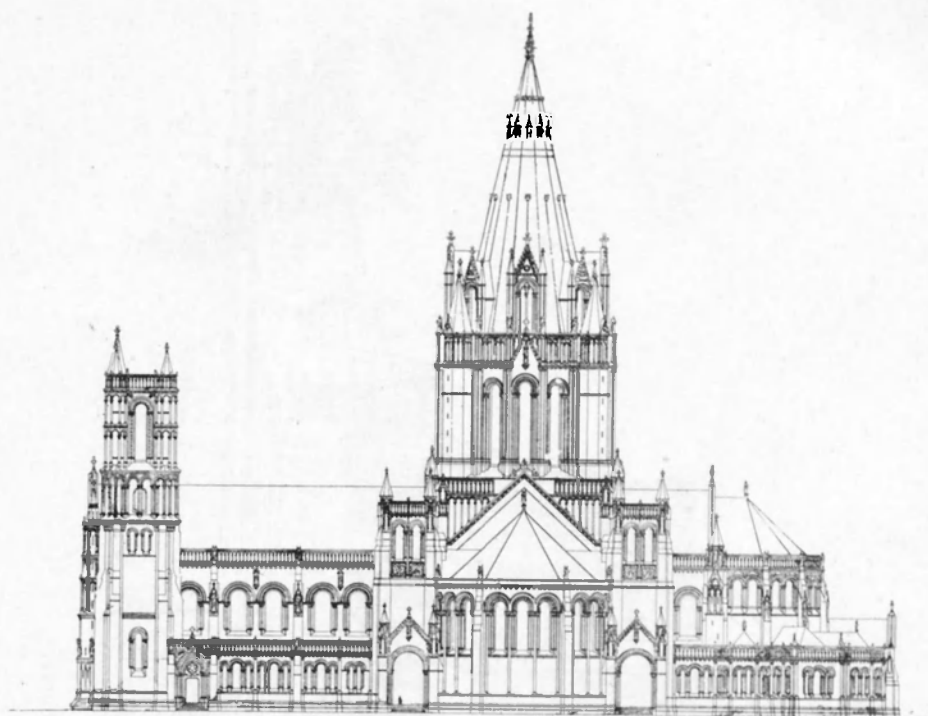


CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

Heins & Lafarge, Architects.



SOUTH ELEVATION.

