

## FINE ARTS.

**WORKS IN PROGRESS.**—The art of line engraving is almost abandoned by British engravers. At the present moment there are only four works of high character and importance in progress "in the line manner;" two are after paintings by Edwin Landseer; one "The Highland Drovers;" the other "The Highland Still;" a third "The Interview between Napoleon and the Pope;" the fourth is Eastlake's picture of "Pilgrims arriving in sight of Rome." We except those of the Scottish Societies, and those that will appear in Messrs. Finden's Gallery of British Art. Our more eminent line engravers have been forced to adopt mezzotinto. For some years, Mr. Cousins has been almost alone in this branch of the profession. He has been gathering an abundant harvest, while men of equal, or perhaps, greater ability, have been almost without employment. The fact is seriously to be deplored. No one questions the vast superiority of line over mezzotinto, yet we have the humbling proof that the publishers hardly dare venture upon undertaking a plate in the higher style of art,—there being but little hope that the large expense they necessarily incur will be met by corresponding public support. The consequence naturally follows: our best engravers are now employed upon works in mezzotinto. Publishers will, of course, employ their capital only upon works that afford a reasonable prospect of remuneration; the higher walks of art, will, consequently, be soon deserted, unless some new plan be started to rescue us from a degraded position.

**THE EXAMINATION OF SHAKSPEARE.**—A more admirable or more interesting work than this "Examination of Shakspeare," has rarely been submitted to the notice of the reviewer. It tells a striking story; the immortal poet stands before his accusers—the evidence of his guilt is on the floor of the old hall; he bows meekly but firmly to the great man who would have been forgotten but for the notoriety acquired by the after vengeance of his prisoner's pen. Beside the poet is his hound, looking, like his master, somewhat proudly, yet with due consciousness of the perilous position in which both are placed. The angry game keeper states his proofs—his witnesses, the falconer with his staff, and the man at arms with his partisan, are by: and at the entrance is the young wife of the youthful culprit, leading by the hand the poet's child. The secretary sits at a table in the centre, the "book" open before him. Sir Thomas Lucy, in whose view slaying a deer was a far heavier atrocity than killing a man, listens to the accusation; while behind his chair a page and two fair women look on with sympathy, in which the wrathful knight has no share.

Martin has received a commission from his Grace the Duke of Sutherland, to paint a large picture of "The Assuaging of the waters after the Deluge." The subject is admirably calculated to display the peculiar powers of the accomplished artist. Since his gorgeous work of "Nineveh," Mr. Martin has produced nothing worthy of his genius.

Mr. David Roberts' portfolio of "Sketches in Egypt, Syria," &c. Of their exceeding beauty, interest and value, there can be no doubt. The estimable and excellent artist was precisely the person best suited to convey to us accurate notions of the grandeur and peculiar character of the Holy Land. In the Literary Gazette there is a brief notice of the rich store which Mr. Roberts has gathered.—"Not to mention the glorious antiquities of Egypt, her no less glorious river, and her splendid mosques, we may tell of pictures of the Holy Land, of the wild and picturesque Mount Sinai, of Horeb, of Jerusalem, of many spots to which the Christian and Jewish world turn with the deepest affection and veneration; and when we add to these the majestic ruins of Baalbec, the Desert, the vast Christian convent with its small train of monks, the daring Arab the caravan, the caravanserai, we have merely hinted at the noble series of subjects never before so beautifully and accurately represented by the skill of the pencil." A curious prohibition was annexed to the leave most liberally granted to Mr. Roberts by Mehemet Ali, to enter all the mosques, and make drawings of their interiors. He was accompanied by a janissary (being also himself in the Arab dress), and forbidden to use bristles of the unclean beasts. They must be of camel's hair.

**THE COVENANTS.**—We have had "The Covenanters' Baptism," "The Covenanters Preaching," and "The Covenanters fighting at Drumclog." The print in progress is intended to class with them; and, skipping over a century, exhibits to us an assemblage of the descendants of the great men who fought for freedom and achieved it. The picture represents the interior of a village school-room; a congregation of red-headed rogues display their knowledge before their parents, and the venerable pastor and his lady—those being ever watchers, and these patient judges of the progressive improvement of the pupils which the schoolmaster desires to exhibit. In the centre stands the Dominie; ranged on a table are four children, answering all questions put to them; to the right is a band of playful and mischievous urchins, some having passed the ordeal, others waiting anxiously for the trial. On the left sits the pastor and his dame, while the village elders throng around their chairs. The picture is a very crowded one, but it is arranged with exceeding skill.

## THE PARTHENON.

By the Author of Letters from the Old World.

