VISITS TO ART-MANUFACTORIES.

No. 3.—ORNAMENTAL STATIONERY, PLAYING CARDS, AND THE PATENT VEGETABLE PARCHMENT.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MESSRS. DE LA RUE.

If we examine any bundle of letters received, we will say, twenty years since, we cannot but be struck at the plain, even coarse, appearance of the paper upon which they are written, when compared with the elegant stationery with which we are now familiar. Our note papers, especially that prepared for ladies' use, and our envelopes, are now delicate in texture, pleasing in every variety of tint, and the ornamentation is generally elegant. Within a few years, the improvement which has taken place in every branch of this manufacture—whether it be in embossing, in printing in colours, in the production of enamelled surfaces, in the preparation of valentines, in the designs of the papers for ornamental albums, for the binding of Irish linens or of piece goods, or for the decoration of glove and fruit boxes—has been truly remarkable.

The whole of this improvement has resulted from the enterprising spirit, the unwearying energy and good taste of one individual.

The capricious goddess Fashion, who is for ever leading our fair sisters captive, running them into ridiculous extremes, and exerting a despotic tyranny uncontrolled by either reason or taste, declared straw hats or bonnets to be against her rule, and that paper should form the head-cover for a season. Then it was that a native of Guernsey, gifted with the inventive faculty, produced an embossed paper for making bonnets, and the demand for this material led to the construction of machines for its manufacture. Paper bonnets in our humid climate could not continue long in vogue, and the inventor of the embossed paper and embossing machines directed his attention to the improvement of stationery. Thus originated with Mr. Thomas De la Rue the manufactory which we have lately visited, and which is one of the largest, as it is certainly the most complete, in the world. Situated in the district of Bunhill Fields, which is surrounded with many historical associations connected with the progress of our civilization, is the manufactory of De la Rue & Co. Extending behind the houses in Bunhill Row, it now stands upon nearly an acre and half of ground; and the several floors, which are crowded with machinery, represent a space of about five acres. This space comprehends the various departments which are devoted to a trade finding customers in every part of the civilized globe; and we must, in brief, endeavour to convey to our readers some idea of one of the most complete and best conducted establishments to be met with in this country, employing hundreds of men and women, boys and girls.

One feature worthy of the highest commendation, and one which we could desire to see copied in all the large establishments of the United Kingdom, is the marked attention which the employers have given to the social condition of the employed. The men were induced, by the promised remission of half an hour from the general day's work, to abandon the use of beer during the hours of labour. Beyond this, since it was necessary that some refreshment such as tea should be obtained, it was thought to be desirable, on the score of economy and of quality, that, instead of letting each man make his own, there should be a more wholesale system adopted. The men, therefore, have formed a fund for this purpose, appointing some of their own body to superintend the purchase of tea, sugar, and milk. One of the Mr. De la Rue's invented a boiler, sufficiently capacious to make tea for so large a body, and so constructed that the fine aroma of the tea is not lost: This machine was, at first, made for the men by the firm; but they have been repaid, and it is now the property of the workmen. The result of this arrangement is, that every one in the establishment can obtain a pint of excellent tea, with good sugar and milk, for a penny. A sickness fund, and a library for the use of all, are well organized; and altogether this hive of industry is working with the utmost harmony and profit to all concerned. We must now proceed with our description of some of the many interesting manipulatory details of this manufacture.

There may not appear to be anything worthy of especial notice in the manufacture of a piece of card-board; but its production involves several niceties of manipulation which deserve especial attention. Card-board is of various kinds, and of course the materials required for the production of the finest varieties are in every way superior to those which are employed in the manufacture for the inferior sorts. Cards are but sheets of paper pasted together, and consequently the manufacturer has but to deal with paste and paper. The manufacture of the paper does not belong to De la Rue's establishment; therefore, this article becomes a matter of selection. The preparation of the paste is an operation requiring the greatest care, especially that which is used for the finest cards. Everything depends, in the first place, upon the purity of the flour, and of the water employed; these are mingled with close attention to certain rules, which experience has shown are necessary, and then boiled in cauldrons by a nicely regulated heat. The paste-room, in which 400 pounds of flour are made into paste daily, is one of much interest; the different qualities of paste which are piled around this apartment in tubs ready for use, varying in colour and transparency, and the mixing and boiling processes, all bear distinguishing marks of the supervision of one who has learnt how to subdue science to be the handmaid of industry. In this room there is also manufactured the sizes which are required in this manufactory; most especial attention is required in making the solutions of gelatine, for it is found that a very slight alteration in the temperature employed will effect an alteration in the gelatinous solution of an exceedingly injurious character.

