

the sculptured effigies of the early part of the fifteenth century, and was used by horsemen about the time when the Wars of the Roses were being carried on in this country.

By MR. T. NEVINSON, a coin of the reign of Queen Anne. It was about the size of a farthing. On the obverse was the head of the queen; on the reverse, the date 1711, with the usual abbreviated legend—REG. MAG. BR. FR. HIB. &c. The coin is of copper, but has been washed over with gold. The impression of the Society was that the coin had been gilded over for the purposes of deception. (*Vide* Humphreys' *Manual* upon the coins of Queen Anne.)

MR. WM. JACKSON (architect) read the following Paper upon

THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF S. MARGARET'S CHURCH, LEICESTER.

THE remarks which I am about to read upon the Architectural History of S. Margaret's Church, if I may use so dignified a title, were first suggested to me during the progress of collecting some examples of Gothic mouldings, which are here particularly good and characteristic, and to which I shall have occasion hereafter to refer. In the course of this collateral study, I was struck by the singular and gradual progression, in point of date, in these mouldings, from the east end of the church, down the south side of the nave and south aisle, and thence to the north side; and being thus led to seek for information from our usual local authorities, I learnt only that no satisfactory account was to be found, and that no materials were believed to be in existence, from which an authentic history could be written. These remarks are offered, therefore, as an attempt to work out the problem, which, under such circumstances, the peculiar and fragmentary examples now remaining in the church proposed to my mind.

The early history of S. Margaret's, like that of many other churches, carries the mind back to the most remote period in the annals of our country. It is not of that time, however, I have now to speak, except as it is naturally suggested by an attempt to explain several peculiarities in the structure as it now stands. Nothing, indeed, remains of that early period except the dim record of a cathedral which stood here in the seventh century. Leland records that in his time a portion of the Bishop's palace yet stood by the church—"the fairest parish church of Leicester;" though I should think it more probable that what Leland saw were the remains of the vicarage, of the endowment of which Nichols gives a copy, dated 1276,—and that these remains were finally dispersed in 1568, when Mr. John Lounde, the vicar, repaired the house, and with the consent of his loving parishioners "dyd extyrpe

and pull down all monuments of superstytyone out of the said prebendall church."* Nichols also quotes the register of Bishop Alnwyke, which describes the alteration and reparation of 1444; and our modern historians make the most of the same materials, and of the alabaster monument (which now adorns the chancel) of Bishop Peny, who died in 1520. But the structure itself preserves some indications of a history which appears to have quite escaped any written record.

It is certain that there was a Saxon building here, from the statement in Domesday Book, that two of the churches, out of six then in the town, were given to the Bishop of Lincoln by the Norman Conqueror: it being clear that S. Margaret's was one of these, from the record (quoted by Nichols, 1110) that "Robert de Beaumont repaired St. Mary's church, and placed there a dean and twelve secular canons, restored their possessions, and appropriated to them all the churches in Leicester, *except St. Margaret's*, which was of the See of Lincoln."

This Saxon church, then, or such remains of one as had escaped the successive ravages of the Danes during the tenth century, and containing doubtless some "Norman" additions, stood here about the year 1110; but doubtless, also, in a dilapidated condition, from the above-named causes, and from the effects of the warlike visits of William the Conqueror, and of his son and successor, William Rufus, who "took vengeance on the town (A.D. 1088) in retaliation for assistance given by the Earl of Leicester to the king's elder brother Robert."

