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## WELLS CATHEDRAL.

During the last few years—or, to speak precisely, since 1842—the renovation of the interior of Wells Cathedral has steadily progressed. A fund, headed by a £1000 subscription from the late Archdeacon Brymer, and supported by very liberal contributions from Dean Goodenough, the late Dean and his lady, Mr. Dickenson, and other lovers of ecclesiastical architecture—having been raised, the professional services of Mr. Benjamin Ferry were in the first instance sought, and under the judicious direction of that gentleman, the nave, transepts, aisles, and lady-chapel gradually underwent *restoration*. We use this term in its strictest sense—for it is a word of many meanings—as nothing was attempted in these portions of the structure beyond the removal of the thick coatings of whitewash which covered the entire interior of the building, the banishment by the score of marble tablets and other monuments, and the repairing of fractured columns, mouldings, quoins, and carvings. In all instances the work was carried out with most conscientious care. Carvings of the greatest delicacy were relieved, without injury, from their integuments of plaster; and in the repairs of the masonry, done for the most part by local hands, can be discovered that freedom and life of manipulation which so precisely accords with the character of the old work.

In the vaulting of the lady-chapel, and, in a lesser degree, in that of the nave, some decorations in polychrome were essayed. These, although in some cases founded upon ancient patterns, discovered beneath the whitewash, can be considered as but partially successful. The patterns in themselves may be good enough, and there are obvious reasons why such traces of the old designs as were brought to light should have been preserved: But while nothing is more glorious in effect than a general system of colour in church decoration, few things are less pleasing than polychromatic dribbles; and yet most of our cathedrals have been trifled with in this manner. We acutely remember the execrable instance of this sort of thing in the roof, at the intersection of the transepts, at Rochester; and now Wells, like its sister buildings, exhibits just that amount of colour which painfully indicates the want of more. In this instance, however, it is satisfactory to see that what has been done has been done well—a circumstance which makes the work peculiar in its way.

In addition to the stalls the work in the choir comprises a new stone pulpit, sedilia, and Minton's tiles on the altar, a carved reredos, repairing the old wooden seats, a complete cleansing from painted marbling of the Bishop's throne, and its general repair; and, of course, the removal of whitewash and obtrusive ornaments.