

LORD LEIGHTON.



WHOEVER has seen the majestic frescoes in the South Kensington Museum representing the Arts of Peace and War, must have been profoundly impressed with the genius of the great British artist, Lord Leighton. These are thus described by our accomplished Canadian artist-critic, E. Wyly Grier, R.C.A.

The first of these designs represents a quay or wharf in a sea-port of ancient Greece, in the background of which, in a semi-circular colonnade, a group of languid beauties is seen, gossiping or braiding their hair. In the immediate foreground (if water may be so described) is a boat laden with fruit and merchandise. On the quay are vendors of fruit, pottery, etc. The whole composition is treated with a view to beautiful arrangement of line, mass and colour without regard to realistic or antiquarian accuracy. This is the keynote of Leighton's success. With a knowledge of the manners and customs of the people of Greece presumably as complete as that of any other painter of his intellectual scope, he never allowed that knowledge to pedantically obtrude itself; his pictures have, therefore, the high æsthetic value of genuine artistic creations in which considerations of historical accuracy have played only a minor part.

In the second panel, or lunette, representing the Art of War, the president struck a more forcibly dramatic note than in the first. The costumes would represent, probably the mediæval period of the world's

history, when the flame of war was quickly spread, and when every man carried his life in his hands. In the busy preparations which are being made by the young warriors in this picture to meet successfully the invasion of the enemy, Leighton has seen his opportunity for a motley picturesqueness which he never reached before nor since. In the busy movement and bustle of the scene, one almost hears the clanging of the armourer's hammer as he rivets on the coat of steel; and, on the left, in the shadow of a palace wall, a group of matrons are stitching and patching the doublets and hose of the departing lords.

A brief sketch of this distinguished artist, more honoured by his nation than any other, together with presentation of some of his more notable works, will be of interest to our readers. We abridge this in part from an article in the *American Methodist Magazine* and from other sources:

When, in the month of January, 1896, the tidings of Lord Leighton's death were announced to the world, a general feeling of the deepest regret was manifested. Unlike the artist-poet, Alfred Tennyson, he hardly lived to enjoy his peerage, so nobly won. Indeed, the new-year list of honours, which included him among the peers of the British realm, was published in the very month of his demise.

Since the days of Sir Joshua Reynolds, the friend of Samuel Johnson and John Wesley, whose "Discourses on Painting" still remains a classic, the national interest in the subject has deepened and enlarged. In many respects Ruskin's theories of art stand in contradistinction to the somewhat formal utterances of the great and good Reynolds. The latter theories in-