For the manufacture of card-boards, sheets of paper are properly arranged, as it regards number and quality, and these piles of paper are carried to the pasting-room. Here there are two long tables: every man having on his left hand his pile of papers, and on his right his tub of paste. He places a sheet on his bench before him, and taking his large brush he dips it in the paste, and by a series of very regular curvilinear sweeps over the surface, he spreads a uniform coat of it upon the paper; on this he lays another sheet, and by a rapid sweep with the hands the two are united. It should be remarked, that a card may consist of two or of several sheets of paper cemented together—the thicker cards requiring, of course, the greater number. Whatever may be the number employed, the workman takes at last two sheets together, the under one forming the upper surface of one card; the upper sheet the under one of the next. This upper sheet is pasted, and thus arises a pile of pasted sheets with unpasted intervals.

Close to the pasting-tables are hydraulic presses, and into these the wet piles of paper are put, and subjected to powerful mechanical compression, by which every pasted sheet is brought into the closest possible contact. Paste is merely flour, consisting of gluten, starch, &c., rendered miscible in water: it is not a solution, consequently, by the great mechanical force applied, water is squeezed out, but the true cementing paste is retained, penetrating the capillary pores of each sheet, and producing the most perfect adhesion.

After the piles of pasted paper have remained for some time in the hydraulic presses, they are removed to the drying-rooms, which are a series of vaults, extending below the manufactory. Here each sheet of "paste-board" is taken, and by means of a piece of hooked wire, hung upon rods. A current of hot and dry air is driven by means of a fan into these vaults; this rapidly robs the paper of its moisture, and, becoming cool as it circulates towards the end of these cellars, the air would again part with its moisture, as dew, and thus injure the other sheets, were not precautions taken to avoid this. Many hundred feet of iron pipes are arranged around these vaults, and through these hot steam is constantly circulating: thus the air is maintained at its high temperature, until it leaves the vaults charged with the moisture which it was intended to remove. The "boards" being thoroughly dry, they are taken down, and removed to another apartment.

The surface of a card-board, when it comes from the drying-room, is far from uniform; examined with a lens it will be found to be a series of elevations and depressions, and it is found, that if these boards are, at once, submitted to the action of polished metal rollers, that the resulting surface is not satisfactory. The process therefore adopted is to pass them through a machine, in which there are a series of rapidly revolving brushes, which search into every part of the card, remove any loose particles, and impart a uniform burnish to it. The next stage is to level both sides by rollers, and especially in the case of card-boards which are to be employed for playing cards, it is important that the smoothness of the two surfaces should be different. In this process of smoothing, therefore, the board passes between a metal roller and a paper roller. The latter is made by pasting together a great number of sheets of paper, compressing them to the greatest possible degree of consistency, and turning the paper cylinder in a lathe. The result is a roller, the surface of which consists entirely of edges of paper, with a texture as close as that of finely polished wood. After this, the card may be regarded as complete; processes of glazing, enamelling, colouring, embossing, &c., following, as may be desired. For whatever process the card may be required, the principle of its formation is that which has been described. We will, however, at once proceed to the consideration of the manufacture of playing cards, for which this establishment has been long and justly celebrated.

With the history of playing cards, which is curious, our prescribed space will not allow us to deal. The "pips" and the "honours" on our cards retain their antiquated and grotesque characters. Attempts have been again and again made to introduce figures of a more natural character; but, we are informed, that these attempts have ever been attended with loss, so firmly are the public wedded to the old forms. The "pips"—*hearts* and *diamonds* in red, and *spades* and *clubs* in black—are printed by one impulse in oil colours, forty in a sheet. The "honours" are many-coloured, and they consequently require several blocks, each block being devoted to its own particular colour. Without entering into a description of this process of printing, which is similar to that which is employed in the production of paper-hangings, with which most persons are tolerably familiar, we proceed. Great attention has been of late years given to the ornamentation of the backs of our playing cards, and in this department the house of De la Rue & Co. has ever been unrivalled. They employ artists of the highest talent in furnishing designs for the backs of their playing cards; and many of the packs which are issuing this season exhibit designs of exceeding beauty. Graceful in the groupings of fruits or flowers, in the ever-lovely arabesque-like curves, or harmonious in the arrangements of colour, the refined character of many of these may be a simple, but it is, nevertheless, a striking proof, that a better, a purer order of things is arising amongst us, since in our idle hours we solicit and receive those trifles upon which there has been a sufficient inducement for the artist to bestow his talents.

