have placed the whole world under a debt, which never can be paid. The very names of Florence and Siena, of Umbria and Venice, of Verona, Ferrara, and Milan, seem redolent of sacred art.

Suffice it to say, in conclusion, that gradually as the fifteenth century advanced, and especially in the age that followed, the symbolic and devotional treatment of the tremendous spectacle of the Crucifixion was eclipsed by the realistic and historic method. The painter no longer approached his subject with awe, that compelled a reserve eloquent of faith in its great mystery; but too often he sought in frenzied crowds, impassioned Magdalens, and contorted limbs to display his own skill only. For Crucifixions that raise the thoughts and heart from the canvas to Calvary itself, we must turn back to those ages, which, with less anatomical knowledge, and perhaps less technical skill, were nevertheless inspired with more perfect ideals and nobler art from the mere fulness of a simple and sincere faith.

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CHAPTER III.

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The Cross in Ritual.

ALLUSION has already been made to the frequency with which the primitive Christians used the sign of the Cross; and there can be no question that it early became a symbol of that confidence which they had, that through the Cross of Christ all blessing, all protection, in a word all Divine help, was afforded them. They delighted, therefore, in finding in the Old Testament prophetic foreshadowings of its efficacy. Israel blessing the sons of Joseph with hands laid crosswise; Moses controlling the fortunes of the chosen people at the battle of Rephidim, by spreading wide his arms; the two sticks with which Elisha caused the axe-head of his disciple to float; and those other two which the widow of Sarepta had just gathered when help came to her in the arrival of Elijah; the saving sign marked on the foreheads of the faithful in the vision of Ezekiel (Ezek. ix., 4), which all antiquity understood as being a *tau* (**T**); these, and other more or less fancifully selected passages, all spoke to them of the mystery of the cross.

A full catena of authorities for the primitive use of this sign would embrace most of the fathers of the Church; one or two quotations must be sufficient to show how universal it was,

as a symbol carved or painted, or as simply traced with the hand. S. Ephrem (died about 378), in a sermon on the Saviour's passion, exclaims, "Let us imprint on our doors, our foreheads, our eyes, our mouths, our breast, on all our members, this life-giving cross; without this let us undertake nothing, but in going to bed and in rising, in working, in eating and drinking, in travelling by sea or land, let us adorn all our members with this life-giving sign." S. Cyril of Jerusalem, in a like spirit, instructs his catechumens "not to be ashamed of the Cross of Christ, but openly to mark it on the forehead, and to use that sign in eating and drinking, sitting and lying, rising from bed, conversing and walking, in a word, on all occasions."

S. John Chrysostom in his fifty-fifth homily thus gives us a reason for these exhortations; "the passion of our Lord," says he, "is the fountain of that happiness by which we live and are; with a joyous heart, then, as if crowned, let us carry about with us the Cross of Christ. Let us earnestly impress this cross upon our houses, our walls, our windows; on our foreheads also, and on our breasts. It is the sign of our salvation, of our common liberty, of the meekness and humility of the Lord. As often, therefore, as you sign yourself, go over in your mind the general concern of the Cross, subdue all the motions of anger and other passions, and fortify your hearts with courage."

Not to multiply instances unnecessarily, let a saying reiterated frequently by S. Jerome sum up the practice, as inherited by his own from earlier lines—"Before every action, at every step, let your hand make the sign of the cross."

Over and above the idea that this holy sign recalled to Christians their obligation to glorify their Master in all their doings, the thought early sprang up that in the sign itself was provided a defence against the assaults of evil. S. Athanasius asserts most emphatically that "if only the sign of the cross, which the Gentiles ridicule, be used, if Christ be but named, devils will instantly be put to flight, and all the arts of magic be reduced to nothing." S. Ephrem calls the sign "the invincible armour of Christians, the vanquisher of death, the hope of the faithful, the downfall of heresies, the bulwark of the true faith." While Tertullian, who was quoted in this connection in a former chapter, tells us in his "Antidote for a Scorpion's Sting," that "we have faith for a defence, if we are not smitten also with distrust itself, in immediately making the sign of the cross over the wounded part, and adjuring that part in the name of Jesus." One wonders whether from some similar hope the custom arose of marking plague-stricken houses with a red cross and the words "Lord have mercy." Tertullian's Apologies give us strong proof of the prevalence of the sign, and the reverence felt for it, in his day, in that he more than once finds it needful to repel the heathen charge that the Christians worshipped the cross, and were indeed merely a "priesthood of the cross, *crucis antistites*."

The "Myrroure of our Lady" (published in 1530) thus quaintly describes and explains the manner of making the sign:—"Ye begin with the hand at the head downward, and then to the left side and after to the right side, in token and belief our Lord Jesus Christ came down from the Head, that is from the Father, unto earth by His holy Incarnation, and from the earth unto the left side, that is Hell, by His bitter Passion, and from thence unto His Father's right side by His glorious Ascension; and after this ye bring your hand to your breast, in token that ye are come to thank Him and praise Him in the utmost of your heart for His benefits." The sign was not, however, invariably made in the same way. The whole hand was sometimes employed (the usual method in the present day) signifying the five wounds of Christ; but sometimes three fingers only, as an invocation of the Holy Trinity; or two fingers emblematic of the two natures of the Saviour. In the east it is made from left to right.

The usages referred to in the passages quoted above are all of the private kind, and their employment, although common to all, must always have depended as to their frequency upon the taste or the habits of individuals. The very earliest liturgical forms, however, give ample proof of their use also in the stated ritual of the Church.

Those ancient offices for the celebration of the Eucharist, known as the Divine Liturgies of S. James, S. Mark, of the Holy Apostles, and others, are of uncertain date, yet is generally agreed that their substance belongs to a period before the great council at Nicaea (325 A.D.); and they one and all contemplate the use of the sacred sign in the course of their ritual. These signations are of several kinds; the priest signs the elements before offering them at the altar; he blesses the people with the sign, and is bidden also to sign both himself and all the deacons who are assisting, on the forehead. Moreover at certain prayers he stands with arms folded crosswise on his breast, and a curious rubric in the Liturgy of the Holy Apostles runs, "The priest kisses the Host in the form of a cross, in such a way, however, that his lips do not touch it, but appear to kiss it." In the different liturgies these several consignations are found with varying frequency, but none are without the sign of the cross in some part of the office. It was not in the Eucharist alone, however, that it was used.

In ordination, according to an early account, the bishop first laid his hand on the head of him who was to be made priest, "with a holy prayer," and then signed him with a cross, after which all the clergy present gave him the kiss of peace. At the reception of catechumens, or candidates for baptism, this sign formed an important part of the ceremony. "Even as a boy," S. Augustine tells us in his Confessions, "had I heard of eternal life promised to us through the humility of the Lord our God condescending to our pride, and I was signed with the sign of the cross, and was seasoned with His salt." Marcus of Gaza also, writing, about

the year 400 A.D., the life of his master and Bishop, Porphyrius, describes how some converts, falling at the bishop's feet, "desired the Sign of Christ, upon which he signed them and made them catechumens." The well-known primitive posture of prayer, namely, with outspread arms, is distinctly alleged by many early writers to be an intentional allusion to the cross, perhaps especially to the Saviour's attitude when hanging thereon. So S. Ambrose prayed upon his death-bed; and so every Christian when at prayer represented, according to Asterius Amasenus (a writer of the close of the fourth century), "the Passion of the Cross by his gesture." Alluding to this constant use of the holy sign in the public offices of the Church, S. Augustine says, "If we are to be regenerated, the Cross is used; or if we are to be partakers of the mystical food of the Eucharist, or to receive ordination, we are signed with the sign of the cross."

In the English Prayer-Book, as is well known, this sign is specifically retained in the office of Holy Baptism, and the thirtieth Canon was issued in defence of that retention. Of its use in this connection in the primitive Church there can be no question, nor was it denied by those Puritans, who, at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604, objected to it. S. Augustine informs us that the water for baptism was signed with a cross; and from several sources we learn that both in the exorcism and the unction, which anciently preceded the actual administration of the sacrament, the catechumen was signed. And further, as the candidate was signed when first received as such, and again when he was baptised, so, too, when the work was completed in confirmation he was signed again. This last signation was preserved, with others, in the first Prayer-Book of King Edward VI., where the bishop is enjoined, immediately before the laying on of hands, to sign the confirmer on the forehead, saying, "N., I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and lay mine hand upon thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Amen."

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In passing from this subject some words of Wheatly's concerning the use of the sign of the cross in the English Church are worth quoting. After observing that in every ancient liturgy one or two signations at least are always found, he proceeds,—“So much has been thought proper on this solemn occasion, to testify that we are not ashamed of the Cross of Christ, and that the solemn service we are then about is performed in honour of a crucified Saviour. And therefore as the Church of England has thought fit to retain this ceremony in the ministration of one of her sacraments, I see not why she should lay it aside in the ministration of the other.”

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The material cross was also early adopted in the ritual of the church. As early as the year 400 A.D., mention is made of processional crosses, their chief use being in the Rogations, or processions in which the Litany was sung. Originally they were without the figure of the Crucified, but frequently bore at their extremities the emblems of the four evangelists, while sometimes there were sconces for holding candles on the arms. Such a cross was given to some of the churches at Rome by Charlemagne, and several splendid mediæval examples are still preserved on the Continent. A processional, or station, cross in the Lateran, dates from the fifteenth century; S. Denis has one of the time of S. Louis, and Mayence possesses a very fine one of gilded bronze of the twelfth or thirteenth century, which embodies in its sculptures a whole system of teaching. In this instance the Agnus Dei occupies the centre of the face of the cross, having in the corresponding place on the reverse the Sacrifice of Abraham; the following pairs of subjects fill the ends of the shaft and of the arms, the New Testament subject being in each case on the front, and that taken from the Old Testament behind it at the back; the descent into Hades and Samson carrying off the gates of Gaza, the Resurrection and Jonah cast up by the whale, the Ascension of Christ and that of Elijah, Pentecost and the giving of the Law on Sinai.

Anciently England possessed some very noble examples of processional crosses. At Durham, for instance, was one for use on high festivals, of gold on a silver staff, and another, for ordinary occasions, of crystal. Canterbury, according to an inventory of 1295, had four, all "gilded and gemmed," and Salisbury, in 1222, had one for Sundays of silver, and another, presumably for festivals, "well gilt and with stones."

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The Exeter Synod, held in 1287, decreed that every parish church should have one fixed cross and one movable, of which the first was probably meant to be a rood, and the second a station-cross, placed when not in procession on the altar. But according to the English rite, a system of ceremonial far more ornate than any now in use in western Christendom, several processional crosses were required, at any rate in large and fully furnished churches. During Lent a plain wooden one was employed, without the figure of our Lord, and painted blood-red; from Easter to Ascensontide the cross was to be of beryl or of crystal; those of brass or the precious metals being no doubt carried on other high festivals, and on Sundays.

The processional Crucifix, symbolical of our great Exemplar going before His people in their pilgrimage through the world, is borne with the figure facing outwards, in the direction in which the procession is moving; and during Lent it is shrouded, as a mark of sorrow, in a violet veil. It seems to have come also to signify, to a certain extent, the parish in its corporate existence and authority; thus no parochial processional cross might be carried into a monastic church, and in collegiate churches at funerals the cross of the church only might be used. It would seem, in short, that no parish might carry its cross beyond its own limits.

To us English, the spectacle of the cross borne in solemn procession is calculated to recall

with special vividness the memory of the establishment of the faith among our forefathers. How the British Church had been driven into Cornwall and Wales, and how S. Augustine, after landing in Thanet to bring the Gospel to the English, advanced with his forty companion monks to meet King Ethelbert, chanting a litany, and proceeded by a silver cross and a crucifix painted on a panel,—these things all men know.

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A processional cross, in a more restricted sense, is that borne before an Archbishop, as a mark of dignity and jurisdiction.

At what date these crosses first came into use is unknown; originally, the bishops of a few only of the most important sees employed them, and they had not yet come to denote specially the archiepiscopal rank. Leo IV., Pope from 847 to 855, had a cross borne before him by a sub-deacon, as he rode through the streets of Rome, an action said to have been "according to the custom of his predecessors." The Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215, granted to all patriarchs the privilege of having a cross carried before them, if neither papal legate nor cardinal were present. The same honour was conferred on Archbishops by Gregory IX. in the thirteenth century, and as a mark of special favour some few western bishops even have been allowed to assume it, as in the case of the Bishops of Lucca and of Pavia, who are authorized by a grant issued by Alexander II. in 1070.

In England this emblem of jurisdiction has on more than one occasion proved a ground of dispute between the archbishops. S. Anselm who ruled at Canterbury from 1093 to 1114, refused to allow the Archbishop of Dublin to use his cross in England. Canterbury and York long maintained a struggle for precedence in the English Church and the point on which it turned was often the right of the one to carry his cross in the province of the other. The quarrel became very bitter towards the end of the thirteenth century, so that we find William de Wickwaine in 1280, the year after his accession to the See of York, complaining to the Pope of violence shewn him while travelling in the southern province. "Adam de Hales," he writes, "an officer of my Lord of Canterbury, rushed like a madman upon my attendants, and scandalously broke my cross in pieces: but thanks be to God, I soon caused another to be raised and carried. Moreover, most holy father, when I am journeying through the province of Canterbury on business relating to my own see, my Lord of Canterbury forbids food or lodging to be supplied to myself or my attendants on pain of excommunication, exactly as if we were heretics, and places the whole district where I make any sojourn under an ecclesiastical interdict." The contemporary "my lord of Canterbury," was John Peckham. Twenty years later the feud was still rife, and we have Robert Winchelsey, the immediate successor of Peckham, writing to the Bishop of Lincoln, bidding him see that the northern primate did not have his cross carried before him in passing through that diocese: he also forbids the laity to kneel to him or to ask his blessing on pain of the Church's censure, and orders that no bell be rung and no service said in any place where he may be. In 1325, William de Melton, Archbishop of York, was appointed treasurer by the King, upon which Walter Raynold, who twelve years before had succeeded Winchelsey, again took up the cause of the dignity of his province, and excommunicated Melton for having had his cross carried in the city of London, in spite of which Melton publicly said Mass in Westminster Abbey. In 1354, a compromise was at last arrived at, by which the Archbishop of York might have his cross borne before him throughout the entire province of Canterbury on condition that within two months from so doing he sent to the shrine of S. Thomas à Becket, a gold figure of the value of forty pounds, of an archbishop with his cross, to be brought by the hands of his chancellor, a doctor of laws, or a knight. On the other hand the Archbishop of Canterbury was to enjoy the same privilege in the province of York unconditionally. The two prelates by whom this arrangement was made, were Simon Islip of the southern province, and John de Thoresby of the northern. The above acknowledgement, or fine, was paid about a century later (in 1452), by Archbishop Booth of York.

