

The Builder.

No. CCCXXVII.

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 1849.



THE aggregate number of works of art exhibited in the six galleries open in London at this time last year was 4,023, and the total number produced, calculating that at least 1,500 were returned to the artists, 5,523, without counting those exhibited only in the provinces. In the present year the number exhibited is rather less, namely, 3,796, and is thus made up, namely— at the British Institution, 518; the Society of British Artists, 639; the Free Exhibition, 531; the Water-Colour Society, 365; the New Water-Colour Society, 402; and at the Royal Academy, 1,341. The number produced, however, was doubtless as great, if not greater: from the Academy alone, we understand, 1,300 pictures were sent back,—many of them, as we can assert of our own knowledge, very meritorious productions.

In consequence of the size of some of the works which are hung, and the arrangement generally, there are 110 works fewer than were exhibited there in 1847, and 133 less than last year. More space is needed. The rejection of an artist's picture involves anguish and trouble of which the public have scarcely any idea. Many of our readers have already seen the particulars of a brutal attack made on Mr. J. P. Knight, the worthy secretary of the Academy, by an artist who had received an official letter from the secretary, stating that his picture could not be hung. The assault was infamous and indefensible, and we would not say a word which would seem to make it appear less so. It may serve as an illustration, however, of the effect of rejection on excitable minds, even where serious pecuniary interest, so far as we know, was not involved.

The exhibition, as a whole, is fully of the average degree of merit, and creditable to the country. Attempts at the highest style of art are rare, but this is less the fault of our artists than of the state of education in art generally. The elder artists, for the most part, maintain their ground, and the younger and rising painters give evidence of a decided advance.

In the architectural room, to which we must first direct our attention (though at present we can go no further than the door, so many matters have pressed upon us), there are 105 works, which specially belong to it,* mixed with very nearly the same number of oil paintings. They are better disposed, however, than they were last year, the architectural drawings occupying the lower part of all four sides of the room, and the paintings the upper part.

It is small space to afford to the big-sister-art, and admits of but trifling illustration of what is doing in architecture among us. As one of our correspondents observed in a recent number, few thanks seem to be owing to the present architect-academicians for the provision for and honour there of the art they profess.

There are no models, and it is desirable that the refusal of the academy to receive them should be known, to save architects unnecessary expenditure and annoyance. Ignorance

* Last year there were 118.

of this led to the preparation of a model of a large building now being erected under a government department, for exhibition at the academy, and the annoyance to the architect will be better conceived than described when he found that, after all the pains and expenditure, admittance was refused to it. It is sufficient to say that the model was made by Mr. T. D. Dighton, to prove that its rejection is not to be attributed to want of excellence as a work of art.*

Mr. Cockerell, R.A., has a very remarkable drawing, called "The Professor's Dream" (1,102), and which is a synopsis of the principal architectural monuments of ancient and modern times, drawn to the same scale, in forms and dimensions ascertained from the best authorities, and arranged on four terraces—Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, and Mediaeval and Modern; the last of these shows more particularly the comparative heights. The Egyptian temples and propylæ form the foreground, including also the sphynx, the Memnon, &c. Then come the Athenian wonders; and the Roman Coliseum, Pantheon, and (once called) Jupiter Stator: the Pisan Tower, the Cathedrals of Cologne, Strasburg, Antwerp; the Brussels Town Hall, &c., represent the mediæval skill. The Italian domes of the Revival, with St. Paul's and other of Wren's works, are crowned by St. Peter's, and the whole are backed by the dim pyramids, which, as old Fuller says, have outlived their makers' names. The buildings are brought into combination most artistically, and the result is an extraordinary work.

Mr. Pugin, who is not usually an exhibitor, has sent four prominent drawings,—No. 1,057, "An Elevation of St. George's Catholic Church, Lambeth," showing the tower and spire as they are intended to be finished; No. 1,013, "New Dining-hall, now erecting for the Earl of Shrewsbury, at Alton Towers;" No. 1,085, "A View of St. Augustine's, Ramsgate," and No. 1,117, "A View of Bilton Grange, Rugby," the seat of Washington Hilbert, Esq. St. Augustine's is the residence of the architect, and includes a church, now building, cloisters, school, &c., all shown isometrically in this "true prospect." Around the main drawing, in compartments tied together by foliage, admirably drawn, are small views of the interior of the church, the "Herbert" Chapel, &c. The style is Early Decorated: propriety rather than ornament is studied. The view of Bilton Grange is finished in the same manner as the last: the interior of the library, the conservatory, the long gallery, &c., occupy the sides. The building itself is Tudor, of red brick and stone, and has an entrance-tower open on three sides, to admit a carriage-drive. The elevation of St. George's tower and spire is several feet in height. The straight heads of the windows in the second story deserve reconsideration.

