Beginnings and Endings: Phoebe Stanton on Pugin’s Contrasts

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When Phoebe Stanton died in 2003, her life’s work, a monumental study of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, remained unpublished. Stanton was emeritus professor of art history at Johns Hopkins University and the recipient of the College Art Association’s Distinguished Teaching Award in 1980. She was also deeply engaged with urban planning and design in Baltimore, serving as the first architecture critic for the Baltimore Sun beginning in 1971 and as a member for more than thirty years of Baltimore’s Architectural Review Board (and its later incarnation the Design Advisory Panel).1 Her massive unpublished manuscript on Pugin updated and expanded her 1971 short monograph Pugin and completed the circle begun by her 1968 study of ecclesiological influences in America, The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste 1840–1856.2 Pugin’s own life was brief, but when he died in 1852 at the age of 40 he had designed over 100 buildings, including, with Charles Barry, the Houses of Parliament in London, and published myriad books and articles. Stanton, in constructing her text, relied on obscure archival evidence and letters and notes between Pugin and his associates, as well as the hundreds of sketches and drawings Pugin left behind. The manuscript delves deeply into the religious and cultural context for Pugin’s brief architectural career, as well as providing exhaustive accounts of his building designs and prolific publication record.

Posthumous publication can be a controversial subject in the literary world and is almost unheard-of in academic publishing because the author is unable to edit, verify, or respond to new interpretations. This brief excerpt from Stanton’s manuscript is offered here as a reflection of the chimerical and changing nature of scholarship itself, which necessarily permutates with the addition of each new layer of investigation and publication. As Stanton’s early work itself updated the classic Benjamin Ferrey text on Pugin, other new works appeared, culminating in Rosemary Hill’s highly praised God’s Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain in 2007.3 Stanton’s orphaned manuscript has thus, in one sense, been superseded.

In another sense, though, the manuscript becomes a piece in the larger puzzle of the historiography of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture. Part of that story concerns how Pugin became an originating figure in discussions of modernism. In the work of Nikolaus Pevsner, Stanton’s mentor at the Courtauld Institute and the author of the introduction to her 1971 monograph, A. W. N. Pugin occupies a seminal position. In his 1936 Pioneers of the Modern Movement: From William Morris to Walter Gropius, itself a pioneering work, Pevsner establishes Pugin as an origin point for the Arts & Crafts movement and John Ruskin’s moralizing emphasis on truth in architecture. More than thirty years later, in Pevsner’s Sources of Modern Architecture and Design (1968), Pugin’s importance remains in the fact he was “read by the Functionalists.”4 In these accounts, and the many that are influenced by and respond to them, it was Pugin’s writing, more than his architecture, that provided the case for his primacy; as Henry-Russell Hitchcock suggested, it was the plates that provided the “most significant contribution.”5

Pugin was the author of a wide range of texts. At one end of the spectrum were volumes of plates, some appearing as pattern books like his Foliated Ornament: A Series of Thirty-One Designs (1849), to more encyclopedic studies like Examples of Gothic Architecture: Selected from Various Ancient Edifices in England (1838). In other texts Pugin was more theoretical, as in his True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture (1841). But it was
Contrasts: Or, A Parallel Between the Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages, and Similar Buildings of the Present Day; Shewing the Present Decay of Taste, first published when Pugin was only 25, that first catapulted him to the center of an ongoing English debate about taste, style, and the meaning of architecture (Figure 1).5 Pugin’s position was deeply informed by his conversion to Catholicism, but the larger issues that he addressed, about the meanings and purposes of architecture in the emerging cultural landscape of an industrial England, resonated far beyond his lifetime.

The excerpt that follows provides both a counterpoint to and a reinforcement of these readings of Pugin as an originating figure within the larger teleological framework of architectural modernism. Stanton focuses on the graphic strategy of Pugin’s Contrasts, his use of pointed and satirical illustrations as a means of neatly condemning certain foibles of nineteenth century architectural landscape of an industrial England, resonated far beyond his lifetime.