The backs and the fronts of playing cards are printed on single sheets, that is, before the sheets are pasted into "boards." The fronts and the backs are pasted upon prepared "foundation cards," and then subjected to the various processes already described. In addition to which, playing cards are, before finishing, subjected to a "sizeing" process, the size for the back and front of the card being different in character. When dry—and it should be here remarked, that in every part of this vast establishment are drying closets, so that, paper having a peculiar power of condensing and retaining moisture in its pores, this moisture may be removed in every stage of the process—when dry, the cards are placed between polished sheets of copper, and passed a few times between milling rollers; they are then carried to a hydraulic press for flattening, and subjected to a pressure of at least a thousand tons, by which they acquire their solidity, and the high finish which is always found on the best playing cards. The cards, being complete, are cut, first into long strips, and then into single cards; and so complete are the arrangements for this purpose, that, although the cutter turns out 20,000 cards a day, they are of precisely the same dimensions. The cards are then sorted into their different qualities, namely, "Moguls," which are the best cards, without spot or blemish; "Harrys," which may have a speck on the back or face; the "Highlanders," which are still

less perfect; and the "Andrews," which are the commonest cards.

The ace of spades being the government stamp, on which a duty of one shilling is paid, is printed at Somerset House. All cards exported are free of duty, consequently, as these packs are all furnished with this stamped card, the duty is returned upon an affirmation made to the effect that they have been sent out of the country.

The manufacture of visiting cards, wedding cards, &c., will have been sufficiently explained up to the process of enamelling and their ornamentation. The composition of the enamel preparation varies according to the circumstances for which the cards may be required. Zinc white, amongst other things, enters into the enamelling compound. There was, at one time, an idea that the health of those engaged in the manufacture of enamelled cards suffered from the absorption of metallic oxides, which were highly detrimental to the human health. Whatever may have been the case, this does not now appear to be so; and, beyond the circumstances of working in very warm rooms, there are no other injurious conditions to which the enamellers are subjected.

Before we pass from the manufacture of cards, we would remark that, by far the large majority of the railway tickets are manufactured here. These have, according to the railway from which they are to be issued, fixed colours and patterns, differing from those of any other line. These tickets are cut by boys, with a rapidity which is truly marvellous. We understand that more than a million-and-a-half of these tickets are manufactured weekly.

If the edges of cards are to be silvered or gilt, a line of gold size is applied, and then the silver or gold-leaf, or the Dutch metal, as the case may be, is laid on it. If embossing is required, the cards are taken to the embossing machines.

The preparation of the plates or cylinders for embossing paper brings into play some beautiful applications of the electrotype process. The design being decided on—supposing it, as is generally the case, to be a continually repeating pattern—it is engraved with great care by the die engraver on steel; this engraved piece of metal is not perhaps more than half an inch or an inch square. Impressions of this die are then taken upon a sheet of gutta percha; in this, of course, much care is required to ensure exactness. The impressed surface of the gutta percha is rubbed over with plumbago or some conducting substance, it is then placed in the decomposing cell of the electrotype arrangement, and a sheet of copper is deposited, which is covered with a multitude of facsimiles of the engraved die. We counted as many as 1200 repetitions on one plate. This is employed in embossing the paper, which may be either white, or it may have been prepared with colour and varnished previously to this process. In the embossing machines the paper passes between an unyielding steel roller and the plate or cylinder upon which the pattern has been prepared.

To Mr. Warren De la Rue, many of the mechanical appliances which are found so exceedingly useful are due—his mechanical genius and his great chemical knowledge peculiarly fitting him to conduct an establishment of this kind. The machine for colouring paper is one of those beautiful applications which cannot be seen without pleasure. It is not easy without drawings to describe machinery; but it is possible to indicate to some extent its mode of operation. Let us suppose an endless band, extending from one end to the other of a long room, and traversing, by the action of the machine, backward and forward over warmed plates. This band is rather wider than the sheet of paper to be coloured. Now, at one end of the machine, a boy places the sheet; this, by the motion, is drawn under a trough, triangular in shape, having a fine slit at its lower angle, through which the colour it contains flows out on to the sheet as it is moved gradually under it. By a most simple and ingenious contrivance, each sheet of paper is made, by the machine itself, to overlap the sheet which preceded it by about half an inch, so that the sheets pass on in an unbroken stream. As the paper passes out from under the colouring trough, it progresses under brushes which have, by the action of an eccentric, a peculiar motion imparted to them by which a cycloidal curve is produced on the moving paper. By this means, the colour is spread with great uniformity over the surface. In some few cases the colour is applied by hand; and it is curious to observe that the motion with which the colourer spreads his colour on the surface of the paper is precisely similar to that of the machine. As the papers pass from the machine along the endless web, the colour becomes sufficiently hardened to admit of the removal of the sheets from the other end, without the risk of disturbing the coloured surface.

