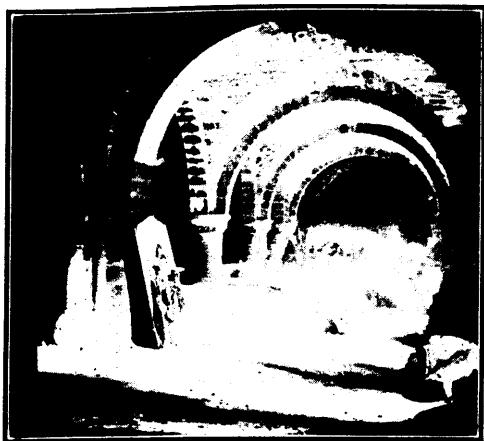


Paul. When the Romans went off about their own affairs and the Saxons succeeded them, religion still claimed this place as her own, only substituting for St. Peter and St. Paul the names of two local saints of great distinction, St. Oswald and St. Werburgh. In a simple wooden building on this site the offices of religion were discharged until the Benedictines established themselves here with the gifts and generous endowment of Hugh Dupres. Then came Henry VIII.'s insidious attack, then the institution of the Cathedral, and we find ourselves in modern times again. Our favourite has stood the test of antiquity.

But the builders: were they many and able, and separated by wide margins of years? And is her structure compacted of all the leading styles of Gothic England? The Saxon building of wood has disappeared, ruthlessly destroyed by the Normans, who, with their passion for creation, were regularly impatient of surviving structures. Yet even with this earliest building are associated the names of King Edgar and the great Leofric, Earl of Mercia. The present edifice displays, in varying amounts, to the careful observer, examples of Norman, Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular workmanship. The Norman work is not easily traceable. Here, as at St. Alban's and elsewhere, the Conqueror entrusted the construction to one of his own Norman ecclesiastics, Richard of Bec, who became the first head of the Monastery of St. Werburgh. A handsome Norman building was erected by this prelate, inspired, no doubt, by Anselm, who succeeded Lanfranc as head of the Abbey at Bec, and again as Archbishop of Canterbury. And Richard was Anselm's chaplain when he was called away to Chester. But only scant and partial remains are there to-day to inform us of the size and magnificence of this structure. The square uncompleted bases of the western towers; the long, dark low-vaulted Norman chamber lying along the west side of the cloisters, which may have served as the cellar of the genial First Abbot; much of the north wall and transept; a Norman capital in the north choir aisle, inverted, and serving as support for a pier of later date; the simple, round-headed doorway into the cloisters: these, and other minor signs point us to the beautiful austere work of Richard and his successors. The merest



Low-Vaulted Norman Chamber.