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THE CHURCH FROM THE EAST END.

(Photograph by Mr. Chester Vaughan, Acton.)

THE ABBEY CHURCH OF WALTHAM HOLY CROSS.

*Once more the gate behind me falls,
Once more before my face
I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
That stand within the chace.*

TENNYSON.

In the time of King Canute there lived a smith at Montacute who dreamed that he was bidden to take the parish priest and some neighbours to dig on the summit of the adjoining hill. The fruit of their labours was the discovery of a flint cross. Earl Tovi at once harnessed twelve red oxen and twelve white cows to a cart, in order to convey the relic to a fitting home. The beasts would not move, till the priest hit upon the expedient of calling out the names of various estates, and, on the mention of Waltham, they fortunately began their journey. Earl Tovi was steward of the household, and had his weald-ham or country house in the woodlands here beside the river Lea; hence the name of Waltham and Holy Cross, its affix.

So the story goes. Let us look a little further into the origin and history of a fine Norman church situated thirteen miles from London and

close to that river from whose banks Izaak Walton was wont to pursue his favourite pastime.

Upon his recovery from an attack of paralysis, King Harold II. (then Earl) visited the manor of Waltham and, on the site of a church built by Tovi, he erected the noble building which is now known as Waltham Abbey Church. With Edward the Confessor, the Founder was present at the consecration of the sacred edifice on Holy Cross day, May 3, 1060. Six years afterwards, at the memorable battle of Hastings, Harold met his death; his body was ultimately interred within the stately edifice he had caused to be built. The place of sepulture is, however, unknown; but there is preserved in the church a piece of ironstone which is traditionally believed to be part of Harold's tomb. This relic is about sixteen inches long, and ten inches broad at its widest part, and upon it is carved a curious representation of a warrior's face, underneath which is the name 'Harold,' cut in modern letters. Harold's foundation was collegiate, not monastic; but in 1177 Henry II. transformed the minster into a monastery, or abbey, with prior, abbot and Augustinian monks, and it had the distinction of being one of the richest and most powerful monasteries in the kingdom, which is saying a great deal. Like his grandfather, King Henry III. showed his love for Waltham. He

advanced the abbot to the dignity of a Lord of Parliament, and further swelled the coffers of the Abbey by granting the monks the privilege of holding in the town two annual fairs and a weekly market; these commercial institutions flourish to this day, though not under ecclesiastical auspices.

We may now pass on to the time of the Reformation, which is said to have had its inception at Waltham, and curiously enough in a house in the Romeland! In the year 1528 Henry VIII. visited Waltham, at which time Cranmer, then a Cambridge Doctor of Divinity, was tutor to the sons of a Mr. Cressy who lived in the Romeland, now a market square and used as the Cattle Market. On that occasion Mr. Cressy entertained Fox and Gardiner, the famous statesmen of that reign, and Cranmer. At supper the Cambridge D.D. sounded the note of the Reformation under the shadow of the venerable Abbey.

Twelve years later (in March, 1540), by order of Thomas Cromwell, vicar-general, the monastery was dissolved, after having existed for 363 years. The endowments—realizing an annual income of £1,000, *i.e.*, £10,000 to £12,000 according to the present value of money—were diverted to other uses, whereby the original idea of the king to found at Waltham a cathedral for Essex, and to place Waltham at the head of the proposed new bishoprics, was not carried out. Within the age-crowned walls of the nave—the present church—divine worship has been uninterruptedly celebrated for the long period of 846 years.

In addition to the historical incidents already mentioned it should be remembered that in 1290

the body of Queen Eleanor rested at Waltham Abbey on its way for interment in Westminster Abbey, and that in 1307, for seventeen weeks, the Abbey sheltered the body of her husband, King Edward I., prior to its removal to Westminster. At Waltham, Bishop Joseph Hall, a former incumbent, preached his famous sermons which gained for him the title of 'The English Chrysostom,' and another 17th century incumbent was Thomas Fuller, an eminent divine and historian. John Foxe, the martyrologist, formerly resided at Waltham, where he is said to have partly written his famous book; and in addition to Izaak Walton already mentioned, the literary associations of the place are enriched by the fact that at one time Tennyson resided in the parish, at Beech Hill Park, where, about the year 1837, he wrote his poem 'The talking oak'—of which the opening stanza is given at the beginning of this article—'the moulder'd Abbey-walls' being those of Waltham. In this connection the poet's 'Harold' will be called to mind, and it is said that the thrilling stanzas in Tennyson's masterpiece *In Memoriam*, beginning 'Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,' were inspired by the sound of the Abbey Church bells as they greeted the dawn of the New Year.