The space in this establishment occupied in the manufacture of envelopes is marked by the extreme activity with which every operation goes on. The impressed stamp on the postal envelopes is, like the ace of spades in cards, executed at Somerset House; from thence they are all sent to De la Rue's to be folded. Those who visited the Great Exhibition will well remember the beautiful envelope folding machine which was always found, when at work, with a crowd of curious inquirers around it. The papers are first cut of the proper size, and one corner is impressed with some design—such as a crest, a monogram, a name, or indeed whatever may be required. It is then gummed at this corner—an operation performed with great ease by children, who pass the corner under a triangular trough containing the gum, and as they withdraw it, they bring away the required portion of adhesive material, which has passed through a slit in the bottom of the little trough. When this is dry, they are sent in bundles to the folding machine. Here no less than six motions are necessary;—the paper is laid down, the four flaps must be turned over one after the other, and the envelope must be withdrawn. A boy lays on the machine a piece of the cut paper; a rectangular hammer falls and knocks it into a similar box-like space; the hammer rises and leaves the four flaps standing up; the same motion which raises the hammer, brings up an iron finger which presses down one corner; then another arises and does the same, and another and another; then the finished envelope itself rises, is clipped by a mechanical arm, and drawn away, leaving its space to be occupied by another. The rapidity with which this is done is something remarkable. The prevailing fashion of stamping papers with monograms, or fanciful designs embracing the addresses of the writers, has given rise to an immense trade in this particular direction. Dies have to be cut; and we learn that the vast variety of tastes, which have to be pleased, become really a source of considerable annoyance, from the immense stock of dies which are thus rendered necessary. This applies equally to all the chaste varieties of wedding stationery for which this house is celebrated.

It should be borne in mind, the Messrs. De la Rue & Company are wholesale manufacturers. The retail stationer receives his orders from his customers, and he sends his order to the wholesale house. Many might, without this intimation, have thought it desirable to go to an establishment where so great a variety could be seen; but, on arriving there they would be disappointed, as it is not possible in so extensive an establishment, where every minute is of value, to admit of any approach to a retail trade.

Mourning stationery is another very important division of this manufacture; but this, with ordinary fancy stationery, we are compelled to pass by without notice, for the sake of directing attention to novelties. The machines for printing in colours, and for the combination of colour printing with embossing, are of a peculiarly interesting character. Here we have an enormous fly press acting upon pieces of card-board with a force equal to a thousand tons, and bringing out in high relief the design which has been engraved upon the steel die. In combining colour printing with these embossed impressions, everything depends upon the nice adjustment of parts; and this "registering," as it is technically called, is carried out in the greatest perfection. We inspected a great number of the beautiful designs produced in this way for the bands for Irish linens and other "piece goods;" and we were almost disposed to regret that so much artistic skill in the production of elegant designs, and so much mechanical ingenuity in the details of the manufacturing process, should be expended upon things of so trifling a character. The necessity which, however, calls upon the manufacturer of textile fabrics to send his goods into the market thus highly ornamented, shows that there must be a general improvement in the public taste. In the *Art-Journal*, we have published from time to time most charming designs, which would have been exceedingly applicable to many of the productions to which we have been alluding; but we admit, although these designs have not been copied, that those produced in this manufactory are in no respect inferior to our own.

The printing of postage and receipt stamps forms a separate department of this immense establishment—this division being directly under the supervision of government officers. One important object with the postal and stamp authorities has been the production of stamps—the colours of which should be sufficiently permanent to stand the wetting to which they are subjected, and other rough usage; but from which the required obliterating ink could not be removed without rendering the attempt at fraud evident. The chemical knowledge of Mr. Warren De la Rue has here been of the utmost value. As a chemist this gentleman is well known for his investigation of the colouring principle of the cochineal insect, and other colouring matters, and out of these researches there has arisen the preparation of those inks which are used in printing the stamps. In the preparation of the plate from which the sheets of stamps are printed, the multiplying process by the agency of the electrotype, which has been already explained, is brought to bear. One head alone is engraved by the die engraver, and this is multiplied 120 times to produce the sheet required. The printing, the sorting of the sheets, and the perforating processes, are each of them peculiarly interesting.