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Notes

6. See Belcher’s Annotated Critical Bibliography for a full listing of Pugin’s publications in their various editions.

Phoebe Stanton, Unpublished Manuscript, Pugin Excerpt from Chapter 4, “Contrasts (1836)”

Edited by Kathryn E. Holliday

Manuscript in the private collection of Michael Stanton, published with his permission. All illustrations are from Phoebe Stanton’s personal copy of Pugin’s Contrasts

The Background

Pugin’s life, abilities, perceptions and convictions changed profoundly between January 1833 and December 1835—his twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third years. Four deaths in his immediate family, a second marriage, and the birth of two children forced maturity upon him. He evolved from boy-genius—the cynosure of the family circle—into a capable young professional, who possessed a personal style and inventiveness and whose work was accepted by distinguished practitioners.1

As assiduous study increased his knowledge, Pugin moved from a preoccupation with late medieval and Renaissance architecture and decorative arts to admiration for earlier medieval

continued
works. Conversion to Catholicism strengthened his convictions and defined his preferences; he came to believe that there was a relationship between the social and religious purpose the buildings he preferred had served and, as he would say in his in answer to A. W. Hakewill’s pamphlet on the Houses of Parliament, their miraculous structure. Pugin had yet to develop and enlarge his conclusions about the values of medieval life, how they were linked with medieval art and architecture and the relationship between an historic model and its reiteration, which would emerge in his writing and designs after 1836. In 1835 it had been the beauty and complexity of medieval art that dazzled him.

In the remarks on architects contained in his early letters and notes, in his drawings and in the preliminary study for *Contrasts* (1836) its sources can be found. Because he hoped that Gothic would supplant the Neo-Classical styles, and because he found Neo-Classical work corrupt and incongruous, he challenged the authority of architects like John Soane, John Nash, Decimus Burton, and William and Henry Inwood, whose domination of the architectural scene was already waning. Sir Robert Smirke was under attack from many quarters; Pugin joined those who were hunting down his career, Pugin acquired Latin.4

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Whether or not one approved of Pugin’s arguments and whether or not he was logical, one could understand what he was saying and enjoy how he said it. He was not given to the convoluted remarks, foreign words and phrases, and the use of formalisms common in the writing of his contemporaries. Comparison of his pamphlet on the style chosen for the Houses of Parliament with the one written by Hakewill makes this clear. This is part of Hakewill’s cumbersome attack on the decision:

> There is no ancient usage, style or art, or costume or dress, which does not recommend itself to the attention of the educated by the pleasing historical recollection which each in its turn suggests; but should this circumstance plead in favor of their continuance, a similar reason would sanction the adherence in the present day to the dress and accoutrements of our ancient warriors; nor does the improved state of warfare oppose itself more completely to the actual use of those implements, than the great perfection which many arts, especially those of painting and sculpture, have obtained in this country, militates against the introduction of the Gothic character into our ancient monuments.5

And this is Pugin’s response:

> I feel confident you speak only as you wish, not as you think, when you state, that Gothic Architecture is becoming daily more obsolete—an observation which I do not hesitate to say is decidedly false. Allow me to ask any person at all conversant with Ancient architecture to look on the erections of fifty years ago, and even much less in the style then termed Gothic, and many of those in the present day, and will they not answer, that Gothic has made a prodigious stride towards its restoration?6

Pugin possessed a mordant wit. His descriptions were the result of careful and hostile examination of the people and buildings he assaulted. He early chose his vocabulary—words such as “execrable,” “enormities,” “abominable,” “wretched”—to describe buildings he did not approve. And he could write elegantly of Gothic:

> The grandeur of their masses—the exquisite finish of their details—their bold and scientific construction—the light, and at the same time solid, manner in which they are erected—all must contribute to fill the mind of the beholder with admiration, and a profound veneration for the skill and perseverance of the ages in which they were produced.7

Study of buildings and objects he admired was Pugin’s pleasure and intellectual and occupational resource. In this, his education was instrumental. Had
he gone from training with his father into an office, the skills he acquired would have been more practical and his knowledge of medieval art less exact. He would not have been encouraged to improvise and design the “imaginary” buildings that filled his early notebooks and attracted clients.