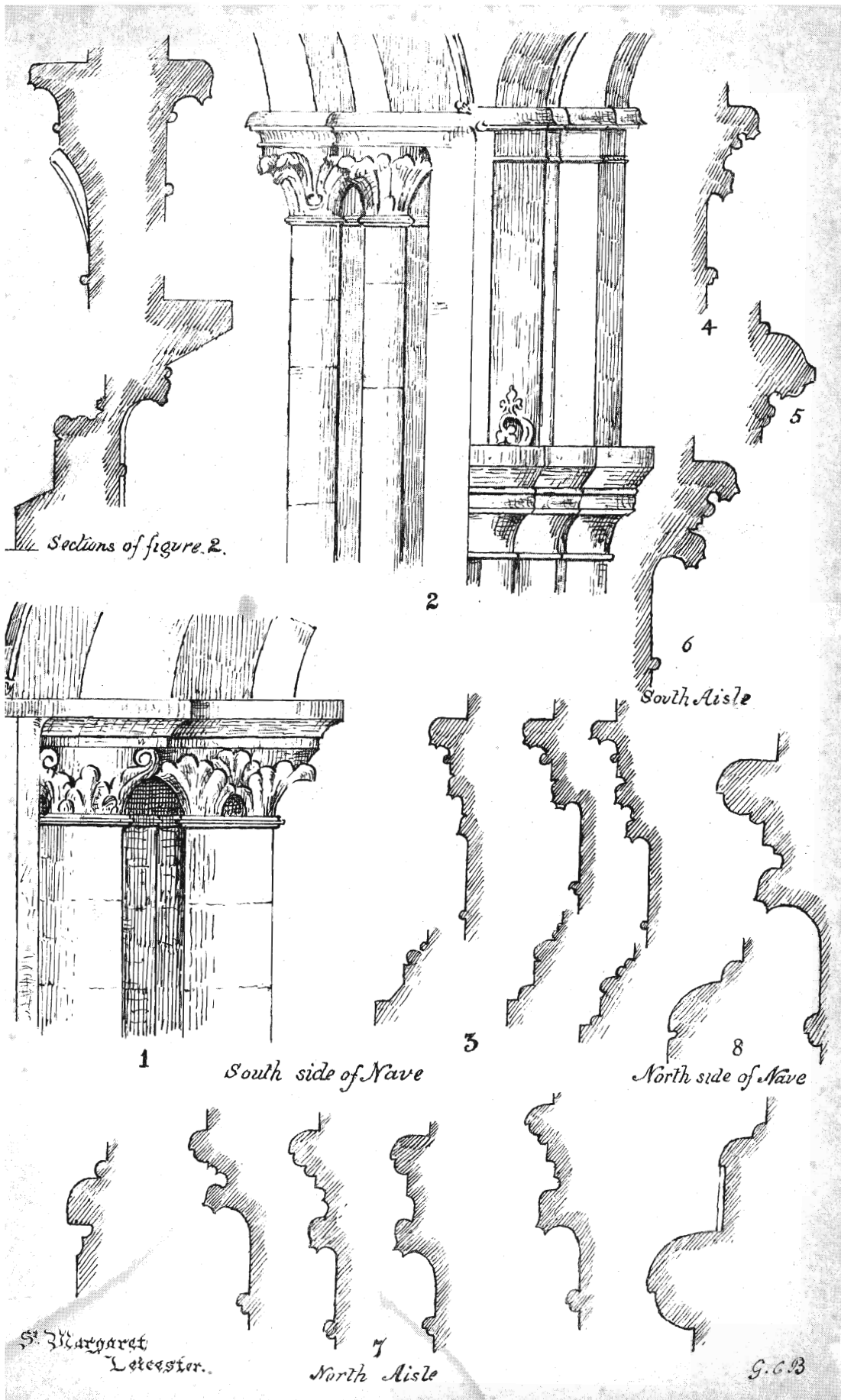
About the year 1120, Robert Bossu succeeded his father as Earl of Leicester, and Nichols, and tradition, have both assigned to him the figure in the niche on the northward side of the east window; and both also say that he built part of this church—the first statement certainly wrong, the other probably right; but if the tradition be true, what part did the Earl build? not "the oldest remaining part, the last bay eastward of the nave," if Mr. Poole be correct as to its date, as about A.D. 1200; and *if not that*, certainly no other part, for Earl Bossu died in the year 1168. But, on the supposition that he did build that east bay of the nave (and there is nothing, I think, in its style of architecture to make that supposition improbable, but the contrary) a great deal of otherwise unaccountable detail becomes reconciled. Thus:—Robert Bossu, Earl of Leicester, finding S. Margaret's Church in a very dilapidated condition, pulled down the old Saxon and Norman remains, and recommenced building from the chancel arch; but the work was stopped by his death, 1168; stopped, also, by the treason of his son, who conspired against the king, Henry II.; and by that king's vengeance, who, for two years, 1173-5, demolished the town and neighbourhood.