We must, however, pass on to the consideration of one of the most curious, as it promises to be one of the most useful of modern discoveries. This is the so-called "Vegetable Parchment," which was discovered by Mr. W. E. Gaine, in 1854. Vegetable parchment is made from waterleaf, or unsized paper, of which ordinary blotting paper is a common example, and is well adapted for the process. This is manufactured from rags of linen and cotton, thoroughly torn to pieces in the pulping machine, and it is found that long fibred paper is not so good for the production of vegetable parchment as that which is more thoroughly pulped. The structure of the waterleaf may be regarded as an interlacement of vegetable fibres in every direction, simply held together by contact, and consequently offering a vast extension of surface and minute cavities to favour capillary action. To make vegetable parchment, the waterleaf or blotting paper is simply dipped in dilute sulphuric acid, when the change takes place, and though nothing appears to be added or subtracted, the waterleaf loses all its previous properties, and becomes in all external respects similar to the prepared skin of animals, known as parchment.

Vegetable parchment greatly resembles animal parchment; the same peculiar tint, the same degree of translucency, the same transition from the fibrous to the hornlike condition. Vegetable, like animal, parchment possesses a high degree of cohesion, bearing frequently repeated bending and rebending, without showing any tendency to break in the folds; like the latter, it is highly hygroscopic, acquiring, by the absorbtion of moisture, increased flexibility and toughness. The preparation of gun cotton, by the action of nitric acid upon cotton, is now tolerably well understood; and it is generally known that in this case there is an increase of weight, arising from the combination of nitrogen with the cotton. Dr. Hofmann, however, informs us that vegetable parchment is something totally different from this. He says:—"With the exception of about 0·9 per cent. of mineral matter, a quantity not much exceeding the amount which is present in the better varieties of ordinary paper, the substance of vegetable parchment is *identical in composition with cellulose or woody fibre*. The analytical experiments demonstrate, as might have been expected, that the extraordinary change which the properties of paper undergo during its transformation, depends solely and exclusively upon a molecular rearrangement of the constituents, and not upon any alteration in the composition of the paper. In this respect, the action which sulphuric acid exerts upon woody fibre may be compared to the transformation of woody fibre, under the protracted influence of the same agent, into *dextrin*, a substance altogether different from fibre, but still identical with it in composition." For the preparation of the most perfect vegetable parchment, about two volumes of sulphuric acid and

one volume of water are mixed together, the blotting paper is dipped into this fluid, and in a few seconds the paper will be found to have undergone a manifest change. It is removed from the acid, well washed with clean water, and subsequently, for the purpose of removing all traces of sulphuric acid, it is dipped into very dilute ammonia, the ammonia being removed by frequent washings. When dried, this is the vegetable parchment. Its appearance has been already described. Its strength is given from four experiments made by Dr. Hofmann:—

	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
Water-leaf paper broke when loaded with	17	15	15	15·6
Vegetable parchment broke when loaded with	78	75	70	74
Animal parchment broke when loaded with	92	78	56	75

Amongst the many applications of this very remarkable preparation, the following peculiarities will indicate many artistic ones:—

1. Vegetable parchment resists the action of most chemicals beyond that of any other organic body.

2. It is found that vegetable parchment takes writing ink and dyes with great facility.

3. It may be varnished without being previously sized.

4. It may be impregnated with salts, which will not in the least affect its properties, but which will enable it to resist the action of *fungi* and of insects.

In addition to its use for *deeds, policies of insurance,* and similar documents, it is valuable for *working drawings,* as it does not break on folding, and is not injured by wet. *Tracing paper* can be made of it, which is, in every respect, superior to either ordinary tracing paper or cloth. For *binding,* the flexibility and endurance of the vegetable parchment renders it peculiarly applicable; and, as it admits most readily of being coloured and gilt, the highest degree of ornamentation can be given it.

Artificial flowers, made from this material are exceedingly strong, and very perfect in colour. Vegetable parchment may be employed by artists in three ways—for pencil and for pen and ink drawings; for water colours and oil painting; and for the latter purpose it appears to stand alone for unrivalled excellence.