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The first metropolitan in the English colonies to assume the cross was the Bishop of Cape Town. A magnificent cross of silver gilt studded with jewels was presented to the See of Canterbury on the enthronement of the present occupant of the Chair of S. Augustine, Dr. Benson. It is modelled on the type of those used by the English Archbishops as early as the time of Chichely (1414), and is adorned with statuettes of a dozen saints.

An archiepiscopal cross, if terminating in a crucifix, is carried with the figure facing the prelate, not as in the case of a processional cross; but one of those anciently used at Canterbury had two crucifixes, one in front and one behind.

The double-crossed staff, suggesting the cross with its superscription, which is heraldically assigned to patriarchs, never came actually into use in the west, although it has been employed in Greece. The triple cross of the Pope is a modern invention, without ritual authority.

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From the distinctive sign of an Archbishop's authority to the Pectoral Cross worn by him in common with other bishops, is a natural transition. It early became customary for a prelate to wear about his neck a reliquary which often contained a fragment of the true Cross, and, as being intended for a religious purpose, was frequently cruciform. From this usage it has been supposed sprang the practice of bishops wearing a cross suspended on the breast, hence called a pectoral cross.

We have instances of its common use long before it began to be reckoned as one of the

regular ornaments of a bishop or a mitred abbot. S. Gregory of Tours is said to have worn such a cross, as also did Pope Leo III. in 811, and S. Alphege of Canterbury in 1012; the pectoral cross worn by S. Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne in 685, is still preserved at Durham, and its design, a curious type of Greek cross, forms the principal charge in the arms of that University. Innocent III. (1198-1216) is the first to mention this as one of the recognised episcopal insignia, and by the fourteenth century special prayers were prescribed to be said on putting it on, with the rest of the episcopal habit. It was about this time also that it became usual for priests, when in their full vestments, to wear the stole crosswise on the breast. In each case the cross-bearing required of a disciple of Christ is symbolized, but in the case of the bishop the breast-plate of the high priest is also alluded to.

In this connection it may be worth while to make passing mention of a strange society of early monks referred to by Cassian, who, with more zeal than knowledge, interpreted the exhortation of our Lord literally, and wore constantly about their necks heavy wooden crosses.

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The full and solemn ritual for the consecration of a church, as still used throughout the major part of Christendom, involves a frequent use of the sacred sign. By a law of Justinian, the building of a church might not be undertaken until the bishop of the diocese had visited the proposed site, and fixed thereon with solemn prayer "the precious cross." On the completion of the building, there is made in ashes on the floor a cross of the shape known as S. Andrew's, and twelve crosses are marked on the inside of its walls, and often twelve more on the outside, five more being cut on the slab, or mensa, of the altar. These mural crosses, having during the ceremony of consecration been anointed by the bishop, are afterwards either cut in the stone or traced in colour. One such in colour still exists in the Palace Chapel at Chichester, and in the cathedral are others cut in the walls of two of the chapels: at Salisbury, Ottery, and elsewhere examples of an ornamental character are found, and two of the external crosses may still be seen at Exeter. High upon a buttress of the Parish Church of Costock, near Loughborough, in Nottinghamshire, is a stone showing on each of its two exposed faces a cross of an elegant interlaced design, somewhat of the kind usually found in old Irish sculptures. These, however, can scarcely be consecration crosses; the stone is possibly the head of some ancient shaft, as it is almost certainly not now in its original position. These crosses do not occur before the eleventh century.

Two further instances only of the ritual use of the material cross need be noticed. The first is the custom, somewhat obscure and perhaps never common, of burying in graves a metal cross inscribed with a papal absolution. Specimens of these have been found at several places on the Continent, and in England at Bury S. Edmund's and at Chichester. It may have been a custom cognate to this use of "Crosses of Absolution" to which Cartwright, the Puritan antagonist of Archbishop Whitgift, refers when, in complaining of the contemporary funeral rites, he speaks of "a cross, white or black, set upon the dead corpse."

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The other ceremony, which must not be omitted, is that pathetic part of the solemnities of Good Friday, which used to be known in England as "Creeping to the Cross." This rite, which consists in kneeling before a crucifix laid before the altar and kissing it, boasts a very early origin. An epistle of Paulinus shows that it was practised in Jerusalem in the fourth century. Alcuin, the friend and adviser of Charlemagne, who was born at York about 740, mentions it; and the Canons of Ælfric in 957 bid the faithful to "greet God's rood with a kiss." In 1256, the Bishop of Sarum, Giles de Bridport, enjoined all parishioners throughout his diocese thus to venerate the cross, making an offering according to their ability at the same time, and he even forbade them to communicate on Easter Day unless they had done so. At the Reformation "Creeping to the Cross" proved the ground of much discussion between the more moderate and the extreme men. Those reformers who had become most strongly tinged with foreign Protestantism from frequent intercourse with Geneva clamoured for its abolition, along with other ceremonies which they disliked. There is still extant the order of precedence, which was drawn up to regulate the approach of Henry VIII. and his court to the Crucifix, and a proclamation by that monarch specifies this rite as one that was to be maintained. In 1546 its abolition was suggested, upon which Thomas Cranmer wrote to the King, "That if the honouring of the cross, as creeping and kneeling thereunto be taken away it shall seem to many that be ignorant, that the honour of Christ is taken away," for, as he says elsewhere, "we humble ourselves to Christ herein, offering unto Him, and kissing the cross in memory of our redemption by Christ on the Cross." In 1548, under Edward VI., a royal proclamation announced that no proceedings were in future to be taken against any persons who omitted sundry ceremonies hitherto customary, the "creeping" being one. In 1549, on similar authority, it was forbidden; and Ridley, Bishop of London, in his injunctions to his diocese in 1550, enforced the prohibition. Yet the custom did not at once die out, and in the sister kingdom of Scotland, it was practised, according to a letter from Latimer to Sir W. Cecil, at Dunbar, on Good Friday, in 1568. A somewhat similar ceremony is observed in the Greek Church on Holy Cross Day; a crucifix is placed in a basket of flowers before the altar, and each member of the congregation, after reverently kissing it, takes a flower, and makes an offering in money.

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A reference to those Holy Days, which have been specially dedicated to a commemoration of the Cross will appropriately close this chapter, the consideration of altar crosses, roods, and others which serve rather as fitting ornaments of churches than as adjuncts to their ritual, being left to form another section.

The Feast of the Invention (or Finding) of the Cross, which occurs on May 3rd, commemorates, as its name implies, the recovery of the True Cross by S. Helena. It is said to have been instituted by Pope Sylvester I., who died in 335, but there is no positive evidence of its observance before the eighth century.

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Holy Cross Day, or the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, is held in the West as of less honour than the feast just named, but in the East it is regarded with special reverence. It commemorates, according to some, the apparition of the Cross to Constantine, but according to others the consecration of the Church built by that Emperor to receive the True Cross. It was certainly observed in Constantinople in the days of the Patriarch Eutychius, who died about 582. On this day in 629, the Emperor Heraclius came in solemn pilgrimage to Jerusalem to restore to the Church there that wood of the Cross, which he had recovered from Chosroes; this event added great lustre to the festival, and a memorial of it has since been added to the earlier commemoration.

Both these holy days have been retained in the calendar of the English Church.

The Greek and Ethiopian Churches celebrate on May 7th a miraculous apparition of the Cross at Jerusalem in the year 346.

Not unconnected with the observance of stated days as festivals of the Cross is the custom of dedicating churches under the name of S. Cross, that is, of course, Holy Cross, or Holy Rood. The instance of the famous Abbey and Palace at Edinburgh will at once occur to all; other cases are found at Caermarthen and Bettws-y-Grôg in Wales, and in England at Southampton, Thruxton, Swindon, Mallong, and a few other places.

CHAPTER IV.

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The Cross as an Ornament of the Church and its Precincts.

A VERY natural sequence from the custom, which, as we have seen, early arose of using the sign of the cross in almost all forms of blessing, was the fancy for making articles of church furniture cruciform, or of marking them with a cross. As a matter of fact the only place where the sacred sign might not be placed was on the floor, lest anyone should trample on it; an exception to this rule, in the blue cross on the ground at the west end of Durham Cathedral, was intended as a boundary, and is therefore an exception only in the letter, not in the spirit, since it was assumed that no one would step on or over it.

Scarcely had Christianity achieved its victory over the empire than churches began to arise, which proclaimed by their shape the faith to the service of which they were dedicated. Those built by Constantine himself at Rome, the ancient S. Peter's, S. Paul-without-the-walls, and S. Maria Maggiore, were all cruciform, as also was the splendid Church of the Apostles which he built at Constantinople; and this ground-plan, whether the form chosen were the Greek or the Latin Cross, began, especially in cathedrals and other large churches, to supplant the simple parallelogram of the basilica.

Evagrius tells us that the church which enshrined the pillar on which S. Simeon Stylites practised his austerities was "constructed in the form of a cross, adorned with colonnades on the four sides." S. Edward the Confessor is reputed to have been the first to introduce cruciform churches into England, in the erection of his famous abbey at Westminster.

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The same historian just named, Evagrius, who wrote in the sixth century, records that Chosroes, who, though a heathen, had a Christian wife, gave to Gregory, Patriarch of Antioch, among other things, "a cross to be fixed upon the holy table;" and Sozomen, earlier still, refers to "crosses lying upon the altar." The primitive ages, however, knew nothing, unless in an exceptional case, of any permanent ornaments upon their altars, yet a cross seems to have been sometimes hung above, or placed beside them, in very early days. In this, as in other matters already dealt with, the suggestion rather than the representation of the Saviour's sacrifice probably came first in the development of Christian art. Thus S. Paulinus of Nola, writing about the year 400, describes a cross in front of an altar erected by S. Felix; it had beside it the Alpha and Omega, around it a crown or nimbus, and a white lamb was placed beneath. The cross did not become an indispensable ornament of the altar until the tenth century, and down to the fourteenth century it was invariably brought in, with the two candles, by acolytes immediately before mass, and removed at its conclusion.

The Venerable Bede gives one of the earliest, if not absolutely the first, mention of an altar cross in England, when he relates how Paulinus, when forced in 633 to retire from Northumbria into Kent, took with him "a large gold cross and a golden chalice dedicated to the use of the altar." S. Cuthbert a little later erected one in his oratory at Lindisfarne, and

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Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, who died in 709, speaks in one of his verses of "a cross at the altar gleaming with plates of gold and silver, and decked with gems." Coming to later times, it is on record that Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester from 1006 to 1014, gave a splendid gold cross to the altar of S. Etheldreda in the cathedral, and that S. Margaret of Scotland presented to a church a crucifix, on which was a figure of pure gold.

The foreign Protestants, whose interference was so manifest in most of the extremer courses taken by the English Reformers, held very strong views as to the unlawfulness of altar crosses, and especially of crucifixes. Writing from Zurich on March 20th, 1560, Peter Martyr says, "to have the image of the Crucifix upon the holy table at the administration of the Lord's Supper, I do not count among things indifferent, nor would I recommend any man to distribute the sacraments with that rite, ... neither Master Bullinger nor myself count such things as matters of indifference, but we reject them as forbidden." "Master Bullinger" speaks for himself in a letter of May 1st, 1566. "I could never approve," he says, "of your officiating, if so commanded, at an altar laden, rather than adorned, with the image of Him that was crucified." The matter was thought sufficiently important to form the subject of a conference, as we learn from a letter written by Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, to Peter Martyr. "This controversy about the Crucifix," he writes, "is now at its height... A disputation upon this subject will take place to-morrow. The moderators will be persons selected by the council. The disputants on our side are the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cox; and on the other, Grindal, the bishop of London, and myself." The discussion took place in the spring of 1560, and apparently resulted in favour of the Protestants, although the sympathies of the Queen, as we learn from a letter addressed by Sampson, Bishop of Worcester, to Martyr, were on the other side.

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The directing force in this iconoclastic movement was evidently Genevan, and it would appear to have been Genevan only, for it is well known that the Lutheran Churches of Germany retain the Crucifix above the altar. In England, also, the attempt was only temporally successful. At the coronation of Charles I. a crucifix was placed on the altar, and the use of at least a cross is now practically universal.

Without question the most striking cross used in the decoration of a church is the great Crucifix, or rood, placed on the chancel screen, generally with the figures of the Blessed Virgin and S. John the Evangelist as supporters. Naturally an ornament of this kind presupposes not only a certain fearlessness on the part of the church in publicly displaying her sacred symbols, but also a command of the resources of wealth and an advanced state of art. We are therefore quite prepared to find that the rood was not a very early addition to the adornment of a church. We read, indeed, of some comparatively early instances in which the figure of the Crucified Lord was painted on the ceiling of the choir, or of the apsidal sanctuary; an example of which exists in Ravenna, in which the Saviour is robed in eucharistic vestments, and is accompanied by S. Michael and S. Gabriel. The cross upon the screen, however, is not traced further back than the eighth century, and the rood with its full complement of figures and lights can claim only a mediæval date.