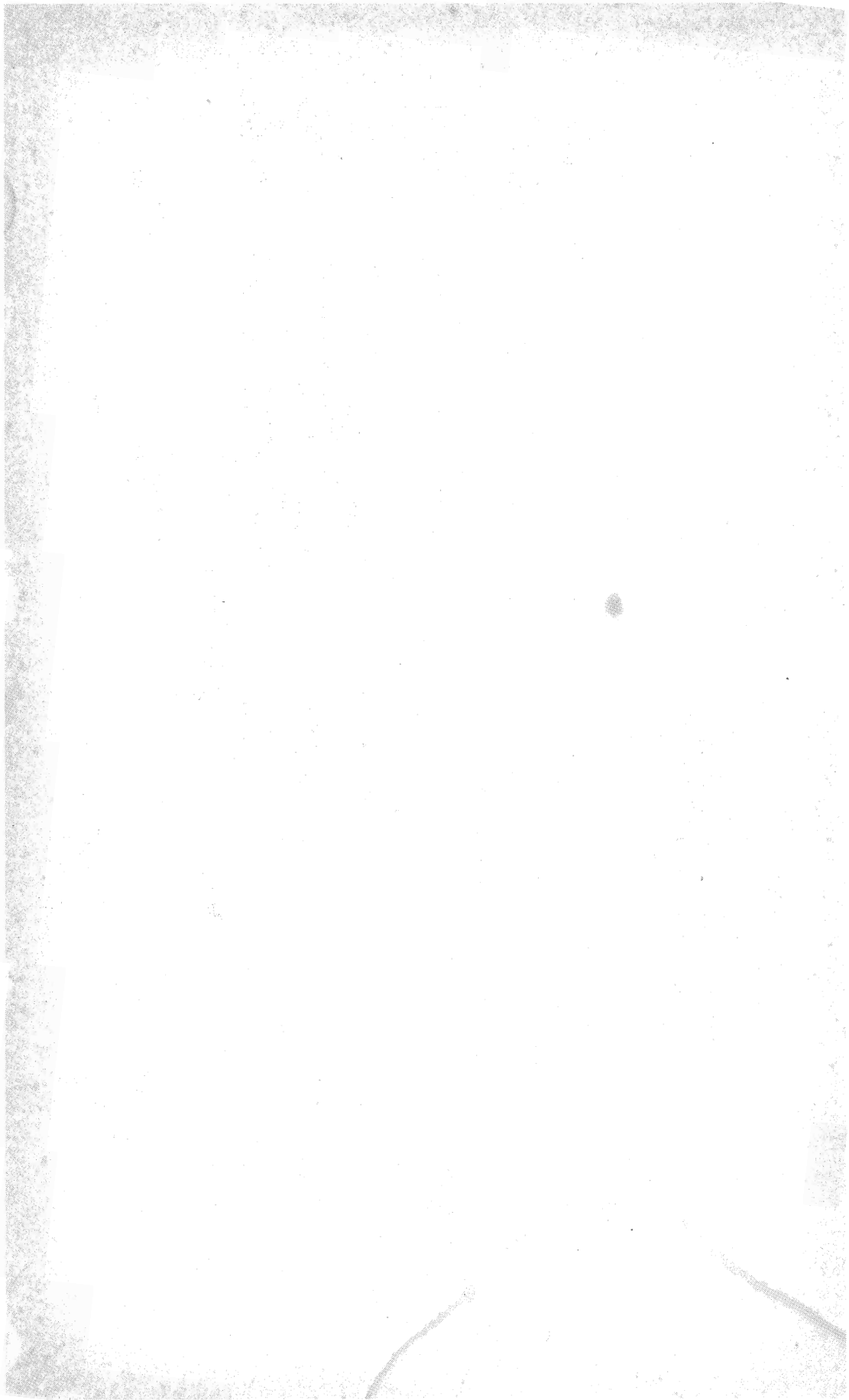
* Nichols.

This supposition accounts, I think, for one great peculiarity in the church, viz., that the east bay of the nave only remains of the semi-Norman style.

Apart, however, from any historical association, this east bay of the nave is itself a most curious study; and it will be remarked first, that the south-east pier is the only one remaining intact of the original design; the others, in addition to their having been under the hand of the modern "restorer," were, I think, originally copies of the south-east pier by another hand—curiously so, too, for it will be seen that the square abacus of the old capital becomes, in the others, a truncated roll and fillet; the plain, slightly articulated leafage becomes the more elaborate foliage—and the chamfered neck-mould, the small annular moulding. (Fig. 1 and 2.) The other piers are also curious:—obviously built, or put together at three different times;—it is equally clear, I think, that the capital, half-way down the western side, is the earliest; the eastern half next in date; and the western upper capital the latest. It will be observed that the early hood-mould is continued down to the springing line of the arch; not as it would be if this capital had been continued in the ordinary way, merely to the intersection of the adjoining hood-mould; and this leads me to think that the lower capital was originally continued with arches at its present level down the nave, and that the builder, who took up the work commenced by Robert Bossu, pulled down this nave, leaving only the east pier, which had been incorporated with the semi-Norman alteration in the way we now see it.

