That the Westminster Hall as at present exists is an admirable work of art, and that it ought to remain visible to the public, and that any alteration of it will injure it as a work of art. Nothing more ought to be done to it than is necessary for the stability of the fabric.

That there is much archaeological interest in the parts of the wall of the Hall of Prince Richard and the 2nd century ruin, and that if after due consultation with respect to it seems probable that the effect of London smoke on the surface of the stone will be seriously destructive, a provision should be made for better protection of the wall, but the provision should be quite simple and not involving a mere protection. The remains of the ancient walls or formations ought also to be preserved and protected, as being of archaeological interest.

That opinions above stated are those involved in the principles of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and imply the impossibility of restoration in any case, but in this case the proposed restoration are almost wholly conjectural and therefore especially indefensible. They involve also the expenditure of a large sum of public money where the slight repair and preservation of the Hall as it is would cost but little, in comparison with as it is would cost but little, in comparison with its obvious necessity, there is no more attending to repair and preservation of the Hall by some such scheme as Mr. Piersone's, even if the more modest scheme is carried out.
Mr. Shaw's defaced scheme for a Memorial Chapel, which he has submitted in a bill to be brought before Parliament, is to receive some attention at present. Such a scheme, though involving as it does the welfare of Westminster Abbey, the Church and its preachers must receive, be of extreme interest to the Society for the protection of Ancient Buildings, and it is the duty of that Society to criticize it without fear or favour.

Before dealing with the details of the scheme however, we must say a few words about the relation of the Abbey to memorials of the dead. The Abbey is proposed to continue in the series of which the Memorial Chapel is a part. Westminster Abbey stands by itself amongst the noble army of historical buildings in Great Britain; in every body's mind it is the centre and representative of our history as connected with the monarchy—since so early the facts of medieval history warrant. The last but one of purely English Kings is, under St. Peter, the titular prince of the place; in his Chapel dwelt guard with at least official reverence on acknowledged priests of our hereditary monarchs, nor has any investigation been made for the removal of the Stone of Doom and its Jubilee Renovated Chair to Bloomsbury or Portmanteau.
The associations of the Abbey, with
our medieval history, &c., magnify
its charms, are undoubtedly, of some
importance amidst the hurry of our
daily modern life; and perhaps they
would be so even if the buildings
were in themselves of indifferent
value of medieval art, or so much, falsified
within and without, as to have lost
the whole of their artistic value.

But though the Church at least
has lost the artistic qualities of its
exterior, its interior has suffered so
much from restoration that many buildings
which might have been
described as life of less
period than the most notable building
of the great Commercial Centre of
the world. Moreover, it is so far
from being a poor specimen of its
class, that we may, without fear
of contradiction, the most
beautiful of all English buildings,
and unsurpassed in beauty, by any
building in the world.

So that while from the historical
point of view it stands as the token
of the violent contrast between medie-
val and modern life in matters social
and political, it is, so from the artistic
side, in the centre of the
sharpest and most wonderful
capital in the world, with London
Squalor (the genuine article) on
the one hand, and London Nobles
on the other.
it upholds for us the standard of
art on the pleasure of life. Contrary
with yet its degradation. Beyond all other buildings
such a building should not be
required to; clearly nothing should be
under no necessity, being made clear by the perfect
determination of the Stile, and at the same time
ought to be watched by people that
done and know it, both in the
present and the past, so that no
beginnings of preventable decay might
be allowed to stop its growth.

It is needless to say that this has not
been done: its beauty, and its history
have been marred as a mere convenience
in whatever temporary folly might
have been lightly passing through man's
heads: even that minority which
its interior has enjoyed from decay.
restoration has been the result not
determined of wisdom and consideration but of
folly and rashness. The interior of
Westminster Abbey Church has been
saved from the destruction of рестoration
by having had its walls so far as
they are within reach planted over
with monuments which it is to be
expected profess to be worthless in part,
though artistic qualities,
but which, as a matter of fact,
are not, as is absurdity, which is a laughing stock to the
world, good in dulness which cannot
stir even wrathful laughter.
In fact the monuments of Westminster Abbey, which to our Country Cousins (as some said) and Travellers elsewhere almost rival the attractions of Madame Tussauds, the Fat Chaps, or the Sommar Exhibition of the Royal Academy, may be divided broadly into two classes: those in which the original architecture of the building was considered and those in which it has been ignored.