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It lies beyond the scope of our subject to discuss the development of the choir-screen, from the curtains once hung before the altar to the broad and solid gateways of carved stone, built beneath the chancel arch, or even further west. Eventually these became a universal feature in church architecture; of wood usually in parish churches, of stone in the larger collegiate churches, in abbeys, and in cathedrals. Fine examples exist in England; at York, Lincoln, Exeter, Wells, Canterbury, Bristol, Southwell, Ripon, Christchurch (Hampshire), Tattershall (Lincolnshire), and elsewhere; but the parish churches, which had timber screens, have naturally not been successful in preserving for us so many examples as we have of the more solid erections, though we have, even of them, many of which we may be proud.

When complete these screens had a broad gallery or loft at the top, access to which was obtained by a winding stair at one, or sometimes at each, end. In several places, as at Lavenham (Suffolk), S. Martin's, Stamford (Lincolnshire), Wells (Norfolk), and Long Melford (Suffolk), the external turret which contained this stair still remains; in other cases, as at Alford in Lincolnshire, a massive pillar was pierced to find room for the steps.

Each side of this gallery was protected by a balustrade, and on the western side, fronting the nave, stood the rood, a crucifix often of life-size, or even larger, the cross being decorated with the apocalyptic emblems of the evangelists at the four extremities, and richly painted; a tree of life and glory to us, though to the Redeemer a tree of shame and death. On either hand stood figures of the Madonna and of S. John the Divine, and sometimes beneath the cross a smaller effigy of the patron saint of the church was placed. On great festivals a multitude of lights blazed along the rood-loft, which, with all its accessories, became the most impressive object in the church.

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A few examples of early rood-screens, with or without the loft, may be quoted. A wooden screen, surmounted by a cross, was erected at Tyre by Paulinus, and a stone one, said to date from the fourth century, still stands at Tepekerman; and a third has been preserved from the time of Justinian in the church of S. Catherine, on Mount Sinai. The Church of the Apostles, Constantinople, had a screen of brass gilt, and S. Sophia's a jewelled one, which was copied at Novgorod, Kieff, and elsewhere in the East, in the eleventh century.

The uses to which these elevated platforms were put were many and various. Those portions

of the more solemn services which it was specially desired that the people should all hear were often declaimed from their summits. At High Mass the Gospel was read thence, a custom which survived in France until the great Revolution. Public notice of the Church's feasts and fasts was given from the loft, and there the lessons were read. Down to the time of the introduction of pulpits at about the thirteenth century, sermons were preached there. The fine screen, referred to above, in Tattershall Church is corbelled out into a pulpit, and has desks for books designed in the stone balustrade. On occasions of special solemnity antiphons were sung and prayers said there, such as the Gradual and Alleluia, the Prophecies before the Epistle at the Christmas Midnight Mass, and the Passion on Palm Sunday and Good Friday. At Constantinople the Emperors were crowned in the rood-loft, as also were the French Kings till the time of Charles X. in the cathedral at Rheims. Altars were sometimes erected on these screens, and generally one or more was set against their western face.

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In England certain roods obtained special celebrity, and became the objects of pilgrimage from all parts of the country; and in some cases the temptation to attract the people at almost any cost proved too much for the ecclesiastics in charge of them, and led to practices which, if truly reported, no one would wish to defend. Such was the Rood of Grace at Boxley Abbey. Archbishop Warham, in a report on the monastic houses, presented to King Henry in 1512, pleads for the preservation of this abbey because the place is "so much sought for from all parts of the realm visiting the Rood of Grace." The foundation was, nevertheless, condemned, and its revenues were granted in the thirty-second year of Henry VIII. to Sir Thomas Wyat. In dismantling the abbey church, the movements of the figure on the rood which, it is alleged, were ascribed to a miracle, were found to be controlled by concealed machinery. "When plucking down the images of the Monastery of Boxley," writes the commissioner Jeffrey Chambers to Thomas Cromwell, "I found in the image of the Rood of Grace ... certain engines and old wires and sticks." The whole affair was carried off, and on Sunday, February 24th, 1538, was exhibited to the people at S. Paul's Cross by Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester, after his sermon. It is only fair to add that it has been claimed that this mechanism was not employed for deception, but that the figure was intended for use in miracle plays. It is a partial support of this view that no one seems to have proceeded against either in the ecclesiastical or the civil courts in connection with the matter, which must surely have been the case had the charge of deception been sincerely made and actually believed.

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Other famous roods were the "Rood of Winchester and the very cross at Ludlow," there was also a noted one at S. Saviour's, Bermondsey, and another at Chester. The last-named, however, was not in the church, but on the spot called from it the Roodee, or Roodeye. It was here that the football was annually presented to the Mayor for the Easter game at Chester. At Durham was preserved the "Black Rood of Scotland," a silver crucifix which was blackened by the smoke of the innumerable tapers burnt before it, after it was placed in the northern cathedral.

Charges such as that made concerning the Rood at Boxley were, whether true or false, only too readily welcomed as an excuse for an attack on all roods at the Reformation. That one case in special seems, indeed, to have been made the most of in the controversy. Calfhill refers to it in his answer, published in 1565, to Martial's book in defence of the Cross; and Peterson, Finch, and Partridge, all English Protestants in correspondence with Geneva, allude to it in their letters.

A general destruction of roods took place in the autumn of 1547, when Heylin tells us "the image of Christ, best known by the name of the rood, together with the images of Mary and John, and all other images in the church of S. Paul, London, were taken down, as also in all other churches in London." At All Hallows, Staining, the loft itself was pulled down, and the "roodloft hangings" sold for 12s. in 1550.

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Under Queen Mary the work of destruction was of course stayed, and in some cases the damage was even repaired. Thus, at the church just named, a new crucifix was purchased in 1554 at the cost of £6 3s., and the parishoners of S. Pancras, Soper Lane, were warned in October, 1555, that their rood, with all its figures, was to be reinstated by Candlemas. The parish accounts of S. Helen's, Abingdon, for the same year, contain several entries concerning a similar restoration:—

"Payd for making the roode and peynting the same,	5	4
For making the roode lyghtes,	10	6
Payed for peynting the roode, of Mary and John, and the patron of the Church,	6	0"

Entries of a like kind are to be found in the accounts of S. Mary Hill, London, for the same year, and in those of S. Giles's, Reading, for 1558.

Then came the revived iconoclasm of the days of Elizabeth. Reading pulled down for 4d. in 1560, what had cost 40s. to put up two years before. John Rial spent three days in destroying the rood at S. Margaret's, Westminster, in 1559, and was paid 2s. 8d. for his services; and "carpenters and others, taking down the rood-loft and stopping the holes in the wall where the joices stood" at S. Helen's, Abingdon, received in 1561, the sum of 15s. 8d.

But the unaccountable hatred which the fanaticism of the time felt towards these sacred symbols, was not satisfied with their mere removal; nothing less than their destruction with every mark of violence and indignity was enough. Crucifixes were brought to Smithfield and to S. Paul's Churchyard, and there broken to pieces and "burnt to ashes, and together with these in some places copes, also vestments, altar-cloaths, etc." The rood with its images from S. Andrew's Holborn, was burnt to ashes, and that from S. Margaret's, Westminster, was destroyed by "cleaving and sawing" it.

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Such rage and violence towards the effigy of the Saviour reads more like an account of the ribald and blasphemous paganism of the French Revolution, than a record of the acts of men claiming a burning desire for pure religion. Who can picture a sincerely Christian devotion hacking and hewing at the statue of the Redeemer?

Amongst the magnificent roods destroyed about this time must be reckoned that at S. Mary Hill, London, the figures from which were sold in the reign of Edward VI. The cross was of wood, plated with silver gilt, and the images of silver, and at the base of the cross was a crystal engraved with the Holy name, and the five wounds of the Lord were marked with rubies.

It was, perhaps, in the hope of making assurance doubly sure that the ecclesiastical commissioners on the 10th October, in the third year of Elizabeth, ordered the removal of all rood-lofts. "It is thus decreed and ordered, that the rood-lofts as yet being at this day aforesaid untransposed, shall be so altered that the upper parts of the same, with the sollar (loft), be quite taken down unto the upper parts of the vaults and beams, running in length over the said vaults, by putting some convenient crest upon the said beam, towards the church." That this order was fully carried out the visitation questions of Archbishop Grindal and other similar documents, as well as the state of every ancient screen left to us, clearly show.

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It must not, however, be imagined that England has been alone in losing these objects of art and of devotion. Rood-screens, once as commonly found in France as amongst ourselves, are now as commonly absent from the ordinary parish churches, although in many instances suspended crucifixes have to some extent filled their place. The lust for destroying, which was such a passion of the Revolutionary era in that country, is largely answerable for this. The great Abbey of S. Ouen, at Rouen, once possessed a splendid rood-loft, ascended by twin circular stairs; it was pierced by brass gates of elaborate design, and surmounted by a crucifix whose top stood sixty feet from the pavement. It was defaced in 1562 by the French Protestants, or Calvinists, and destroyed by the revolutionary faction in 1791. The Cathedral of Alby still has a fine loft similar to the one which existed at Rouen, and Louvain has one also of great dignity.

In recent years an extraordinary revival of rood-screens, adorned with all their proper and ancient images, and even provided with lofts, has taken place in England. Amongst well-known London churches, S. Peter's, Eaton Square, has recently been adorned with a fine metal screen surmounted by a cross and the figures of six angels, and S. Paul's, Knightsbridge, with a complete rood-screen; but instances of this are now indeed common. As an illustration of the revival of the loft, together with the other details of the ancient screen, amongst village churches in the single county of York, Womersley, Cantley, and Sledmere have all in recent years been thus enriched. Certainly few architectural features add more solemnity and dignity to a sacred building than a well-proportioned and well-designed screen, crowned by the representation of the Great Sacrifice.

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The marking with a cross by engraving, embroidery, or otherwise of almost all articles used in the sacred offices, calls for little comment, being largely a matter of taste merely. It has long been usual to enrich the stole and maniple with three crosses, one in the centre and one at each end; most of the linen used at the altar is also similarly marked. The old English chasubles usually had a cross on the back in the form of a Y, the Continental ones have a Roman Cross. The "Imitatio Christi" refers to these chasubles, and explains their form thus: the priest "has before him and behind him the sign of the cross of his Lord, that he may continually bear in mind Christ's Passion. Before him he bears the cross on his chasuble, that he may diligently look at the footsteps of Christ, and fervently endeavour to tread in them. Behind him on his back he is signed with the cross, that he may meekly endure for Christ's sake any trials which others may bring upon him." This passage has a literary interest in that it has been imported into the controversy concerning the disputed authorship of that famous book of devotion. The work has been ascribed to Gerson, Chancellor of Paris, as well as to Thomas à Kempis; but Cardinal Garganelli argued that neither the Frenchman or the German could have written it, but that the honour belongs to Gerson, Abbot of Vercelli; one of his arguments being that the Italian vestments only had the cross both on front and back, those used elsewhere bearing it behind only.

The curious "dissembled" cross, the fylfot, early used with various mystical meanings by the faithful, became a not uncommon form with which to impress church bells in some districts, especially in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and Derbyshire. It is alleged to have been thought a charm against lightning.

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The cross has long been used in two very natural ways outside the fabric of the church. As the church in the midst of the clustered houses is itself a setting forth of the faith, so it

follows, almost as a matter of course, that it should uprear the symbol of that faith as prominently as possible. Thus the tall spire, the church's finger, heavenward pointing, holds aloft a cross. At Amiens is an example dating from 1526,—a long life for a piece of metalwork in so exposed a position. The stone crown which caps the tower of S. Giles's, Edinburgh, originally had a bold cross above it, as shewn in old engravings.

The other use referred to, is the erection of churchyard crosses. Standing in "God's acre," surrounded by the heaving "turf in many a mouldering heap," where rest those who have died in faith, and sleep in hope,—what can be more natural than the symbol of the Christian's faith, the anchor of his hope? That this has been felt to be the case is abundantly shown by the use of this form in memorials of the dead, as in the shape or the adornment of tombstones and sepulchral slabs. In an illuminated copy of the English pre-Reformation Offices, preserved by a Lancashire family, is a painting of an English graveyard of the fifteenth century, where we see the tall stone cross reared amidst the simple wooden crosses which mark the several graves.

One of the most striking examples of the churchyard cross now left in the country, stands on the south side of Somersby Church, in Lincolnshire. It has a tall octagonal shaft, with an embattled capital rising from a square base to a height of fifteen feet. The cross, which is protected by a slight embattled canopy or gable, has on the one side a crucifixion, and on the other the Madonna with the Holy Child. It is supposed to date from about the middle of the fifteenth century. Other crosses, somewhat similar in design, though none more light and graceful in construction, are found in several places. At Cricklade are two examples, one in S. Mary's churchyard, and the other in S. Sampson's; each consists of a tall shaft, mounted on steps, and crowned with tabernacle work. The niches in S. Mary's cross are filled with figures, but those of S. Sampson's have been despoiled of theirs. The latter of these two is not strictly a churchyard cross, having been removed in recent times from the main street of Cricklade to its present site. Another of these tall crosses is found in Bitterley churchyard, Shropshire; the shaft is octagonal, and the tabernacle with its crucifixion is a good example of its kind. At Ampney Crucis, near Cirencester, is a very bold and solid specimen, the tabernacle of which is larger, in proportion to its shaft, than those already described. S. Ives and Lanteglos in Cornwall have interesting crosses in their churchyards. In each case the cross had been taken down and buried near the church, perhaps by some pious souls anxious to preserve them at the time when so many of their fellows were ruthlessly destroyed. They were rebuilt some forty years ago. The S. Ives cross, which is ten feet six inches in height, is the plainer, the massive shaft being, as is often the case, a simple unadorned hexagon, while the alternate faces of the example at Lanteglos, which is of about the same height, are elaborately carved. The almost cubic head of each is cut into niches, containing a crucifixion and the figures of saints. Other instances of churchyard crosses in Cornwall are found at S. Buryan, S. Levan, Gwinear, S. Erth, Sancreed, S. Paul, Illogan, Lelant, Cury, Ludgran, Gulval, and a few other places. These, for the most part, are roughly hewn crucifixes, of from four to six feet in height; but those at Sancreed and at S. Erth are taller, the latter being a ruder specimen of the type found at S. Ives and Lanteglos, and the former a crucifix of a primitive sort with some simple designs cut on the body of the cross. A good example of the characteristic Cornish cross, of little height and decorated with an interlaced pattern resembling wicker-work, is in the churchyard at S. Columb.