Notwithstanding all I have heard and read of the immaculate purity of conception, and the almost celestial harmony of propor-

tions exhibited in Minerva's shrine, I came here a sceptic; but the moment I found myself within the sphere of its influence, I became a convert. There is one sure test of perfection in all that pertains to beauty and harmony of proportions, in dimensions and ornaments, which the eye soon acquires by attentive observation.

How often you must have perceived, when dwelling on an object of art, say a statue or a picture of the great masters, which contained some striking fault in mould or drawing, that the eye would first rest upon the blemish, and that all the beauties in the work had not sufficient power to prevent it from constantly reverting to the fault with pain. But when no fault exists, all the emotions produced by the contemplation of the beautiful object harmoniously accord, and not a single intruding regret ruffles the tranquil but joyous current of the feelings.

View that paragon of perfection, the Parthenon, in any and every way, the eye glides over its immense surface without being arrested by one salient line or angle, or obtrusive beauty claiming attention beyond the rest, all is modest grace, severe perfection, and studied harmony.

Such were the strength and solidity of this temple, that, had Time been its only enemy in this fair clime where the sun is

"One unclouded blaze of living light,"

so far from now seeing its lines broken, its angles destroyed, and its ornaments defaced or pillaged, we should behold its foundations, its superstructure and adornments defying the toothless rage of the general destroyer, and promising to run the course of future ages, until it and Time should be together engulfed in eternity.

"These Cærops placed; this Pericles adorn'd,  
That Hadrian reared when drooping science mourned."

But, by the accidents of war and invasion the fane was rent asunder, and most of its colonnade overturned. "Alaric and Elgin did the rest."

The Goth sacked and pillaged her interior treasures, and the Briton despoiled her of her outward ornaments.

Besides all the beauties of the Parthenon, which have so often been told, and those which remain yet unsung, there is that about it which attests how greatly superior in mechanical talents were its builders over all those who had preceded, as well as all who have followed them. Its gigantic masses of white Pentelican marble are laid up without cement or any other substance between the stones; yet such is the precision with which they are cut, that the point of a penknife cannot be inserted in their almost imperceptible joints. On examining the blocks of some of the overturned pillars, I found that the joining surfaces of all of them were polished as highly as the external portions, in order to produce a more perfect junction.

Every part and detail of the structure, that which was never intended to meet the eye when in its place, as well as the most exposed, is finished with a justness, precision, and lavish exercise of skill and labour, only equalled in perfection by the mysterious members of the time, detecting chronometer.

## NEW YEAR'S NIGHT.

**THE NEW-YEAR'S NIGHT OF AN UNHAPPY MAN.**—An old man stood on New-Year's Night, at the window, and with alarm and despair on his countenance, looked by turns up to the immovable, eternal, blue heaven, and down upon the quiet earth, of all whose inhabitants none were then so joyless and so helpless as he. For his grave lay before him, not adorned with youth's sweet verdure, but covered over with the cheerless snows of age, and he had brought with him from the beautiful, rich life, naught but error, sin, disease, a wasted body, a desolated mind, a breast full of poison, and an old age of repentance. The pleasant days of his youth passed like spectres before him, and carried him back to that bright, sunshiny morning when his father bade him good speed upon the road of life—which, on the right, through the foot-path of virtue, brings the assiduous traveller into a wide and peaceful country, teeming with golden harvests, and forever lighted by a noon-day sun; but, on the left, with the mole-worm's pace of vice, drags him imperceptibly, but surely, down to a dark, dreary cave, filled with noisome sultry vapours, darting snakes and ever dropping poisons.

Alas! the snakes hissed in his ears, and drew tight their slimy folds about his breast, the poison-drops fell thick upon his blistering tongue, and he knew well where he was.

Wild with fright and unspeakable grief, he cried to Heaven, 'Give me my youth once more. O, father! place me but once again at the beginning of life's road, that I may choose more wisely.' But his father and his youth were long since and forever gone.

He saw the will-o'-wisp dance fitfully along the marshes, and disappear over the burying ground, and said, bitterly, 'They are my foolish days.' He looked upward, and saw a bright star quit the clear wintry sky and fall, lighting up, for a moment, all around it, until it melted away over the earth. 'Such an I,' said his bleeding heart, and the serpent teeth of repentance dug deeper into its wounded core.

