

which have been made here, the duels and trials by ordeal, and other events of the olden time, would occupy much space; for, up to the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James I., this renowned site was the resort of the royalty and nobility of the land. Drake, Raleigh, and others have knelt here on the cloth of gold before the maiden sovereign; nor has Old Smithfield been wanting in the display of scenes of more tragic import. Amongst these will be remembered the death of Wat Tyler, and the burning and the execution by other means of many who suffered for conscience' sake. Bartholomew Leggate was, in 1611, condemned and executed in Smithfield as a dangerous heretic, and was the last for his who perished at the stake in England person religious opinions; but there were various terrible executions in Smithfield later, for charges of witchcraft, and other supposed offences.

The precincts of St. Bartholomew's must have been a pleasant retreat, with its mulberry-garden and elm and fruit trees. Under the shade of these the scholars of the chief London schools were at seasons wont to assemble for the purpose of discussion and rivalry in the display of knowledge. Then the sale of sheep and oxen was but trifling, compared with the present demand, and the extent of the pens was proportionably small; but the ancient fair had not in Stow's days ceased to be of almost national importance; and most picturesque groups must the London historian have seen in his wanderings here at fair-time. As years passed on, the improvement of the roads, the altered character of manufactures, and other causes, led to the alteration of Bartholomew's Fair from a great trade gathering to an assembly of Londoners for festive purposes and amusement. At length the sports and wonders of the fair, which were witnessed and illustrated by Hogarth, declined, and that which had for many centuries been a valued institution became a scene of confusion and riotous and drunken disorder. Few, therefore, were sorry to hear the last proclamation of the ancient fair made by the City authorities; when the small group of fruit and cake sellers who had assembled according to old custom, were made to move on by the police. Bartholomew's Fair had done its work; and, like the English crossbows, coats of armour, pack-horses, and a hundred other things, gave way before changed arrangements.

A few years afterwards we heard the last knell of the bell which closed for ever the old Smithfield Cattle-market: like the fair, a time-honoured institution, but which, like the other, had become a nuisance, and unsuited for its purpose; and none regret the change who remember the scenes of confusion which reigned here on market-days,—the loud lowing of oxen, the bleating of ill-used sheep, the barking of dogs, the hoarse voices of drovers, the want of water, and the other miseries of Old Smithfield.

For some years past this place has been in a disgraceful state of neglect; but we may hope now for improvement. Let us urge that in the course of it some thought be given to pent-up City lads, who, during the last three centuries, have been gradually robbed of their play-grounds.

#### LONDON STREET ARCHITECTURE.

THE NORTH BRITISH AND MERCANTILE INSURANCE OFFICES.

The Mercantile Insurance Company was formed in consequence of the large additional rates required by the Associated Fire Insurance Companies, after the great fire in Tooley-street, June 22nd, 1861; and, when fairly established, the directors purchased of Messrs. Prescott the site of No. 61, Threadneedle-street, and commenced there the erection of new offices. It having, however, occurred to the parties interested on both sides, that an amalgamation with the North British Fire and Life Insurance Company would be advantageous, that amalgamation was effected, and the associated companies, under the title of the North British and Mercantile, then added to their land by the purchase of the well-known Cook Tavern, and upon the site thus enlarged, the present building, of which we give a view, has been erected by the surveyor to the company, Mr. Thomas Piper, assisted by Mr. J. E. Goodchild. The builders were Messrs. W. Cubitt & Co. The material is Portland stone, varied with blue grey granite, in the ground story, and in the upper stories red granite

columns. The building is made fire-proof throughout, with iron and concrete.

The style of architecture is Italian, not following the exact arrangement of any particular building, but adapting the several features of the style to the exigencies of street architecture in our northern climate, thus abandoning the advantage obtained, architecturally, by the solid basements of Italy, for the sake of the improved light required on the ground-story for mercantile purposes. The windows are well recessed, and the front, as a whole, is effective and handsome.

The North British Insurance Company was established in 1809, commenced life business in 1825, and was incorporated by royal charter. It has the co-operation of some of the highest Scottish families. The joint company has obtained the confidence of the public to such an extent, that its total income last year was above 498,000*l.* The paid-up capital of the company is 250,000*l.*, and its realised and invested funds are 2,238,927*l.* The company expect to occupy their new offices in the month of June.\*

#### THE MULREADY COLLECTION IN THE KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

This most interesting exhibition, the result of a gentleman when he was about nine years old, architectural sketches, dated 1803, and his last picture still unfinished, has been commented on already at such length by the daily press, that we shall content ourselves with mentioning that it is open, and should be visited by every student and lover of art. 113 paintings, and many hundreds of drawings, show his industry, and tell the whole story of his progress. We are not amongst those who rave of his genius. He was a great draughtsman, and a great colourist; but not a great thinker. His pictures amuse and please: they serve to interest men and women in other men and women (and that is something), but his teaching, with some few exceptions, is but small. Within his own limits, however, he holds one of the highest places.

