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978-1-108-04484-4 - The Gentleman's House: Or, How to Plan English Residences, from the Parsonage to the Palace

Robert Kerr

Frontmatter

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The Gentleman's House

After Scottish architect Robert Kerr (1823–1904) published this book in 1864, he was given a commission to build what would become his best-known work, Bearwood House, in Berkshire, for the then proprietor of *The Times* of London, John Walter. Kerr gives a thorough explanation of the elements involved in the planning and building of a 'comfortable English Residence of the better sort' in this book, which is divided into five parts. The first gives a detailed historical account of the 'domestic plan' from the eleventh century to the present day. The subsequent sections leave no corner of a manor house unexamined, as Kerr discusses every room of such houses, their grounds, the possible types of architectural styles, and the matter of cost. There is also an extensive appendix of plates of architectural and garden plans, accompanied by explanations, giving a comprehensive guide to mid-Victorian stately-home-building.

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THE GENTLEMAN'S HOUSE;
OR,
HOW TO PLAN ENGLISH RESIDENCES,
FROM THE PARSONAGE TO THE PALACE;

WITH TABLES OF ACCOMMODATION AND COST, AND A SERIES OF SELECTED PLANS.

BY ROBERT KERR, F.R.I.B.A.,
ARCHITECT;
PROFESSOR OF THE ARTS OF CONSTRUCTION IN KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.



LONDON:
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P R E F A C E.



THE purpose of the present treatise is to set forth a systematic exposition of those details of arrangement which make up the plan of a "Gentleman's House,"—a convenient and comfortable English Residence of the better sort, on whatever scale.

Other departments of the Architect's practice may offer more to his ambition as an artist or a man of science, but there is none which has higher claims upon him as a useful servant of the public than the design of Domestic Plan. Any endeavour, therefore, to treat this subject thoroughly will be received, no doubt, with every indulgence.

It may be thought somewhat remarkable that the subject should not have been already exhausted, for it is well known that there are few good things so good (and therefore so well worth describing) as a good English house; but it is still more singular that no book whatever appears to have been published from which we can obtain, with regard to Domestic Plan, (except indirectly, as in the writings of the indefatigable Loudon), even matter for suggestion and inquiry, far less authority for reference.

The author consequently has to submit the present work as one in which compilation has yielded him scarcely any

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PREFACE.

aid, but which has been founded rather upon the experience of practice and the study of years, directed to all examples, good or bad, which have come within his reach.

The intricacy and extent which the inquiry assumes, when one attempts to deal with it in any degree exhaustively, will become apparent to the reader by a glance over the items of the Index ; and how much has to be said upon many of these items may be perceived by noting the length of certain of the chapters. If the reader should experience surprise in either or both of these respects, the author has only to say that in commencing to write he himself did not expect either index or chapters to be so long.

London, November, 1864.