

PROJECTED WORKS, &c.—Tenders have been called for by advertisement for the several artificers' works to be done in erecting the church of the Holy Trinity at Abbots' Leigh; for the erection of an additional wing to the Littlemore Asylum, near Oxford; a lock-up house at Sunnyside, near Hartlepool; a sea wall, 1,000 feet long, with an esplanade, at Ventnor; a stone bridge in Radnorshire; also for laying down footways and paved gutters of Rowley rag-stone at Bromsgrove; for flagging and curbing on footpaths at Bromsgrove; for warming and ventilating additions to Devon county prisons; for the execution of the whole work of a station-house, goods' shed, &c., at Annan, Scotland; and the formation of one and a-half mile of the Taff Vale railway (Rhondda branch); also forthwith for making a survey plan and valuation of the townships of West Dean, Monmouth union.

D'AUBIGNE'S IMPRESSION OF LONDON.—On approaching the capital (on the Dover Railway) my wondering eyes looked down from the carriage into innumerable narrow streets of small houses, all of uniform and mean appearance, blackened with coal-dust, and shrouded by a smoky atmosphere. Such is the gloomy avenue which leads to the delightful parks of the metropolis, its superb squares, magnificent bazaars, and rich palaces. What crowds in the streets, what bustle, what hurry! These carriages, public and private, almost as numerous as the foot-passengers; that dazzling display of every production of British industry and of the most distant lands; those forests of ships, motionless in their immense docks; the steam-boats, which, like a weaver's shuttle, incessantly ply up and down the Thames with inconceivable rapidity, taking up and setting down at every pier a fresh cargo of breathless passengers;—every thing you behold tells you that you are now in the capital of the commercial world. If the German feeds upon the ideal, the practical is the characteristic of Great Britain; I say Britain, because most of what I say of England is applicable to Scotland also. Reality, action, business, bear sway in the politics, the industry, the commerce, and, I will even say, in the religion of the English, yet this practical tendency which characterises England is not selfish, as might have been expected. The large scale on which the people work gives a certain scope and grandeur to the imagination. The habit which the English have of forming into parties, and of looking constantly at themselves as a nation, is opposed to a narrow selfishness; and a most elevated sentiment struggles with this vice in a large portion of the people. Perhaps one of the things that strikes a stranger most on his arrival in London is, not the nobility, but the common people: their strength, their energy, their quickness, their skill, their civility, and above all, their calmness and silence during their unceasing activity. They are all alive to what they are about, and they are clever at it: you can see this in the carriages, the ships, and especially the railroads. The skill with which an English coachman drives you through the streets of London, among thousands of vehicles, without ever jostling you, is inconceivable.

FALL OF RAILWAY ARCHES.—On Wednesday week, seven out of thirteen brick arches, forming part of a viaduct erecting at Manchester by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, to connect the lines of that company with the London and North-Western line at Ardwick, gave way. Eight of the arches had been erected before the winter. The centres had been taken from six of the arches, when the seventh arch sprang upwards from the centre and fell, followed momentarily by the whole of the other six. The contractors are Messrs. Noel, Hemingway, and Co. The loss will be about 1,000*l*. The thickness of the masonry was half a brick less than that usually adopted for arches of the same kind, but the accident is attributed to want of scientific knowledge or judgment in the ballasting. On Saturday the entire viaduct over the river Nidd, at Knaresborough, which was nigh being completed, fell in with a tremendous crash. It consisted of four arches (the centres of which had not been removed), each 50 feet span and 80 feet high. The cause remains yet to be explained.

AN ARCHITECT'S OPINION OF THE WINDOW TAX.—At a late meeting in Reading, to petition against the light and health tax, already alluded to in our pages, Mr. W. Brown said:—To talk of taking the duty off glass and retaining the duty on windows, is a left-handed piece of legislation, and a complete putting the cart before the horse. It is not the glass that pays the duty—it is not the opening—it is the light that passes through the opening. It is a misnomer to call it a window tax: it is a light and air tax; not artificial light, but the light of nature—the pure, the holy light of heaven. That is the name by which it should always have been called, and then for very shame it would long since have been repealed. How, then, the taking the duty off glass can be a benefit when the very means are retained which prevents your using it, I am at a loss to imagine. It reminds me of the story of Tantalus holding out the prospect without the possibility of enjoyment. As to the effect the window tax has upon the construction and appearance of buildings I am perhaps better qualified, from a long extended practice as an architect, to form an opinion, than most here present, and I do not hesitate to say that its practical working in this respect is most injurious. Parties for whom I have prepared designs for the constructions of dwelling-houses on a small scale, have first of all inquired whether they were so arranged as to exclude the window duty; and although I have informed them that as few windows as possible consistent with health have been provided, but still more than the Act allows, the answer has been that they would not let if subject to the window duty, and with regret I have been compelled to exclude all light and air from those places which most require it, and where mephitic vapours are chiefly generated. In larger buildings the same question arises, and I have reluctantly sacrificed appearance and cheerfulness without, and healthiness within, to keep down the number of windows. It was this that first drew my attention to the baneful working of this Act—it was this that made me wage war against it. As to the inconvenience felt by those who reside in houses thus constructed, I can speak personally. And here, if you are careless of the matter yourselves, I would claim your attention on behalf of the women of England, who have no voice in the matter, but whose natural protectors you are. They, from their habits and avocations, spend much more of their time within doors than men generally do, and are therefore entitled to be fully supplied with light and air in the exercise of their domestic duties.

