

MAY 21, 1892.]

The American Architect and Building News.



[Contributors are requested to send with their drawings full and adequate descriptions of the buildings, including a statement of cost.]

THE CENTURY CLUB-HOUSE, NEW YORK, N. Y. MESSRS. MCKIM, MEAD & WHITE, ARCHITECTS, NEW YORK, N. Y.

[Gelatin Print issued with the International and Imperial Editions only.]

✓ SKETCHES BY THE American Architect TRAVELLING-SCHOLAR FOR 1891, MR. ALBERT KAHN: THREE SHEETS.

[Issued with the International and Imperial Editions only.]

✓ COMPETITIVE DESIGN FOR THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY, PITTSBURGH, PA. MR. W. HALSEY WOOD, ARCHITECT, NEWARK, N. J.

✓ COMPETITIVE DESIGN FOR THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY, PITTSBURGH, PA. MR. W. E. GREENAWALT, ARCHITECT, NEW YORK, N. Y.

✓ THE CATHEDRAL, COUTANCES, FRANCE.

THIS magnificent edifice, which is situated in the highest part of the town, dominates the surrounding country, and also serves as a landmark for the mariner. One of the "Historic Monuments" of France, it is dedicated to Our Lady, and dates mainly from the eleventh century, although portions of it were not built until some time later. In 1056, Geoffroy de Montbray, Bishop of Coutances, consecrated this structure, which is in the form of a Latin cross, and measures about 310 feet in length by nearly 110 feet in width. It has three principal entrances, the grand western portal and two side ones, which are surmounted by two towers quadrangular in shape at their base, but terminating in pyramids of octagonal form. The height of these towers, including the pyramids, is about 250 feet. At the crossing, a large octagonal tower, flanked by turrets, rises above the cathedral: it is known as "le Plomb," and has been the subject of many encomiums.

The interior presents some beautiful stained-glass windows, dating from the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the monumental tombs of two bishops and a fine altar in the Renaissance style, erected in 1750. The interior of the central tower is very curious and the woodwork of the organ, and an ancient fresco in good preservation add to the details which are worthy the attention of the visitor. The sculptures in the tympanums of the side doors represent respectively the Virgin sitting on a throne adored by angels, and Jesus Christ surrounded with the symbols of the four evangelists.

A view from the east end is shown in one of the sketches of the American Architect Travelling-Scholar published this week.

[Additional Illustrations in the International Edition.]

DETAILS OF A SMALL DOOR FROM THE MOSQUE OF BEYT EL-EMYR.

[Steel Plate Engraving.]

In order to protect the interior of mosques, and with the purpose of closing off certain portions of secondary importance, Islamism conceived that, in imitation of the ancients in their temples and Christians in their churches, it would be necessary to use some system of enclosure or enclosing doors of one or more valves and of different number and sizes, whose outer and inner faces might, according to circumstances, receive a decorative treatment more or less rich. From appearances, the nature of these valves was quite various. Some were made of sculptured wood, painted and gilded, or of inlaid work in compartments. They were likewise composed of metal; that is, of iron or bronze.

These works, which, at least, give an idea of the state of art at the time of their execution, furnish indisputable proof that the casting of metals, more particularly the casting of bronze, was at a certain date practised and cultivated by the Arabs. There are a few mosques at Cairo whose principal doors are yet ornamented with applied bronze-work and niello-work damascened with gold and silver. Some of these doors date from a very remote epoch. The most elegant and complete are those of the Mosque EL-Youssef.

ported from Constantinople to Venice, where they decorate the Church of San Marco, are, on the other hand, of solid bronze the mosque of Cordova there are five bronze doors, or rather covered with pieces of this metal, and formerly there were ten of them.

DETAIL FROM THE HOTEL DE CLUNY, PARIS, FRANCE
[Gelatin Print.]

INTERIOR OF ST. MARK'S, VENICE.

It would be easy to show how the appreciation of St. Mark subjected to laws of development. A century ago the building not understood. Goethe, who explored Venice in what he considered was a thorough fashion, does not appear to have done any aid towards his own culture (which was the principal business of his life) out of the wondrous medley which is formed by the cathedral and its contents. It is evident from his journal that he found it more profitable to study the Renaissance buildings. Goethe would consider that Forsyth was not far in error when he described the interior as "dark, heavy, barbarous, nay, in spite of all the porphyry and Oriental marbles and glaring in that should enrich the walls, the vaults and pavement; in fact a variety of colors would impair the effect of the purest architecture." The last words afford a key to the standard of criticism was used a century ago. Refined architecture was supposed always white, and it is no wonder that in England whitewash brushes were in request to please fine gentlemen who had cultivated tastes.