Such is a rapid sketch of an establishment which is, in every way, worthy of commendation. The perfection of every section of the manufactures for which the firm has a world-wide reputation, the excellence of all the arrangements for the comfort and well-being of those employed, and the regularity with which an enormous amount of material is prepared for the home, foreign, and colonial markets, distinguishingly mark the manufactory of Thomas De la Rue & Co., as a fine example of one of our native industries.

ART IN IRELAND AND THE PROVINCES.

Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland.—The first stone of this edifice was laid, in the presence of a large number of the Irish nobility and gentry, by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, on the 29th of January. The circumstances which gave rise to this important proceeding—auguring, as we trust, a bright future for the Fine Arts of Ireland—will be best learned from the following extract of the address read to his Excellency by Mr. G. F. Mulvany, R.H.A., the honorary secretary, on behalf of the governors and guardians of the National Gallery:—"It is an occasion to which, in common with the public at large, the governors and guardians have long looked forward with anxious expectation—they had hoped that ere now they would have reached a far more advanced stage of progress, and even been, perhaps, assembled in the completed building to open and inaugurate it. They have, however, been subjected to the not uncommon mischance of such undertakings, that of too cheaply estimating the probable cost of the work, and have found that the funds by which it was originally contemplated that the building could have been erected fell far short of the necessary amount. Those funds amounted to the sum of £11,000, £6,000 of which was supplied by parliamentary votes in the years 1855 and 1856, and £5,000 contributed by the committee of the subscription collected at the close of the great exhibition, held on this lawn in the year 1853, a subscription designed to commemorate the distinguished public services of William Dargan, Esq., in connection with that exhibition. After a considerable time had been occupied in the consideration of plans and designs for the gallery, it was found that a much larger sum was required, and it became necessary to obtain the sanction of the Lords of the Treasury to an application to parliament for a further grant. Such an application was accordingly made for the additional sum of £12,000. The endeavours of the governors to procure this sanction occupied a much longer time, but at last, in the spring of 1858, the justice of the claim was recognised, and an additional sum of £5,000 has been voted towards this object in the last session of parliament. With funds thus at present augmented, the building trustees have thought they may safely proceed in the erection of the Gallery. The designs and plans of it have been finally arranged, under the sanction of the Board of Trade, and their inspector for Science and Arts, and approved of by the public bodies whose concurrence is required by the act of parliament—namely, the Trustees of Primate Marsh's Library, and the governors and guardians of the National Gallery—they have also been approved by the Committee of the Dargan Subscription Fund, by the Council of the Royal Dublin Society, and on the part of the Right Hon. Sidney Herbert, under whom the lawn is holden. The external elevation of the building will correspond with that of the New Museum of the Royal Dublin Society, recently erected on the south side of the lawn." The address concludes by an invitation from the governors for "public aid to support them in their exertions, fearing that whatever sums they may be able to obtain from the legislature for building purposes and for the maintenance of their establishment, they may be disappointed in any application for aid towards the purchase of collections, and they feel some confidence that the proceedings of this day, assuring to the public, as they do, the erection of a National Gallery of Ireland, will induce the great body of our gentry and people to assist this important object, and to follow the generous example set by those noblemen and gentlemen whose names are already found in our list of subscribers and donors."

Waterford.—The Art-Exhibition held in this city at the close of last year has, in its results, fully answered the expectations of its promoters. An official report of the committee informs us that the number of visitors was 15,638; the receipts amounted to £186 7s. 10d., and the expenditure to £131 7s. 10d., thus leaving a balance of £55 in the hands of the treasurer. Of this sum £40 have been applied to the purposes of the School of Art, in compliance with the rules of the department, and £15 were voted for the purchase of a piece of plate to be presented to George Gibson, Esq., honorary secretary, in recognition of unwearied and gratuitous services in promoting and carrying out the exhibition.