His collection of objects of art and books—some purchased on his tours on the Continent—was an extension of his “hands-on” knowledge of medieval art and the feeling for medieval history notable in his work and writing. In his earliest drawings Pugin did not confine himself to English models. His acquaintance with Flemish, French, and German decorative arts appears as early in his career as the design of the treasures in the vestry of his Parish Church, and it would reappear throughout his career. In the middle of the 1840s he would take the design of the brass mountings on the binding of the Missal for Cheadle from drawings he had made of a medieval example he had seen at Mayence.

Pugin’s designs were inventive and sensitive to how medieval models could be adjusted to nineteenth-century taste and uses. E. J. Willson, Scrope, and Francis Palgrave had considered whether and how Gothic could be adapted to a modern setting. They had recognized its structural and decorative power, that it should have a prominent place in the history of English art, that it deserved revival and that the style and Christianity belonged to one another. But these gentlemen did not know how the accommodation between the medieval past and the nineteenth-century present was to be accomplished. In Pugin’s fictive buildings, he composed a synthetic and composite late Gothic in tune with nineteenth-century tastes. His creations were coherent and richly ornamented, and there was no residue of the late Baroque and Classical manners that haunted E. B. Lamb’s Gothic mansion. Yet Pugin was not replicating Gothic: rather than a copy, these early works were inspired imitation of the kind Quatremère de Quincy recommended. Pugin produced resemblance. This is the talent Barry perceived and enlisted for the Houses of Parliament.

Between September and December 1835, employment by Barry and Gillespie Graham and the building and furnishing of St. Marie’s Grange took precedence over other projects Pugin had in hand or contemplated. The quiet that followed submission of the competition drawings for the Houses of Parliament, though tense for the competitors, gave Pugin—who had a personal but not vested interest in the success or failure of the entries with which he had been involved—an opportunity to return to work he had laid aside. His book, Examples of Gothic Architecture, was complete but still without its letter-press. Another volume for Ackermann, Designs for Gold and Silversmiths, was on order and its plates were being printed. Various projects—such as small commissions for decorative details, furniture and architectural drawings—came his way.

When he published Contrasts, Pugin joined a current of ideas that was already in full spate. The success or failure of his attempt to find a place for himself among those who were identified with the ideas he espoused would depend on his ability to present his ideas with conviction and so concisely that, at least superficially, they seemed irrefutable. Conversion to Catholicism, the ardent preference for medieval art and architecture he had acquired even before he became a Catholic, astonishing ability to draw, talent for acidulous criticism, willingness to assume an aggressive and combative role and to make his views public, gave Pugin the edge he needed as he sought public attention for his ideas and himself.

The Book

When Pugin first prepared the experimental drawings for the plates of Contrasts, his opinions appear to have evolved as he established how best to assert them. The impersonal and relatively innocuous comparisons in his youthful first study for Contrasts from 1832 were no longer useful. They had not compared actual modern and medieval monuments; the contrast between the Deanery in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries had also been hypothetical. They implied the points Pugin was ready to make in 1836, but they had not named offending architects. Conversion to Catholicism now supplied Pugin with the will and energy to pursue his argument and to publish specific observations on the state of nineteenth-century architecture. Publication of Contrasts became imperative, as a statement of his beliefs and of his findings on the condition of art and architecture.

Participation in the Houses of Parliament competition in 1835 was Pugin’s first direct contact with the architectural community; it had been both an instructive and chastening experience and may have incited him to soliloquize in his diary, “The present condition of architecture is deplorable.” Travel in England and on the Continent had enriched and strengthened his tastes, artistic repertoire, and opinions. He was reading political, religious, and architectural history. The idea for a book of contrasts had been strengthened by these experiences.

In four plates of general statement, for which there was no equivalent in his first studies for Contrasts, Pugin, in 1836, announced his thesis and the crux of his argument. These four plates are: an illustrative frontispiece; an illustrative title page; a sheet of derisive dedication to “The Trade” of architecture; and the last plate in the book, an illustration of a balance in which the architecture of the nineteenth century is weighed against that of the Middle Ages (Figures 2–5). These were the best known and most effective plates in Contrasts and among the finest Pugin would ever publish. Although, when he developed and expanded Contrasts for its second edition, he did not use all of the illustrations in the first, Pugin retained these four declarative images unchanged. Both editions open with three and close with one of these plates. An account of their genesis is significant to his thought and method of work. Fortunately preparatory drawings for them exist.