How different a critical rule is now in use, even among tourists! In their way, they feel like the late Mr. Street, although they may not be able to express their delight in such words following:

"The color is so magnificent that one troubles one's self but about the architecture, and thinks only of gazing upon the expanse of gold and deep, rich color, all harmonized together into one whole. The mosaics commence throughout the church at the crown of the main arches, dividing the nave from the aisle and are continued up the remainder of the wall and into the ceiling. Even the angles or arrises of the arches are covered with gold mosaic, so that all architectural lines of moulding and the like are entirely lost, and nothing but a soft, swelling and undulating color is perceived. The lower portion of the walls is encrusted with slabs of marble of all sizes, joined together with small rivets arranged without much symmetry or apparent design, except particular: the slabs of marble, being cut into two or more pieces, are then so arranged next to each other that the pattern of the marble on one piece may just meet and touch the corresponding pattern on the other, so as to make a regular kind of mosaic pattern."

We may be sure that Prout, when he drew the interior of this week, must have felt how incompetent is the best draughtsman in black chalk to render so glorious a scene, and how the artist who sacrificed so much to enrich St. Mark's with color must have longed for the beautiful which later races cannot comprehend. He may have also doubted whether, with his materials, he could do justice to any of the perspectives of the church, and, reverence, limited his view by the screen, which may be said to be work of the fifteenth century, for it was set up in 1394, a modern if compared with other objects in St. Marks.

PULPIT, RAVELLO CATHEDRAL. MR. J. A. SLATER, ARCHITECT.

BISHOP'S THRONE, RAVELLO CATHEDRAL. MR. J. A. SLATER, ARCHITECT.

DESIGN FOR OXFORD MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS. MR. A. BREUILL, ARCHITECT.