His fevered fancy people the adjacent roofs with night walkers creeping and tottering on the eaves—the wind-mill raised menacingly its arms upon the contrite one, and as he looked into the dead house at the skeleton of one who had been there left to moulder the grinning skull resumed gradually its features. Suddenly, in the midst of his frantic struggle, with the horrors which thickened thus upon him, sweet music, like a far-off church-hymn, fell upon

his ear. It proceeded from a neighbouring tower, and was the song of happy ones rejoicing for the New-Year. He became more gently agitated. He looked around the horizon, and down upon the wide earth. He thought of the friends of his youth, who, now happier and better than he, instructors of the world, fathers of good children, blessed men were, and he said sorrowfully, 'I could, also, like you, this birthnight of the year pass in peaceful slumbering, and with tearful eyes if I had so willed it. O! how happy could I have been, my beloved parents, if I your New Year's wishes had accomplished, by heeding the wise counsels by which they were ever accompanied!

These recollections of his youthful days fevered his imagination, and it appeared to him that the skeleton now clothed with his own features raised itself slowly up in the dead house, and finally with the aid of that superstition which on New-Year's night, peoples the world with spirits and discloses to its votaries the hidden future, became a living youth, fair favoured and infinitely graceful as he was himself when life was yet in the bud, and ere the canker worm of vice had robbed the blossom of its fragrance and destroyed the timely fruit.

He could see it no more—he closed his eyes, and thousands of hot tears fell hissing upon the snow. Comfortless, he insensibly murmured, in a voice broken by low, deep groans, 'Come again, sweet days of youthfulness, come again.'

And they did come again; for it was but a frightful dream which had visited him on New Year's night, and he was still a youth. But his errors were not a dream, and he thanked God that he was still young, and could turn back from the impure current of vice, and seek out and follow the foot-path of virtue, which leads to the land of purity and peace.

Turn back with him, young man, if thou like him standest in error's way.—Translated from the German of Jean Paul.

## SCRAPS.

**FACTS ON LONDON.**—London is one of the largest and richest cities in the world, occupying a surface of 32 square miles, thickly planted with houses, mostly three, four and five stories high; it contained in 1831 a population of 1,471,941. It consists of London city, Westminster city, Finchbury, Marylebone, Tower Hamlets, Southwark, and Lambeth districts. In the year before last there entered the port of London 3786 British ships, 1280 foreign ships; 2639 were registered as belonging to it, with 32,786 seamen. The London Docks cover 20 acres. The two West India Docks cover 51 acres; St. Katharine's Dock covers 24 acres. There are generally about 5000 vessels and 3000 boats in the river, employing 8000 watermen, and 4000 laborers.

**"THOU GOD SEEST ME."**—As the chaplain in the Wethersfield State Prison, says the New Haven Record, was passing the cell of a culprit, who was reading his bible, he was accosted thus; "If I had only known these words before I had committed crime, I would not have been for twenty-eight years a tenant of the State's prison." "What words," said the chaplain. "Why these in Gen. xvi. 13; the words of Hagar, 'Thou God seest me.' And he was not the only prisoner who made similar statements to the chaplain. A number told him that they found it impossible to perpetrate the crime for which they were sent there until they had brushed the thought of the omniscient and omnipresent God from their minds.

**TOPICS FOR THOUGHT.**—Give no quarter unto those vices which are of thine inward family, and having a root in thy temper plead a right and propriety in thee. Examine well thy complexional inclinations. Raise early batteries against those strongholds built upon the rock of nature, and make this a great part of the militia of thy life. The politick nature of vice must be opposed by policy, and therefore wiser honesties project and plot against sin; wherein, notwithstanding, we are not to rest in generals, or the trite stratagems of art. That may succeed with one temper which prove unsuccessful with another. There is no community or commonwealth of virtues, every man must study his own economy and erect these rules unto the figure of himself.—Sir Thomas Brown.

**ELECTION TACTICS.**—The late Charles Mathews had a good electioneering story. At an election, in a certain corporate town, there were two rival candidates, one of whom we shall venture to call Mr. Humdrum. A stranger, who was anxious to witness the progress of the contest, introduced himself into the committee-room of Mr. Humdrum's antagonist, and had not been there long before a printer's boy came with a roll of hand-bills, wet from the press, bearing the following inscription in large and legible characters:—"No Humdrum—No Bullock's Liver." At the head of the table sat a respectable tradesman, (the chairman of the committee and alderman of the borough,) to whom the stranger addressed himself for explanation. 'Pray sir,' said he, 'what is the meaning of this—what connexion is there between Mr. Humdrum and bullock's liver?' 'Why, really,' replied the chairman, with undisturbed gravity, 'I can't pretend to say; but we've had them bills printed because they'll make him very unpopular.'

**ORIGIN OF THE WORD "FARM."**—In the Saxon's time the estate which the Lords of Manors granted to the freemen were but for years, with a tender or a rent, which in those days were of corn or of victuals, and thence the leases so made were called farms or farmes, which word signifieth victuals;—but subsequent times