

With reference to the Museum of Mediæval Sculpture, which it is proposed to form as a necessary part of the school, a few words may suffice, as the importance and interest of such a collection will not, I presume, be questioned, even by those who object to the school. There is not, I believe, in England anything accessible to the public which can be called a Mediæval Museum,—a fact not a little surprising, when the wonderful remains of the middle ages, and the proud display of which this country can boast, are taken into consideration. The British Museum contains specimens of artistic skill from every country on the face of the earth; but not a single leaf, or flower, or fragment of stone, from our own: not a single shelf in the whole establishment is devoted to British antiquity, though the interest that must attach to a collection seems past all possibility of doubt. And surely no country has so glorious a collection of effigies of kings, nobles, warriors, and priests; not like the Ninevite, nameless, and without histories, but all of them, their names and their deeds, their ancestry and their successors, known as well as the most familiar story. But all these have been passed by as utterly worthless, by the side of some broken Greek inscription, containing perhaps a list of the names of the doorkeepers of some forgotten temple. And not only are they of surpassing interest, as monuments of antiquity, but some of them are beyond all praise as national works of art. As works of art merely, and without reference to their antiquity, they are second to none; and specimens, I take it, may be found, not only equal, but perhaps superior to anything on the Continent. The men of the middle ages in our country were not only inferior to none in all Europe, but in not a few instances superior to all: for the beautiful style of architecture which they cultivated never reached in the hands of either the French, the Germans, or the Italians, the point of excellence which it did here. Try it by any standard we will—by principles, when we have them—by rules, when we know how to apply them—or by comparison where memory serves,—the glorious style, as we have it in England, is not only second to none elsewhere, but infinitely and marvellously superior to all. I hold them in all respect, and hope to see all the evidences of their skill; but let us not do injustice to ourselves by giving undue credit to foreign works because they are distant and less familiar.

Let us then try to collect under one roof a connected series of what yet remains to us untouched by the desolating hand of restoration, and thus leave to those who follow us the plaster evidences at least of what our forefathers have left us; and what we have studied, and wondered at, and tried to emulate, let them study, and wonder at, and emulate.

At the close of the paper—

Mr. Scott, Fellow, said—On the main points there could be no difference of opinion: that architect who had not felt the great want of artistic skill in the majority of the workmen employed to execute his designs, was indeed fortunate. The only question was as to the best mode of supplying the want. They must all agree that a school in which workmen might be taught thoroughly to practise each his own branch of ornamental art, was worthy of their support.

Mr. C. H. Smith, visitor, said, that, having been brought up as a mason, he was much more in favour of example than of oral instruction as a means of educating workmen. It was of the greatest importance that ingenious workmen should be able to examine a good collection of examples, which indeed would be infinitely more valuable than anything they could be taught; for it was very truly said that "he who learned nothing but what he was taught, would never know much." He attached the greatest importance to an extensive museum of specimens of art-workmanship. Actual specimens were far more valuable than squeezings or plaster casts, which could not possibly convey the spirit of the tool and the sharpness of the chisel. He had been frequently applied to with respect to the execution of Gothic carvings for modern churches; and when he stated the price which ought to be paid for their proper execution, the parties went away quite astonished at the price named. Whilst carving was put into the general

contract with builders, it was impossible it could be properly executed.

Mr. Seddon, Associate, mentioned the success which had accompanied the "North London School of Drawing and Modelling," at Camden Town; in which, since its establishment, 600 or 700 workmen had been engaged to drawing and modelling. With regard to Mr. Allen's plan of instruction, it was his own opinion that it was impracticable. The great variety of the different classes of workmen attending was astonishing, and it would be impossible to provide the necessary space for all the different materials of their trades, if they were to work upon them in the school, while it would be difficult to find parties competent to give the practical instruction suggested.

Mr. Barry, jun. Associate, thought the chief difficulty to be surmounted arose from the commercial principle referred to by Mr. Smith, and the ambition which all men felt to better their position. The practical instruction suggested by Mr. Allen would tend to make the workman feel a pride in his own art, and the commercial difficulty might to a great extent be overcome.

Mr. Alfred Smith, Fellow, thought that with regard to carving, architects ought to take it into their own hands, and not allow the builders to have anything to do with it. It should be kept out of the contract or specification, and superintended by the architect himself.

Mr. Burns, Fellow, said it was a very easy thing to say that architects should take the superintendence of carving into their own hands, but they had very little power where money was concerned. In reference to the education of workmen, he felt convinced that without teaching them drawing and modelling, so as to appreciate a drawing when put before them, they could never be made carvers.

Mr. Hardwick, V.P., before quitting the chair wished to express his sense of the extreme importance of educating workmen in art. Architects constantly experienced the want of a knowledge of form and effect on the part of workmen, and a consequent difficulty in getting their drawings properly carried out. Differences of opinion might exist as to the best mode of conducting the required school, but undoubtedly some education was highly desirable. The Royal Academy was confined to the fine arts, and accomplished its purpose most successfully. The Government Schools of Design were connected with commercial art, and drawing and modelling were there only taught to lead the students to design works for manufacturers. The means of educating workmen in metal, stone, and wood, so as to understand architects' drawings, were still wanting. He hoped the members of the profession would unite to form such a school as they required, with a museum as a collateral branch of it.

