

for the perfection of art. The productions of the vegetable kingdom were of the greatest value in suggesting new forms for ornamental detail. He had lately heard the tale of Vitruvius, about the origin of the Corinthian capital, treated with greater levity than he thought it should be: as a matter of history the fable was worthless, but the moral was excellent. The professor then vacated the chair to Mr. Creeke, whom he introduced to the association as their future president.

Letters of apology for non-attendance, but expressing their cordial sympathy with the association, were read from Mr. Ferrey, Mr. G. Godwin, and Mr. G. Bailey.

The report of the session 1847-48 was then read to the meeting, shewing very satisfactory advance.

Mr. W. Young then moved the adoption of the report, congratulating the members generally on the promising state of the association with regard to the number of members, and the state of its funds. He called the attention of the visitors to the sketches made in the class of design, which were the production of six months only, and hoped that the association would, in the forthcoming session, memorialise the institute to take into consideration the abuses of architectural competitions, which was a subject of great consequence to the younger members of the profession. He hoped that this society would always look up to the institute with respect, and felt much gratified at seeing several of its members present.

The president stated that Prof. Cockerell had expressed his warm sympathy in the objects of the association, and had only been prevented from attending by an engagement on the continent. The president then delivered an able address, taking for his subject the architectural monuments of England, considered as exponents of the spirit of the age in which they were erected, shewing how every structure was a reflection of the minds and dispositions of the men of the days in which they were erected. The same principle was traced through the feudal castles of the Normans, the monkish architecture of the middle ages, and the styles which prevailed subsequent to the reformation. The parallel was brought down to our own time, and the present state of our architectural prospects was touched upon, special reference being made to the practice of adjudication by committees of taste.

Prof. Donaldson thought the paper just read was most suggestive; it was a subject of great practical usefulness. It had been said that the student of zoology, when he finds a tooth, can from it determine the form and structure of the animal to which it belonged: give to the architect an antique memorial, and he will from it describe a whole nation. Chester was a most remarkable city, and so was Coventry, but the men who built Coventry must have been of a more refined class than those who erected Chester. Go to the city of York, and you have a city embattled and fortified, or go further north, to Edinburgh, and you see in the ancient portion—the castle and the rock—the characteristics of a hardy, warlike race; and then cast your eye below, and you see modern Edinburgh, extending its ramifications over the plain, — a perfect emblem of a huge, plodding, peaceful people.

Mr. Billings expressed himself much pleased with the proceedings of the evening. He was glad to hear that the association purposed to get up an annual architectural exhibition. He felt quite confident in its success if put in practice. He perhaps ought not to grumble at the Royal Academy: he had had seven drawings in last year's exhibition: four were hung near the ceiling, three were placed near the ground; but this was not the worst of it; — his eighth drawing had been rejected, although he had sold it next day for thirty guineas: this was surely a fact worth recording. Allusion had been made to modes of getting up drawings: he certainly had a prejudice in favour of skies and landscape, because they showed the connection of the buildings with the surrounding scenery; the Greek skies harmonized admirably with the Greek style, which, when transported into this climate, produced, in his opinion, dead failures. The way in which the Gothic structures harmonized with English hill and valley was worthy of remark.

Mr. C. H. Smith said, that although not an

architect, he was a great lover of architecture, and being *stosewise* rather than *otherwise*, he would make a few observations on that material. The structures of the middle ages and the portico of St. Genevieve of Paris, were peculiar examples of large buildings erected with very small stones. Mr. Smith made some very interesting observations on the increased use of iron at the present day, and said that he would be always happy to afford information to any member of the association on subjects within his own province.

Mr. J. W. Papworth made some observations on Saxon architecture, and remarked with reference to the connection between history and art, that art was always at its zenith when commerce was at its highest prosperity, which he illustrated by referring to Athens, at the time of Pericles, to Rome, Florence, and France under Louis XIV. — Mr. Scoles, as secretary to the institute, expressed the interest which he felt in the welfare of the society, and his readiness to lend his assistance to the association in anything that they might do with reference to architectural competitions, and to lay before them what the institute had done on the subject.

Mr. Jacob Bell and Mr. Dwyer briefly addressed the meeting; the latter gentleman taking up the theme started by Prof. Donaldson, and urging the importance of the study of botany to the architect. The acanthus had been copied, modified, remodelled, and used *usque ad nauseam*, and he hoped the British flower gardens would suggest some new ideas for architectural detail.

LECTURES ON PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF ORNAMENTAL ART.

THE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL OF DESIGN.

ON Friday evening in last week Mr. Ralph N. Wornum gave the first of a course of lectures on the History, Principles and Practice of Ornamental Art, and sketched the manner in which he proposes to divide his subject.

