A Summer Chapel

IT is acknowledged that mental as well as physical needs change with the revolving seasons. In winter, the sense of circumscription is not irksome; it is then synonymous with that of protection. In summer, confinement of any nature becomes tyrannous. Every human impulse is then toward freedom and abundant life. It is as if the great armies of city population marching toward the conquest of things of matter, or things of mind, raised the common cry of "Thalassa," "Thalassa," like Xenophon's hosts at the sight of the sea.

To meet the immaterial wants of those who are temporarily released from the discipline of the strenuous life demands both skill and sympathy. Signs of such comprehension, of such adaptation of all externals to a prevailing mood and temper of mind exist in great numbers and are still multiplying along our coast lines, our river banks, and at our mountain resorts. Domestic architecture in these places has been simplified and developed, just as a living organism undergoes evolution to fit it to a new environment. Church architecture is also developing on parallel lines a new species, distinctive, yet bound by no hard and fast rules; a style which shall minister to that aestheticism which is the handmaid of the religious sense.

In accordance with this well-defined and now active movement, The Craftsman offers plans for A Summer Chapel, which may be erected in any village or spot possessing ordinary natural resources and facilities for construction.

The first essential of our structure, as it should always be in any place of worship, is to indicate plainly by its exterior features the character of the ritual followed within its walls. There is no better reason for an edifice consecrated to the Baptist form of worship to recall by its architecture an English cathedral, than for...
the services therein conducted to imitate those of the Anglican communion. The two contingencies are equally illogical.

Strict regard having been paid to these ideas of fitness, it becomes possible and even easy to conceive and execute a plan that shall conform in every detail to the required functions. Nor will it be difficult to obtain structural material that shall be at once convenient, economical and sightly. Indeed, the entire process of planning and construction appears so simple, so easy of accomplishment, so difficult to avoid, that the fantastic structures which everywhere masquerade as houses of worship are an unpleasant and inexplicable surprise to those who give even slight consideration to the subject of church building.

It must be confessed that for the existing evils two classes of individuals are equally responsible: namely, the Church authorities and the men in whom they put their trust; to speak more plainly the architects. But the latter are not wilfully in the wrong. They are incapable rather than perverse. They have academic training. They distinguish with nicety between twelfth and thirteenth century Gothic. They are critics of the profiles of classical moldings. To them an axis is a sacred thing. But they are so thoroughly "educated" that they can not approach a simple problem in an earnest, straightforward manner. With them the letter has killed the spirit.

It is this same influence of scholasticism which works so disastrously in domestic architecture, often making the house in front the artistic inferior of the barn in the rear; since the latter fulfills certain fixed requirements, while the former has been constructed with consideration for its exterior only, with the "arrangements" added as after-thoughts, as best they might be. The barn in its structural qualities fulfills the functions for which it was intended. It justifies its existence. It is not ashamed frankly to declare its uses to the passer-by. It should be the same with the church, whether it be of the monumental, or the chapel type, or yet again any intermediate member of the long series which runs between these two extremes.

The structure which we here illustrate is an ordinary place of worship to be built with a rigid regard for economy and with
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no attempt at ostentatious display. It is an Anglican church located at a place of summer resort.

The first problem here offered to the architect is how to meet the demands of the required form of worship, which, in this instance, is a combination of ceremonies and preaching. Therefore, the clergy must be afforded adequate space and facilities for conducting the ceremonies; while the laity must be provided with the means to see and to hear all that occurs within the sanctuary and choir.

For a church of the character and style under consideration one hundred seventy-five sittings are sufficient; which reservation of area, together with the aisles and the space for the font would give for the body of the church, put into rectangular form, approximately twenty-eight by thirty-four feet; these proportions, taking one-half the width of the church for the width of the chancel, and making the latter as it should be, twice as deep as wide, gives us, inclusive of the rear wall of the tower, fourteen by thirty feet.

The church proper—nave and chancel,—being secured, the second important feature is the room for the Sunday School. This is not in direct communication with the body of the church and capable of being thrown into the same, as would be required in churches of some denominations. But it is of easy access from the main porch, from the vestry, and from the nave. Fulfilling the necessary conditions, it occupies the one place upon the plan which is open to it, and in accordance with the seating capacity of the church, it must not have less than the thirty by twenty-five feet of floor area. In addition, a Bible class room is placed directly at the rear of the superintendent’s desk and at the same height as the platform. This arrangement leaves a space between the choir and the Sunday School which very properly divides itself into the vestry and the small sacristy or robing-room for the choir. It thus follows that unless useless expense be incurred, the only space for the organ remains at the north side of the choir. And this being larger than is demanded by an organ suitable for the church, a portion of the area is used as a means of access to the pulpit.

The font is located with regard for convenience and also for aesthetic reasons, while the places of the altar, choir, pulpit and
lectern being prescribed by the rubrics, do not call for detailed explanation.

