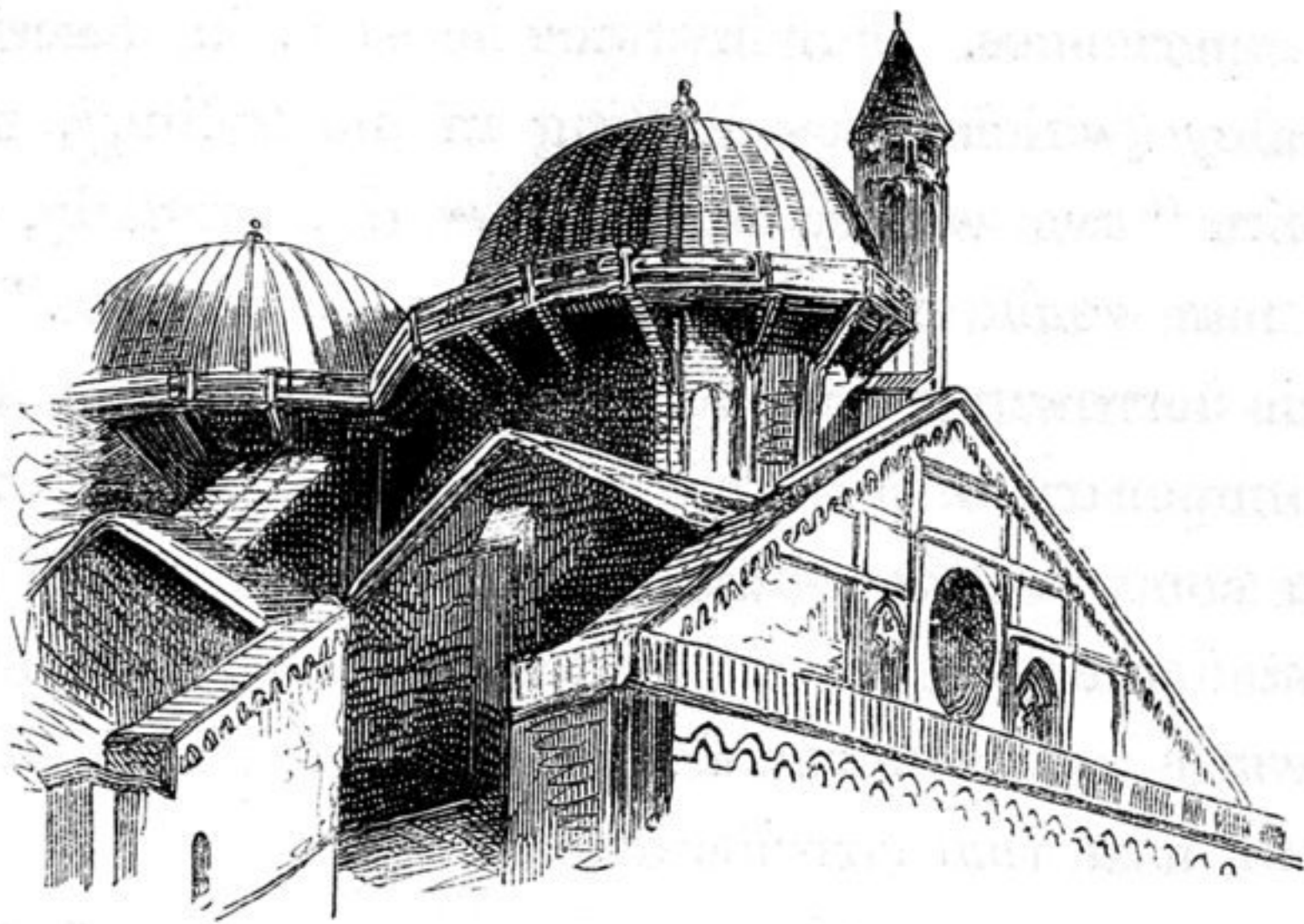


saw a very big tortoise. 'How big?' quoth Gulielmo all agape; 'Was it as big as the dome yonder?' "Well, yes," says the sick traveller, perhaps without turning to look, and certainly without making a very accurate comparison, 'I dare say it might be.' And down it goes in regular narration: "*Vidi ibi testudinem majorem revolutione trulli eglesiae Sancti Antonii de Padua.*"



Domes of St. Anthony's at Padua.

Odoric's credit was not benefited by the liberties which Sir John Mandeville took with his narrative. Because ignorance formerly accused Herodotus and Marco Polo of multiplying falsehoods, the fashion of "rehabilitation" would extend itself too widely, and try to cover also such writers as Ferdinand Mendez Pinto and Mandeville. No one, of course, could regard Mandeville as throughout writing *bonâ fide*; but he has been treated by respectable authorities as if he had really travelled in the far East. Now the fact is that the substance of his travels to the Indies and Cathay is entirely stolen from Odoric, though largely amplified with fables from Pliny and other ancients, as well as from his own imagination, and garnished with his own wonderfully clear astronomical notions.

These *coincidences* were so obvious to former ages that Mandeville is, I think, said to have been termed on his tomb, *Odorici Comes*, whilst the MS. of Odoric in the library of Mentz Cathedral entitles the latter, "*Socius Militis Mendavill.*" Sir Thomas Herbert, too, calls Odoric "travelling companion of our Sir John."