Liverpool.—The Society of Arts has hitherto met with an amount of success that must be gratifying to all who have laboured in its establishment, and in this, its first exhibition. The following list of pictures sold has been forwarded to us:—'Wild Flowers,' J. H. Mole, 15*l.* 15*s.*; 'Wild Heath,' W. S. Rose, 5*l.* 10*s.*; 'Woodland Dell,' W. S. Rose, 5*l.*; 'Ariel' (bas-relief), F. M. Miller, 8*l.*; 'Tomb of Conrad, Strasburg Cathedral,' W. G. Herdman, 5*l.*; 'Evening Hour,' Collingwood Smith, 6*l.* 6*s.*; 'Oberwesell,' Mrs. Oliver, 7*l.* 7*s.*; 'Blairlogie,' James Wood, 5*l.*; 'Linlithgow,' S. Rayner, 20*l.*; 'The Squire's Hall,' J. Stephanoff, 22*l.*; 'Cotter's Saturday Night,' J. Stephanoff, 17*l.*; 'War,' J. Stephanoff, 4*l.* 10*s.*; 'She listens with her Soul,' Stubbs, 12*l.* 12*s.*: 'Tranquil Hour,' Collingwood Smith, 5*l.* 5*s.*; 'Vitre, Brittany,' L. J. Wood, 16*l.* 16*s.*; 'The Confidante,' James Curnock, 45*l.*; 'The Haunt of the Stag,' J. H. Smith, 4*l.* 4*s.*; 'The Frozen Brook,' G. A. Williams, 20*l.*; 'Ludlow Castle,' Niemann, 75*l.*; 'Windsor Castle,' J. J. Hughes, 5*l.*; 'Passing Shower,' Collingwood Smith, 5*l.* 5*s.*; 'Chapel, Haddon,' S. Rayner, 25*l.*; 'Beauchamp Chapel,' S. Rayner, 25*l.*; 'Dinas Mowddy,' George Shalders, 40*l.*; 'Grandad's Return,' Alex. Burr, 100*l.*; 'Night,' S. P. Hall, 36*l.* 15*s.*; 'Morning,' S. P. Hall, 36*l.* 15*s.*; 'Coast Scene,' James Callow, 20*l.*; 'Ayr Fishing Boats,' Henry K. Taylor, 20*l.*; 'Arch of Titus,' William Parrott, 7*l.*; 'The Sognefjord, Norway,' W. Melby, 84*l.*; 'Stonehenge,' J. D. Nalder, 31*l.* 10*s.*; 'Bridge, Dolgelly,' J. R. Cafferata, 5*l.*; 'Tombs of Shiekhs,' Frank Dillon, 80*l.*; 'Sunset,' J. Mogford, 80*l.*; 'Chepstow Castle,' J. Joy, 6*l.* 6*s.*; 'Doune Castle,' C. Pearson, 10*l.*; 'Loch Lomond,' J. Joy, 4*l.* 4*s.*; 'Derby Day,' Alex. Blaikley, 10*l.*; 'Landscape and Cattle,' H. C. Selous, 15*l.*; 'Downs, Sussex,' J. Price, 40*l.*; 'Dell in the Wood,' J. Price, 40*l.*; 'Young Nourmahal,' T. J. Ewbank, 47*l.* 5*s.*; 'A Calm,' Henry Dawson, 21*l.*; 'Llanstephen Castle,' Henry Lamb, 6*l.* 6*s.*; 'Near Brombro',' Benjamin Callow, 10*l.*; 'Cattle,' W. E. Turner, 30*l.*; 'Old Bridge, Stirling,' W. G. Herdman, 20*l.*; 'Nymph and Cupid,' Miss Margaret Tekusch, 29*l.* 8*s.*; 'Game of Chess,' Miss E. Edwards, 15*l.* 15*s.*; 'Pooley Bridge,' E. A. Pettitt, 20*l.*; 'Wreck Ashore,' J. Callow (London), 6*l.* 6*s.*; 'Last Ray of Day,' C. Smith, 9*l.* 10*s.*; 'Hoylake,' James Callow, 7*l.* 7*s.*; 'Brombro',' John Callow, sen., 4*l.*; 'Trefriu,' P. Deakin, 10*l.*; 'Landscape and Cattle,' J. D. Harding, 49*l.* 15*s.*; 'The Brunette,' William Spillman, 3*l.* 3*s.*; 'Study in the Highlands,' A. C. Stannus, 3*l.* 3*s.*; 'The Noon-day Meal,' James Carnock, 35*l.*; 'On the Ouse,' E. Boddington, 20*l.*; 'Waiting for Fish,' E. Powell, 7*l.* 7*s.*; 'Loch Riddan,' G. F. Buchanan, 35*l.*; 'Morning,' R. Benedict, 10*l.*; 'Evening,' R. Benedict, 10*l.*; 'Windy Day,' T. J. Ewbank, 36*l.* 15*s.*; 'Ballachulish,' E. Richardson, 18*l.*; 'Off Portnan,' Edward Hayes, 10*l.* 10*s.*; 'The Release,' William Salter, 52*l.* 10*s.*; 'Slave Merchant,' J. Noble, 12*l.*; 'A Present from the Country,' Emma Corfield, 8*l.* 8*s.*; 'Dead Game,' Miss Huggins, 7*l.* 7*s.*; 'In the Wood,' George Alexander, 8*l.* 8*s.*; 'Henry the Seventh's Chapel,' J. G. Toney, 42*l.*; 'Grumio,' W. F. Callaway, 7*l.*; 'Expectation,' Fanny Geefs, 30*l.*; 'Windsor Forest,' Mrs. Oliver, 7*l.* 7*s.*; 'Coblentz,' Mrs. Oliver, 7*l.* 7*s.*; 'Landscape,' Alfred Clint, 31*l.* 10*s.*; 'Eastham,' Benjamin Callow, 10*l.* 10*s.*; 'Engaged,' Thomas Heaphy, 21*l.*; 'A Study,' E. Hughes, 21*l.*; 'Capture at Lochleven,' A. B. Clay, 84*l.*; 'Bala Lake,' E. Pugh, 6*l.* 6*s.*; 'Richmond Park,' T. S. Soper, 8*l.* 8*s.*; 'Cathedral-yard, Stirling,' W. G. Herdman, 25*l.*; 'October Evening,' T. S. Cooper, A.R.A., 350*l.*; 'Streamlet,' H. F. Witherby, 10*l.*; 'Mussel Gatherers,' J. Michie, 12*l.* 12*s.*; 'Dogs,' T. Earl, 10*l.*; Coast Scene,' G. D. Callow, 12*l.* 12*s.*; 'Highland Produce,' J. A. Houston, 25*l.*; 'Chrysanthemums,' Miss C. James, 10*l.* 10*s.*; 'La Bouquetière du Roi,' a pastel, Madame M. Lagache, 40*l.* &c., &c. The catalogue contains a list of 872 exhibited works of all kinds; and we observe that very few of the larger pictures have found purchasers. Van Schendel, of Brussels, contributes four, to which are respectively attached these prices—360*l.*, 280*l.*, 240*l.*, and one, 'The Birth of Christ,' 1200*l.* Amount of sales, 2383*l.* 6*s.*