From an architectural, no less than from an ecclesiastical point of view, Waltham Abbey has undergone great changes during its existence of 846 years. The sacred edifice was formerly double or treble its present length by reason of the choir forming its east end. At the dissolution of the monastery the choir was demolished, as was also a central tower which separated the choir from the nave. Between 1556

THE OLD ABBEY GATEWAY.
(Photograph by Mr. Chester Vaughan, Acton.)

and 1558 a new tower, the present erection, was built at the west end of the nave—that portion of the building which has always been used as a parish church—with the result that the original west front was deprived of its architectural features. Two years ago this massive west tower was successfully restored, whereby its uppermost stage has been strengthened and greatly improved in appearance. The lady chapel, erected in the 13th or 14th century—the exact date is not known—is on the *south* side of the church, not at the east end, where it is usually found. After having served the purposes of a schoolroom for many years, the lady chapel was restored in 1876. On removing the bricks from the windows fragments of the former elegant tracery were found, and on taking down the plaster from the east wall, remains of an ancient fresco representing the Last Judgment were discovered.

The interior of the building may be judged from the photograph on the opposite page. Should the visitor remark that the magnificent pillars are like those of Durham Cathedral, the genial vicar will reply, 'Yes, but Durham copied from us'! The easternmost pillars on the north and south sides of the church show the spiral ornament, while two other piers are enriched with the chevron or zig-zag embellishment, as in the northern cathedral. The Rev. J. H. Stamp, in his interesting and informing lectures on the Abbey, says :

The nave consists of seven bays on each side, the mystic number signifying completeness. The clear space of the bays measures 10 feet 3 inches. There are three tiers of arches—nave or arcade, triforium, and clerestory, the three forming one composition—an evident allusion to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity proclaimed by the Apostles, for ancient architects, who were frequently monks, worked out their theological tenets even in the materials which they handled, thus preaching sermons in stones.

Fourteen arches exist in this second stage [triforium], nine being Norman and five Gothic or pointed. The five arches were altered by the architect first engaged by Abbot Reginald at the end of the 13th century, who also most foolishly cut away four of the nave arches, so that there are now only ten in the lower stage (called the arcade) instead of fourteen. In the upper stage or clerestory, sixteen smaller arches rest on twenty-four pillars, nine being Norman and seven pointed.

In 1859-60 the church underwent a complete restoration at a cost of £5,000, under the architectural supervision of the late William Burges. The floor of the church was reduced to its original level; the pillars and walls denuded of their plaster; the Norman windows restored and filled with stained glass; two hideous galleries were removed; and the high-backed pews were replaced by low oak seats. On each side of the Communion Table, and painted on a groundwork of blue, were two curious effigies of Moses and Aaron. Moses was represented as holding a staff, and Aaron in the act of swinging a censer which had a close resemblance to a pepper-box. These two patriarchs and an escutcheon of Charles II.—painted on a large square board at a cost of £24 in 1662—disappeared at the restoration of the

Abbey. In regard to other changes then made at the east end, further quotation may be made from Mr. Stamp :

The rough stonework and small window which had been placed under the grand tower arch at the east end were displaced by the present magnificent structure. The rose window depicting the work of Creation, and the Jesse window with three lights, representing patriarchs, kings and prophets, were inserted under the arch. The cartoons for the windows were designed by the famous artist the late Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

It is of special interest to mention that, at the same time (1860), the flat ceiling was painted, after the manner of Peterborough Cathedral, by Sir Edward J. Poynter, Bart., P.R.A., then a rising young artist of twenty-four.