The former stretch over a long series of years, and are of many styles, some of which are very inferior to the style of the original building; but when all of them are in harmony with the architecture and are subordinate to it, and also they may be said to suit facts and to be beautiful; there were various obvious reasons; of level, of official position, and of respect for the work in the Church of the lucky Church Communicant, be built in the Church and there begin an end of it. The second class does not come over so long a period, though it works. Condemning them, they are far more numerous, yet it is laying the position very mildly to say that they do not harmonize with the architecture; to persons unaware of the grave crudity of the art of their period, they would seem to be placed in Church with the same purpose of insulting that architecture, but of course their producers never attained to such a pitch of intelligence as this. Apart also from their qualities as art, these architectural monuments are meaningless and worthless. Which, is the natural essence of their charm as monuments.
is a famous Church, a great Centre
of Civil & Ecclesiastical Administration,
but a new piece of conventional
pedantry, which aims to the creation
of academies for the living which was
a process of the same period; in short
a privileged class of memorial of the privileged
dead. From the end of the 17th
or beginning of the 18th Century it has
come to be a custom of our nation that
any one who could acquire a certain
degree of respectable notoriety, might
put in a claim to the
of burial & commemoration in West
minster Abbey as a final privilege bestowed
by a grateful nation to his merits in
self-devotion. Hence the man of official
understands memorial art in our
which, if he might have been designed for some purpose whatever but
lonely Church of which he above said has
incidentally preserved the rest of his
doubt much to their annoyance) dealing
as the world has wished with the interior.
But the English are a very energetic
race and produce a vast amount of
memorials of the kind just mentioned,
and as a consequence (the capacity of the
Church being limited) the memorials have
been crowding each other for some time
past, and at last after having had
recourse to stained glass windows and
brass as a last resource for the dis-
coveries of some place space for the further
disfigurement of the building it has been concluded that there
became clear that there is no more room.

This is not perhaps strictly the case; the exercise of a beneficent munificence would provide
reasonable room for a solid and most magnificent
memorial to the memory of a person of insight has come to the
conclusion that the trusts produced:
by modern sculpture are not quite
connected with the architecture of
people who know how to care for
and that possibly the time had come
before we have said to the strange appearance
in ugliness under which the Abbey
has so long suffered.
It has not indeed occurred to any
responsible person to suggest that the
might quietly let the whole thing drop,
and cease to carry on this continuous
competitive examination in notoriety;
but it has occurred to several to
suggest a silent solution which would
enable us to indulge in this curious
habit without much injury as to
the capacity of the Abbey, or the
possible injury that might be done
it by covering its walls and floor, and perhaps its roof
with memorials incongruous with
the structure and with each other.

And at last
Mr. Shaw before proposed to bring these various ideas to a point
and if possible to get Parliament to
consent to spending certain public
monies on this new experiment in National Commemoration.
It does not concern us here to inquire
as to where this money is to come from,
and indeed we think that no properly
placed, fairly designed, solidly constructed
building in London can be wholly a
waste of public money, which today
is being spent,
and with very little diminution, on far less important

Again as to the scheme, we must lay
Mr. Lefevre to understand that, though
we have sometimes been opposed to
his proposals for dealing with publ.
buildings we have no wish to
attack his scheme, but rather to
criticize it, and ask him if he
cannot see his way to mending it,
his proposals.
And certainly if he manages to get
a final embargo put upon its memorials
in the Abbey, he will deserve the gratitude
of the public once more as he did in his
successful efforts to save the poor
remains of Rising Forest from complete
destruction.

He assumes that some place for monuments
must be found in connection with the
great historical pile at Westminster; and as for us since we
having already hinted views (which
it is to be feared will not be popular)
about this supposed necessity, let us
assume that this is necessary and
so proceed to our criticism.