The next earliest part is the south side of the nave, and this is also quite distinct in character and date from any other part; and it is curious to observe, in parish churches, how commonly this is the case—that one side of the nave differs in date from the other side. Here we have the "nail-head" decoration of the arch, the double-bell and plain neck-mould of the capital indicating a date early in the thirteenth century. One of these capitals (the second from the tower) differs from the others, having only a single "bell;" and its neck-moulding being the common truncated roll, instead of the three-quarter annular moulding. It is, however, so clearly similar in general character to the adjoining work, and there are, besides, no evidences of its being of another period, that I think it must be regarded as a singular instance of the early use of the details in question. (Fig. 3.) This side of the nave is generally thought to be the finest part of the church: its chaste and elegant capitals, and deeply-recessed arches, alternating with small moulded ribs; its hood-mould filled with the characteristic dog-tooth ornament, with foliated terminals, make one regret that the other side of the nave does not remain in the same style—regret too, the destruction of the west bay, which was done, apparently,





at the time when the tower was built, as if to force into notice the singular contrast in the moulded work of the two periods.

Turning next to the south aisle, we find a difference from the style of the south side of the nave, in the "double bell" and the "nail-head ornament" being no longer employed. With this exception, however, there is a similarity in the mouldings; the abacus being the truncated roll and fillet, and the neck the bold three-quarter annular moulding. (Fig. 6.) The bases and string-course are "restored" ones, and it is questionable whether their true contour has been preserved. As regards the bases, they are of some form that belongs, I think, to no period of architecture whatever; and, as respects the string-course, there is no other example of the "scroll moulding" in this part of the church.

The cincture in the jamb-shaft at the east end of this aisle, and indeed, the whole of the details of these rere-arches and capitals are quite worth remark: nothing, indeed, could be better, probably, for their place and purpose; stopping short of needless elaboration, yet quite sufficient to produce a chaste and rich effect, and to indicate the thought bestowed upon them; nothing, either, could be more clearly indicative of the style of the destroyed mullions and tracery; and nothing more conclusive than the plain, heavy, chamfered mullions which have lately been inserted, are quite out of character.

Passing westward we have, in the "neck-moulding" of the last window in this aisle, (Fig. 4) the first indication of the later style which prevails in the whole of the north aisle, and, on the north side of the nave, indicated by the "scroll moulding" of the abacus and neck of the capitals, by the more simple form of section, by the base mouldings projecting over the line of the plinth, and by other details. The date of this work I should suppose to be the early part of the fourteenth century. (Figs. 7 and 8.)

At the east of this aisle is a curious capital, growing, as it were, out of the pier, at about the same level as the lower capitals in the east bay of the nave before alluded to; but this, also, has been under the hand of the "restorer," and it is very doubtful whether the original foliation was not of earlier character; the square abacus rather leads to the belief that such was the case.

Another point deserving attention, in this place, is the curious variety, as well as the symmetrical beauty, of these mouldings:—although, on a cursory view, they seem all alike, as, indeed, they are generically; it will be found, on examination, that the form of section is varied in almost every instance. It will scarcely be doubted, I think, that the builder who exhibited so much fertility of design in this matter, would fail in the more striking feature of window tracery, and yet, I understand that in the proposed restoration of this aisle, one design is to be repeated in the whole six openings.

The history of the remaining part of the church is well known from the register of Bishop Alnwyke, quoted by our local historians; from which it appears that the tower and chancel were built about the year 1444.

I have thus endeavoured to lessen the hiatus which exists in the history of S. Margaret's Church, between the time of "Domesday Book" and the register of Bishop Alnwyke, so far as a careful examination of the simple yet characteristic details of the building will permit; and I have also endeavoured to explain the architectural problem by an historical parallel, which accounts for the tradition that Robert Bossu built part of this church. In conclusion, permit me to remark upon the wide field into which the enquiry has introduced us: we step at once, by the help of these apparently unimportant stones, into the province of universal history: we pass in review the first Christian edifice which arose here in the remote and barbarous ages of our country: we account for its disappearance by the savage and successive ravages of the heathen Danes; for its rebuilding after the Norman Conquest; and for its partial destruction during and in consequence of the feudal times; and these are all matters of universal interest,—interest which cannot fail to derive additional importance to us from being thus localized; whilst, at the same time, the veneration we owe the fabric cannot fail to be increased from being thus palpably connected with some of the most important events which have occurred in the history of the world.

GENERAL MEETING AT LUTTERWORTH.

26th and 27th September, 1861.

THE REV. J. P. MARRIOTT, President.

To a casual observer Lutterworth might appear to offer few attractions to claim the visit of the members of an Architectural and Archæological Society. It is a small market town on the banks of a small river, the Swift, which soon discharges itself into its better known neighbour the Avon. Its ancient hospital has long since passed away, and there is, apparently, nothing to attract the attention of the visitor but its church, and even that is robbed of much of its dignity, symmetry, and beauty by the loss of its noble spire. These are the impressions upon the mind of a mere passer-by. To the thoughtful observer, to the antiquary, to the student of history, in short, to every one feeling the least interest in the antecedents of the locality, the town of Lutterworth, and more