Of the antiquities not previously referred to, mention should be made of the old carved post, dated 1598, which served the double purpose of whipping-post and stocks, and also the pillory. These punishment relics have found a place on the wall of the tower, after having for many years done their duty in the Market Place. The registers date back to 1563; in the churchyard is a quaint old lych-gate and a venerable elm tree measuring twenty-two feet round its base, which, despite its great age of five or six hundred years, still provides 'a shadow from the heat' to those who sit under its branches. And then we must not forget to draw attention to the old Abbey gateway (photograph on p. 595), *temp.* 1370, which formerly led to the conventual buildings: the armorial bearings of Edward III. may still be discerned on the label of the spring of the great arch on the south side. Inside the church, on the south of the altar, is the monument to Sir Edward Denny (died 1600), who was attached to the court of Queen Elizabeth, one of whose maids of honour he married. His remains were interred in the chancel and his widow erected the fine marble monument shown in the photograph on p. 600. The valiant knight—he fought Queen Elizabeth's battles with Sir Philip Sidney and the poet Spenser as his comrades in arms—is represented, armour clad, lying on his left side, while the recumbent effigy of Lady Denny, who survived her spouse for nearly half a century, is seen below. The six boys and four girls, on the lower part of the monument, are the ten little Dennys saying their prayers.

The reader may be disposed to ask: Are there any musical interests associated with the Abbey Church of Waltham Holy Cross? To this natural interrogation the reply is an emphatic 'Yes,' and one that needs no apology; not that the Abbey can in this respect claim rank with cathedrals and other 'quires and places where they sing,' but by reason of a former organist. But first a few words about the organs. In the 'Inventory of Church Goods, A.D. 1540'—that is at the dissolution of the monastery—we find the following items :

OUR LADY CHAPPELL.—A Table of ymagery of
the xij apostells xs.
A lytell payre of organes xxjs.
IN THE QUYRE.—A greate large payre of Organes
above, on the northe of the Quayre, a lesser
payre beneath.

[Mrs. Chester Vaughan, Acton.]

The Abbey Church of Waltham Holy Cross.

Photograph by]

It would be very interesting to possess the specifications of these *three* instruments, especially the 'greate large payre of Organes in the Quyre.' The above entries only refer to the organs belonging to the monastic part—the choir—of the church; but it is interesting to know that early in the 17th century the parishioners of Waltham Abbey sold to the churchwardens of Cheshunt an old organ. This instrument, said to have been constructed by the monks of Waltham, is still preserved at Cheshunt Great House in the neighbouring parish. For nearly a hundred years the church appears to have been without an organ, during which time the services were doubtless accompanied by divers instruments—violin, flute, hautboy, clarinet, bass viol, &c.—the players of which, in consort with enthusiastic singers, made 'a joyful noise unto the Lord.' In the year 1819, one Thomas Leverton presented an organ to the Abbey Church. This instrument, built by Messrs. Flight & Robson and

and the pedal organ adding the requisite dignity to the instrument.

GREAT (8 stops).		Feet.	Feet.
Open diapason (large, forming chancel front)	 8	Harmonic flute 4	.. 4
Open diapason (small)	 8	Fifteenth 2	.. 2
Wald flute	 8	Mixture (3 ranks).	 8
Principal	 4	Trumpet 8	.. 8
SWELL (14 stops).			
Double diapason	 16	Fifteenth 2	.. 2
Open diapason	 8	Mixture (3 and 4 ranks).	 16
Gamba (lieblich bass)	 8	Contra fagotto	 8
Vox angelica (tenor C)	 8	Horn 8	.. 8
Stopped diapason	 8	Oboe 8	.. 8
Principal	 4	Orchestral oboe	 8
Flute	 4	Vox humana 8	.. 8
CHOIR (6 stops).			
Salcional (tenor C, grooved bass)	 8	Flute 4	.. 4
Dulciana (lieblich bass)	 8	Piccolo 2	.. 2
Lieblich gedact	 8	Clarinet 8	.. 8
PEDAL (4 stops).			
Open diapason	 16	Quint 10 $\frac{3}{4}$	10 $\frac{3}{4}$
Bourdon	 16	Principal (forming west front)	8

Manual compass, CC to A = 58 notes: Pedal compass, CCC to F = 30 notes.

Manual compass, CC to A = 58 notes: Pedal compass, CCC to F = 30 notes.

COUPLERS, &c.