The frontpiece, entitled “Selections from continued
the Works of Various Celebrated British Architects,” is composed of illustrations of ten London buildings (Figure 2). Only three had been built in the 1830s; the others were works of the 1820s or earlier, and so were hardly a fair sample of the buildings that were rising when Contrasts was prepared. Small and unflattering portraits of them are set within an architectural frame that Pugin constructed, in part, of decorative motifs and pendentives extracted from the works of John Soane. So that this allusion not be overlooked, Pugin inscribed Soane’s name on the interior of the pendentives. The attic of this frame, the Neo-Classical decoration at the base of its front, and the strange, corrupt Ionic capitals of the square fluted elements on either side are from the buildings by Nash on Regent Street. Within this enframing structure Pugin placed an altar he dedicated to “The New Square Style.” On it are displayed architects’ drawing instruments in a panel above the words “Robertus Smirke invt.” Pugin was remarking that, whether Gothic or Classical—and the examples Pugin chose from Smirke’s work represented both—his buildings were essentially the same: square. The altar suggests that in 1836 secular concerns had replaced religious purpose. As was his custom, Pugin placed his own name and initials in prominent positions on the plate. At the bottom is written, this time in scrawny classical lettering, Contrasts Drawn & Etched by A. W. Pugin. Below, to the right, to claim the etching as his work, is the monogram he had settled on, AP with a pendant W.

The rasping effectiveness of this frontispiece is a product of the unerring eye of the young professional aspirant, who finds it easy to detect and parody the routine stock in trade of senior practitioners. These, Pugin is saying, are the works of the establishment. He reduced the buildings he chose to a series of miniature, two-dimensional elevations without any illustration of refined detail, suggestion of rich building materials, or play of light and shade. He enlarged and emphasized the ornaments, however, on the enframing architecture; on the buildings from which Pugin extracted them
they were minor decorative features, but this plate forces one to see them in detail, out of their original context and in a scale their designer never intended.

Before he found its final form, Pugin studied at least one other scheme for this plate. A preliminary drawing shows the tomb of James Watt in Westminster Abbey, by Chantrey, positioned in the part of the frame where Pugin ultimately placed the house in Regents Park by Burton. He had also considered including the British Museum among the buildings by Smirke, but he replaced it with the dedication to “The New Square Style” and the tools of the architect.11

Pugin experimented with several ideas for what became an illustrated title page, the second plate in the book. As he did so he discovered the possibilities of two further plates, the one dedicated to “The Trade” and the illustration of the balances. Both suggested telling and ironic jokes Pugin resolved to develop rather than discard.

This evolution of ideas and images accounts for the unusual arrangement of Contrasts. Its frontispiece resembles an illustrative title page; it does, in fact, carry a partial title of the book. A true illustrative title page follows (Figure 3). Then, after the printed title page (Figure 1), the notable attack on “The Trade: follows (Figure 4). It could have been a frontispiece as well, and was, indeed, derived from Pugin’s studies for one. The plate of The Balance (Figure 5) concludes the book and summarizes its content.

The way in which the dedication to “The Trade” and the balance were conceived, evolved, and were finally drawn reveals how the idea of Contrasts emerged. In a preliminary and incomplete study for the illustrative title page, Pugin had divided the image in half vertically, a device that announced the idea of contrast.12 On the left, in a carved late medieval frame, richly decorated with metal mounts and jewels, a medieval architect presents plans to an ecclesiastical patron. Beneath this edifying scene is the legend “In Deo Gloria.”

The right half of this design is what would later become, when its possibilities were fully exploited, the first conception of the plate dedicated to “The Trade.” Its import is caustic. A border surrounding a stark modern façade unusual in early nineteenth-century London streets, carries the words “Architecture as practiced on easy and improved principles in the 19th century.” In the cornice, a competition is announced for a church, Gothic or Elizabethan, to cost no more than £1,500 and seat 5,000, the winner to receive a prize of £5. Beneath, on the façade, posted notices indicate that this building houses an “Architectural Repository,” a “Temple of Taste,” and an “Architects Office,” where rejected competition designs are bought and sold.

