



EXETER CATHEDRAL, SHOWING GREAT WESTERN WINDOW.

and higher that they might carry the thoughts of the worshippers upward. In Italy and the East blank wall spaces were covered with painted or mosaic pictures. So in an age when few could read, the churches became like great stone Bibles, of which the coloured windows, carvings, and paintings, and even the shapes of the stones, were like separate chapters.

This Gothic love of height showed itself in the narrowing in and uplifting of the walls. The columns were made slender for beauty and clustered together for strength, until they became parts of stone piers on which the weight of the arched roof rested. Towers and steeples were added. Painted glass was considered the most beautiful form of decoration and picture writing. The window spaces were made larger and larger until they weakened the strength of the walls, and it became necessary to hold up what

was left of them between the windows with outside props called buttresses, some of which touched the wall only at the top, and came to be called flying buttresses. So the work went on century after century, the people taking more pride and pleasure in their churches than in any other treasures they possessed, the architects trying to make these great stone Bibles in the city streets more and more full of meaning.

At last the spirit of the time changed. Builders began to take more pride in showing what wonderful things they could do with stone and mortar than in the religious use of the churches they planned. Instead of growing better and better, Gothic art grew worse and worse. Then came the age of printing and discovery. The ruins of Greece and Rome began to be studied again, and the old Greek and Roman writings to be read. A pagan art that cared for nothing but beauty