

Church and Parsonage Architecture.

GENERAL REMARKS.

WITHIN a couple of decades a vast change has taken place in this country in the matter of Church architecture. In the rural sections the old log school-house has given place to buildings of a more church-like type; in many villages the churches are the most attractive buildings in the place; while in towns and cities the brick or stone buildings of yore,—“plain as a pike staff,”—are being replaced by ornate structures of almost cathedral proportions. This is well. We have no sympathy with the notion—still too prevalent—that any kind of a building is good enough for a church, and that the plainer and more repulsive-looking they are the better. Our church edifices should keep pace with the growing wealth of the people, on the principle that the best we can supply should be consecrated to the Lord's service. David could not rest in his “house of cedars,” while “the ark of the Lord” remained under “curtains”; and it argues poorly for that man's piety who can dwell contentedly in a costly mansion or comfortable homestead, while the house of God is little better than a barn—in some cases not so good as barns that we have seen.

On the other hand, there is need to guard against ostentation and a wasteful expenditure of money in useless ornaments. We do not object to a reasonable amount of architectural embellishment in an hospital; but the chief end in such an institution should be to provide the most comfortable accommodation for the patients. And our Bethesdas—our “houses of mercy”—should be constructed with the view of attracting men by home-like comfort rather than of exciting their admiration by architectural display.

PLAN FOR A TOWN CHURCH.

Our object in this department of **EARNEST CHRISTIANITY** is to offer from time to time hints and suggestions that may be useful to congregations contemplating the erection of churches or parsonages, especially in country places, and in villages or small towns.

The design which we give in the present number is rather too large and elaborate for a village church, but will be found admirably suited to a large town, or to parts of a city where comfort and convenience is an object rather than imposing architecture. The front elevation is plain, without being bad; in fact it is one of those designs which secures a good degree of elegance at a moderate cost, and this will