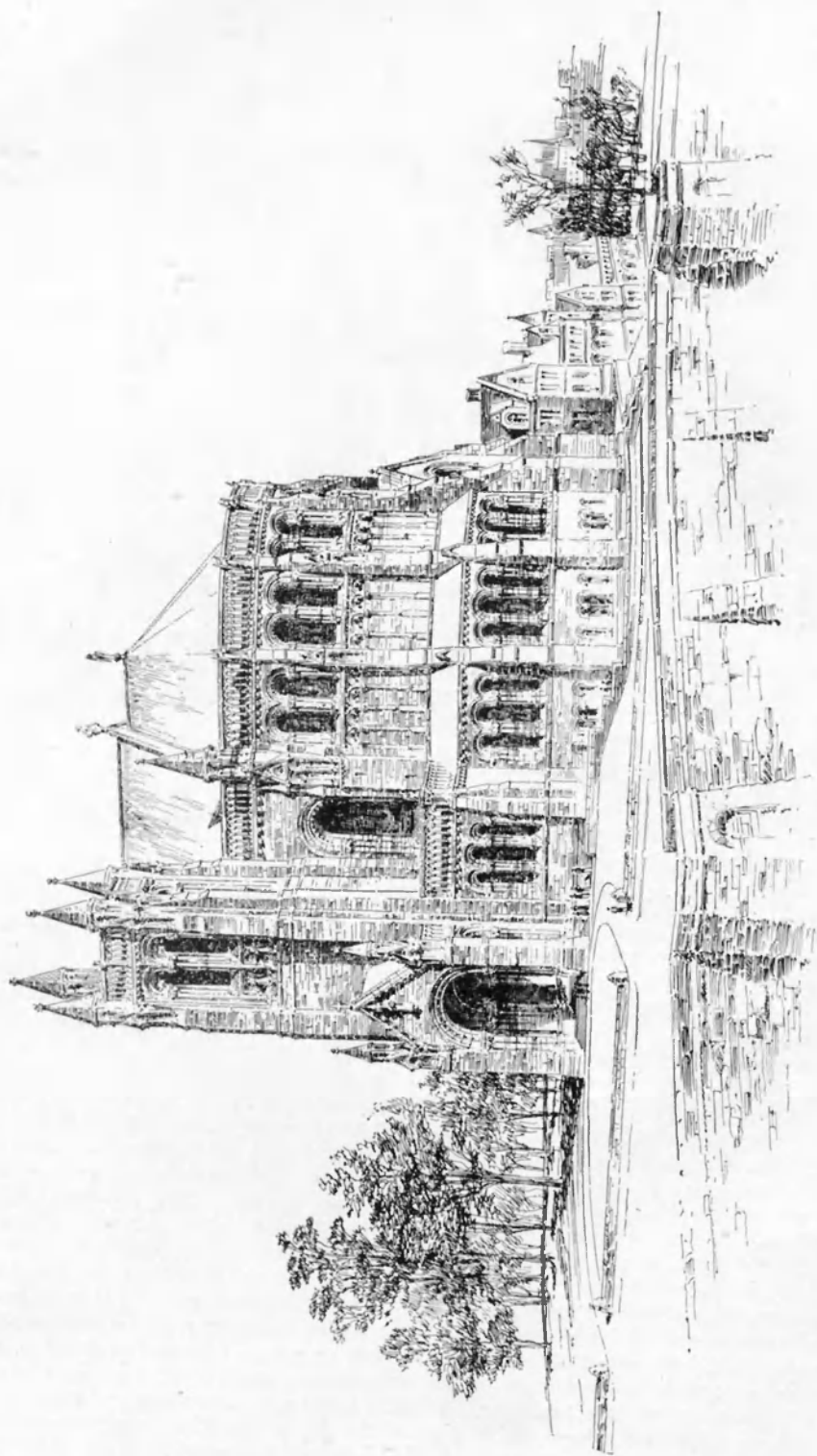
THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.