Sheffield.—On the 26th of January the council of the Sheffield School of Art gave a pleasant entertainment to the friends of the institution, the arrangements of the evening being made by Mr. Young Mitchell, principal of the school, and his assistants. A very large assembly of the most influential inhabitants met to testify their interest in the progress of the school, and to inspect the collection of works of Art, chiefly lent for the occasion by gentlemen resident in the locality. The walls of the rooms and corridors were hung with many excellent pictures by ancient and modern painters, large photographs, and in glass cases were exhibited collections of Majolica and Palissy ware, new and old; specimens of carved wood, silver-work, enamels, Venetian glass, bookbinding, electrotypes, &c. At the south end of the statue gallery the prize-drawings of the students were seen, and, at the north end, a collection of water-colour drawings, by local artists. Everything appears to have been done that could afford interest to the visitors, who, after partaking of tea and coffee, assembled in the large class room, where Mr. Alderman Dunn took the chair, in the unavoidable absence of Lord Goderich, who had consented to preside. Mr. Dunn addressed the meeting, in a long and able speech—judging from the report of it which we have seen in the local journals—on the nature, progress, and prospects of the school, and then proceeded to deliver the prizes adjudged to the successful competitors. We can find space to enumerate only the principal of these:—the "Norfolk Prize," of 20 guineas, to Charles Green, for the best design for a candelabrum; the "Mayor's Prize," of 10 guineas, to Walter Nicholson—with whom Hugh Stannus was almost *bracketed* as equal—for the best design for a race-cup: the "Parker Scholarship," of £10, for gaining the greatest number of medals in two years, to Read Turner; the "Master Cutlers' Prize," of 5 guineas, to Read Turner for the best design for twelve silver fruit-knives; and the "Montgomery Medal" to Howard M. Ashley, for the best drawing of eight flowers from nature.

Leeds.—The committee of the "Fine Arts Association" recently met to discuss the question as to the best method of decoration to be adopted. Mr. Cope, R.A., and Mr. Armitage, from whom letters were read, suggested that the Victoria Hall and the vestibule should be ornamented with frescoes, the cost of which was estimated at £10,000; but the committee is not at present in a position to incur the responsibility of so large an outlay, and, therefore, recommend that the vestibule should have the first attention, and that a subscription should at once be commenced to raise the sum required for that purpose, about £1500.