Mr. Ferrey has three designs,—No. 1,140, "The Training and Middle School for the Diocese of Worcester;" geometric in style, plain and appropriate in appearance; No. 1,173, "Some Additions made to the West

* We have received some complaints as to errors and omissions in the catalogue. Mr. F. E. H. Fowler says, the title of his drawing, No. 1,139, which stands thus—"Design for the Army and Navy Club-house, to which the second premium in the first competition was awarded," was further described as—"modified to suit the extension of the frontage afterwards made by the committee, given as that which might have been submitted (in lieu of that actually sent in). In the second competition, had the instructions prescribed in that case not been adhered to, or had they been rescinded in the instance of each competitor." Mr. Talbot Bury's drawing, No. 1,164, has been an incorrect description and name it ought to have been—"View of the church of Aldenham Church, Herts, as rebuilt from the designs and under the superintendence of Talbot Bury."

Front of the Episcopal Palace, Wells;" and No. 1,187, "St. Stephen's Church and Schools, Westminster," of which we gave an engraving some time ago.

Mr. Daukes, who seems to be one of those fortunate individuals graphically described in the old saw, as having "somebody else's luck and his own too," exhibits most of the works which have recently fallen into his hands,—No. 1,036, "Church of England Training College at Cheltenham;" No. 1,075, "The Middlesex County Lunatic Asylum, Colney Hatch;" and No. 1,141, "Aged Freemasons' Asylum, at Croydon" (a very every-day affair); while Mr. Wehnert exhibits a "View of St. Peter's Church, Cheltenham (No. 1,032), and Mr. Coe, a drawing of St. Stephen's Church, Avenue-road, Regent's-park" (in the Decorated style), both in course of erection by the same architect.

TRAVELLING NOTES IN ITALY.

BY AN ARCHITECT.
PÆSTUM.

HERE we have more stupendous and more mysterious memorials of the Italo-Greek race. These Greek colonists seem to have selected the most enchanting spots for their cities. The site of Pæstum equals, almost surpasses, that of Pompeii;—on the shore of a fertile plain, spreading itself at the foot of the lofty snow-capped ranges of the Calabrian Apennines, and laved by the blue waters of the magnificent Gulf of Salerno—a gulf at least equal in beauty to that of Naples. These three temples of Pæstum, like those of Baalbec, stand like solitary rocks in the chart of ancient history. The annals of the races that founded them have perished. History has not a word to say in regard to their origin or their object. Doubtless they were already ancient when Pompeii was overwhelmed, and they may have been visited by the Pompeians as vestiges of remote antiquity. There they stand in silence and solitude, like the great triad of pyramids on the rocky edge of the Egyptian desert, lone monuments of the genius of their aspiring founders, whose bodies have ages ago been re-united to the dust of their native plain; and still they greet successive generations of travellers with that same august and tranquil aspect they have ever worn.

If the traveller were to select from the thousand objects that challenge admiration in Italy those which had most moved his soul at the moment, and had traced the most indelible images on his memory, he would probably name the interior of Milan Cathedral, the cupola of St. Peter's looking up from the pavement, the Coliseum by moonlight, and the temples of Pæstum. Of these the dome of St. Peter's is emphatically a monument of the towering genius of the great architect: but the other three may be regarded as bodying forth the spirit, and genius, and habits of thought of the three great ages of Italian civilization—the Hellenic, the Roman, and the Mediæval age. At the Duomo of Milan, that sublime vista of piers and arches, those gorgeous stained windows, that high embowed roof, and those unparalleled effects of chiaroscuro, how exactly adapted are they for priestly pageantry, for awakening all the fervour of devotion, or at least of devoteism, for which that age is remarkable. At the Coliseum the grandeur of the design, the rapidity of its execution, the bloody associations of its vast arena, where ladies would sup while it was still reeking with the blood of the gladiator or the Christian martyr, all vividly recall the characteristic traits of the Roman mind. Then recur to Pæstum. How dissimilar are these monuments to the other two. In that sublime unity of conception, that severe simplicity of mass combined with finish of detail, above all, in that

* This was described in our pages at the time of the competition. The first stone of the building was laid by Prince Albert, a few days ago. According to the newspapers, the extreme length of the building will be 1,183 feet 6 inches, greatest breadth 143 feet 10 inches. There will be two wings, the right for females and the left for males, to each of which will be attached a surgeon's residence and an infirmary. The descent to the basement story is to be effected by a corridor of inclination, instead of steps. The roofing and flooring are to be covered with mosaic work.