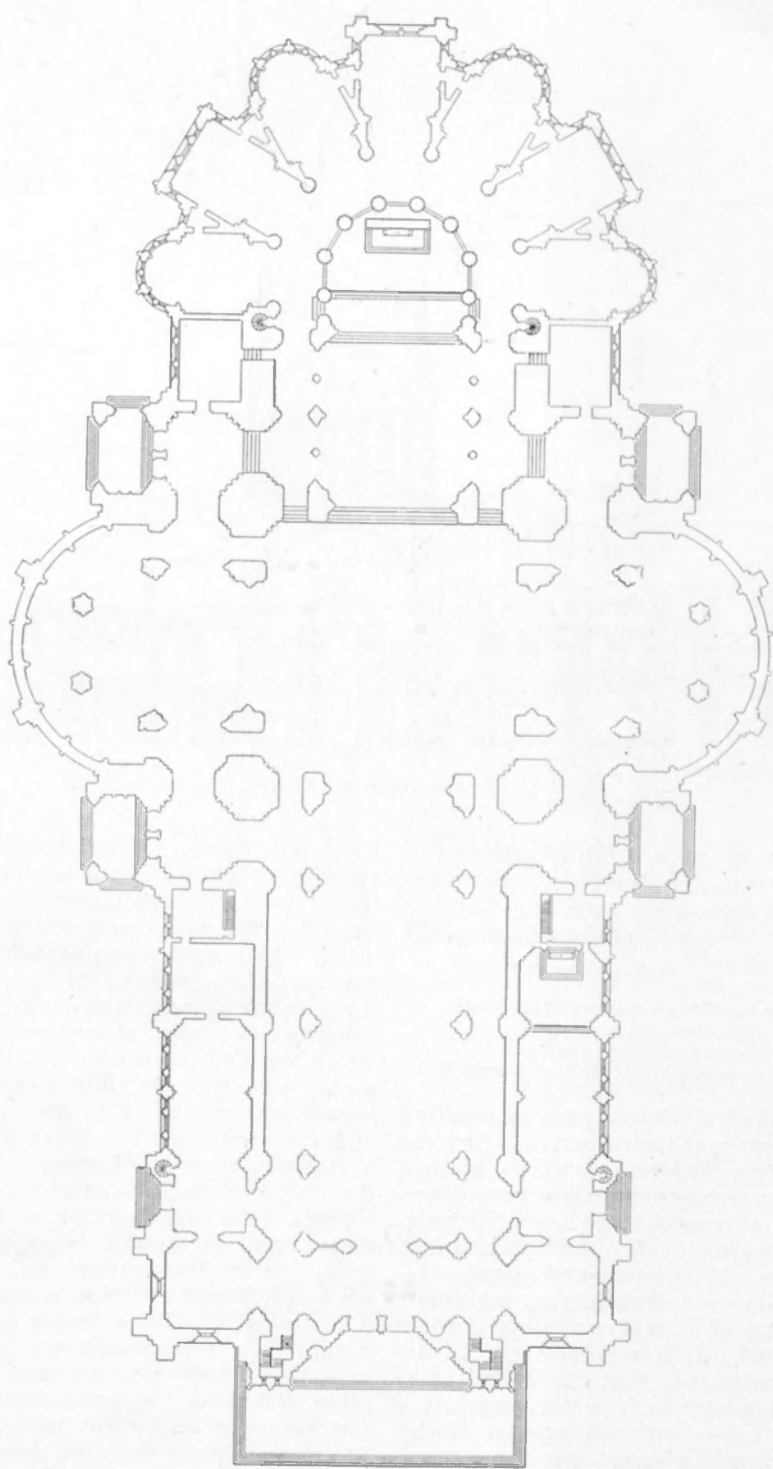
HEREWITH we present to our readers the accepted plans for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine so far as they have been matured. Though this publication represents them in a more advanced stage towards completion than any other that has been made the architect will not fail to observe that they are not fully matured and that the drawings, made at different periods and representing considerable modifications of the original scheme, do not, even at all essential points, agree with each other. For example, the difference that appears in the perspective sketch of the choir as a separate fragment and in the rear elevation of the cathedral are more than differences of detail and represent a considerable change in the general massing of the building. It will doubtless be safe where such discrepancies appear to assume that the

geometrical drawings represent the most matured thought of the designers.

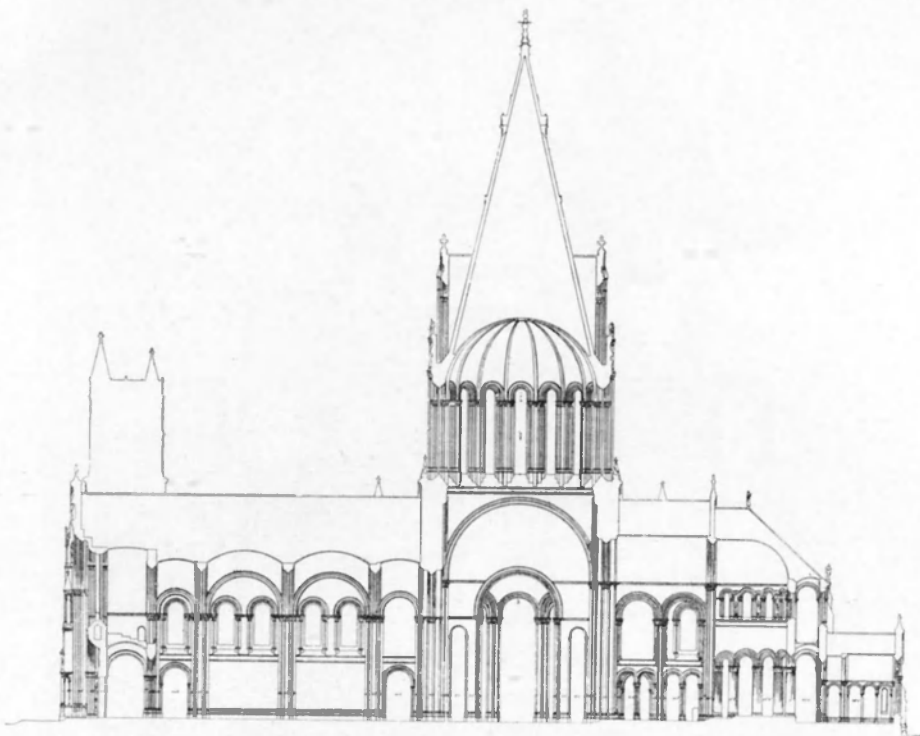
Certainly these drawings represent a wide departure from the accepted notion of a cathedral. In the mediæval cathedral the exigencies of vaulting control the entire plan. The outer line of the building is fixed by the ultimate buttresses of the nave vault, the position of these is dictated by mechanical considerations and the aisles are the spaces accruing between this line and the line of the nave-vaulting itself. In the disposition of the parts there is no room for artistic caprice. Everything is as it must be and, to translate that phrase literally, but yet with an increase of significance, everything is *comme il faut*. The architecture is the exposition, more or less clear, more or less eloquent, according to the ability of the designer of the mechanical conditions of his work. It is this fact