Swell to great.	Swell to pedal.
Swell to choir.	Great to pedal.
Choir to great, unison.	Choir to pedal.
Choir sub-octave to great.	Tremulant to swell.
Three composition pedals to great organ.	
Three composition pedals to swell organ.

THOMAS TALLIS (1510?-1585).

ORGANIST OF WALTHAM ABBEY.

(From Mr. Myles B. Foster's 'Anthems and Anthem Composers'.)

placed in a high gallery at the west end of the building, contained seven stops: open diapason, stopped diapason, principal, fifteenth, sesquialtera and cornet. The absence of pedals may or may not have been compensated in a barrel attachment—'one of the finest of barrels,' according to a local enthusiast—which could play eight tunes. Enlarged and reconstructed by J. W. Walker in 1860, the instrument was removed in 1879 to its present position at the north-east corner of the chancel.

In 1893, the organ, which had been left unfinished, was completed by Messrs. J. W. Walker & Sons, according to the original specification as given below. And here mention must be made of the fine churchlike tone of this organ, the diapasons being of the right quality, rich and devotional,

The organistship of Waltham Abbey was formerly held by a no less eminent musician than Thomas Tallis, or Tallys, as he signed his name. This interesting fact, unknown to Burney and Hawkins, was discovered about thirty years ago by the late Mr. W. Winters, the historian and antiquary of Waltham, in a document preserved at the Public Record Office. This document, one of those connected with the dissolution of the monastery in 1540, is headed 'Wages and Rewards,' and contains a list of payments to those who were then and there displaced. The fourth name on the list is:

THOMAS TALYS - - - - - xxs. ; xxs.

The payment of xxs. for wages was more than the other gifted men connected with the Abbey received, except the priest, and the 'reward' (compensation for loss of office) was equally liberal. In what year Tallis became organist of Waltham Abbey is not known, but he certainly held the post in 1540. It may well be surmised that Henry VIII., a frequent visitor to Waltham, became acquainted with the skilled musicianship of Tallis, and that when his services were no longer required at the Abbey the King appointed him a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. This office Tallis worthily held for forty-five years, serving under four sovereigns—Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, the last named queen having bestowed upon him the additional appointment of organist to Her Majesty's Chapel Royal.

During his organistship at Waltham, or at the dissolution of the monastery, Tallis became the possessor of a valuable manuscript volume, now preserved in the British Museum (*Lansdowne MS.*, No. 763). The last folio of this interesting tome contains the only known autograph of its former owner, 'Thomas Tallys,' written in the ordinary

running hand of the period: beneath it the name is re-written in large Roman-shaped characters, to which succeeds the following note:

xxity. gilt bookes in quarto and octavo.
x. bookes in folio.
iii. fayre sets gilt bookes.

This note, which may or may not be in the handwriting of Tallis, possibly refers to other books which came into his possession or that of someone else at the dissolution of the monastery.

And now for a few words about the book itself. The volume bears the following title in rubric:

Hunc librum vocitatum Musicam Guidonis, scripsit Dominus Johannes Wylde, quondam exempti Monasterii Sancte Crucis de Waltham Precentor.

found in Sir John Hawkins's 'History of Music' (p. 240 *et seq.*, Novello's Edition), but a few extracts of a more or less quaint nature may be given. A discourse on the practice of descant concludes thus:

But who wil ken his gamme [gamut] well, and the imaginacions thereof, and of hys accordis, and sette his perfyte accordis wyth his imperfyte accordis, as I have rehersed in thys tretise afore, he may not faile of his conterpoynt in short tyme.

In another essay it is stated that 'the tone and semitone may be very aptly compared to Leah and Rachael':

For as Jacob was first joined in marriage to Leah, and afterwards to Rachael, thus sound, the element of music, first produces a tone, and afterwards a semitone, and is in some sense married to them. The semitone, from which the symphony of all music principally is generated,

THE ORGAN.

(Photograph by Mr. G. F. S. Chalk, Waltham Abbey.)

This is followed by the usual anathema found in most early MSS. belonging to religious houses, and imparts no less a curse on any who should steal or injure the book:

Quem quidem librum, vel hunc titulum, qui maliciose abstulerit vel deleverit, anathema sit.

