

EXHIBITION OF DRAWINGS BY AMATEURS.

The gallery at 12, Pall Mall, is again opened, with a collection of drawings and sketches by amateur artists, containing no fewer than 300 original productions by 109 exhibitors. Many of them are very beautiful works, and might make some professionals look to their laurels. We have a remembrance of some one saying in a farce,—“Amateur! ah, that means impostor;” but this exhibition contradicts the definition. The ladies take the lead, indisputably, and though gallantry would avoid comparisons in such a case, we may mention as amongst the most striking productions (18) “Naples, with Capri in the distance,” and others, by Mrs. Bridgman Simpson; (48) “La Cava,” by Mrs. Davidson; (142) “Convent of Amalfi,” and others, by Miss Blake; Miss Brereton’s “St. Mary’s Church, Beverley;” (86) a female head by Miss Louisa Percival; several by Mrs. Salvin, Miss Emma Seymour, Miss Houlton, and others.

This exhibition was a happy idea, and can scarcely fail to promote the cultivation of the arts in families. The gentleman to whom it is due has long since entailed himself to the thanks of the public by his disinterested efforts in the cause of art. As to the financial results of the exhibition, the catalogue says,—“The large amount which was expended last year beyond the receipts derived from the visitors to this gallery precludes the probable expectation, or even the hope, of any surplus at present to be rendered available for the advantage of art: the promoters of this design, however, feel assured that the time is not far distant when, in addition to the many other important results of these periodical exhibitions, by their means a fund may be realised, to be employed for the advancement of that desirable object.” Our readers should aid in bringing this about.

THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF ARCHITECTURE.

The second edition of Mr. Gwilt’s “Encyclopædia of Architecture,” recently published by Messrs. Longman, Brown, and Co. contains an appendix of forty pages on Pointed architecture, not in the first edition. This consists of five sections, viz.—1. General remarks on Pointed architecture in relation to its symmetry and stability; 2. Different periods of the art, and Flamboyant style; 3. Pendants; 4. Vaulting; and 5. Shafts. In this last section are given some remarks on windows, symbols, and on the secular architecture of France, from which we take the accompanying engravings, as examples of the manner in which the work is illustrated. Fig. 1 is the *portail* of the Palace of the Dukes of Lorraine, at Nancy, the date of which is called 1476. It is much more “debased” than works of the same period in England. The author says—

“The shell-sculptured gable, with the candelabra-shaped ornaments bounding it, exhibit in an interesting way the contention between the past and coming styles. In the *balcons* the Flamboyant takes its place, and the foliage of the principal feature under the reigning pointed arch are inverted, though set upon a ground in which the trefoils are in their proper position. The finials are inordinately large, and the elliptical form of the arch over the gateway is a step beyond what we call the Tudor arch. In every respect the example is one of great interest; and those persons who do not approve of an admixture of styles, must, at least, admit that it is highly picturesque.”

The well-known Hôtel de Cluny at Paris, completed at the end of the fifteenth century, is of the same character, but has less intermixture of styles. A portion of it is represented by Fig. 2.

Fig. 3 represents the Hôtel de Ville at Brussels, one of the most admirable adaptations of the Pointed style to town architecture that we have. It appears to have been completed in 1445.

“The whole of the tower seems rather later than the date above given, which accords well enough with the northern wing. The authorities we have looked into scarcely, however, admit us to doubt its correctness. One of the puzzles attending this example is, why the tower and spire do not stand

in the centre of the front. We are of opinion, on this head, that the northern wing is of the length originally intended for each side of the centre, and that it was, in execution, lengthened out on the southern side for the acquisition of more room. Certainly the southern wing is rather later, and there is a carelessness about the detail which would seem to indicate that the burgo-master of the day found there was not enough space for the offices, and that, *comme qui coûte*, he was determined to supply them. The proportions of the front would clearly have been more congenial to the style, had the southern wing been restricted to the same number of bays as the northern. As the building stands executed, taking one of the bays on the northern side as a measuring unit, we have three measuring the central space for the tower, ten for the north wing, and eleven for the south wing; the height, to the top of the parapet, nine; to the ridge of the roof, thirteen; to the top of the spire, thirty-three. The tracery on the spire is very elegant, and is pierced throughout. It is 40½ feet high, and crowned with a copper gilt colossal statue of St. Michael, the patron of the city, 18 feet high, which is so well balanced upon the pivot on which it stands, that it is susceptible of motion with a very gentle wind. The interior of the edifice has a quadrangular court, with two modern fountains, statues of river gods with reeds and vases, as usual in such cases.”

All who have visited Louvain will remember the Town-hall there, one of the most interesting structures of its kind that can be found. Fig. 4 shows the upper part of one end of it. It was commenced in 1448, but not completed till 1493.

“The façade towards the Place extends rather more than the height, and is pierced with twenty-eight windows and two doorways, being ten openings in each story, the spaces between the windows being decorated with canopies and groups of small figures from the Old Testament, some whereof are rather hecstious. This charming edifice, which in its delicate rich tracery, had suffered much from time and the elements, when we last saw it, four or five years since, had at the joint expense of the town and government undergone a complete renovation. This had, stone by stone, been effected with great care and artistic skill by a M. Goyers, and religiously accurate it appears to be. The new work has been saturated with oil: it is executed in very soft stone, which hardens with exposure to the air.”