VIEW OF CHOIR.



GROUND PLAN.



MAIN LONGITUDINAL SECTION.

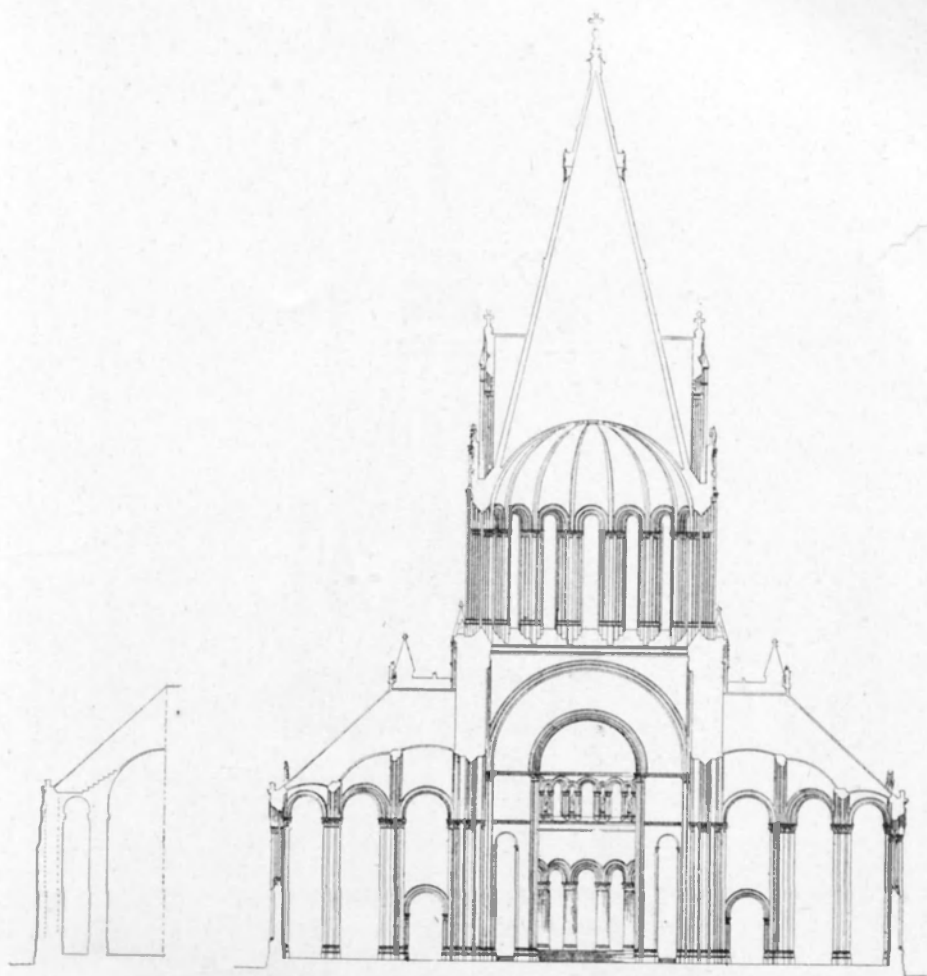
which gives to a Gothic cathedral its analogy to a natural organism and makes Emerson's famous lines in "The Problem" more literally true than the poet knew :

"These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass;
The passive master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned."