Few people will be disposed to
question that the Church and its premises
are much too crowded by buildings
at once mean and characterless: may
some are so troubled by the crowding
that they would pull down a building
good in itself, replete with
historical associations, and which
groups well with the Greater Church
and fits its scale: a piece of destruction
which to our mind is not to be thought of.

On the South side of the Abbey
however there is a site of mean
messuage, now houses containing a piece
of ground part of which to the
site of St Katharine's Chapel,
Some remains of which are
built up in them. The buildings
(which amongst other evils add
to the risk of fire at the Abbey)
ought certainly to come down; and
we should have thought that before the
Clergy had made
Space more Cozen, it would have
been in accordance with Mr. Lefèvre's
labours to have elsewhere for him
to do his best to keep this most
desirable air space open: but it
is in this very space that he
proposes to jam in his Chapel between
the ancient building and the modern
ones in a place where it will not be
properly seen itself, and where it will
prevent the Abbey from being seen.
Furthermore, it will encroach up
the Jewel Tower, which is an interesting building,
and so carry on the mutilation
of the already precariously used domestic
buildings of the Abbey.
But the Chapel thus placed on this
objectionable site Mr. Lefèvre finds it
necessary to make a passage from
the Abbey into it, so as to keep claim
for it the quite false position of its
being a part of the Abbey; this
desired passage of course blocks up
the site of the Chapter House and
its buildings, and cuts off a huge
court of Portal Corner, and would
be altogether an awkward and
injurious addition to the Abbey.
Our quarrel with Mr. Lefèvre's
scheme is altogether as to the site which necessitates most injuries to the
Abbey. In considering any scheme for dealing

with the question of monuments. [In manuscript, the word is unclear, possibly "estates"]: the conditions essential that these conditions should be adhered to.

1. That no more monuments of any kind should be placed in the Abbey Church on any pretext whatsoever.

2. That no part of the precinct shall be touched upon by the new building.

3. That the new building shall not be connected by any passage with the Church or its adjoining ancient buildings.

4. That no removal of ancient boundary lines should be allowed.

We should hope also that the new building would be dignified and impressive, and that its site would do the best for it on this head.

This can be that the proper site for the memorial building to be raised under such conditions is not far to seek. No better site could possibly be found than that now occupied by the block of houses in Abingdon that bounded by St. College St.

A building erected on such a site would have every opportunity for taking the true form for the needed purpose. We may venture to suggest as possibly a body interested in architecture generally (though our detractors will not allow this) that the form which such a building should take ought not to be that of a chapel, which implies an altar & chalice, which things which might have the aspect of some of the most fulsome competitors;
But neither of a long hall with a lobby as covered entrance to it. The site we suggest would lend itself admirably to this treatment.

There can be no possibility of objection to this site but what of expense. But if this public work is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well; otherwise there can be no question that it had better be let alone. We may well quote Mr. D'Arcy himself on this point:

"We have no right to remember the earth with defective buildings, and to prejudice future generations because we cannot afford at the moment a few thousand of pounds."

and again, "The government itself should do whatever it undertakes in the best possible manner and with due regard to a long future."

Finally we must say that we cannot help noting indications of public opinion that point to the probability that Mr. D'Arcy will not be allowed the use of the money which he is asking for, unless and that his scheme of a "Viceregal Chapel" will fail for the present. In that case let Mr. D'Arcy take heart and try to push through the thing which is essential in this matter: let him get a bill passed for building all memorials in Westminster Abbey, and let nothing else be put on the same spot.

The construction of where else it can be put being go its own ways.

...By so doing he will earn our lasting gratitude and will have done something to be remembered by in the future. And if he has any quibels as to his scheme, calling himself off from that honoured Crown of honours, burial in Westminster Abbey, let him console himself that many and many a man has been so buried with abundant honor, assisting success far less important than helping to save the most beautiful building in England from further degradation.

Theodore SPAB. William Morris