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One of the best known crosses in the country is the one in the churchyard of the little village of Eyam, in Derbyshire, celebrated for its tragic experience of the plague. It is a fine specimen of a Saxon cross, with scrolls on the shaft, and figures in the arms and on the centre. It had long lain in fragments in a corner near the church, when John Howard, the philanthropist, seeing it, got it rebuilt; to him, therefore, it may be considered a lasting and fitting memorial. Bakewell, in the same county, has another cross originally of the same type, but now much mutilated.

A very curious example of the Runic cross stands in the churchyard at Nevern, in Pembroke. On a tall and substantial shaft, which slightly tapers towards the top, is placed a small cross surrounded by a circle, the whole being covered with interlaced carvings of a semi-barbaric kind. A very curious form of churchyard cross is seen at Romsey Abbey, a fine late Norman building; a large crucifix of antique type is let into the outside wall of the south transept; the feet of the Redeemer lie side by side, and above is the Father's hand—marks of antiquity as we have seen.

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EYAM CROSS, DERBYSHIRE.

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All over the country, remains of ancient churchyard crosses exist. At Dindar, and at North Petherton, in Somersetshire, are graceful shafts from which the tabernacled heads have disappeared; at Crowle, in Lincolnshire, is a short shaft on steps, which now supports a sundial; at Bebbington, in Cheshire, the base alone is left. And so the catalogue of battered fragments might be continued, through every county in England. In their perfect state, these churchyard crosses often witnessed to the artistic feeling of our ancestors, and always to their sincere faith; are we driven to draw as a moral from their ruins, that we have fallen as far behind them in the latter, as it will hardly be denied we have in the former?

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In recent years something has been done to repair the losses of the past in this respect. It has been pointed out above that several of the crosses as we have them now, such as those at Eyam, at S. Ives, and at Lanteglos, are the carefully rebuilt fragments of antiquity. But besides these, some new churchyard crosses have recently been erected, proving the revival of the ancient feeling of their fitness. Quite recently the old base of a cross at East Brent, in Somersetshire, has been crowned with the addition of an impressive stone crucifix, intended as a memorial of the long incumbency of the late Archdeacon Denison. At Harburton, in Devonshire, is a new cross, designed after the best ancient type, with a tabernacled head surmounted by a short crocketed spire; the carvings represent, on the four sides, the Crucifixion, the Epiphany, and S. Andrew, and S. Bartholomew. Hickleton Churchyard, in Yorkshire, and other places, have also had crosses re-erected in them in recent years; as at Broadwood Widger, near Launceston, where an ancient cross has been recovered from secular use, and placed in the churchyard.

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The churchyard crosses, besides exciting the devotion of the faithful, as they passed amid the sleeping dead to prayer, were often used as fitting places for the performance of penances, and hence were sometimes called "Weeping Crosses." Another name, "Palm Crosses," marks the fact that the Palm Sunday procession in passing round the church made a station at the churchyard cross, which was for the nonce adorned with palm-branches, or more strictly with yew or willow, which in mediæval England generally served as substitutes for the oriental palm.

CHAPTER V.

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Public Crosses.

THAT "the ages of faith" considered religion foreign to no department of life, is in nowise more strikingly shown than by the public use of the emblem of Christianity. Our

forefathers held it as the fittest of all ornaments, not for the Church only, but for every place where Christian men were found. Over five thousand crosses, it is said, existed at one time in the public places of England;—in the obscure village churchyard and the busy mart, the lonely highway and the crowded city thoroughfare.

Precisely how many of these now remain, it would be difficult to say; but certainly only a small proportion exists in anything like the original state. Some have survived as mere shafts, beautiful still in many cases, but shorn of almost all meaning by the loss of the one member that gave them a being and a name. In other cases an unsightly stump, a useless flight of steps, a few worn stones, an ancient place-name, or a bare tradition, keep alive the memory of the Cross, now desecrated or destroyed.

The ceaseless beating of the tide of time is responsible for much of this decay, which the local authorities, in carelessness or ignorance, have been guilty in too many instances of watching without attempting to retard; and in not a few cases the whole structure has at last been taken down simply to avoid the cost and trouble of needful repair.

Modern improvements in the streets of our towns have cost us several examples that could ill be spared. It would be as foolish as futile to decry the opening out of narrow thoroughfares to the sweet influences of sun and air, or to grumble when growing towns make due provision for growing traffic; yet one cannot but regret the many ancient landmarks that these changes have swept away, nor can one doubt that, had a proper appreciation of their worth been felt, some means might have been found to preserve most of them.

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But after all it was the bigotry of the Puritan epoch which robbed us of the greater part of our public crosses, just as it was the narrow views imported into the Reformation movement from foreign sources that were chiefly answerable for the disappearance of our roads and other church crosses.

Some method of classification being needful in treating of the various kinds of crosses, one has been adopted here which is practically useful, rather than strictly accurate. Churchyard crosses, included in the preceding chapter, form a division sufficiently distinct; others, which specially commemorate some person or event, as do the Eleanor Crosses and that at Neville's Cross, near Durham, will compose another class to be considered in the next chapter, as memorial crosses. In our present one attention is called to those which were public, in the exclusive sense of being used for public purposes, such as markets, royal proclamations, and preaching; and finally, under the names of roadside and boundary crosses, will be included many stone crosses which cannot be grouped under any of these heads.

It is confessed that this classification is not scientific, inasmuch as the classes are not in all cases mutually exclusive. No doubt several of the market crosses, besides serving the usual purposes of such structures, enshrined the memories of departed worthies; and unquestionably many village and roadside crosses were originally erected as preaching places for the brothers of some neighbouring monastery, or for the use of itinerant friars.

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For practical purposes, however, the above division of the subject will be found to serve.

To notice every cross of this public sort which has at some time adorned the streets and market-places of Great Britain, even if it were possible, would be after all the compiling of a mere tedious catalogue. It will be more interesting to take a few of the more important ones as types, referring to the others as occasion may arise.

For such a purpose no example can suit us better as illustrating the secular and civil uses to which these structures were put than the Market Cross, or "Mercat Croce," of the northern capital. This venerable erection might indeed be truly named, borrowing an American expression, the "hub" of Scotland, round which for centuries has revolved the history, not of Edinburgh only, but of the whole kingdom.

It seems not improbable that the original of this cross belonged to the class of well-crosses to be referred to hereafter, and may have been placed there by the earliest teachers of the faith in the district, an old well existing not far from the present site under the name of the cross-well. But no certain allusion to a cross standing here is found before the year 1436, when we read of the assassins of King James I. of Scotland meeting their punishment "mounted on a pillar in the Market Place in Edinburgh." Nearly three hundred years before this, however (in 1175), William the Lion ordered that "all merchandisis salbe presentit at the mercat and mercat croce of burghis," which may well be taken to imply that the first burgh in the kingdom was not at that time without its "croce." Our next reference is in a Charter of S. Giles' Church, dated 1447, in which occur the words "ex parte occidentali fori et crucis dicti burghi," and its use as a Market centre is clearly defined in a letter from James III. to his citizens, written in October 1477, in which he orders "all pietricks, pluvaris, capones, conyngs, checkins, and all other wyld foulis and tame to be usit and sald about the Market Croce and in na other place."

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No data remain from which to reconstruct with any certainty the ancient cross in the original form. The "pillar of the cross" now standing is the same as that named in the earliest historical notices of the structure, perhaps even the very one that was first set up, but whether it stood at the outset on an elevated platform as it now does and long has done,

or whether it surmounted a flight of steps in the way usual in England, cannot be determined. In the reign of James III. great improvements were made in Edinburgh. The church of S. Giles, for instance, was enlarged and made collegiate, and its independence of all but papal jurisdiction was guaranteed by a Bull; it seems therefore not improbable that the same royal patron of the arts added at that time dignity to the city cross by building the lofty stone platform from which it could more unquestionably dominate the market. In 1555 some alterations were made in the structure, which are described as "bigging the rowme thereof," which has been thought to imply that the open circles, which probably first supported this platform, were filled in so as to form the "rowme." The following extracts from the accounts of the city treasurer at any rate imply that the enclosed base, entered beneath by a door, was standing shortly after this date. In 1560 we read "Item for ane band to ye Croce dur," "Item for mending of ye lok of ye Croce dur;" and again in 1584, "5 Julii, Item, ye sam day given for ane lok to ye Croce duir, and three keyis for it." An old birds-eye view of the city as it appeared in 1647 shews the main outlines of the building to have been then very similar to what we see it to-day.

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This type of cross was peculiarly Scottish. A similar one remains in good condition at Prestonpans, and another very fine one at Aberdeen; Perth and Dundee had similar ones now unfortunately destroyed, and the capital itself had a second cross of like design in the Canongate. It may have been that the metropolitan cross was accepted as the model for the other burghs of the kingdom.

The treasurer's accounts cited above, give evidence also of the early erection of another feature peculiar to the Edinburgh cross, namely the surmounting of it with the national emblem. In 1584, is an entry, "Payit to David Williamson for making and upputting of the Unicorn upon the head of the Croce."

In the year 1617, the "ald croce," was taken down and "translated by the devise of certain mariners of Leith, from the place where it stood past the memory of man to a place beneath in the High Street." The stone for building the new substructure was "brocht frae the Deyne," and on the 25th March "the Croce of Edinburgh was put upon the new seat;" the total cost of its removal and re-erection being £4486 5s. 6d. (Scots). Amid the Puritan violence of the Protectorate, the cross was defaced, among other things the Royal arms were torn down, and "the crown that was on the unicorn was hung upon the gallows by these treacherous villains;" as a consequence the city accounts show payments for repairs to Robert Mylne, a descendant of John Mylne, who had been one of the "Master measones" at the re-erection. At this time the cross, or some part of it, perhaps the heraldic carvings, was adorned with colour, a sum being given "to George Porteous for painting the Croce."

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On March 13th, 1756, the Market Cross of Edinburgh was demolished. Some of the carved medallions which had decorated it passed years later into the hands of Sir Walter Scott, by whom they were built into a wall at Abbotsford, where they now are. The pillar, which was allowed to fall and break in the course of demolition, was acquired by Lord Somerville, who set it up near his house at Drum. The site was marked out with stones, and a plain stone pillar "was erected on the side of a well in High Street, adjacent to the place where the cross stood, which, by act of Siderunt, was declared to be the Market Cross of Edinburgh from that period." But even this was not allowed to remain long, the chief argument for the removal both of it and of its great predecessor being the alleged obstruction which it offered to traffic.

Efforts were made from time to time to persuade the city fathers to restore a structure so long and so intimately bound up with the national history, and at last "the pillar of the cross" was brought back to Edinburgh, and placed upon a pedestal within the railings of St. Giles' Church. So matters were allowed to remain until 1885, when by the generosity of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, then Member of Parliament for Midlothian, the original pillar was reinstated on a new and imposing base of the ancient type. The following translation of the Latin inscription which appears on one of its eight faces, and which is dated the day whereon it was formally handed over to the Corporation, appropriately closes the record of the changes through which it has passed: "Thanks be to God, this ancient monument, the Cross of Edinburgh, devoted of old to public functions, having been destroyed by evil hands in the year of our salvation, 1756, and having been avenged and lamented in song both noble and manly by that man of highest renown, Walter Scott, has now by permission of the city magistrates been rebuilt by William E. Gladstone, who through both parents claims a descent entirely Scottish. November 23rd in the year of grace 1885."

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Many were the Scottish sovereigns who were greeted by their people at this, the heart of their capital. When James IV. brought home his bride, Margaret, daughter of Henry VII. of England, a fountain at the Cross ran wine for all to drink, and a similar rejoicing took place when the ill-fated Mary, in 1561, made her public entry into the city from "Halryrud hous," and again in 1590, when her son James VI. introduced his Queen, Anne of Denmark to the citizens.

Of the many national and civic proclamations which have been made from Edinburgh Cross, two stand out conspicuous in the history of the whole island of Great Britain. The first, in 1513, was a summons for a general muster of the Scottish army for the invasion of England before the fatal field of Flodden; and the second was in 1603, when the Lyon King-at-arms announced from that spot the death of Elizabeth of England, and the consequent union of

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the crowns of the two countries.

Such part as the cross has played in the religious history of Scotland, is mostly concerned with the progress of the Reformation in the north. In 1555 John Knox was burnt in effigy there, having gone to Geneva instead of answering a summons to appear before the Bishops. In 1565 a Roman Catholic priest, for the enormity of having said mass on Easter Day at Holyrood, was "tyed to the cross, where he tarried the space of one hour, during which time the boys served him with his Easter egges;" and again on the following day "he was set upon the Market Cross for the space of three or four hours, the hangman standing by and keeping him," while the populace again as on the former occasion displayed their godly zeal and christian charity. In that stormy time for Scotland, the reigns of Charles II. and his brother James, when politics and religion were so strangely and unfortunately intermingled, that while the one party claimed to be punishing rebels, the other felt that it was suffering martyrdom, many, including the Duke of Argyle and a hundred other persons of all ranks, suffered death in Edinburgh, in most cases at the "Mercat Croce."

England provides more than one instance in which, as in the case of Edinburgh, the present generation has in some sort replaced the town cross, hastily or heedlessly destroyed by a former age.