A cathedral without groined vaulting and so without the system of buttresses and flying buttresses which groined vaulting involves must be a very different thing from what we know historically as a cathedral, and it cannot be an example of Gothic architecture.

The dome is doubtless as legitimate a method of durably covering a space as a vault. It has indeed one advantage, and that is that the ceiling may be visible exteriorly as the roof. It is a reasonable reproach against Gothic that, while the vault was the generating principle of the whole structure and determined its general form and even

its detail, it was not exhibited in the exterior architecture, but left to be inferred from the appliances that were exhibited for its support and its abutment. Above the monumental roof of masonry the architects of the Middle Ages found it practically necessary to construct a less monumental roof which masked the vaulting. In Spain alone was the vaulting merely protected and exhibited as the covering of the church, for the only example of a masonry roof in Northern Europe, the pointed tunnel-vault of Roslyn Chapel, is admitted to be of Spanish derivation. It cannot be said, however, that the innovation of the Spanish builders was artistically successful. The roof of Seville is simply invisible, except from a point above it, and the lack of a visible roof is one of the defects that give the great church the impression of an almost total lack of exterior architecture. But the domical covering also presents its difficulties as the visible roof and crown of a con-

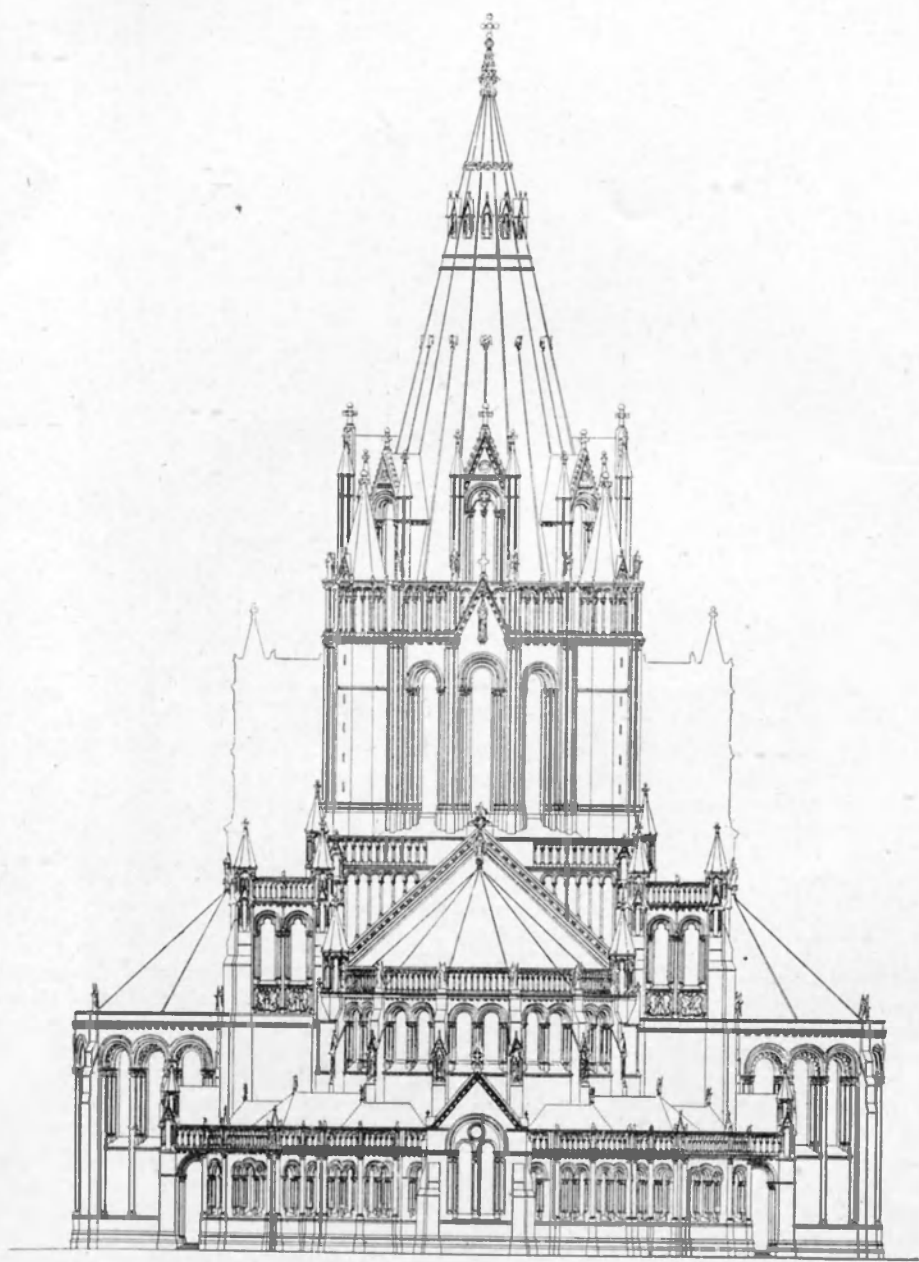


MAIN TRANSVERSE SECTION AND SECTION THROUGH TRANSEPT.

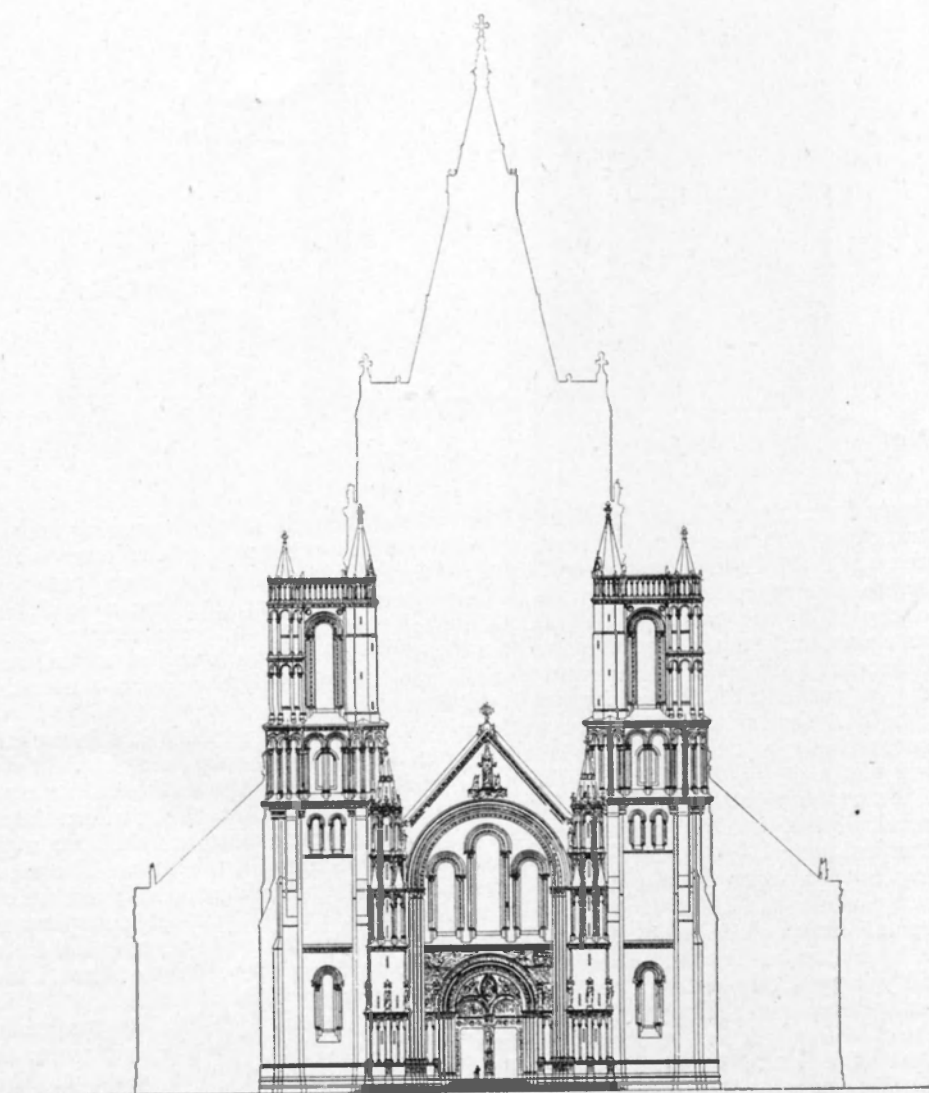
struction. The Roman and the true Byzantine domes, as represented respectively in the Pantheon and in St Sophia, are true roofs as well as ceilings. In each case, however, the roof is too low to form an adequate culmination of the exterior architecture, although it is lofty enough for impressiveness in the interior. The desire to make it tell more effectively on the outside led the builders of St. Mark's in Venice and the builders of the mosques and all the other dome-builders whose prototype was St. Sophia, to construct double domes, of which one was to be an exterior and one an interior feature, and which enabled the Mahometan architects in Asia, released