A queue of unfortunate architects, their designs in portfolios, awaits the attention of the proprietor of this business, who can be seen, through the shop window, seated at a counter. A row of cast-concrete Gothic chimneys and Classical balusters, an “improved” Ionic capital with its volute upside down, advertisements for ready-made Gothic details, and the office of “A Professor”—perhaps a reference to Soane—complete this display of disgraceful items. Beneath, in Gothic letters on the left and unornamented Classical letters on the right, the word Contrasts appears. Below, a notice informs church builders how they may save money on their projects. Pugin abandoned this composition but retained the modern half for use elsewhere in his book.

A second exploratory sketch for the title page shows that Pugin was also experimenting with the image of the balance. He once considered placing the balance at the center of the title page, within a rich, late medieval frame with figures, and above it the title Contrasts. He also discarded this scheme as being, perhaps, too complex to be readily understood, or he could have decided that the idea of the scales was too effective to be expended early in his book and that it provided an opportunity for a resounding summation of his thesis.

The illustrative title page on which Pugin finally settled was improved by being distilled and separated from the complex images he had earlier considered (Figure 3). A carved frame in a late medieval style, not unlike those Pugin used to introduce some of his volumes of drawings of fictive buildings, surrounds a shortened title of the book. Pugin’s travel sketches help to trace the sources of this frame; in its richness it resembles the carving on the monumental tomb of Cardinal Georges d’Amboise in the Cathedral of Rouen, an early sixteenth-century work Pugin knew well and drew repeatedly on his visits to that city. The tendrils and free-standing carving at the top and the leaf forms suggest the work of Adam Krafft in Nuremberg.

continued
In niches on either side at the top are the figures of Erwin of Steinbach, celebrated by Goethe, and Alexis de Berneval, fifteenth-century architect and the master of the works at Fecamp and St. Ouen, Rouen, whom Dom Pommeraye discussed at length in his book. Erwin of Steinbach displays a plan, taken from his surviving drawings on parchment, for octagonal towers he proposed should terminate his design for the west front at Strasburg. Alexis de Berneval holds a drawing for his rose window in the south transept of St. Ouen. Above these figures, on scrolls, cementarius is inscribed; it is indicative of Pugin’s ideal of the medieval mason that he chose this term rather than architectus.

Again, in the case of the images of the architects, Pugin’s inspiration can be traced, for in the church of St. Ouen in Rouen—a building Pugin knew well, had studied repeatedly, and knew from the account given by Pommeraye—there was an incised memorial slab to the two architects responsible for its construction. Alexandre de Berneval, who worked for Henry V and died in 1440, was one. Both effigies have compasses in their right hands and point with them to, in the case of the figure on the left, a design for the tracery of a rose window, while that on the right displays a ground plan of what appears to be a tower. Pugin’s architects display the same gestures, hold comparable drawings and point to them with compasses. Pugin did not, however, reproduce the costumes illustrated in the slab; he gave his men caps and surcoats of more elaborate design than the tunics with full sleeves shown on the slab in Rouen.13

William of Wykeham stands in the niche at the top of Pugin’s frame, wearing the vestments of a bishop and holding a pastoral staff, which resembles the one he bequeathed to New College. Attended by two ecclesiastics, he considers architectural drawings laid out before him. To clarify the significance of the scene and the figures, Pugin included the names of all these august persons on scrolls suspended from the frame. Within the opening of the frame.
a journal usually meticulous in its remarks about architecture, had published an article commending the ornamental chimney pots and shafts of artificial stone available from one Mr. Austin of London. It explained that the cost of stone and the tax on bricks of unusual size and shape put the use of either beyond the reach of most builders. Mr. Austin was now able to manufacture decorative details with a “degree of perfection.” Although Austin was, surely, not the only merchant selling this sort of thing, the illustrations of his wares and the comment on them in the article enraged Pugin and supplied him with illustrative material. The “gothic chimneys, elegant terminations and ready made balustrades” in Pugin’s plate resemble the figures in this article.

W. H. Leeds, writing as “Candidus” in *The Architectural Magazine* of March 1835, had again discussed one of his favorite themes, the deplorable attitude toward the arts as “trades,” a subject on which Pugin focused in *Contrasts*. As he launched one of his attacks, this time on Joseph Forsyth, whose books he hated, Leeds declared that “among all ranks of artists in this country there is, it is to be feared, too much of the mere trading spirit; an indifference to reputation, except so far as reputation tends to promote their interest.”

