

haud his master's letter which he has just read. No. 9 represents the dedication. Before a cromlech, or stone altar, whereon is a bullock as a sacrifice, stands Solomon with his hands outstretched heavenwards. Although there is here only one figure, and therefore the picture lacks the usual aids to effect, the artist has concentrated all his skill, and with success, in making that figure truly noble and king-like. Solomon is in an attitude of intense earnestness, his whole frame thrilling with emotion in the excitement of the supreme moment which witnessed the fulfilment of his dearest hopes. He seems to stand out in relief from the canvas, his finely moulded Hebrew features instinct with the fervor, the enthusiasm, the joy of his heart. His invocation is so sublime, it will not be amiss to repeat some of it here:—"And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands, saying, 'O Lord God, there is no God like unto Thee, in heaven above or in the earth beneath, who keepest covenant and showest mercy unto Thy servants who walk before Thee with all their heart. Let Thy word be verified which Thou hast spoken unto David my father. Let all the people of the earth know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else. Let all the people of the earth know thy name and fear Thee. Let all the people of the earth know that I have built this house and consecrated it to Thy name. But will God indeed dwell upon the earth? Behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee. How much less this house which I have built? Yet have respect unto my prayer and unto my supplication, and hearken unto my cry. May Thine eyes be open toward this house by day and by night, even toward the place of which Thou hast said, 'My name shall be there.' And when Thy servant and Thy people Israel shall pray toward this house, hearken to their supplication. Hear Thou them in heaven, Thy dwelling-place, and when Thou hearest forgive. And the Lord answered and said, I have hallowed the house which thou hast built, and put my name there for ever, and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually." And all the people answered and said, 'The Lord is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever.'" In the concluding picture of the series is a view of the builders at work. A scaffolding is raised round one of the pillars. The central figure is an overseer, who is directing three men on the left, engaged in slipping a stone which is attached to a rope. On the right are two sub-officers watching the movement, or waiting to speak to the overseer. One of them holds a plan and the other a calipers. Of the pillar little beyond the base can be seen. It seems to rise from a cluster of lotus leaves, and is embellished with carved lily work. The forgoing description conveys little beyond a sketch of these high class works of art. On their archaeology alone an interesting treatise might be written, not to speak of an elaborate criticism of their artistic merits. As to the propriety of their arrangement, placing the most important and those with most figures in the centre for prominence, or, on the other hand, chronologically arranging them according to the order of events, however opinions may differ, their excellence both in conception and execution disarms criticism. It is hoped that the present achievement will lead to the revival of mural decorations in high art, examples of which are few in this country. The greatest painters that ever lived—Raphael, Michael Angelo, Titian, and many others of the ancient masters—have decorated the walls of churches and palaces with their best efforts while in modern times Maclise has adorned the halls of Westminster with noble frescoes which none can see without admiring his genius. Mr. Gibson's penitence effort already proves him an expert. By studying the great works of the great men of yore who were adepts in Christian art and its symbolic exposition, he, too, may win a