The volume, consisting of 131 folios, is beautifully written on vellum, probably either late in the 14th or early in the 15th century. It seems to have been the work of the said John Wylde, an old-time precentor of Waltham Abbey, the bearer of a name unknown in the musical world except as the author, compiler, or transcriber of this book. It contains a curious *olla podrida* of learning—scientific, religious, heraldic, astronomical and musical. Copious quotations therefrom will be

as it tempers the rigour and asperity of the tones, may aptly be assigned to Rachael, who chiefly captivated the heart of Jacob, as she had a beautiful face and graceful aspect.

Some verses of St. Bernard (12th century) are quoted, these having reference to the disgraceful manner in which the Psalms were sung. The old monk calls the chanters 'jangles cum jappers,' (probably those who sing too quickly and irreverently), 'nappers and galpers' (sleepers and yawners), 'drawers' (drawlers), 'skippers, overenners and overhippers' (those who skip over the words). Are not some of these terms of St. Bernard applicable to psalm chanters of the present day? Before leaving this old MS. volume we must not forget to mention that at one time it was in the possession, either as his own book or as

a loan, of Thomas Morley, who largely availed himself of a portion of its contents in his 'Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke,' first published in 1597.

To return to the organists of Waltham. It appears that there was a second organist at the time of the dissolution in the person of John Boston, a Waltham man. He died sometime before the year 1564, as his wife, who died 'a widow,' was buried January 30, 1564, and there are several other entries in the parish registers of the Boston family. At the dissolution of the monastery

Waltham and the bearer of a name that achieved fame terpsichorean rather than in ecclesiastical music. Mr. Coote's tenure of office lasted only one year, when a competition took place and a Miss Thompson was elected to the office. This lady suffered so much from ill-health that she was unable to officiate for some years. Several organists were engaged to discharge the duties that Miss Thompson could not perform. In this connection we may quote from a very interesting pamphlet containing a letter from the then vicar (the Rev. James Francis) to his

THE TOMB OF SIR EDWARD DENNY (DIED 1600).

(Photographed specially for this article by Mr. G. F. S. Chalk.)

John Boston received the sum of 6s.—as against the sum of 40s. paid to Tallis—for his 'wages and reward'; and he had previously been paid the sum of 20d. 'for mending the organs.' Mr. Boston may have played the 'lytell payre of organes' in the lady chapel, while Tallis officiated at the 'greate large payre of Organes' in the choir.

The first organist who officiated at the Flight & Robson organ, erected in 1819, was a Mr. Coote, one of a musical family, natives of

parishioners, which preludes some particulars of the various parochial institutions. It is dated Easter, 1849, and contains the following reference to the

ORGAN FUND.

In May, 1848, at the instance of many persons who felt a great and proper interest in the subject, the following circular was addressed to members of the congregation. 'As it is highly desirable that the Praises of God in the Church should be sung in the most appropriate and devotional manner, and that the whole congregation

should have the opportunity of joining in them, an endeavour has been made to further this object. In accordance, therefore, with the wishes of a large proportion of our congregation, the services of a gentleman connected with the Temple Church, and having excellent testimonials, have been engaged, whose assistance may be retained through the liberality of members of the congregation.*

Parsonage, Waltham Abbey, May, 1848.

This suggestion was so well received, that very soon a sufficient sum of money was contributed to retain for a year the services of the gentleman above referred to. It was felt by all, and especially by those who first moved in the matter, that no arrangement whatever ought to be allowed to interfere with the interests of the organist who had fulfilled the duties of her station for so many years. At the discretion of the minister and churchwardens, and with the permission of the vestry, she has been assisted in her duties, an arrangement which has been undoubtedly a great relief to her under her severe bodily suffering.

The 'gentleman connected with the Temple Church and having excellent testimonials,' referred to by the worthy vicar, was a youth named William Hayman Cummings, now Principal of the Guildhall School of Music, who at the age of seventeen became one of the successors of Thomas Tallis in the organistship of Waltham Abbey. Moreover, it was at this old church that the young organist, more than half a century ago, adapted Mendelssohn's music to Charles Wesley's hymn 'Hark! the herald angels sing.' The young organist eagerly procured everything that Mendelssohn composed directly it was published. While playing over the *Festgesang* chorus (in G), he was at once struck by its adaptability to the familiar Christmas hymn. He copied out the parts, and the tune was sung with great enthusiasm by the congregation of Waltham Abbey before it had found its way into any other churches, not to say hymnals.*

Mr. Joseph Chalk, the present organist, was appointed in 1859. At that time the organ was in an upper gallery at the west end of the church. He gave his first recitals there, on the enlarged and reconstructed organ by Walker, on June 5 and 8, 1860, and as the organ had been opened only a month previously, he did not lose much time in getting used to the C pedal board.