As Pugin published the plate on “The Trade”—finally entitled “This illustration of the practise of architecture in the 19 century on new improved and cheap principles is dedicated without permission to THE TRADE”—he expanded the content but did not change the tone of his earlier experimental drawing for the title page (Figure 4). He moved his comment on cheap principles and “THE TRADE” from the border to the title. He included direct reference to Messrs. Ackermann, who had published his and his father’s work and who owned a bookshop, the Repository of the Arts. The “Temple of Taste” refers to Lackington’s Temple of the Muses in Finsbury Square; its founder was said to have made a competency “by the sale of second-hand books, on the sure principle of small profits and quick

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*Figure 5. “The Balance,” final plate from Contrasts (London, 1836).*

is a shortened title of the book. Pugin’s name or his initials appear five times amidst the blaze of ornament on the frame. The date, 1836, is also included.

As Pugin finally published them, the illustrative frontispiece and the title page constitute the first contrast. The former is concerned with modern buildings, their impoverished and corrupt ornament and their “tradesmen” architects; the title-page celebrates the patrons and architects of the Middle Ages.

The idea of an attack on “The Trade” was too telling to discard. As he developed his preliminary sketch for this illustration, Pugin drew upon the many statements in contemporary writing on architecture that suggested the points he wished to make.

In June 1834, *The Architectural Magazine*,
returns."17 Pugin also added an assault on Decimus Burton and John Nash, for the arch at Hyde Park Corner and Buckingham Palace are figured: the former is so richly frosted with Victories that some slide off the sides; the dome of the palace, which was much criticized in the public press, can be seen at a distance through the arch as a small round object. Pugin’s references to the use of assorted and unsuitable styles—“an Egyptian marine villa” and a “Gin Palace in the Baronial Style”—are amusing but not particularly pertinent comments, for such exotic choices were, by 1836, relatively uncommon and unfashionable, although as late as 1833 Francis Goodwin had published a design for “a marine villa in the Gothic style” which he described as suitable for “the residence of a gentleman, or a dignitary of the church.”18

As it was published, the plate with the balance recapitulates Pugin’s argument and epitomizes the idea of contrast (Figure 5). In a first study for this final plate, Pugin drew the balance alone, weighing buildings. Below it are the words from the Book of Daniel: “They are weighed in the balance and found wanting.” The final and resolved plate is clearer in its meaning. In it the word “Veritas” appears on the fulcrum of the balance. As in the preliminary drawing, a banner with the words “libra excellentiae,” is wrapped around the beam. Pugin now adds to the left pan the words “19th century,” to accompany an assemblage of buildings and a monument of which he disapproved. Strangely, not all belong to the nineteenth century.19 On a scroll, which falls beneath them, appear the names of offending architects; each, unless the architects had been knighted, dignified by “Esq.” to indicate the secular nature of his calling. They are William Donthorn, D. Burton, G. Basevi, G. S. Repton, W. H. Inwood, W. Wilkins, James Wyatt, George Dance, J. Nash, John Soane, and Robert Smirke. In the right pan, whose contents are far heavier than those of the other, is a single Gothic edifice, which generally resembles Canterbury. A scroll dropping from it displays the names of Erwin of Steinbach, Adam Krafft and William of Wykeham—exemplars of the medieval mason, the craftsman, and the generous, informed patron who had been celebrated in the illustrative frontispiece. Around the whole image, in a decorative frame, appear the baleful words of warning to Belshazzar from Daniel 5:27, adapted freely by Pugin as “They are weighed in the balance and found wanting.” At the top, Pugin’s monogram fills the opening in the handle of the balance. The details, style of drawing and the image of the balance in this plate together suggest that it was inspired by Pugin’s admiration for Dürer; a balance is carried by the third horseman in Dürer’s Apocalypse series, and one hangs on the wall in his Melancholia.

