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## TYPICAL CHURCH TOWERS OF ENGLISH COUNTIES.

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### PART I.

LONDON AND MIDDLESEX.



OUR girls who are in the habit of visiting different English counties, either for purposes of study or of holiday-making, must have been struck by the various forms of the church towers of those counties; they will have noticed, for instance, that the graceful and elegant Somerset steeples differ completely from the sturdy embattled granite structures of the neighbouring county of Devonshire or the massive, plain square piles of

Wiltshire. If they passed through Northamptonshire, they will have observed the remarkable fact that the majority, even of the village churches, are adorned by tall, graceful stone spires, a feature unknown to Middlesex or Hertfordshire, and so rare in other counties that Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Essex can show only one solitary example apiece. What contrast in architecture can be greater than that which exists between the quaint and humble low towers of the Essex churches and the stately towers of those of the adjoining county of Suffolk?

Now without going so far as to assert that every county in England has but one type of tower, which is peculiarly its own, yet the marked and striking contrast between the steeples of adjoining counties is so singular as to demand careful study, and, if possible, explanation.

Before writing these papers we consulted a very eminent ecclesiastical architect upon the subject, and we give his opinion in his own words. "I consider the very distinct variations, to be noticed between the church towers of different English counties, the most interesting and singular fact in the whole history of mediæval architecture, and any explanation of the causes which have led to such a startling result would be highly valuable."

We must caution our readers against concluding that every tower in each county follows the "local type," but where it does not some reason for the variation can usually be assigned. Perhaps the architect came from some other county,



MIDDLESEX: OLD HADLEY CHURCH.

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