

Art.

—Recently a statue of Sir D. Corrigan, Bart., was presented to the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, of which institute Sir Dominick has been president during five years,

—*Public Monuments.*—A vote of £2,800 on account of the Wellington monument is to be proposed to the House of Commons this session. The original estimate for the monument was £14,000; £10,266 had been expended upon it up to the end of 1868, leaving £3,734 to be still voted. A vote will also be proposed of £667 towards the erection of a monument in Westminster Abbey to the memory of Lord Palmerston. The estimate for this monument is £2,000. £1,333 had been expended up to the end of 1868; the present vote, therefore, will complete the estimated amount

—*Monument to Dr. Whewell.*—The Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, have just decided to intrust to Mr. Woolner the execution of a monument to Dr. Whewell, which is to be placed in the ante-chapel of the college.

—A Journal of Finland states that a painting by Rubens, representing a "Descent from the Cross," has just been discovered in the church of Elenas. The inhabitants were not aware that they possessed such a treasure, although the picture had always attracted the attention of connoisseurs. Last summer three artists, named Shestrand, Lowgreen, and Munsthelm, being on a visit to the town, declared positively that the work was a Rubens. An inquiry was then instituted, and showed that the painting had been brought from Germany in 1650 by Count de Loewenhaupt, who presented it to the town. It is said to have been restored by the artist Lindau in 1821.

—The death is announced of Mr. William Essex, enamel painter in ordinary to her Majesty and the late Prince Consort. The deceased was 85 years of age.

—A tomb has just been completed, at Kensalgreen Cemetery, to the memory of Samuel Lover. The tomb is formed of white Carrara marble, and upon the top a shadow-cross has been erected. The following is the inscription on the tomb: "Samuel Lover, Poet, Composer, Novelist, and Painter, born February 24, 1797; died July 6, 1868. 'Thy rod and thy sceptre comforted me.'"

Discoveries and Inventions.

—Mr. G. H. Cordes, of Bremerhaven, has invented a new apparatus for saving the shipwrecked. For the experiments that have as yet been made, a one-pounder has been used, which a single man is able to move and direct when the ground is favourable. The projectile, remarks the *North German Correspondent*, weighs about 20 lbs., and by means of it a line may be thrown a distance of from 1,000 to 1,200 ft. A light four-pounder will cast the line about 2,000 ft., and a six-pounder from 2,500 to 3,000 ft. As at first the velocity is not great, there is but small danger of breaking the line. Two kinds of projectiles are employed; one for stations on the coast, by which a line may be cast to ships in distress, while the other is intended for the vessels themselves. When it strikes it forms an anchor, so that a connection may be established with the land without any assistance from the shore. The whole apparatus is much cheaper than the rockets now in use

—*Interesting Discoveries at Florence.*—A number of coins, 1,419 in all, have been found in the convent of St. Annunziata, at Florence, and have come into the possession of the National Museum; 2 are of gold, 58 of silver, and the remaining 1,359 of copper. The gold pieces bear the likeness of Valentinian II, and Justin III. Of the silver coins, there are 1 of Julius Cæsar, 2 of Pompey, 9 of Marcus Antonius, 2 of Octavian, 1 of Tiberius, 2 of Trajan, and 2 of Antoninus Pius. Several Etruscan, and Volscian pieces are to be found among the copper coins—1 of King Juba, 28 of Caracalla, 11 of Heliogabalus, 33 of Constantine, 1 of Alaric, King of the Goths, and 167 of the Free Cities. Besides these, 162 old medals were found, and a number of small works of art in a glass vessels, vases of various forms, and three lamps.

—*Improved Cabs.*—The Council of the Society of Arts have offered the following medals for improved hackney carriages specially suited for the metropolis:—The Society's Gold medal for the best and most convenient open hackney carriage for two persons; the Society's Silver Medal for the second best ditto; the Society's gold medal for the best and most convenient closed hackney carriage for two persons; the Society's silver Medal for the second best ditto; the Society's Gold Medal for the best and most convenient closed hackney carriage for four persons; the Society's Silver Medal for the second best ditto. Lightness of construction, combined with adequate strength and durability, will be especially considered in making the awards.

—During an excavation made in Pompeii a short time ago, the objects turned up were, a human skeleton, almost perfect, a pair of gold ear-rings

with pearls, a gold bracelet and five gold coins, 782 silver coins, three silver rings, and sixty-seven pieces of bronze money. The coins were all of the Consular and Imperial periods. The jewelry and coins will be placed almost immediately in the Naples Museum, and the skeleton in the Pompeii Museum, together with the human remains previously discovered.