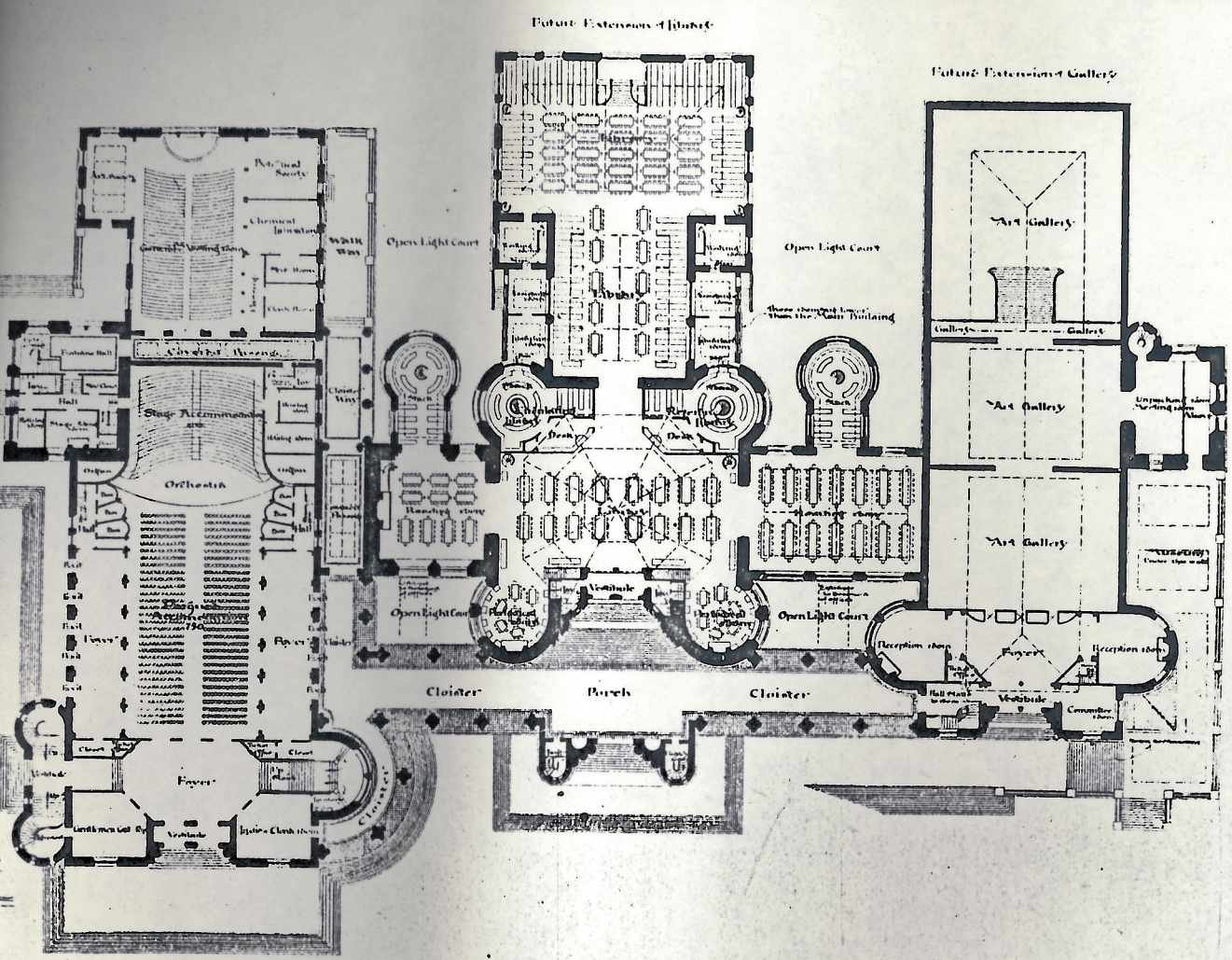


THE ROOF OF THE ST. PANCRA'S STATION. — The large arch which constitutes the truss adopted in the St. Pancras station owes its height to the floor beneath it. The level of the rails being of a sufficient height above the adjoining streets, it was decided to utilize for its purposes the whole of the area beneath the station.

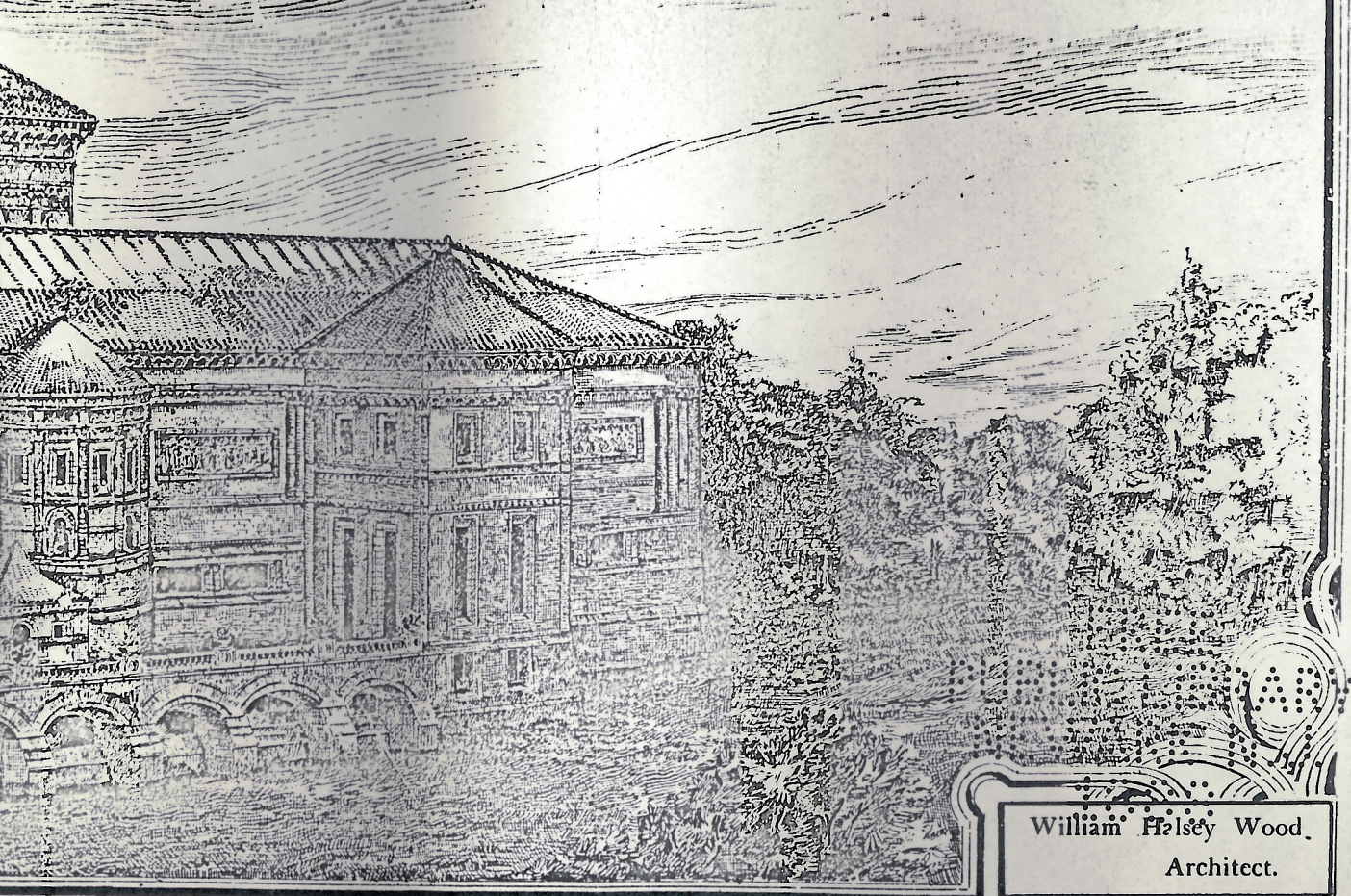
May 31, 1892



CARNEGIE FREE
LIBRARY BUILDING.



Ground Floor Plan



William Halsey Wood,
Architect.