Bristol once possessed a handsome market cross of the fourteenth century, containing, in niches, statues of several English Kings, the whole work gorgeous in vermilion, and blue, and gold. So late as 1633, the citizens, to preserve it, enclosed it with a railing and regilt it, at the same time adding a new storey with four more statues. Yet in 1733, on the declaration of some neighbouring tradesman that it was a danger to his life and property, it was entirely pulled down. Re-erected at private cost on College Green, it was actually demolished a second time, a public subscription (to the disgrace of Bristol) defraying the charges. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, having acquired the fragments, rebuilt it in his park at Stone Head, and a subsequent age has replaced it on the Green with a copy of the original, once so scornfully flung away.

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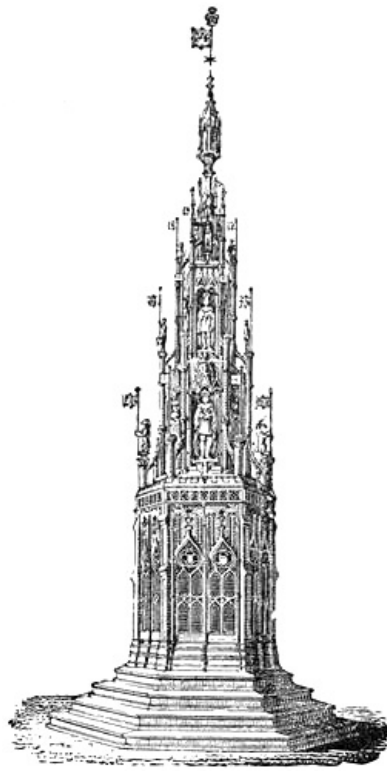
Glastonbury, again, has, by the recent erection of a new cross, made some reparation for its careless treatment of an old one. Its ancient market cross was one of the most curious in the country; substantial, simple, and unadorned, offering ample accommodation and shelter beneath its wide arches, and with a certain quaint attraction in its curious gables. On showing signs of decay, its past services to the market folk were so far from pleading for it, that it was abandoned to the plundering of local builders, who coveted its time-honoured materials, and not a recognizable vestige now remains. Its modern successor is, as one expects of a nineteenth century erection, perfectly conventional, consisting of a column with canopied niches, surmounted by a short spire.

Gloucester boasted a market cross from the days of Richard III. to the year 1750—an hexagonal tower-like structure garnished with statues, but, like Edinburgh Cross, it was condemned as an obstruction, and, less fortunate than its comrade in misfortune, has found no one to rebuild it.

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Another town in which the exigencies of modern business have been supposed to require the removal of a famous relic of the past is Coventry, whose cross must in its day have been one of the most ornate in the country. This cross, which Sir William Hollis reared in 1541 in the place of an earlier one, was built on similar lines to one at Abingdon, which has also disappeared. In form it was a hexagonal spire, some sixty feet in height, on a series of four steps, covered with a mass of tracery and carving, and containing a number of figures beneath canopies. It was lavishly gilded, and so solicitous were the authorities of preserving its gleaming bravery untarnished, that a fine was imposed on any one who should presume to sweep the "cheepinge," or market, without first watering it to lay the dust. In 1668, it was repaired and regilt at a cost of £276, but barely a century later it was razed to the ground, and its memory is only kept alive by the presence of a few of its statues and some other fragments, preserved variously in the neighbourhood. Abingdon Cross was "sawn" down by the Puritan soldiery of Waller's army, and the same brainless bigotry robbed Chester of its High cross. Holbeach had a cross of unique plan, consisting of a column supported by a pentagonal platform raised on arches, which has disappeared; as also has one at Leicester, and a boldly designed market cross at Ipswich, which must have been both useful and ornamental.

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COVENTRY CROSS.

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It is difficult for us to conceive how constantly these sculptured shafts and sheltering arches met the gaze of our forefathers at every turn in the older cities of England. Beside the splendid cross, for instance, just described, Coventry had at one time its Swine's Cross (taken down about 1763), a second of the same name in another part of the town, Sponne Cross, Hill Cross, Jesus Cross, the Maiden's Cross, and the New, or Queen's Cross, as well as others close at hand at Radford and at Whitley. A similar case meets us in Doncaster, which once could boast of a Butcher's Cross (destroyed in 1725), a Butter Cross (removed to make room for the Market House in 1846), the Northern Cross, the Wheat, or Market Cross, the Crosses of S. James, S. Sepulchre, and Maudlin (Magdalen), Snorel Cross, and one in the churchyard. Not one of all this list remains, Doncaster's only example being the Hall Cross, which will be referred to among the memorial crosses.

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During the Commonwealth, with its temporary establishment of civil marriages, this rite was "solemnized," if one may use the term in such a connection, in Doncaster at the Wheat Cross.

The ancient city of Lincoln is another example of a place once rich in these memorials. Only a well-cross exists there to-day, although its first Bishop, Remigius, built a town-cross, his successor, Hugh de Grenoble, added others, and yet others were erected by Hugh de Wells, all of which, as also an ancient High Cross, have gone.

Amongst the Market Crosses still left to us, a foremost place, if not the first, must be given to that of Chichester. This beautiful structure was reared by Edward Story, bishop of the diocese from 1478 to 1504, who also left an estate, valued at £25 per annum, to keep it in repair, and to provide wine at the Cross annually on S. George's Day. It is an octagon in plan, and covers a space of some four hundred square feet. Crosses of this type, of which Malmesbury and Salisbury provide other excellent examples, are not only more beautiful, but more useful, than the solid decorated towers or spires, such as the crosses of Coventry and Abingdon, for the wide arches afford both shade and shelter to the market folk in summer heat or wintry rain and snow. A cross which is almost a combination of the solid high-cross and the large covered type is found at Shepton Mallet, having been erected by Walter Buckland and his wife in 1505. Other examples of the covered cross exist at Chipping Campden, in Gloucestershire, and at Cheddar. Even in the narrower scope of the high cross, an attempt was sometimes made to provide at least so much shelter as was possible under the circumstances, as we see in the open lower story of the Butter Cross, at Winchester, and of the curious pentagonal cross at Leighton-Buzzard.

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Amid all the bustle of the busy market-place, and perhaps above all times in this hurrying, grasping age, the old market cross stands with its message ever old, yet ever needful, for all who have ears to hear; testifying that there are interests of more moment than buying and selling and getting gain, and by its very antiquity speaking of the frailty of the life of man, so many generations of whom have bargained and chattered beneath its shadow, and gone out one by one in long procession into the unknown Infinite.

Turning to those public crosses, which were used chiefly, though not quite exclusively, for religious purposes and especially for preaching, S. Paul's Cross comes first by right both of



MARKET CROSS, CHICHESTER.

The original foundation of the Cross at S. Paul's is lost in antiquity, but evidence exists that one, on or near the site of the later one, marked the spot whereon the city folkmote was held before the twelfth century. The earliest actual mention of the cross is in 1191, when one William Fitz Osbert here delivered an address against the divine authority of the crown. From that time down to the middle of the seventeenth century, a period of about five hundred years, the references to it are frequent and interesting.

It was first used for ecclesiastical purposes in 1285, when the churchyard was enclosed, and began probably to be regarded more distinctly as a cathedral precinct, yet even after this the events connected with the cross are not all strictly ecclesiastical. In 1382 the building was damaged in a severe thunder-storm, and in 1449 it was re-built in "a more splendid style" by Thomas Kemp, Bishop of London. The last preaching at the cross was in 1633, after which the sermons were delivered in the cathedral; and in 1643, by order of the Long Parliament, the cross was taken down. All that now remains of it is the octagon base, which was discovered a few years since, when the churchyard was laid out as a garden; the site will be found, marked out with stones, at the northeast corner of the present cathedral, a portion of the east wall of which rests upon a small part of it.

In its palmy days, S. Paul's Cross consisted of a covered pulpit of stone, surrounded by a low wall, and surmounted by a bold cross on an ogee roof. When not in use it was closed by a door, and near the opening or window where the preacher took his stand, was, in its latter days, a bracket for an hour-glass. At the left hand of the structure, against the east wall of the cathedral transept, was a covered gallery of two storeys, known as "the shrowds," in which persons of special distinction were accommodated to hear the preaching; the bulk of the congregation sitting on movable forms or standing between the cross and the church.

Here at various times were heard such famous leaders of the religious thought of the nation as Fisher, Latimer, Gardiner, Ridley, Coverdale, Tunstall, Bonner, Grindal, Scory, Jewell, King, "the king of preachers," according to the opinion of James I., Hooker, "the judicious," Donne, Dean of S. Paul's, and Laud, who, as Bishop of London, was the last of the famous preachers to occupy this celebrated pulpit. Several of the sermons delivered here have become historical, or were connected with events that have helped to make history. On September 12th, 1557, "Dr. Standyche did preach at the shrowds for the winning of the battle of St. Quentin," the lord mayor and the aldermen being present in state. Jewell, Bishop of Salisbury, preached a sermon on March 30th, 1560, which became known as "the Challenge Sermon," from the fact that it was largely composed of a number of theses, which he defied the Roman controversialists to prove from the Fathers or from Holy Scripture. Another discourse that acquired a name had been preached here by Latimer in 1548; this was the "Sermon of the Plough," which treated in a quaint and characteristic manner of the seed and the husbandry of "God's plough-land." Queen Elizabeth came to S. Paul's Cross in full state on September 8th, 1588, to hear another bishop of Salisbury, Dr. Piers, preach in

commemoration of the overthrow of the Armada. On this occasion eleven ensigns taken from the Spanish fleet were exhibited, previous to their being displayed on the following day on London Bridge. On March 24th, 1619, the cross was draped in black in memory of the death of Anne of Denmark, the queen of James I., who had died early in the month; and in April, King, Bishop of London, delivered a sermon there at a solemn thanksgiving for the king's recovery from severe illness. In 1629 a muttering of the coming storm was heard at S. Paul's Cross, when, on the Sunday before Whitsunday, two papers were found attached to it addressed to King Charles I., who was warned of the wrath of heaven against him, and bidden, "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou must be no longer *Stuart*."

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The Cross, however, was not used for sermons only. Being a place centrally situated and resorted to by large numbers of people, it was deemed a suitable one for the performance of acts of public penance. In 1441, Roger Boltyngbroke, who was found guilty of the sin of necromancy, sat on a chair by the Cross during sermon time, surrounded by his magical appliances, and afterwards openly abjured his dark arts. A more notable penitent was Mistress Jane Shore, who came here "out of all araie, save her kertle onlie," and with a taper in her hand, in May, 1483. John Hig, "alias Noke, alias Jonson"—a suspicious character obviously—stood bareheaded and barefooted, with a faggot on his shoulder, all through the preaching at the Cross on Good Friday, in 1528, as a penance for certain "damnable and erroneous opinions" which he confessed to having "erroneously and damnably said, affirmed, believed and taught." A similar penance was performed in 1532 by a barrister of the Middle Temple, James Baynham by name, who seems to have been a singularly weak and vacillating creature. Having professed Protestantism, he recanted; again recalled his recantation, and was burned at Smithfield. In 1534, Elizabeth Barton, "the holy maid of Kent," who professed to have had divine revelations condemning the divorce of King Henry VIII., was compelled to stand on a high scaffold over against the pulpit, together with some half-a-dozen priests and monks, who had expressed belief in her prophesyings. This probably mistaken, but certainly well-meaning and pious nun, was hanged at Tyburn on April 21st, 1534.

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In November, 1554, five men did penance here by standing during the sermon with lighted tapers in one hand and rods in the other; in March, 1556, a man, for transgressing the rules of Lent, stood with the carcase of a pig on his head and another in his hand; and in August, 1559, a "minister" did penance for "marrying a couple that were married afore-time."

The custom, common in past days, of formally destroying a book by way of condemning its publication, has several times been illustrated at S. Paul's Cross. Many of Luther's works were burnt at a sermon preached there by Fisher on May 12th, 1521; and Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, after another sermon by the same bishop, Cardinal Wolsey being present also, in 1530. In 1613, some books by a Jesuit named Suarez, whose works were said to be "derogatory to Princes," were burnt at the Cross, and the writings by Pareus, concerning the people's authority over princes, were similarly treated in 1622.

A notice of the Cross in the reign of Edward III. gives us a curious insight into the ideas of episcopal duty at the time. Michael de Northbury, Bishop of London from 1354 to 1362, acted as a pawnbroker for the benefit of the citizens of that city, and if at the year's end the pledges were not redeemed, notice was given by the preacher, after his sermon at the Cross, that they would be sold in fourteen days.

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THE READING CROSS, ST. PAUL'S, LONDON.

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Amongst the incidents of a secular character which centred in this time-honoured erection, we find a pleasing illustration of the friendly relations which subsisted between the King and his subjects in bygone days; for it seems to have been customary for the monarch, before going abroad, to come down to S. Paul's Cross, and there to bid them farewell. So came, at any rate, Henry III., both in 1257 and in 1261, before passing into France.

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The gatherings round the spot were not always of so friendly a nature. Under Queen Mary, religious feeling ran so high as to lead to serious disturbances. Dr. Bourne, chaplain to Bonner, was interrupted by shouting and uproar for attacking Ridley in a sermon on August 13th, 1553, and a dagger was flung at him, which stuck into a post of the Cross. On the following Sunday, about one hundred and twenty halberdiers were present, and peace was preserved; but in June of the next year, Dr. Pendleton was fired on whilst preaching and nearly struck by a pellet "of tyne."

No other preaching cross attained to the name and fame of that of S. Paul's, yet they were not uncommon in the country. In the Green Yard at Norwich was one of wood, with leaded roof and a cross of the same metal; Worcester also had one. Remains of a preaching cross may be seen near the church in Iron Acton, in Gloucestershire, a graceful structure originally, now lamentably mutilated; and at Disley, in the same county, is another, also in ruins. A still better example is the Blackfriars' preaching cross at Hereford, a hexagonal enclosure with open arches, above which is the stump of what was once the sacred emblem.

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The Puritans, although such advocates of preaching, evidently had a strong prejudice against these open-air pulpits. That at Iron Acton bears to this day marks of the violence used in the attempt to destroy it, and most of our English preaching crosses have, like our most famous example, wholly disappeared.