On Monday, 8th, Mr. C. Barry, Mr. Clarke, Mr. G. Godwin, Mr. Penrose, and Mr. G. G. Scott met Mr. Allen to consider in what way the proposal could best be carried into practice. Letters of concurrence from Mr. T. H. Wyatt, Mr. Carpenter, Mr. Ferrey, Mr. Cundy, Mr. Hardwick, jun., and many others, were read, and it was determined to form a committee, and to open a subscription in support of the project. Mr. Scott agreed to act as treasurer.

#### ARTIST WORKMEN.

The conversation which followed Mr. Allen's paper, at the Institute, induces me to beg your attention for a few remarks. There seems to be a pretty unanimous feeling that the sculpture now applied to our buildings is not equal to that of old times. That feeling is justified, not only by a glance at examples where it is used architecturally, but is, alas, only too dreadfully true where it is used *per se*, as let the public statues which disgrace and disfigure London witness. With this branch of sculpture, however, we have nothing or little to do at present: it is the figures, fruit, draperies, &c., applied architecturally, which are complained of, and which it is proposed to reform by the foundation of an artisan school, after attendance at which every workman will be a great sculptor in his way,—give spirit, life, and meaning to his work,—and we be proud of the sculptural parts of our buildings, instead of ashamed of them, as we ought to be. I have no faith in that plan: this idea of turning the hands into the head will never succeed: the great mass of workmen will be the mechanical hewers of stone, and nothing more,

whilst stone-masons are masons: it was not otherwise of old, is not now, and never will be, as far as we can see. The secret of the superior sculpture in all periods of art, down to Grinling Gibbons, in England, was, that there was one great sculptor employed, who worked, himself, who superintended those who assisted him, and who finally gave the finishing touches to the whole work; and that not slightly, by just putting more force in a frown, more joy in a laugh,—but to such an extent as to leave the pre-eminent mark of his own individual power throughout the whole mass. Besides which, let me add, that the sculptor worked always in the style of the time, and with the life and knowledge of his time: he was not required to get up a fictitious feeling for a period of art inferior to his own; and if told to seek the style of an era not his own, it was an era which led him on by a noble emulation to an excellence which has never yet been surpassed. I could say more, much more on this subject of the deficiency of architectural sculpture, which is the sculptor's fault arising from a pitiful little pride, preventing our great sculptors from giving that assistance to architecture which was never thought a disgrace till now. However, doubtless, money has much to do with this. Although a school for the workman may not be amiss, I would also suggest a school for the architect. One gentleman, who prided himself on being a "practical" man, said he saw much of architects, and they often did not know what they wanted themselves.

There was a time when architects were artists. I will pass over the grand, the revered names of the great painters and sculptors of old, and will only say that I have seen—we may all of us have seen—drawings by Sansonino, Sanmichele, Balthazaar, Peruzzi, Palladio, Brunelleschi, and many others, which bespoke quite sufficient power over the human figure, animals, and ornament generally, to raise them above the level of ordinary artists. We have great architects now—men who do more, and on a larger scale often, than they of old. I would ask them what the secret of drawing? Who is the stupid workman to be complained of? I will not go further into this to me painful subject. I will not appeal to those whose names stand first on the list of successful architects to give us proof of their knowledge of drawing,—of their capability, without external aid, of making the workmen know what they want. To those who have somewhat of the heart and soul of the artist about them, I would say, and do say, seriously, earnestly,—avoid this trade (for trade it is): the genius of the art of architecture is dead, and gone: if you love art enter not here, for here art is a sin, and will, if followed by you, bring nothing but neglect and disappointment. Have you an oily tongue, a glib speech, a lust of gold at all price, a good connection, a sound business tact and knowledge? Can you flatter patrons, cajole committees, bully builders, now good and fawn, now dispute and withstand? In fine, can you do all that is necessary in all professions save those of the gentle arts? Then enter here. And with this knowledge the reward of success will be some thousands a year; but as to the art which you love and seek, it is anywhere but here: you may instruct workmen, but it will not therefore come; you may get some great sculptor to aid you, but it will still be absent: you may weep over it, but your tears will not revive it; you may prey over it, but the soul is not there, and will never come until the architect shall be valued, not by his means, his manners, or his name, but by his love for, his knowledge of, his manual power in, all the arts connected with his vocation.

BRICKS FOR THE MILLION.—At Stourbridge, according to the *Worcestershire Chronicle*, a machine is at work producing perfect bricks from antempered clay, at the rate of forty-eight a minute. The bricks are said to be of such consistency as to be immediately fit for the kiln. It is added that there is little doubt the machine would produce them at the rate of 100 a minute, if required.