Omitting mention of the historical course, we may say that in the *Analytic* course he proposes to treat of the principles and objects of decoration, giving an analysis of the various styles and the motive or sentiment by which each is characterised, so as to present an æsthetic view of the subject. After explaining the term *æsthetic* as expressing sensuous perception of the beautiful, Mr. Wornum gave an exposition of the importance of observing *fitness* and *utility* in ornamental designs; and illustrated the motive causes of the three primary forms of ornament by examples of use, symbolism, and embellishment, from Egyptian chairs, the winged globe of the Egyptian temples, and the so-called egg-and-tongue moulding of Greek architecture, which he proved to be derived from the horse-chestnut *xyloc*. Other motives were adverted to, and that of ostentation was shown to be a constant indication of barbarism and decay of taste, as instanced in the passion of the savage for mere glitter and finery, and that of the civilized man for mere display of wealth. Every gaudy elaboration of form and colour is not ornament. Forms of beauty are as strictly dependent on natural laws as the forms of use, and above all it is necessary to bear in mind the *fitness* of a design to its destined use. The essential principles and elementary laws of ornament are contrast, unity produced by symmetry, balance, and proportion of parts, repetition in series—horizontal, diagonal, vertical, curvilinear, &c. Every beautiful form or shape is composed of symmetrical parts: these principles illustrated in the kaleidoscope, in decoration of surfaces, diaper work, paper-hangings, architectural mouldings. Ornamental forms are rather suggested by than imitated from natural objects. This constitutes the distinction between an ornament and a picture. The painter imitates natural forms, the ornamentist only applies them. It is against reason to suppose there can be any beauty in impossibilities and absurdities. The ornamentist should be rational when he can. The remarkable passage from Vitruvius was cited in condemnation of the vicious taste of the style of decoration known as the Pompeian or grotesque style, falsely denominated the Arabesque.

The *Practical Course* will furnish a general

knowledge of every mechanical process and condition of reproduction which it is necessary the students should observe, in order to render their designs capable of being executed by the manufacturer. As an example of the kind of practical information which he should supply in this course, Mr. Wornum explained the process of manufacturing paper-hangings by printing with blocks, and pointed out the conditions to be observed by the designer. In conclusion, the lecturer observed that all ornamental manufactures have been most popular and most successful in those periods when the greatest efforts have been made to render them objects of taste; so that, taking a mere utilitarian view, it is the interest of the manufacturer to cultivate beauty of design to the utmost of his power; but we must also regard the moral and social advantages of a universal diffusion of artistic taste. The object of this school is not to aggrandize, but to disseminate art. Neither is it for the manufacturer only, but also for the consumer; for gratifying and elevating the minds of the family of the daily labourer. It is not, therefore, the architectural decorator alone who will fulfil its great mission, but the designer of those articles of use and comfort which our manufacturers send to the remotest regions of the globe. "It rests with you, then," said the lecturer to the students, "to make this school a source from which all the suggestions of the beautiful, and every benefit that can result from its contemplation, may flow in an ever-increasing stream, even to the utmost limits of society. Let the furniture and domestic utensils of the rich and the poor differ only in material, not in qualities of taste; so that the cottage of the peasant may, notwithstanding its frugal simplicity, be as refined and as cheerful in its degree as the more gorgeous palace of the prince. The potter's clay is as capable of displaying the forms of beauty as was ever marble of Paros, or the famed bronze of Corinth or of Delos, or, as is now, the purest gold of Brazil. The Egyptian potter, more than three thousand years ago, produced with his simple earth forms as beautiful as all the wealth and art of Greece and Rome combined have ever accomplished since. And what is the fatality that hangs over us that our poor alone should be wholly debarred from the enjoyment of the beautiful? If they can be reproached as indifferent to or incapable of appreciating such things, whose fault is that? They cannot appreciate what they have never seen; and while our manufacturers have for ages overwhelmed their markets with the most outrageous abortions in design that could well be conceived, how is it possible that these people should be otherwise than unconscious of any notion of art or idea of beauty? But this is not altogether the fault of the manufacturer. It is to the indifference or ignorance of the designer that we must attribute it. Just or not, such is the manufacturers' complaint, and it is for you to look to this, and to render the reproach impossible at least for the future. But you must look to it with both your eyes. Little is to be hoped from you if you turn only one eye here while the other is fixed on the doors of the Royal Academy. Persevere where you are—a high mission calls you here—the cultivation and the elevation of the nation by the dissemination of those forms of beauty and taste which it is in your power to identify with the designs of even the most ordinary of our manufactures. Be of good heart, an adequate reward is ever awaiting honest industry; and, be assured, that by industry alone can talents, however brilliant, be successfully developed."

DALMELLINGTON IRON-WORKS. — These works, belonging to the Messrs. Houldsworth, Glasgow, were blown in for the first time on Monday week, and the first casting took place on Wednesday. The machinery was found to work smoothly, and everything went off well. Ayrshire is now nearly griddled round with iron-works; and, should trade improve, many more will be set going, as minerals and coals are found in abundance in almost every corner of the county. An English Company has been exploring the hills around Dalmellington for the last few weeks, and have found lead, black-band ironstone, &c., in great abundance. — *Glasgow Herald*.