#### PRIZES FOR ART WORKMEN.

The Council of the Society of Arts have published a long list of subjects, for which they offer handsome prizes of money in competition. All specimens must be sent in by the 26th of November. The subjects comprise carvings in marble, stone, and wood; repoussé work, in any metal; hammered work, in iron, brass, or copper; carving in ivory; chasing in bronze; etching and engraving on metal—Niello work; enamel painting on copper or gold; painting on porcelain; decorative painting; inlays in wood (marquetry or buhl), ivory, or metal; cameo-cutting; engraving on glass; wall-mosaics; gem-engraving; die-sinking; glass-blowing; bookbinding and leather work; and embroidery. The list in detail, with the amounts and conditions, may be obtained at the society's house.

#### AWARD OF PREMIUM BY THE ART-

UNION OF LONDON.

The council of the Art-Union met on Tuesday at the South Kensington Museum, Professor Donaldson in the chair; and proceeded to award their offered premium of 600*l.* for the best statue or group submitted in competition. After successive votings the number of models for choice was reduced to three,—the Wood Nymph, the Lady of the Lake, and Imogen; and ultimately the Wood Nymph was selected. The successful sculptor was found to be Mr. C. B. Birch, of 88, Keppel-street, Russell-square.

The council invite competitors to affix their names to their several works.

The sculptor of Imogen writes:—

"Seeing in your notice of the Art-Union sculpture in the Kensington Museum, the remark that the right arm of Imogen is doubtful, I would submit that I thought this heroine of Shakespeare not only as affording, I thought, a popular subject to meet the desires of the Art Union, but as also taking a point which I am not aware of having seen treated, either in painting or sculpture, *i. e.*, a woman's fearful and unaccustomed (and therefore, perhaps bordering on the awkward) way of drawing a sword (as she throws a stone!). In the rest of the figure I have tried to be graceful, but in this respect I dare say I have some what sacrificed grace to expression, and your remark touches this point."

\* Part of the building will be occupied by the International Financial Society, established, with a strong direction, to make advances on land with promptitude and small expense.

"FINE ARTS APPLIED TO INDUSTRY."

CANTON LECTURES.

IN his fourth lecture, devoted to "Iron and Brass," the first point noticed by Mr. Burges was the great employment of bronze in the classical era, it being used for most of the articles that we commonly manufacture in iron. Bronze statues were also numerous, although very liable to be melted down if the persons to whom they were erected became unpopular. Mention was made of the celebrated bronze colossi at Rhodes and Athens, as well as of several other *chefs-d'œuvre* of ancient art. Attention was drawn to the various methods employed in the decoration of bronze statues in the classic times, such as damascening, gilding, and the substitution of silver, ivory, and other substances in the eyes. As regards Mediæval bronzes great stress was laid upon our own series at Westminster Abbey, so much being known of the artists and of their rate of payment; and after noticing the great antiquity of bronze castings in the East, and the great skill of the Japanese in this art, the lecturer referred to the present state of these manufactures in France and England, very little being done in our own country. In France, M. Barbézieux deservedly holds the first rank, for the extreme care displayed in the casting, although some doubt was expressed as to the expediency of copying works in marble by reducing them as bronzes. After describing the Damascused dinanderie produced at Mossul, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and Hart's and Harding's imitations of that of the Middle Ages, the lecturer referred to the prevalent use now made of iron, both wrought and cast; observing that at present we had no very good means of judging whether structures built of this metal were likely to be permanent; and adding that there was very great room for a much more extended application of art to engineering works than had hitherto been made. The ironwork of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was pointed out as models to be followed in the designs for elaborate works for doors, screens, and other small objects, the ornament being obtained by means of iron stamps, while the practice of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, of getting the effect by placing thin perforated plates one behind another, was by no means to be so much approved. A screen, however, executed by Hardman in this manner, and placed in the late exhibition, was mentioned with great praise for its delicate workmanship. Mr. Burges concluded by strongly advocating the application of art to works in cast-iron, and by suggesting several methods whereby this might be decorated. The table presented an interesting show of works.

The fifth lecture (March 7th) treated of "Gold and Silver." Through considerable documentary evidence existed as to the excellence of the antique works in gold and silver, the value of the material has caused an almost complete destruction of the objects themselves, and we have, consequently, but little to learn from this quarter: on the contrary, a comparatively large quantity of Mediæval plate and jewelry has come down to our own day, to say nothing of the numerous and curious inventories so frequently met with; the most instructive of these latter being that of Louis, Count of Anjou, taken somewhere about the year 1360, and which has been published in the work of M. de Laborde, on "The Enamels in the Louvre." The various processes applied to the working of the precious metals in the Middle Ages were then described, and a short list given of the principal vases and ornaments demanded for the decoration of the Church and for secular uses. Much regret was expressed at the want of art education, not only among the workmen, but among the tradesmen themselves; the old silver and gold smiths, such as Cellini, being both tradesmen and artists. The next part of the subject touched upon was jewelry. Great praise was given to the ornaments of the ancient Etruscans, which were literally "jewels of silver and jewels of gold." The higher sort of Mediæval jewelry appears, on the contrary, to have consisted almost entirely of precious stones, only such an amount of metal being used as was necessary to bind them together. The jewelry of the Renaissance formed a third variety, being distinguished by the little figures and ornaments covered with enamel. The lecturer drew attention to the modern revivals of Etruscan work by Signor Castellani, of the Mediæval by Messrs. Hardman & Co., and of the Renaissance by Mr. Hancock and Messrs. Widdowson & Vale. Mr. Green's jewelry was also noted for the good taste