

**ESSAYS ON
GOTHIC
ARCHITECTURE**

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Essays on gothic architecture by Various

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VARIOUS

**ESSAYS ON
GOTHIC
ARCHITECTURE**

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ESSAYS
ON
GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE,

BY THE
REV. T. WARTON,
REV. J. BENTHAM,
CAPTAIN GROSE,
AND THE
REV. J. MILNER.

(WITH A LETTER TO THE PUBLISHER.)

ILLUSTRATED WITH
TWELVE PLATES OF ORNAMENTS, &c.

SELECTED FROM
Incident Buildings;

CALCULATED
To exhibit the various Styles of different Periods.

THE SECOND EDITION.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A LIST OF THE CATHEDRALS OF ENGLAND, WITH THEIR
DIMENSIONS: ALSO TWO NEW PLATES.

—Et nos aliquod nomenque decusque
Ceffimus— VIRGIL. *Æn. lib. ii.*

LONDON:

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HIGH HOLBORN.

1802.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

PUBLIC approbation having rendered a Second Edition of these Essays necessary, the opportunity has been embraced of rendering the volume further interesting and useful, by the addition of two new plates, and the dimensions of all the Cathedrals in England. Of the plates, one is an interior view of Durham cathedral, from a drawing by Mr. Turner; the other, of Westminster Abbey, from a drawing by Mr. Barrow. The points of view here shown are intended to exhibit the difference of character and effect, of

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the circular and of the pointed styles of ancient English architecture.

Durham cathedral is justly considered one of the best and purest specimens of the early, circular, or Saxon style. This view, taken from near the west entrance, looking down the nave towards the east, exhibits an interesting specimen of circular arches springing from massive round pillars, decorated with appropriate ornaments, the zig-zag, billet, &c.

The view in Westminster Abbey is taken from near the principal entrance into the choir, looking up the great isle or nave; and shows the lightness of highly-pointed arches, springing from slender clustered columns, from which issue mouldings and ribs fancifully spreading over the adjoining parts and the vault of the roof. A view is also given of the elegant tracery and magnificence of the great western window.

An attentive inspection and comparison of these prints will give a pretty clear and accurate
idea

idea of the two styles, in which consist the distinguishing characters of our ancient architecture.

The measurements of the Cathedrals, it is presumed, will be particularly acceptable; their real or comparative magnitude is very interesting, and is closely connected with our ideas of the grand and sublime: I know of no book in which the same can be found entire. For ease of consulting, they are arranged alphabetically; and every endeavour has been used to be accurate in the dimensions, which have been taken principally from Willis's Survey of the Cathedrals, and the Mitred Abbies: however, every subsequent authority has been examined, and every possible inquiry amongst an extensive acquaintance has been exercised; so that it is presumed the measurements may be relied upon with considerable certainty, and from which the absolute or comparative magnitude of any of our Cathedrals may easily be known.

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The regular Cathedrals only of England are noticed in this list, with the exception of Westminster Abbey, which, for its elegance and magnitude, it would have been unjust to have omitted: if needful, it may be pleaded it was once numbered among our Cathedrals. The dimensions of old St. Paul's, London, are added, from Dugdale, as highly curious, and without which the subject would not have been complete.

P R E F A C E.

THE want of a concise historical account of Gothic architecture has been a just cause of complaint: the subject is peculiarly interesting to every Englishman, as his country contains the best specimens of a style of building not unequal in grace, beauty, and ornament, to the most celebrated remains of Greece or Rome. This style of architecture may properly be called English architecture, for if it had not its origin in this country, it certainly arrived at maturity here*; under the Saxon dynasty

* Since the publication of the first edition of this work, I am highly gratified by a note which has appeared to the account of Durham Cathedral, which accompanies the Plans, &c. of that structure, published by the Antiquarian Society. "It is much to be wished that the word Gothic should not be used in speaking of the architecture of England, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. The term tends to give false ideas on the subject, and originates with the Italian writers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; who applied the expression of 'La Maniera Gotica,' in contempt to all the works of art of the middle ages.

"From these writers it was borrowed by Sir Christopher Wren, the first English writer who has applied it to English architecture. There is very little doubt that the light and elegant style of building, whose principal

dynasty this style of building was introduced, and under the Norman dynasty it received its ultimate degree of beauty and perfection.

To remedy this want of a convenient manual on this interesting subject, it appeared best to collect what had been already said by several authors of celebrity, in detached works, and which had been received as authorities. In this view, the Rev. Mr. *Bentham's* Essay on Saxon and Norman architecture, in his elaborate History of Ely Cathedral, stood foremost for selection, arrangement, and accurate discrimination of historical facts: next to this, Captain *Grofe's* Preface on Architecture to his Antiquities of England is to be valued; which, although founded in a great degree on Mr.

principal and characteristic feature is the high-pointed arch struck from two centres, was invented in this country: it is certain that it was here brought to its highest state of perfection; and the testimonies of other countries, whose national traditions ascribe their most beautiful churches to English artists, adds great weight to this assertion, and peculiar propriety to the term ENGLISH, now proposed to be substituted to the word Gothic.

"The architecture used by the Saxons, is very properly called Saxon. The improvements introduced after the Norman Conquest, justify the application of Norman to the edifices of that period. The nation assumed a new character about the time of Henry II. The language, properly called English, was then formed; and an architecture founded on the Norman and Saxon, but extremely different from both, was invented by English artists: it is, surely, equally just and proper to distinguish this style by the honourable appellation of English. This term will therefore be used instead of Gothic, in the course of the work; and it is hoped no English antiquary will be offended at the substitution of an accurate and honourable name, in the place of one which is both contemptuous and inappropriate."

Bentham's