These plates, when combined with the full title of the book, Contrasts; Or, a Parallel Between The Noble Edifices Of The Fourteenth And Fifteenth Centuries, and Similar Buildings Of The Present Day; Shewing The Present Decay Of Taste: Accompanied by appropriate Text, constitute a strenuous and contentious statement. A preface of two pages, a letter-press of fifty, consisting of text and an appendix of evidence, follow. There are twelve plates of contrasted buildings, two to a page. The image of the balance concludes the book.

Contrasts is astonishing and effective because its argument is deceptively simple. The visual device of contrast is direct and easy to understand, and Pugin possessed the wit, the artistic gift and the courage to put it forward. The twelve pairs of contrasted buildings are trenchantly critical of the work of nineteenth-century architects. They are amusing. They are, also, palpably unjust. As much as the controversial and Catholic nature of the thesis of the text, the contrasts and caricatures of the works of notable architects account for the fame and notoriety the book promptly brought Pugin.

Endnotes
1. In 1868 Edward Welby Pugin twice asserted that he possessed volumes of drawings made by his father in 1833 and 1834. (See: Who Was the Art Architect of the Houses of Parliament? A Statement of Facts, Founded on the Letters of Sir Charles Barry and the Diaries of Augustus Welby Pugin [London: Longmans Green, 1837] and Notes on the Reply of the Rev. Alfred Barry to the "Infatuated Statements" Made by E. W. Pugin on The Houses of Parliament [London: Longmans Green, 1868], 4). In his second reference to them, he specified that he had thirteen such volumes. Eleven bound books of early Pugin drawings have been discussed here. Two E. W. Pugin then owned may still be unaccounted for, or, as seems possible, in his eagerness to overwhelm the Barry heirs, E. W. Pugin included in his count the Catholic Chapel and the astonishing volumes of notes...
and drawings Pugin brought home from his travels. The extant pocket notebooks, the scattered unbound drawings, the correspondence with E. J. Willson and Osmond, the plates Pugin published in Examples, the books of designs commissioned by the House of Ackermann and the notes in Pugin’s pocket diary for the year 1835 (the first year he appears to have kept such a record), constitute the evidence on his activities and development in these early years.


3. In his notes on his early life (Alexandra Wedgwood, AWN Pugin and His Family [London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1985], 24), Pugin gives an account of this training. He wrote that he studied mathematics with two of the masters, R. N. Adams and J. Tyson, and Latin with Mr. Leighton and Edward Rice. He does not indicate that he was at any time a full-time student. These boyish notes on Pugin’s life appear to have been among the papers that were put at Ferrey’s disposal when he prepared his biography. His comment that Pugin attended Christchurch derives from his reading of them.

4. He was particular that the Latin inscriptions on the monuments and windows he designed be accurate. It should be noted that when extensive translation of texts were required for his Glossary Pugin acquired the assistance of the Reverend Bernard Smith.

5. A. W. Hakewill, Thoughts Upon the Style of Architecture to be Adopted in Rebuilding the Houses of Parliament (London: John Weale, 1835). Hakewill was one of the architects of the new Houses of Parliament.

6. Pugin Diary, 1835 (Wedgwood [1885]) indicates that Pugin was working for Gillespie Graham, doing small jobs for Charles Barry (presumably the last of the furniture for the Birmingham school) and work for a “Mr. H.,” who, Mrs. Wedgwood believes, was Edward Hull, London dealer in antiquities, with whom Pugin had an account.


10. These architectural ornamental details may be clearly seen in James Elmes and Thomas Shepherd, Metropolitan Improvements; or London in the Nineteenth Century Displayed in a Series of Engravings, 2 vols. (London: Jones, 1830), vol. 2, plate illustrating the east side of Regent Street.

11. Wedgwood, Pugin and His Family, 164.

12. Ibid., 164.


14. Pugin misspelled the word parallel, as parrallel, an odd mistake, as there are few such errors in his letters.


17. Elmes and Shepherd, 171.


20. Some of the buildings illustrated are All Souls, Langham Place (John Nash); St. Mary’s Church, Wyndham Place (Robert Smirke); St. Mary’s Chapel, Somers Town (William Inwood); St. Pancras Church (William Inwood); The Colosseum (Decimus Burton); The Monument, Fish Street Hill (Robert Hooke and Christopher Wren); The New Treasury, Whitehall (William Kent).