Mr. Chalk has kindly supplied the following notes on the music of the church at which he has officiated for nearly half-a-century :

Going back to the time of Mr. (now Dr.) Cummings, none of the organists who came after him stayed any length of time. The lady organist (Miss Thompson) received her salary until a little more than a year before her death, and I found it recorded at a meeting of the vestry that on a proposition that she should continue to receive it for another year, only two votes were recorded in favour of the recommendation.

In 1850 Mr. J. W. Walker added to the organ a tenor C swell of four stops, viz.: open diapason, stopped diapason, principal, and hautboy, and an octave and a half of pedals which pulled down the keys. This was the organ, reopened by Hopkins, of the Temple, I found here in January, 1858. On either side of the instrument were seated the boys and girls of the Leverton School, and behind the organ seat was a pew large enough for

a few men, who, with the school children formed the choir. The music was in a bad state and the congregational singing was of the poorest kind. I came here on the recommendation of John Hullah to form singing classes in the parish. I also played at the children's and other special services, and superintended the music in all of the schools at that period, so that I have been connected with the musical life of the Abbey for more than forty-eight years. I had permission to practise on the organ, and when the post fell vacant at the end of 1858, I discharged the duties and have played regularly since January, 1859, and at the Easter vestry of that year I was appointed organist. Soon after, the work of restoration of the Abbey began, and with it, in the autumn of 1859, the demolition of the galleries and pews. Although the parish had been scouring for funds for the church I made an effort to improve the organ. My vicar (the Rev. James Francis) gave me assistance, and a good friend, one Colonel Edenborough—to whose memory the reredos was erected—set me going with a donation of £100. I managed to raise with the help of friends £280, whereby the organ was greatly improved, a new CC swell, an

MR. JOSEPH CHALK.

ORGANIST OF WALTHAM ABBEY CHURCH.

(Photograph by Mr. G. F. S. Chalk.)

open diapason on pedal, &c., being added. The reopening services were held on May 3, 1870, the 800th anniversary of the consecration of Harold's church. On that occasion the music was under the direction of Dr. (then Mr.) W. H. Cummings, with myself at the organ, and the anthems included Boyce's 'I have surely built Thee an house,' and Purcell's 'O sing unto the Lord.'

Later on the choir was placed in the chancel, but as the Leverton school children still occupied the gallery, great difficulties arose in securing unanimity. To remedy this unsatisfactory state of affairs my then vicar decided to place an additional small organ in the chancel. This excellent one-manual instrument, built by Walker at a cost of £200, had eight stops, all—except the open diapason and the pedal bourdon—enclosed in a swell box: open diapason, stopped diapason, dulciana, principal, flute, oboe (to tenor C), mixture and bourdon (pedal). This organ was dispensed with when the large (gallery) organ was placed in the chancel in 1879.

When I came here in 1858 the Psalms were not chanted. The first time they were sung was at an ordination service on July 3, 1864. As we had no psalters, I pointed an ordinary Prayer Book for the occasion.

* See THE MUSICAL TIMES, December, 1897, p. 810; and February, 1898, p. 81.

When Novello's 'Cathedral Psalter' was issued we used that, and I was then saved the trouble of pointing any more prayer-books. For some time the Psalms were chanted only on special occasions, and later on at the evening services only, but since 1885—when the Rev. F. B. Johnston, the present vicar, was appointed—they have been sung at every service. Let me conclude by saying that our congregational service is one which many parishes might envy, most gratifying to listen to and pleasant to accompany.

For kind help in the preparation of this article the writer is indebted to the Rev. F. B. Johnston, M.A., vicar of Waltham Abbey Church; to the Rev. J. Henry Stamp, curate (to whose writings on the subject reference has already been made); and to Mr. Joseph Chalk, organist and choirmaster; also to the photographers whose names appear under their respective photographs.