—*Coal in Notts.*—The discovery had recently been made, the *Sheffield Independent* says, that immense quantities of coal exist throughout the whole of the district lying in the neighbourhood of Nottingham, and important mining operations are accordingly now in progress. There is said to be sufficient coal under Wilford estate to make Mr. Markham-Clifton, the new proprietor, the richest man in the North Midland counties. It is also anticipated that the Nottingham Corporation will find coal under their land, and it is suggested that they should open collieries.

—*Curious Geological Formations.*—It is stated by one of our foreign exchanges, that near the city of Medina, in Italy, and about four miles around it, wherever the earth is dug, when the workmen arrive at a distance of sixty-three feet they come to a bed of chalk, which they bore with an auger five feet deep. They then withdraw from the pit before the auger is removed, and upon its extraction the water bursts up though the aperture with a great violence, and quickly fills the newly-made well, which continues full, and is affected by neither rain nor drought. But what is most remarkable in this operation is the layers of earth as we descend. At the depth of fourteen feet are found the ruins of an ancient city, paved streets, houses, doors, and different pieces of mason-work. Under this is found a soft, oozy earth, made up of vegetables, and, at twenty-six feet, large trees entire, such as walnut-trees, with the walnut still stuck to the stem and the leaves and branches in a perfect state of preservation. At twenty-eight feet deep a soft chalk is found, mixed with a vast quantity of shells, and the bed is eleven feet thick. Under this vegetables are found again.

Botany.

—*A Wonderful Flower.*—"Come with me, sir; come! A flower very large and beautiful, wonderful!" exclaimed a Malay, who drew the attention of Dr. Arnold to a flower remarkable alike for its enormous size and its anomalous structure and habit. And the surprise of the Malay was nothing compared with that of Dr. Arnold and his companions, Sir Stamford and Lady Raffles, when, following their native attendant, they saw among the bushes of a jungle a flower apparently springing out of the ground, without stem or leaf, and measuring at least a yard in diameter. The first news of this remarkable discovery created a great amount of curiosity in Europe, and no papers ever read at the Linnean Society can be compared, for the interest they excited, with those in which the illustrious Robert Brown described this wonder of the vegetable world. The most striking feature in the *Rafflesia* is its enormous size; indeed it is the largest and most magnificent flower in the world. It is composed of five roundish leaves or petals, each a foot across, of a brick-red colour, but covered with numerous irregular yellowish-white swellings. The petals surround a large cup nearly a foot wide, the margin of which bears the stamens; and this cup is filled with a fleshy disc, the upper surface of which is everywhere covered with curved projections, like miniature cows' horns. The cup when freed from its contents, would hold about twelve pints of water. The flower weighs fifteen pounds. It is very thick the petals being from one to three-quarters of an inch in thickness. A flower of such dimensions and weight might be expected to be a treasure to the perfumer; but, alas, its odour is exactly that of tainted beef! Dr. Arnold supposed that even the flies which swarmed over the flower when he discovered it were deceived by its smell, and were depositing their eggs in its thick disc, taking it for a piece of carrion! Another cause of wonder to the little band of explorers who discovered it was that they could find no leaves connected with it. It sprang from a small, leafless, creeping stem, about as thick as two fingers. Now, a plant without leaves is like an animal without a stomach; for the leaves are to the plant what the stomach is to the animal; they separate from the air the food needed for the growth of the plant. There are, however, strange plants which are actually leafless, making up for this want by using the leaves of others. Such plants are called parasites, because they feed on the nutritive juices of others. Thrusting their roots into the living tissues of other plants instead of into the earth, they appropriate the prepared food of these plants, and at once apply it for their own purposes for the production of stem, flower, or fruit. The gigantic *Rafflesia* belongs to this class. Without a vestige of foliage, it rises at once from the long, slender stems of one of the wild vines of Sumatra—immense climbers, which are attached like cables to the largest trees of the forest. The buds push through the bark-like little buttons, continuing to grow until they have the aspect of large closed cabbages, and in about three months after their first appearance the flower expands. It remains but a short time in perfection, soon beginning to rot, leaving only the central disc, which becomes a large, rough fruit, filled with multitudes of small, simple seeds.—*World of Wonders.*