by the employment of un-monumental materials from the exigencies of structural design, to erect the fantastic and bulbous cupolas that crown their works. The architects of the Italian Renaissance may be said to have solved the problem of a monumental dome, which should be a crowning feature both internally and externally, and, after Brunelleschi and Bramante, the double dome with the brick pyramid of St. Paul's in London appears a makeshift and a retrogression.

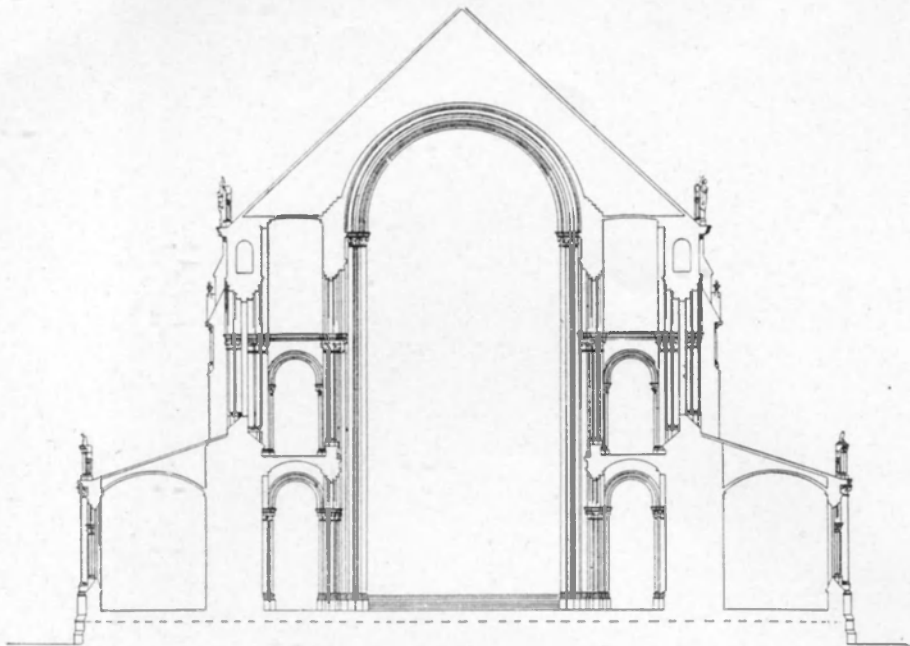
The dome, which is the central feature of the new cathedral internally, is covered and masked by the tower, which is the central feature exteriorly. The space covered by the dome and its



EAST ELEVATION.



WEST ELEVATION.