The plan of the church being now fixed, we may pass on to consider the building materials. These also present themselves naturally, as at the ordinary summer resort, it is as easy to build in stone as in brick, with the added advantage of the avoidance of delay incident to the transportation by water or rail of the latter material. Consequent upon these reasons, the exterior walls of our church will be constructed of the local stone, built precisely like a cellar-wall, with no niceties of ornamental setting, but with the sole purpose of producing a perfectly plumb, substantial, well-bonded and craftsmanlike piece of work; the joints liberally pointed up and left frankly to show construction.

It will be observed that no attempt has been made at exterior decoration, save in the windows, which show a modification of Perpendicular Gothic, and in the gable spaces at East and West. Here symbolic ornament, indicative of the uses of the structure, is introduced in rough-cast cement work: the spaces being covered with the LaFarge cement of a creamy white tint, into which are inset, after the manner of mosaics, flat decorations in color: the subject of the West front being the Trinity, represented by ecclesiastic conventions; while the subject in the East shows the Supreme Being ruling the Cosmos. It must be added that this decoration, although very important as an aesthetic factor, is easily prepared by means of the full size drawings herewith presented, and can be executed by any stone-mason or plasterer.

The framework of the roof is to be covered with black slate, and the exterior metal work to be painted dark green, while the general effect of the exterior is left to time and the weather. The result, as evidenced by an inspection of the drawings is one of extreme simplicity, but withal dignified and obedient to tradition.

The interior of our church prolongs the note of symplicity struck by the exterior. Consequently, the strict rules of proportions for the height of nave and aisles formulated by certain enthusiasts have been disregarded: the nave has not been given an extreme height, and the side-walls have been carried up only far enough to admit an adequate degree of light, and to allow freely
Transverse Section
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the exercise of the functions for which the church is intended. Owing to the same reasons, the trusses carrying the roofs are of the simplest pattern possible, and are designed solely with regard to the work which they are to perform.

From this interior ornamental and symbolic carvings in stone have been rigidly excluded; for while such might be desirable from the archeological point of view, considerations of economy have led to the use of modest plaster on furring, and of wainscoting, as is indicated by the sections and the perspective drawings.

The woodwork—wainscoting, trusses and benches—is of ash, stained in dark, rich green, while the floors throughout the building, save in the chancel and the vestibule, are also of ash, stained in dark orange brown.

The plaster, “left under the trowel,” is washed with a slight coat of yellow shellac to a pale gold tint, which covers the walls of the nave and chancel, and extends to those of the Sunday School room.

All the windows are of extreme simplicity in design, with strongly accented leads enclosing “ripple” glass of a greenish amber tone; the chancel windows being distinguished from those of the nave by medallions containing the emblems of the Four Evangelists executed in dull tones of the traditional colors proper to each.

The floor of the chancel is of red and brown Roman brick, set on edge, and laid in cement conformably to the “herringbone pattern,” with a border of blue stone; the latter material forming also the degrees or steps reaching to the sanctuary.

The altar is of white Vermont marble, without ornament except the sacred Constantinian monogram, which appears midway in the front and is wrought in glass mosaic. The retable or super-altar is of ash, stained a dark, strong peacock blue approaching green.

A focus of color is obtained in the reredos, which is here a canopy of tapestry, extending to a considerable length, as seen in the drawings, embroidered and showing old rose and gold, except where it is reversed at the top, when the color-scheme at the back is changed to gold and dull turquoise blue. A further accentua-
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tion is afforded by the wrought-iron candlesticks with their waxen tapers, and the whole is projected against the expanse of yellow plaster, which is here given a fuller, richer, more golden hue, sug-
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gesting in some slight measure the background of the early basilica apses.

The chancel is separated from the nave by suggestion rather than reality; the division being marked by a Rood screen, sur-
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mounted by the Cross bearing in marble mosaic a symbolic, non-
pictorial, conventional representation of the Crucifixion.

As will be observed, the opening from the chancel to the organ
chamber is not, as is usually the case, filled by the organ face. On
the contrary, it is frankly occupied by a wooden screen which per-
mits the passage of sound, and does not violate the general harmony
of the Church.

On the opposite side of the chancel, facing the organ screen, a
conventional colossal figure of the Archangel Gabriel may be
painted in matt tints. This decoration need not be a great addi-
tional cost to the structure, and if it be executed flatly and simply,
it will enhance the mystical, sacred effect of the sanctuary.

The font at the end of the nave, opposite the altar and facing
the entrance to the church, is constructed of molded brick, laid in
cement. It is provided with a stationary pewter bowl as a recep-
tacle for the consecrated water.

The Sunday School room demands no explanations further
than those made for the body of the church, except that a word may
be given to the tapestries. These occupy the wall space contained
between the wainscoting and the roof trusses, and are executed ac-
cording to methods previously given in The Craftsman. They
represent such episodes from the Old and New Testaments as are
usually taken as the subjects of elementary Sunday lessons. They
beside constitute a strong decorative factor which will go far
toward securing and holding the attention of children.

Altogether our interior, simple and severe though it be, is
found upon careful examination to respond to that most imperative
of modern aesthetic demands: the love of color. The gold of the
New Jerusalem is suggested in the apse, and the chaste harmonies
formed by the tones of woods, stones, and metals will find their
counterparts in the chants and canticles of the Holy Place, rich yet
simple, with their contrasted and well-balanced voices.