In this last half century, the English people have woken up once more in a wonderful way to an appreciation of life in the open air. Never were outdoor sports and games so generally followed; and "garden-parties" and "garden-meetings" are amongst our most modern inventions. Parks and pleasure-grounds are now demanded almost as a public right; and no "exhibition" can look for success that does not provide ample accommodation for its patrons to listen to music under the open skies. In the face of all these signs of the times, is it too much to hope that the Church may be touched with the same feeling—surely a healthy and a desirable one; and that we may yet see on summer's evenings the congregations choosing to sit or stand about the preaching cross in the churchyard, rather than sit, involuntarily listless, at the best with difficulty attentive, in the heat of a crowded, and often ill-ventilated church?

Memorial Crosses.

THE sign of our salvation having come to fill so large a place in Christian art, it would naturally be expected that in memorials in any way connected with religious feelings it would be employed, and above all in the monuments of the dead laid to rest in hope of a joyous resurrection through the victory of the Cross. As a matter of fact, our earliest Christian cross-forms are the disguised crosses of the catacombs, and in spite of every outbreak of bigotry against other uses of the symbol, it has never been entirely abandoned for such purposes. Preaching crosses and market crosses might fall into ruin, and roods and crucifixes be wantonly destroyed, but the Cross, carved in stone or cut on stone above the grave, is found in all ages, though not so frequently in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as before or since.

The first cross said to have been raised in the Kingdom of Northumbria, was that wooden one which S. Oswald, the King and Martyr, planted with his own hands on the eve of the battle of Hevenfelth in 635. This, originally a sign of the cause for which Oswald sought to reclaim his realm, became a memorial of the Christian victory, and was still preserved as such in the time of the Venerable Bede, who tells us that "the place is shown to this day, and held in great veneration."

Another memorial of battle was the famous Neville's Cross, near Durham, erected to mark the spot where Ralph Neville, in October, 1346, defeated the Scottish invaders. This, according to ancient accounts, was a singularly dignified structure, with a crucifixion beneath a stone canopy at the top, and a series of figures at the base, the whole being raised on half-a-dozen steps.

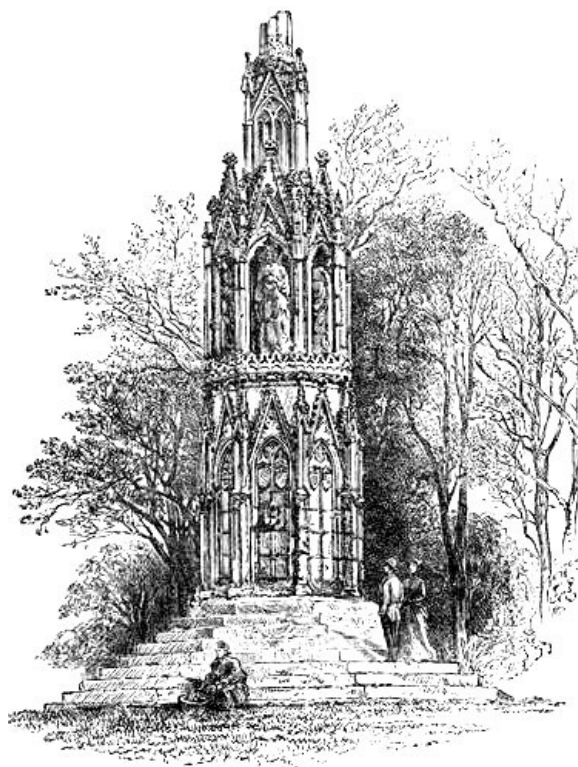
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The greater number of our memorial crosses, however, preserve the memory, as was above indicated, of persons rather than of events; and amongst the earliest of these is a very ancient example of the so-called runic type in the Parish Church of Leeds. It is curiously wrought with human figures, difficult now to name with any certainty, and with several fine specimens of the varied and intricate scrolls so popular with the early stone-carvers of the north. It is supposed to be a monument to Onlaf Godfreyson, who died about 941.

Travellers in the Alps will be familiar with the memorials, pathetic in their simplicity, of those mountaineers and wayfarers who have met sudden destruction beneath the overwhelming avalanche; ever and anon the rustic cross of wood is met with, marked with the initials of the dead and with the letters "P. I.," or perhaps the words in full, *Perit ici*. Spain, too, has her wooden crosses scattered along her most lonely roads and hillsides, or by the forest pathway; memorials, these, however, of more sombre tragedies, telling where the brigand or the highwayman struck down his victim.

The great type of the permanent memorial cross amongst us in England has been supplied by the devotion of Edward I. to his Queen Eleanor, and any land might well have been proud of the splendid series of crosses which he raised to her memory.

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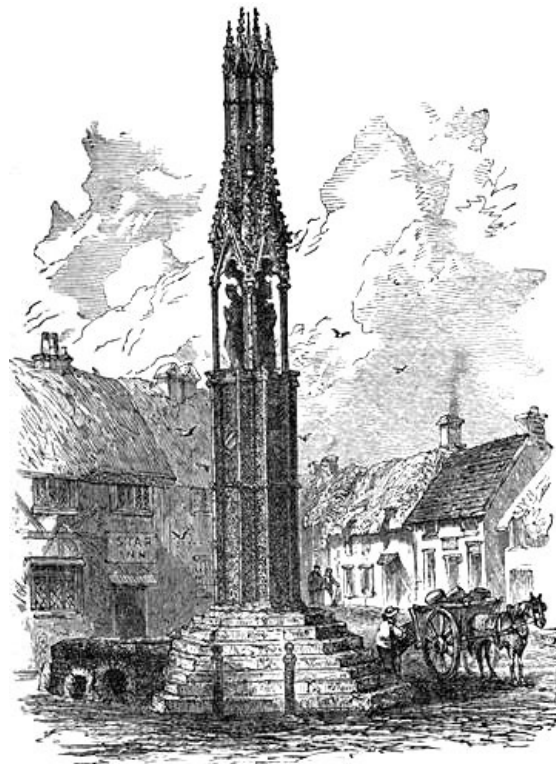


NORTHAMPTON CROSS.

Queen Eleanor died at Hardeby, in Nottinghamshire, on November 28th, 1291, her husband being at the time in the north, entering upon a Scottish campaign. The body was embalmed; and as the solemn procession, which the King joined ere its start, made its slow way to Westminster, a spot was chosen at each halting place, on which a monument was to be raised. The total number of these is not quite certain, but the following is probably a complete list of them, namely:—Lincoln (where those parts of the body removed in the embalming were buried in the Minster), Grantham, Stamford, Geddington, Northampton, Stony-Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, S. Alban's, Waltham, West Cheap, and Charing. All have now disappeared except those at Geddington, Northampton, and Waltham; and these three survivors, singularly enough, illustrate three distinct styles of construction, the ground plan of the first being a triangle, of the second an octagon, and of the last a hexagon.

With so many crosses varying so largely in design it is probable that there were several architects, but not many names have come down to us; John de la Battaile is said to have designed the one at Northampton, and Pietro Cavallini the Waltham one, Alexander of Abingdon, and William de Ireland executing the work. All the existing crosses have several statues of the Queen, so that we may conclude that this was a feature common to the whole series; and all were adorned with the arms of England, Castile, and Ponthieu. The design in each case is beautiful, and the detailed carving, whether in the diapering of the surface, or its enrichment with flowers, crockets, and other architectural features, both elaborate and exquisite. Charing Cross, the cross of "the beloved Queen" (*chère reine*), the last of the series, more nearly approached the Northampton Cross than either of the other two which remain, but its plan was hexagonal. Not a trace or a description of the original condition of most of the other crosses has been handed down to us.

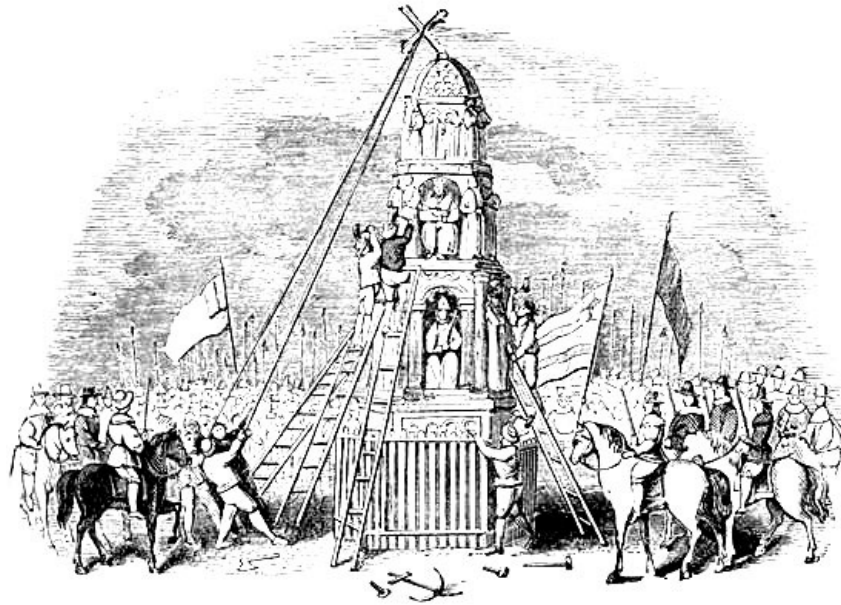
Geddington Cross is in a singularly perfect state, wanting only its upper member with the actual cross. That at Northampton is similarly truncated. In the reign of Queen Anne a new cross, quite out of keeping with the rest of the design was placed upon the latter by the local justices of the places, who also adorned its faces with sundials; these have happily been again removed. Waltham Cross, which had become seriously decayed, was restored early in the present century, and again more carefully and satisfactorily in 1887 as a memorial of the jubilee of the reign of Queen Victoria.



GEDDINGTON CROSS.

The Cheapside Cross was renewed in 1486 by the citizens of London, and again in 1600. In the excitement of the religious ferment of the following century it was a great sufferer, all the images on it being broken in 1581, and again, "with profane indignity" in 1596. Its final destruction took place in 1643 under an order of the Long Parliament, which decreed the demolition of all crosses. Both this and, it would appear, the earlier attacks upon it, were the work of a fanatical minority merely, which could command but little popular sympathy, for Sir Robert Harlow, who had charge of the work of destruction, brought with him to the city a troop of horse and two companies of foot to protect the workmen from the rage of the citizens. The Cross at Charing was probably removed at the same time. Of the fate of the

others we have no record; some perhaps crumbled with decay, and were neglected, others doubtless met a fate similar to that of their London sisters.



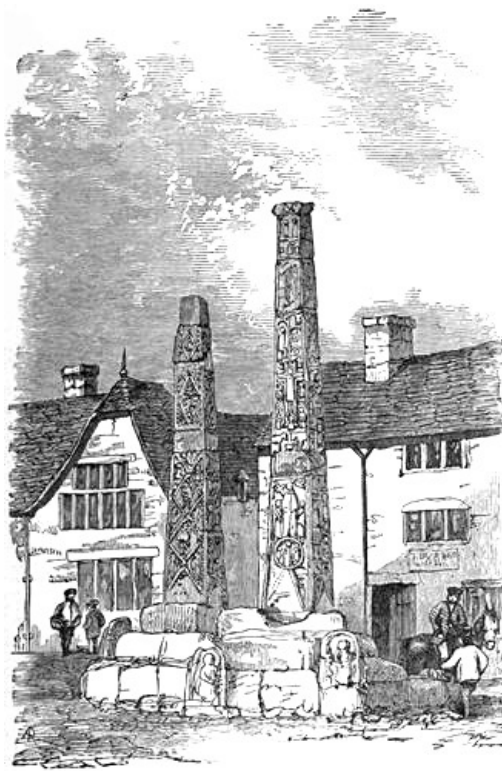
PURITANS DESTROYING CHEAPSIDE CROSS.

The Waltham Cross has proved the most suggestive to architects of subsequent times; amongst other instances the Crimean Cross, near Westminster Abbey, has been formed on its design. Sir G. Gilbert Scott drew inspiration from the Northampton Cross for the erection of the Martyrs' Memorial at Oxford; and near Sheffield is one which perhaps follows, though at an immense distance, the type at Geddington. This is the memorial to the four hundred victims, of the terrible epidemic of cholera which visited Sheffield in 1832. This cross, the foundation-stone of which was laid by James Montgomery, the poet, is chiefly interesting as one of the earliest instances of the reviving taste and feeling for this specially appropriate form of monument. Another Memorial Cross, whose noble size and dignified proportions, when compared with the one last named, give ample evidence of the artistic growth which has accompanied this growth of feeling, is the S. Andrew's Cross, at Plymouth.

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Two crosses of a different type to the Eleanor crosses are those at Newark and at Wedmore. The first, which consists of a tall shaft on a flight of bold, hexagonal steps, was erected by the Duchess of Norfolk, as a memorial of her husband, John Viscount Beaumont, who fell at the battle of Towton Moor in 1461. The present head of the cross is modern. The Wedmore Cross, sometimes called "Jeffrey's Cross," commemorates the unfortunate country-folk of Somersetshire, who fell in Monmouth's rebellion, or were butchered by the brutal Jeffreys afterwards.

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CROSSES AT SANDBACH, CHESHIRE.

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Probably, could we but decipher the allusions intended by their sculptures, we should find that most of our ancient carved crosses were originally memorials. Almost certainly the two shafts at Sandbach, in Cheshire, are such. These, which are amongst the most valuable relics of early art in this country, dating probably from the eighth, or even from the seventh century, were broken into many pieces and scattered over the district as doorsteps, gate-posts, and what not, until collected and most carefully restored by Colonel Forde, the lord of the Manor. The larger of these two columns, each of which has lost its cruciform head, is covered with sculptures of sacred subjects taken from the New Testament; we have the annunciation of S. Elizabeth, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the trial and crucifixion of our Lord, the apocalyptic emblems of the four evangelists, and other sacred scenes and persons. The carvings on the smaller cross are of a secular character, and are supposed to represent events connected with the marriage of Peda, King of Mercia, to Alchfleda, daughter of Oswy, King of Northumbria, and his baptism, on which as a condition that marriage depended; most of the work is now inexplicable, referring to scenes of which all other records are lost. The stones of which these columns are composed are of the hardest and most durable sort, and a perfect enthusiasm of destruction must have been required to tear them down and break them.