DRAINAGE OF THE METROPOLIS.—The following is the title of a bill about to be introduced into Parliament on the part of the Great London Drainage (late London Sewage) Company, by Mr. H. Drummond and Mr. B. Baldwin, viz.:—"A bill to afford means for effectually draining the metropolis; to preserve the Thames from the impurities at present passing into it, by diverting them into subterranean main channel sewers, and to collect all the produce of the sewers for application to agricultural purposes." The preamble of the bill is to the following effect:—"Whereas it is expedient that powers should be granted for more effectually draining and cleansing the city of London, and the parts adjacent thereto, which lie within the limits hereinafter mentioned, and that provision should be made for interrupting and collecting the sewage water, siltage, soil, and other refuse matters now discharged within the said limits, through the various sewers, drains, and culverts, into the river Thames, and for adapting and applying the same to the purposes of agriculture, whereby the health of the inhabitants of the metropolis will be greatly promoted, and a valuable manure produced." There are forty-two clauses in the bill.

TO TRANSFER ENGRAVINGS TO WHITE PAPER.—Place the engraving for a few seconds over iodine vapour. Dip a slip of white paper in a weak solution of starch, and when dry, in a weak solution of oil of vitriol. When dry, lay the slip upon the engraving, and place them for a few minutes under a press. The engraving will thus be reproduced in all its delicacy and finish. The iodine has the property of fixing on the black parts or ink of the engraving, and not on the white. This important discovery is yet in its infancy.

COMPETITIONS.—Plans are wanted for a new church in the parish of Edmonton: no specific terms; also designs for the Stonehouse Mechanics' Literary and Scientific Institution: no premiums, but the usual commission.

ANONIMENT AND INDURATION OF PLASTER, STONE, CEMENT, AND PASTEBOARD.—A patent has been granted to Mr. William Hutchison, of Barnsbury-park, Middlesex, marble merchant, for a foreign method of rendering plaster, pasteboard, porous stone, and other substances, impervious to wet, frost, vermin, or other destructive agencies, and for mashing paper, rags, hemp, ropes, and even hay and straw, and preparing them into substances useful for sheet-roofing, pipes, tiles, &c. The plaster, porous stone, mashed hay, &c., are first shaped as may be desired, then perfectly dried, so as to be highly absorbent; then boiled in a mixture of rosin and oil grease, &c., or pitch and coal tar, for a time, varying according to their thickness or bulk, and then dried again, and finished off by polishing, &c., according to the nature and purpose of the article. The absorbent mixture may be tinged with various mineral or vegetable colours, or the substance be prepared of a black or other dark colour, as with the pitch, &c. Chalk, alabaster, busts, and even soft and porous wood, may be also treated in the same way, but all must first be dried, so as to ring like metal, and be afterwards boiled in the unguent till it is thoroughly absorbed.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF "DOMBEY AND SON."—Messrs. Chapman and Hall have recently published four portraits, to accompany Mr. Dickens's admirable story of "Dombey and Son,"—namely, Alice, Edith, Florence, and Little Paul. They are drawn and partly engraved by Mr. Hablot Knight Browne (*Phiz*), and have very considerable merit. Every buyer of "Dombey" should add them to the volume.

INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.—At a meeting on the 7th instant, the discussion upon Mr. Redman's paper, "On Dock Entrances," occupied the entire evening, so that no paper could be read. The speakers examined the merits and defects of the several dock entrances in the Thames and in other situations; and the general result appeared to be, that although the engineer must be guided by local circumstances, yet that in situations where the river was sufficiently wide and the position of the land permitted, an acute angle pointing up the stream was the best for docking vessels with the flood. That the reverse would be the best for undocking ships. In ordinary width of rivers, therefore, the end would be attained by forming a bay sufficiently deep to render the water still in front of the dock, the wing wall being so much splayed as virtually to give the directions up and down the stream, as circumstances required. Mr. Chubb exhibited an iron box for the transmission of money, bullion, &c., on railways.

DISCOVERY OF LEAD IN CUMBERLAND.—PATIENT SEARCH REWARDED.—Recently a fine large vein of lead ore was discovered in the manor of Hartsop, Patterdale, of which the Earl of Londale is lord. It was found by a poor man, a miner, named Hodgson, who, for upwards of twenty-five years, felt convinced that there was a vein in the manor, and who, from time to time during that long period, has searched, and, at last, found it, and who has been presented with a share of it, as a reward for the discovery. The ore is said to be of the best quality.

IRISH MARBLE.—The vessel *Victoria*, arrived in the river Thames from Galway, has brought, as a portion of her general cargo, the large quantity of fifty-three tons of marble, the produce of the county of Galway, Ireland.

CAMBRIDGE ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—At a meeting held on Friday evening, March 3, a paper, communicated by the Rev. P. Freeman, Principal of Chichester Diocesan College, "On Proportion in ancient Gothic Architecture," was read by the rev. president. It was illustrated by numerous diagrams, and contained an examination of the theory propounded by Mr. W. P. Griffith, in his work on this subject, recently published, with an extension of its principles to the case of classical buildings. The president also read some interesting letters on the subject, which he had received from Mr. Dobson.