DOTTED CROCHET.

A FORGOTTEN CONCERT ROOM.

Modern London is becoming a new Americanised city, and all its old and peculiarly English characteristics are fast being improved out of existence. If any one who left it during the sixties of the last century return to visit it to-day, he will imagine himself to be in some foreign town, and for the most part fail to recognise the London he knew so intimately of old. The comparatively narrow streets with their respectable if ugly houses have become broad thoroughfares lined with enormous blocks of buildings five or six stories high, and the whole of many well-remembered districts have been completely swept away. He will look in vain for his old landmarks. In the Strand and Fleet Street he will miss Temple-Bar and Holywell Street, and if he turn westward to Piccadilly Circus he will be no better off. Other streets and blocks of houses have disappeared, and in the middle of the great open space remaining, the winged figure over the fountain may stand for the mocking spirit of Modern Progress shooting arrows of scorn at the memories of the past.

The wanderer may be a lover of music and desire to revisit the concert-rooms where in his young days he spent so many happy hours. He will not find them. Exeter Hall still stands, but it is now occupied by the Young Men's Christian Association. On the site of the Hanover Square Rooms is a great block of flats with shops beneath them; and as the traveller walks down Regent Street he sees a hideous gap in the stately curve of the quadrant, and realises with dismay that St. James's Hall, formerly the most perfect concert room in Europe, has utterly vanished after an existence of more than half a century to make room for a new hotel.

It is a long while since fashion began its pompous westward march from London City to its present resting-places in Mayfair and Kensington, through Gray's Inn, Bloomsbury, and Soho, and in the melancholy remains of these old neighbourhoods traces of their former grandeur may still be found. In a narrow, dingy street, once of considerable repute, barely a stone's

throw from Regent Street, stand three old Georgian houses side by side. Plainly built of red brick, they have no architectural pretensions. All three are worthy of respect for the sake of their former inhabitants; but the easternmost is of more than common interest, especially to musicians, for it contains an ancient concert-room that alone of all such places of entertainment has been left to us from the 18th century. Carlisle House, the Great Room in Dean Street, Soho, and the Music Room in Spring Gardens, exist no longer, and the same fate has attended Almack's and the Pantheon, where the concerts and assemblies were so exclusive that great ladies intrigued to gain admission to them. But the long-forgotten old concert-room in Brewer Street has fortunately escaped demolition, and it recalls a chapter of London's musical history little noticed by the general reader. The building now forms part of the premises of the Club Français, but for thirty-five years during the middle of the 18th century it was a much-frequented and fashionable resort, and was known by the name of Hickford's Room.

John Hickford, the proprietor, began life as a dancing-master in the latter part of Queen Anne's reign, and originally had a dancing school in James Street, Haymarket. There was at that time only one other room in the West-end large enough for concerts of any pretensions, and as that was sometimes difficult to secure and its proprietor was not a particularly agreeable man, certain well-known artists began to make use of Mr. Hickford's great dancing-room wherein to give their concerts. The situation was so convenient that the worthy dancing-master found himself besieged with applications for the use of his room, and, being a man of accommodating disposition, his dancing-school soon became the recognized concert-room of the day. Mr. Hickford must also have had a talent for organization, for he quickly acquired a reputation as a concert agent. So successful was he in this capacity that after some years he decided to move into a still more fashionable quarter, and accordingly took up his abode in a fine new house in Brewer Street, or as it was then called, Brewer's Street. Here he was in the best of company, for his next door neighbours were my Lord Mansfield and the Spanish Ambassador.

It may be presumed that the house was designed and built specially for Mr. Hickford, as it is still easy to see how conveniently it was arranged for the use he made of it. The front door opened into a square hall, through which the company proceeded to the concert room built out at the back, and a staircase gave access to a small gallery. Though dignified by the title 'Great,' in common with other music-rooms of the period, Hickford's room is not actually of large size, being only about fifty feet in length and some thirty feet in width. But its proportions are excellent; the ceiling is coved, and the mouldings, cornices, and other decorations are in the simple, elegant style that the brothers Adam improved upon and made their own many years later. This beautiful room appears to have remained so unchanged since it was first built that