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IONA CROSS.

The Scottish island, the famous home of S. Columba, has several note-worthy examples.

They are of the so-called runic design, covered for the most part with very elegant carvings, and form the most interesting series of relics left to us in that cradle of northern Christianity. None of them date back so far as the days of the great Abbot, whose name is so interwoven with the history of Iona, yet they are very ancient and characteristic. Gathered about Reilig Odhrain, the burial-place of the isle, they bear eloquent testimony to the sanctity of the spot, to which kings and chieftains were brought for sepulchre even from far off Norway. One of these, and perhaps the most familiar, stands on three roughly-hewn steps overlooking the sea; its ornamentation consisting of a series of circles. Abbot Mackinnon's Cross is now headless; the shaft is covered with a scroll beautifully designed of conventional leaves, and bears an inscription, recording the date of its erection, 1489. S. Martin's Cross is near the ruined cathedral, and is also carved in graceful scrolls in which the figures of snakes and other creatures are introduced.

Monasterboice, or the Monastery of Boethius, a bishop who died in 521, situated in county Louth, has a number of crosses, several of which are in excellent preservation. The Great Cross, as it is called, stands twenty-two feet in height, and is on the south side of the church. A second example, which is also near the church, has been described as "the most beautiful specimen of Celtic stone-work now in existence," this is the Cross of Muiredach. It is covered with carvings of scriptural scenes, and bears on the front the inscription (in Erse), "Pray for Muiredach, by whom this Cross was made." The venerable builder was Abbot of Armagh, and died in 923 or 924. Drumcliff, near Sligo, and many other places in Ireland also possess most interesting crosses.

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THE CROWLE STONE.

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A curiously carved shaft in the church of S. Oswald at Crowle, in North Lincolnshire, has been supposed by many to be the shaft of a very ancient cross, and if so, must almost certainly be included amongst those raised as memorials. It is covered on one side with an involved chain pattern roughly suggesting a snake swallowing its tail, and on the other are some human and animal figures, the meaning of which has never been satisfactorily explained. What makes the shaft especially interesting is the presence of the fragment of a runic inscription. The wall into which the Crowle stone is built was part of the eleventh century church of the place, and this ancient memorial to some long-forgotten hero was obviously taken from some neighbouring spot and converted into a lintel for the west door by the Norman builders.^[3]

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Another memorial cross of quite a different type is the Hall Cross of Doncaster. It was erected by, or in memory of, Oti, or Otho di Tilli, steward of Conisborough for the Earl of Warren, under Stephen and Henry II. It would have been destroyed by the troopers of the Earl of Manchester in the Civil War, but for the action of the mayor, who succeeded in preserving it; but in 1792 it was taken down on making some alterations in the level of the road, and another cross of the same character was put up in the following year on Hall Cross Hill. It consists of a centre circular column, with four others much smaller placed about it, each of the five originally terminating in a cross. Its memorial character is preserved by the old Norman-French inscription, which it still bears, "Icest est la cruce Ote di Tilli a ki alme Deu en face merci. Amn." It served a more gruesome purpose in the seventeenth century,

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being the spot chosen for the exposition of the heads of decapitated traitors.

Among the simple crosses planted in such profusion over and around Dartmoor are one or two interesting memorials. Roman's Cross, at Leemoor, a plain Latin cross nearly six feet in height, standing on a circular base, is claimed by a local tradition as marking a spot whereon the Apostle S. Paul once preached. On Fox Tor stood, till about 1812, a cross raised on a very solid square sub-structure in three tiers, known as Childe's Tomb. Here, according to the story, Childe, a hunter of ages long gone by, met his death from cold one stormy winter's night. The whole memorial was wantonly destroyed by some labourers early in this century, but it has recently been re-built and surmounted by a new cross. Bra Tor boasts a modern addition to the Dartmoor Crosses, one having been erected there in memory of her Majesty's Jubilee, and another, of a style more lofty and ornate than is characteristic of the locality, has been erected at Plympton S. Mary in memory of the Rev. Merton Smith, a late vicar, who perished in the Pyrenees in 1883.

Travelling yet further west, in Cornwall, one ancient cross at least is found which was intended as a memorial of the now forgotten dead. In the market place of Penzance, which can hardly, under the circumstances, be its original site, is a cross some five feet high, on which, at its removal in 1829, from the centre to the side of the square, were found near the base the words, "Hic procumbunt corpora piorum."

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Thus scattered up and down the land, from far Iona to the Cassiterides, is found the simple but expressive emblem of the Christian faith, bearing its silent testimony to the belief and hope of all the ages, that through the Cross the holy dead all sleep in peace to rise in joy.

CHAPTER VII.

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Wayside and Boundary Crosses.

WE have seen how the cross was erected in the busy market and beneath the shadow of the great Cathedral, where crowds hurried to and fro, day by day, for business or devotion. It was not alone in such populous places, however, that the sign of salvation reared itself to cheer the weary traveller through life's ways by a message of faith, of hope, of divine love. In the village street, the lonely trackless moor, the meadow pathway and the king's high-road, at every turn and in every place in mediæval England one met the same sacred memorial. Nay, even the hillside itself has been scored with it, as in the case of Whiteleaf in Buckinghamshire, where a cross, nearly one hundred feet long by fifty feet broad, was cut at some unknown but remote period in the chalk hill, by means of a huge trench over two feet in depth, after the fashion of the more familiar White Horse in Berkshire.

These numerous examples are not easily classified. If only the full history of their raising could be known, many doubtless would fall into classes that have already been considered. Some would prove to be memorials which have failed to preserve the memory of their founders; others may have marked spots, round which the villagers gathered to hear sermons from the travelling friars, to listen to some proclamation issued by the lord of the manor, or by the king, or to discuss those topics of local politics or of public interest which might from time to time come uppermost; others again marked the boundaries of estates, and especially of Church lands. They were in fact public crosses for no one special purpose, but for every public requirement of rural life.

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In the west of England, in Devon and Cornwall, roadside crosses were, and even now are, remarkably common. Those of the former county seem to have generally served one of two purposes, either to mark the boundaries of lands, or to act as guide posts on the other wise almost trackless moorlands of Dartmoor and the neighbourhood.

For example, not far from Princetown stands one of the largest of the Dartmoor Crosses, known as Seward's or Nun's Cross, over seven feet in height. On the western face of this is carved, in two lines, the word 'Boc-lond,' marking it as a boundary stone of the lands of Buckland Abbey, although in this case it was adapted to that purpose, not erected expressly for it, the foundation of the abbey being not so ancient as the cross. The abbey dates from 1278. Bennet's Cross, again, is one of the boundaries of Headland Warren, and of the parish of Bovey Tracey; it bears on its face the letters W. B., standing for "Warren Bounds;" the letters, but not the boundary line, are modern.

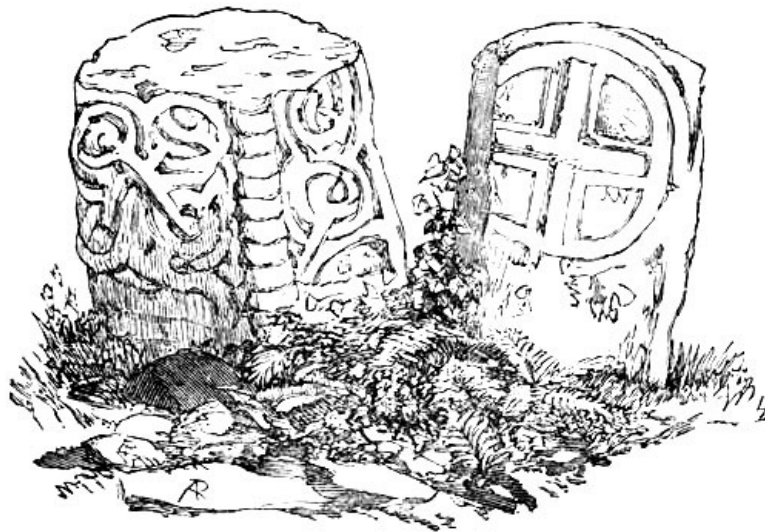
An ancient track across the moor, called the Abbot's Way, which formed the most direct method of communication between the abbeys of Buckland and Tavistock on the one side, and that of Buckfast on the other, was marked out with a series of crosses, many of which yet remain. The fords of the Avon, on this pathway, were indicated by this means;

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Huntingdon Cross still stands at one ford as of old, but Buckland Ford Cross has gone. Some of these weather-beaten stones have carved on their several faces the initial letters of the towns towards which those faces turn, as a guide to the traveller. Sandowl Cross, now a rough stone rising scarcely a yard from the earth, has cut upon it the letters B., T., R., and M., pointing to Brent, Totnes, Kingsbridge, and Modbury respectively. Similarly Hookmoor Cross indicates the direction to be taken to reach Modbury, Brent, Totnes, and Plymouth.

These Dartmoor Crosses are interesting as ancient landmarks and boundaries, and as indications of the almost instinctive way in which our forefathers employed the Cross for every purpose of more than usual importance; they are moreover not devoid of a certain picturesque effect from the harmony of their rugged forms with their moorland surroundings. They are not, however, in the ordinary sense of the word, beautiful. They are mostly plain Latin crosses, occasionally mounted on one or two steps, with no attempt at carving or decoration. Nor are they specially impressive in height or size; Merchant's Cross, near Lynch Hill, is the largest and stands but eight feet two inches high, and some are much less than this. Some few of them have an incised cross cut within the head, or even running the whole length, but those on the Moor proper are of the simplest kind. On the borders we find a few cut by some slightly more ambitious hand. At Hele is a Maltese Cross, the section of each of its limbs being an octagon, and a Latin one of the same section is at Holne.

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REMAINS OF RUNIC CROSS, WEST KIRBY, CHESHIRE.

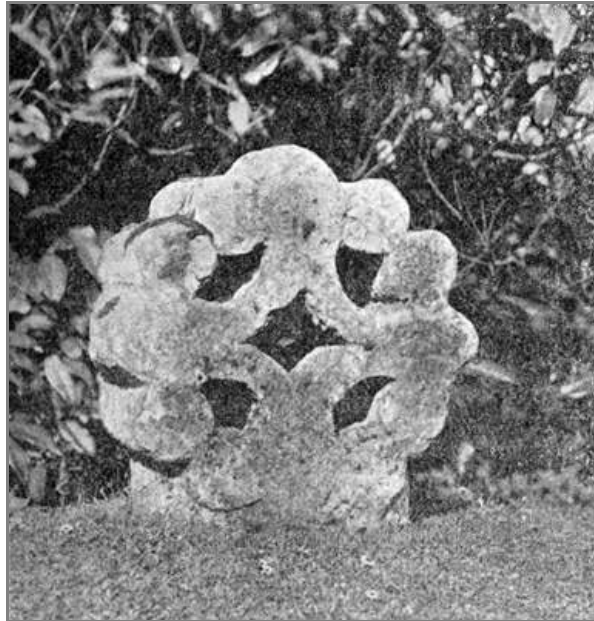
The roadside crosses which dot the neighbouring county of Cornwall are similar in this respect, that there are few of them of any great size, but otherwise the type is quite different. They are mostly shafts terminating in circular or oval heads, on which is either incised, or cut in relief a cross or crucifix; in very few instances is the stone itself cruciform. A great number of the Cornish crosses stood near an ancient cell or chapel, serving much the same purpose as a churchyard cross, others marked the pathways which led to these rude and now forgotten shrines. Formed of the hard granite of the district, the simple, and sometimes almost grotesque, carvings of these monuments, have been generally well preserved; and seeing that in recent years an increasing amount of interest is shewn towards them, there is every reason to hope that the days of careless neglect or wanton destruction are over. Many crosses have recently been reclaimed from degrading uses, as field gate-posts and the like, and placed in more seemly situations. A singular cross unearthed at West Kirby, near the Dee in Cheshire, bears a closer resemblance to the characteristic crosses of Cornwall, than to those found elsewhere in England. The fragments of the shaft, for it is in several pieces, are covered with ingenious interlacing scrolls, and the head has a bold Latin cross within a circle cut upon it.

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Many other examples of wayside crosses are scattered up and down the country, in a greater or less condition of preservation, some of them being still tall and graceful structures. At Aylburton in Gloucestershire, is the lower portion of a very substantial column, said by competent authorities to form part of a fourteenth century cross probably designed by some foreign artist. At Bromboro, in Cheshire, are the remains of a cross, well illustrating the meaningless fashion in which some of our ancient buildings are restored. It was at one time a tall cross of simple design, standing at the top of a flight of nine steps; but the upper member, the actual cruciform head, having been destroyed, a senseless stone ball has been put in its place, and sundials affixed to the shaft. At Burythorpe, in East Yorkshire, the head of what must once have been a beautiful cross is preserved in the garden of a private house. It is foliated, and of a singularly graceful pattern, but whether originally a wayside, or a churchyard cross, it is impossible to say with any degree of certainty. The East Riding has been specially unfortunate in the matter of wayside crosses, of the many examples which it once could boast little has been left but a number of stone sockets, so mutilated for the most part that local tradition has forgotten their origin and purpose,

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describing them as stone chairs, stone coffin heads, old fonts, and so forth.



BURYTHORPE CROSS.

