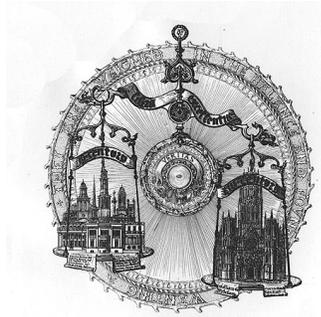


AUGUSTUS WELBY NORTHMORE PUGIN, *CONTRASTS: OR, A PARALLEL BETWEEN THE NOBLE EDIFICES OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES AND SIMILAR BUILDINGS OF THE PRESENT DAY; SHEWING THE PRESENT DECAY OF TASTE* (1836), (LEICESTER: LEICESTER UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1969).



It will be readily admitted, that the great test of Architectural beauty is the fitness of the design to the purposes for which it is intended, and that the style of a building should so correspond with its use that the spectator may at once perceive the purpose for which it was erected.

Acting on this principle, different nations have given birth to so many various styles of Architecture, each suited to their climate, customs, and religions; and [religious] edifices ...are the most splendid and lasting monuments ...

[With] Christianity has arisen an architecture so glorious, so sublime, so perfect, that all the productions of ancient paganism sink, when compared before it, to a level with the false and corrupt systems from which they originated.

Pointed or Christian Architecture* has far higher claims on our admiration than mere beauty or antiquity; the former may be regarded as a matter of opinion,—the latter, in the abstract, is no proof of excellence, but in it alone we find *the faith of Christianity embodied, and its practices illustrated*.

[Pugin then explains how the cross of the Crucifixion is seen as the plan of (Gothic) churches; triangular forms relate to the Trinity; and the verticality of Gothic architecture symbolizes the Resurrection.] ...

[The “convulsion” that followed the Fall of the Roman Empire] ...was a sufficient cause for the barbarous state of Architecture at that period: but when Christianity had overspread the whole of western Europe, and infused her salutary and ennobling influence in the hearts of the converted nations, art arose purified and glorious; and as it had been previously devoted to the gratification of the senses, then it administered to the soul: and exalted by the grandeur of the Christian mysteries, ennobled by its sublime virtues, it reached a point of excellence far beyond any it had previously attained; and instead of being confined to what was sensual or human, it was devoted to the spiritual and divine. Christian art was the natural result of the progress of Catholic feeling and devotion; and its decay was consequent on that of the faith itself...

AUGUSTUS WELBY NORTHMORE PUGIN, *THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF POINTED OR CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE* (1841), (LONDON: ACADEMY EDITIONS; NEW YORK: ST. MARTIN'S PRESS, 1973).

Cast-iron is a deception; it is seldom or never left as iron. It is disguised by paint, either as stone, wood, or marble. This is a mere trick, and the severity of Christian or Pointed Architecture is utterly opposed to all deception....

It is not incumbent on all men to raise vast and splendid churches; but it is incumbent on all men to render the buildings they raise for religious purposes *more vast and beautiful than those in which they dwell*.... Let every man build to God according to his means, but not practice showy deceptions; better is it to do a little substantially and consistently with truth, than to produce a great but fictitious effect.

* It is Pugin's custom to use the terms “Pointed” and “Christian” interchangeably for what we would more commonly call “Gothic.”