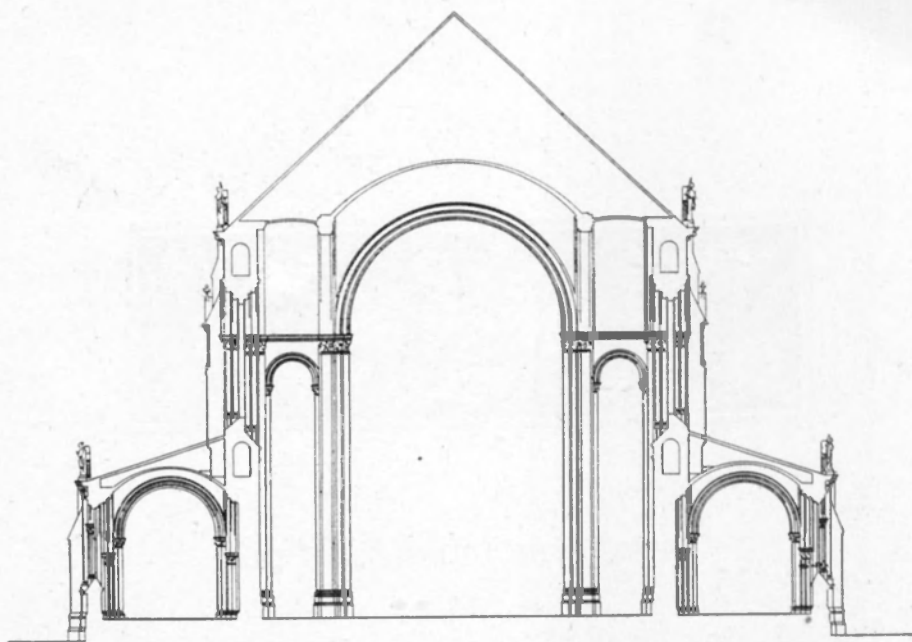
SECTION THROUGH CHOIR.

immediate appendages, including the transepts and the choir, is practically the cathedral, the nave being but an impressive approach. The whole space occupied by the transepts is available as a vast auditorium, and the one great difference between a modern and a mediæval cathedral is thus recognized and provided for, as it was, more or less successfully, in nearly all the competing plans.

As we have intimated, the scheme of construction, which contemplates a domical covering not only for the crossing but for each of the bays of the same, while the choir is ceiled with a barrel vault succeeded by a semi-dome, is by no means Gothic. It is very possibly an ecclesiastical rather than an architectural feeling that has led to the clothing of such a structure in forms that give it the general aspect of a Gothic church. This aspect it derives almost wholly from the treatment of the towers. The aisles are not, as in Gothic, the spaces between the nave piers and the ultimate buttresses. Indeed, the outer aisle is a cloister, walled off from the interior, and the comparatively slight thrust of the very light

tile-arch used in the covering of the nave is resisted within the walls. Flying buttresses are thus rendered superfluous, and the main wall, instead of being a mere screen, as in the Gothic cathedrals, is a real and massive wall which supports the entire structure.

For the exterior effect, it is fortunate, we think, that the trustees should have decided to give the cathedral its true orientation, so that the western front really faces the west and the apse, with its ring of chapels, the east. The view to be mainly considered, and from which the cathedral will be most conspicuous and dominating is, of course, that from the east, from the lowlands beneath the plateau upon which it is to stand. The only argument for placing the flank along the edge of the plateau, as was at first proposed, is that more of the church can thus be seen at once. But the thing to be aimed at, it seems to us, is that the church shall really crown the cliff and produce the effect that is so striking in Mont Saint Michel and in the cathedral of Limburg-on-the-Lahn, and this is much more decisively to be attained by the presentation of a



SECTION THROUGH NAVE.

symmetrical and pyramidal mass, such as is presented by the apse of the cathedral than by the exposure of the long side. The massing of this apse has been studied with high and successful skill. The ring of chapels forms a terrace behind which rises the apse, flanked by its low and flat-topped towers, and again by the sloping lines of the transept-roofs, and from this ample base emerges the pyramid of the large tower. It was a very happy thought to alternate square and rounded faces in the ring of chapels, and thus to secure the feeling of security and stability that in a Gothic chevet is given by the interpolation of the buttresses. The treatment of the transepts, too, is admirably adapted to contribute to the supremacy and effectiveness of the great tower. The lofty gabled transept of a Gothic cathedral loses its value when there is anything more important than a light *flèche* at the crossing. By

rounding these in plan and hipping back the roofs, not only is the transept taken out of competition with the central mass, but value and detachment are given to the low flanking towers which carry the lines of the central tower outward and onward. As a picturesque object and considered by itself, the central tower will leave little to be desired, if the effect of its admirable massing is supplemented by effective detail. But from another point of view, it will leave something to be desired, and that is as the outcome and expression of a dome, of which it now appears as a graceful and ingenious mask. It is possible that the architects may see their way, in the years that must intervene before the crowning feature of the cathedral comes to be built, to a design for it that shall not only result in an impressive object, but shall be the solution of a very trying architectural problem.