Several villages are happy in having preserved intact very beautiful examples of the wayside cross, or scarcely less so in having found careful and reverent restorers of them when in ruins. Gloucestershire has some good specimens, as at Hempsted and at Clearwell. The former is a very slender shaft surmounted by a cross of four equal arms within a circle; the whole, save that the cross is of the Latin and not the Maltese type, looking very like the cross-headed staff which formed the badge of a Grand Master of the Templars. The Clearwell Cross, of the fourteenth century, has the usual features of steps, square base or pedestal, and slender shaft, but the elegant cross at the head is of bolder proportions than is found in the majority of cases. A very similar erection is the White Friars' Cross at Hereford, which can perhaps claim to be considered a memorial cross, in that it was built by Bishop Charlton, or Cherleton (1361-1370) at the time of an outbreak of the plague in the city. It is an excellent example, with a base heraldically decorated and finished at the top with battlements. The head has been restored. Another fine cross of about the same date is at Headington in Oxfordshire; it is crowned with a tabernacle, which is modern and not a good imitation of ancient work of the kind. But one of the most imposing of our wayside crosses stands at Stallbridge, Dorsetshire. It consists of three octagonal steps on which a broad low pedestal is placed, from the centre of which rises a shaft with narrow buttresses, surmounted by tabernacle work. The column is adorned with niches containing statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John, and other saints, and the tabernacle is completed with a tapering spire ending in a small cross. The whole structure is thirty feet high.

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A special class of wayside crosses has been provided by the ancient custom of placing this holy sign beside wells and springs. From ancient times an idea of special sanctity attached itself to springs of bright clear water. It was so in the days of classic Rome, and the Derbyshire custom of well-dressing proves its existence in the past amongst ourselves. All over the country we find such springs with a tradition of being "holy wells," and their frequent dedication in the names of saints illustrates the same fact. Canons of the church enacted in 960, ordered that no well should be venerated except with the permission of the bishop of the diocese; but so strong was the popular superstition, that similar enactments were called for in 1018, and again in 1102. It was no doubt out of regard for this popular estimation of wells, that in 950 they were declared to be sanctuaries, whither the hunted fugitive from justice might flee and be safe. The special fame of the wells of S. Keyne and of S. Winifred is widely known.

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Such being the case it was a natural thing to erect upon this holy ground the sign of our salvation, a practice which the reader will no doubt remember is referred to by Sir Walter Scott in his *Marmion*:—

"Where shall she turn? behold her mark
A little fountain cell,
Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
In a stone basin fell,
Above some half-worn letters say,

**'Drink, weary pilgrim drink, and pray
for the kind soul of Sybil Grey,
Who built this cross and well.'**

Just such a rustic roadside erection as that to which Clare thus turned for water to slake the thirst of the dying Marmion, exists at the village of Bumpking Leys, in Shropshire. A plain oblong trough of stone surrounds the well, and beside it is a small Latin Cross, with an inscription, now indecipherable save for the sacred initials I.H.S.

We have already noticed that a well-cross is the only one left of a number of crosses once existing in the city of Lincoln. It stands near the old church of S. Mary-le-Wigford, and consists of a square building, like a wayside chapel, the gable of which once bore the cross. It is said to be the finest well-cross in the country, and dates from the fourteenth century. The heavy base of a cross in Bisley Churchyard, in Gloucestershire, which is now simply a truncated spire, has been supposed to cover a well, which has now, however, dried up or taken some other course. And again in the same county at Hempsted, whose wayside cross was noticed above, another conduit resembling the one at Lincoln is found. This building, known as Our Lady's Well, has the bases of two crosses on its gables, and niches for statues beneath them. In the present century the well was closely built up. The neighbourhood of London at one time had several well-crosses. The original Cross at Tottenham, of which the present one is but a modern imitation, was not improbably of such a character; and S. Chad's Well, S. Bride's Well, and the Clerk's Well (Fons Clericorum), which have given their names to the respective districts of Shadwell, Bridewell, and Clerkenwell, doubtless had their crosses likewise. Near Madron, in Cornwall, is a well-chapel covering the Madron Well. This, though only twenty-five feet by sixteen feet, was complete with stone benches, raised sacarium, and altar, but was almost destroyed by Major Ceely in the Civil War. Helstone also has a holy well, and a third is near Grade Church, all in the same county, where in each case the well-cross has developed into a way-side chapel.

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Henley has a cross which deserves mention on account of the subject carved in the tabernacled head. A crucifix fills the niche from side to side, while behind it, and with hands upraised in benediction over it, is a crowned and bearded figure representing the Divine Father. The Dove, the usual emblem of the Holy Spirit, does not seem to have been inserted. This is a type of carving of which few instances have been left to us in England, but one which was common in mediæval English art, whether the artist wrought in stone or in glass.

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Many of these wayside crosses, besides the well crosses, had granted to them, or acquired by popular custom, the rights of sanctuary; and doubtless in early days, when the arm of the law was not long enough or strong enough to reach through all the length and breadth of the land, and when the king himself amongst his barons, was scarcely more than *primus inter pares*, the foremost of his peers, it must have been a wise and merciful policy, which multiplied these "cities of refuge," where safety was guaranteed to the accused until his case was fairly investigated.

Others of these crosses appealed to the devotion of certain classes of the people, like one which stood at King's Weston, on the Severn, which was emphatically the sailor's cross. Here the mariner, after a successful voyage, or perhaps after an almost unlooked-for escape from the perils of the deep, paid his vows and offered his grateful thanksgiving.

Various civic functions, also, took place around the high crosses of the towns, or those of a similar character in the villages. The good folk of Folkestone were summoned by the blast of a horn to assemble at the churchyard cross before proceeding to elect their mayor; and at Aston Rogers and elsewhere, the court of the lord of the manor met at the cross.

The parish cross was, in a word, in bygone days the centre of the parochial life, and speaks most convincingly of the extent to which religion entered into the lives of the people. In times when the people's holidays were begun by attendance at the Eucharist, when trade guilds had their special altars in the parish church, when every public function naturally included the offering of the great act of Christian worship, it was simply a part of a consistent national life that the cross should dominate the market, should offer its welcome form at each turn of the high-road, should mark the boundaries of property, and crown the hillside and the cooling spring, as well as stand where the dead lay, sown as seed for the Great Harvest, or gleam from the lighted altar, or tower above the worshippers from the rood-loft.

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In the destruction of these holy emblems all England has not suffered equally. The west has been most fortunate; Cornwall, Devon, Somersetshire, and Gloucestershire, being especially rich in the number and excellence of the examples still preserved in a more or less perfect condition. The eastern counties have met with the hardest usage, Lincolnshire and the neighbouring shires having been swept almost bare of them.

Thus briefly we have reviewed the uses of the sacred symbol of the Cross in Christendom and especially in England. The field is one of well-nigh infinite extent, and there are portions that we have barely touched. The heraldic employment of the sign might fill a book full of interest, and even of romance, and every foreign land has examples worthy of record, and a history diversely woven like our own, of devotion and iconoclasm, which has its word to say both to our art and our religion. A fascinating portion of the story of the cross, which lies somewhat beyond our scope, is the legendary lore that has sprung up about it; how the wood for the true cross was matured for its high purpose, and how there was a mystic meaning in the several kinds of wood employed; how the cross-bill twisted her beak in the vain endeavour to drag the nails from her Creator's hands, and the robin splashed his fluttering breast with the Redeemer's blood, in a similar fruitless attempt; how the patient

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ass was signed with the holy sign in memory of the sacred burden that he bore on the first Palm Sunday; and a score of other legends, often full of pathos and of graceful fancy.

It is pleasant to picture those times, further off from ours even in feeling than in years, in which such fancies were woven. The smoke of factory and mine had not then blasted or blackened the foliage of half the land, nor green pastures nor rustling woods been swallowed up by an ever advancing tide of bricks. The world moved slowly then, and commerce and trade were in their infancy; yet the world was beautiful. The stately minster and the lordly abbey, the rustic church and the humble cell stood in stately grandeur or in simple grace amid the fields and farmsteads of the people. In every market place the tapering cross, then perchance fresh and white from the carver's hands, saw the folk gather at its feet to chat and chaffer, as beneath the shelter of a friend: and every highway and byeway was marked at intervals, like the great pathway of man's life, with crosses that are at once emblems of suffering and of salvation. In infinite variety of form, yet always elevating in purity of outline, gracefulness of adornment, and perhaps in richness of colour, these crosses taught, unconsciously to the learners, the love of the beautiful and the good.

The wonderful growth of British commercial enterprise, closely allied as it is, with the building up of our colonial empire and the establishment of our place in the family of nations, is not a fact that any Englishman can regret. But when one marks the sordid spirit, the selfish grasping for wealth, the apotheosis of mere material prosperity, which too often accompany it, he may well feel that the constant presence of a symbol which speaks of other and higher aims, is not less, but more needed now, than it was of old.

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From the point of view of the mental elevation of the people, also, the loss of so many treasures of art cannot be too deeply regretted, nor their rebuilding, if rebuilt in the old spirit, too greatly desired. We are but just awakening to the realization of the fact that Art is not an amusement for the rich, but an educating, elevating, spiritualizing power for all. We may rejoice in the wealth of our manufacturing cities, in the vast output of our foundries and our coalpits; but a factory, too hideous in its blank, bald, monotony of bareness for use as a prison amongst men with eyes and hearts, does not compensate for the loss of an abbey, whose every arch, and gable, and "storied window," raises the soul to thoughts of the pure and the true; nor can a foundry chimney, even though its veil of poisonous smoke represent a fortune working out beneath, be accepted in exchange for the graceful, tapering cross, the very sight of which, in its calm still beauty, would cheer the dweller in our modern towns like the glimpse of an oasis in a desert.

In our schools of all grades some elementary instruction in art forms is now considered a necessity, and something is being done for "children of a larger growth" by opening to them, at times when the masses can use them, the treasures of our museums and picture galleries; how largely would these attempts at popular instruction have been aided if the people had ever before their eyes the graceful forms that ignorance, carelessness, and bigotry have combined to rob us of! And what an influence might not the continued presence of such examples among us have had upon the building of our towns.

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It is at least significant that in the days when these types of art were common in the land, even domestic architecture showed a certain harmoniousness of outline; the gabled roof, the timbered front, the quaintly designed chimney, formed a setting not unbecoming the jewel in our mediæval market-places, and our village streets. It is only since so many different instances of our forefathers' taste and skill, fair copies each and all for their successors, have been taken from us, that we have learnt to build our towns in a horrid monotony of dullness.

Ruskin, in words of biting force, has defined a town of to-day as "the modern aggregate of bad building, and ill-living held in check by constables, which we call a town, of which the widest streets are devoted by consent to the encouragement of vice, and the narrow ones to the concealment of misery." May we not hope that the wish now so obvious among us to rebuilt so far as may be, those glorious piles which are instinct with "the beauty of holiness," is a proof that we are beginning to realize both the squalor and the sin of this condition of things? So far we have seen, it may be, but the little cloud no larger than a man's hand; may it be indeed the earnest of that refreshing rain for which the land has panted, a reviving influence which shall make English art once more the expression of a sincere and devoted faith.

CHAPTER VIII.

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Conclusion.

IN our rapid review of the various uses to which the sacred figure of the cross has been put, we have been considering the most widely-spread illustration of a tendency of the human mind, namely, the universal love of emblems. This trait in man's character, a strange one, perhaps, but a very powerful one, has been forgotten or ignored by the iconoclast and the Puritan, and it is owing to this characteristic that they have never been able to obtain more than a transient victory.

Scarce anything which moves the heart of man, rouses his enthusiasm, or binds him more closely to his fellows, but he has commonly represented it by a symbol.

Amongst the earliest of such influences was the family or tribal bond carrying us back to days of patriarchal simplicity. In the last blessing bestowed by Jacob upon his sons, we find the earliest allusion to the *family emblem*, in the lion of Judah, the serpent of Dan, the hind of Naphtali, Joseph's "fruitful bough," and the other symbols of the twelve ancestors of the chosen race. A striking parallel to this catalogue, in the *totems* of the North American Indians, will occur to almost everyone. But, indeed, the custom of selecting some natural object to denote the idea of the family was well-nigh universal. The inhabitants of the East Indies are as familiar with the spirit of totemism as their brethren of the west. In Africa, the Hottentot, the Bechuana, and others distinguish their tribes by the figure of some animal; in far off China the flowers serve the same purpose, and in Australia the same practice obtains under the name of *Kobong*. Not to multiply examples, we may refer only to the ancient Greek tribes as affording another instance, and suggest the parallel supplied by the crests used in mediæval and modern heraldry.

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The adoption of national symbols was but the inevitable extension of these practices, consequent on the nation, and not the tribe, coming to be recognized as the political unit; and thus we get the Roman Eagle, the White Horse of the Saxons, the Black Raven of the Danes, and the countless national emblems of more modern times.

A closer analogy to the use of the cross meets us when we recall how, in all ages, the gods have been suggested to their worshippers by signs and symbols. The thunderbolts of Jove, the lyre of Apollo, the caduceus of Mercury, the hammer of Thor, are all obvious examples.

It may be true that many of these took their rise at a time when letters were almost unknown save to the learned few, and thus the emblem appealed to those to whom written words were meaningless. Yet as learning spreads to the masses of the people, the popularity of significant tokens does not decrease, but man gives a natural welcome to that which, by a few strokes or a simple outline, sums up for him the expression of a great truth.

And what figure is so expressive of the Christian faith as the hallowed symbol of the Cross? To the ignorant as clearly as the learned it tells of the sufferings which purchased our redemption, of the life of sorrow and death of agony voluntarily undergone by the God-Man. In the light of that Redeemer's own teaching, it speaks of the life of self-abnegation, the daily cross-bearing, to which His followers are pledged; and to the faithful it foretells also that flashing of the "Sign of the Son of Man" across the heavens which shall announce the end of earthly time. The Christians' faith, the Christians' life, the Christians' hope, all are summed up and symbolized in that one most sacred sign—the Holy Cross.

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- [1] See “Bygone Derbyshire,” edited by William Andrews, F.R.H.S., Hull, 1892.
- [2] Engraved, as are several other examples referred to, in Mrs. Jameson’s “History of our Lord, as exemplified in works of Art,” vol. 2.
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