Its appearance was not at all improved by the application of the oil. When we last saw it, it looked very much like painted compo.

In connection with the Belgic town-halls, we may quote the curious rebus of the Canon Charles de Bovelles, in which the date of the Hôtel de Ville at St. Quentin is facetiously given:—

D’un mouton et de cinq chevreaux  
Toutes les têtes prendrez . . . . . m.ccccc  
Et à icelles, sans nul travail,  
La queue d’un veau joindrez . . . . . v  
Et au bout ajouterez  
Tous les quatre pieds d’une chatte . . . . . iiii  
Rassemblez, et vous apprendrez

L’an de ma façon et ma date . . . . . m.cccccviiii—1509.

Mr. Gwilt’s “Encyclopædia” contains an immense amount of information very clearly arranged and indexed. “An attempt to produce a complete body of architecture,” says the author in his preface (and we quote the passage because it will bring under the notice of our younger readers several works which they ought to know), he

“Believes to be entirely original. In his celebrated work, ‘L’Art de Bâtir,’ Rondelet has embodied all that relates to the construction of buildings. Durand, too (‘Leçons et Précis d’Architecture’), has published some admirable rules on composition and on the graphic portion of the art. Lebrun (‘Théorie d’Architecture’) has treated on the philosophy of the equilibrium, if it may be so called, of the orders. The ‘Encyclopédie Méthodique’ contains, under various heads, some invaluable detached essays, many of which, however, suffer from want of the illustrative plates which were originally projected as an appendage to them. All these, with others in the French language, might, indeed, be formed into a valuable text-book for the architect; but no such attempt has hitherto been made. Neither in Germany nor in Italy has any complete work of the kind appeared. In the English, as in other languages, there are doubtless several valuable treatises on different branches of the art, though not to the same extent as in French. In 1750, Ware (London, folio) published what he called ‘A Complete Body of Architecture.’ This, though in

many respects a useful work, is far behind the wants of the present day. It is confined exclusively to Roman and Italian architecture: but it does not embrace the history even of these branches, nor does it contain a word on the sciences connected with construction. The details, therefore, not being sufficiently carried out, and many essential branches being entirely omitted, the work is not so generally useful as its name would imply. From these authorities, and many others, besides his own resources, the author of this Encyclopædia has endeavoured to compress within the limits of one closely-printed volume all the elementary knowledge indispensable to the student and amateur; and he even ventures to indulge the belief that it will be found to contain information which the experienced professor may have overlooked.”

That this is really the case, we bear willing testimony. We have now had several years’ experience of the book, and can say there is no work to which we refer with greater certainty of finding what we want. Of course it has its weak places, and in the first edition the weakest of these was in respect of Gothic architecture. The appendix in the new edition is intended to remedy this, and will be found valuable, especially in a constructional point of view; but Pointed architecture is not the author’s *forte*: all his studies and all his prejudices lead him the other way. We are forced to regret, too, throughout the book, the want of any generous recognition of the labours of contemporaries, an omission which in some cases amounts to injustice.

The body of the work, we should say, is the same as in the first issue: it is probably stereotyped. In a future edition, the revision of some parts will be desirable. The author’s views on drainage, which brought on him some abuse and probably pecuniary loss, would seem to remain the same. A recent discussion amongst the civil engineers shows that there are still others of his opinion.

Notwithstanding flaws, the “Encyclopædia” is indispensable for all who are engaged in the study or practice of architecture; and if there be a student who can only afford himself one book, this is the volume he must buy.

ST. THOMAS CHARTERHOUSE SCHOOLS, GOSWELL STREET.

The foundation-stone of these schools was laid on Wednesday, 25th April, by the Marquis of Lansdowne, K.G.—the last school grant of his administration having been made to this institution. The building will consist of a basement and three other stories.

The front part of the basement will be occupied as a kitchen and laundry, and, with the vaults under the street, will form an industrial department for teaching girls household duties. The back part will be a play-room.

The front rooms of the ground and one-pair stories will be school-rooms for 190 girls. The back room of the ground story will be an industrial room for the instruction of 173 boys in different trades.

The back room of the one pair will be a school for 250 infants, and the top story throughout will be occupied as school-rooms for 366 boys.

Altogether, the building will accommodate upwards of 1,000 children.

Except the basement, the stories will be 15 feet high in the clear. The floors will be constructed with wrought-iron girders, and hollow brick arches, and covered with metallic lava.

The Byzantine style is adopted, and the facings will be of red bricks. The architect is Mr. Robert Hesketh.

ARCHITECTURAL PUBLICATION SOCIETY.  
—The annual general meeting of this society will be held on 10th May, to receive the report of the committee on the general affairs of the society, when a proposal will be made to the members respecting the Cyclopædia. It is to be hoped there will be a good attendance.

\* On this occasion paper-drains, and the system of back drainage, were objected to. The form and internal smoothness of a drain were said to be of no consequence; and Mr. Hesketh denied the correctness of the experiments on the flow of water through pipes, published by the Board of Health.