

The Dublin Great Industrial Exhibition.

The Inauguration of Ireland's first Great Exhibition of the productions of her own and other nations, took place at the appointed time,—and passed off with brilliant success. The weather was most propitious, and the assemblage brilliant. The central hall—upwards of 400 feet long, as we have said—was left clear for the company, which filled from end to end. There must have been at least 15,000 people present; including the Lord Lieutenant, the representatives of the Church, the Bench, the Bar, the University, the Army, and the Corporations and Guilds of Ireland,—besides a large number of visitors from England, Scotland, and other countries. The hall was hung with upwards of 150 heraldic banners:—which added much to the picturesque appearance of the whole.

The music was in itself a great triumph. It was of a high character and performed with marvellous accuracy; and the effect of the 800 performers, vocal and instrumental, aided by the great organ, was sufficiently powerful to fill the building, without being marred by that superabundance of noise which often spoils the effect of the finest compositions and execution.

The exhibition itself, it must be confessed, was somewhat hidden by the ceremony which was to usher it to the world—the means overlaid the end. The object of the exhibition is, the practical and useful:—that of the inauguration was, the introduction to high society, with a view to give it that stamp which recommends both men and things so forcibly to the public. It is to be hoped that some day the Useful and Beautiful may walk hand in hand, independently, through the world,—that an order of merit will rank side by side with orders of nobility:—but those who have the management of Industrial Exhibitions or of any other great public displays must take the world as they find it at present, and use the means which are common to all.

The main body of the Exhibition was far from complete on the opening day,—but the managers had wisely prepared a great treat for their visitors in the Picture Gallery. The collection is perhaps the finest that has ever been seen of the works of modern and especially of living artists. The room is 325 feet long by 40 broad, and already contains nearly 600 pictures. Many more have yet to be hung; and an additional gallery, about a quarter the size of the present, is in preparation for the remainder. The Belgian and English schools are most fully represented; next to these, the German; then, the Dutch; and lastly the French. The foreign collections were made by Mr. Roney, the Secretary, with the assistance of the Emperor of the French, the King of Prussia, and Dr. Waagen, the King of the Belgians, and the Dutch Government. The English pictures have been contributed by private individuals,—including Her Majesty and Prince Albert; and several of the finest productions of the English school have thus been brought before the public for the first time for many years, amongst which may be mentioned Hogarth's 'Gates of Calais' and 'Last Stake'—Landseer's 'Bolton Abbey'—Wilkie's 'Rent Day'—Borlase's 'Woodman'—Dauby's 'Deluge'—Mulready's 'Wolf and Lamb'—Etty's 'Rape of Proserpine.' A late number of water colour drawings and prints are placed on screens in this gallery,—and the centre is occupied by sculpture. The most remarkable of this last, perhaps, is the 'Boy and Dolphin' attributed to Raffaele. The sculptors of Ireland make an excellent show. This division of the Exhibition must alone draw a very large number of visitors, for such a collection of works of Art is not likely soon again to be brought together.

One end of the Fine-Art Gallery is devoted to mediæval exhibition; which is in process of being arranged by Mr. Hardman of Birmingham, and will include painted glass, iron, brass, and silver work, ecclesiastical fittings and vestments, wood carving, orna-

mented tiles, &c. The ceiling is covered with ecclesiastical emblems. The department is considerably larger than that in Hyde Park, and will be much more complete in design and arrangement. The contents of this department, whatever may be its faults and peculiarities, may teach the people of Ireland an important lesson upon Ornamental Art. The value of the articles is very considerable; but that value resides not in the costliness of the materials, but in the artistic labour which has been expended on them. The Irish have a fertile fancy and great aptitude; and this portion of the Exhibition may dispose them to produce articles of ornament, as the Art workmen of the middle ages did, by the application of taste and skill to materials of comparatively little worth,—and to avoid imitating our heavy, costly, and often inelegant, pieces of plate.

A glass case in the Picture Gallery contains a collection of memorials of Edmund Kean:—including a sword and box presented to the Tragedian by Lord Byron, and another sword given to him by the people of Edinburgh, with the play-bills of his first and last performance in London,—the characters and dates being, Shylock in 1814, and Othello in 1833. In addition to these, there are, a dagger which belonged to Henry the Eighth and the hat of Cardinal Wolsey, from the Strawberry Hill collection.

There will be a fine collection of East Indian and Chinese articles—contributed by Her Majesty, the East India Company, the United States Service Museum, the Royal Asiatic Society, the Society of Arts, and several private individuals. The standards taken in China and the guns captured at Sabraon and Goojerat by Lord Gough, attract much attention.

The most important sections of the collection to Ireland, however, are those which are self-derived, and which represent her natural resources or the industry of her people. One of these is, a collection of Irish Marble—not merely cabinet specimens, but good practical examples—exhibited by the Royal Dublin Society, in whose grounds the Exhibition building, as our readers will remember, stands. The Exhibition, in fact, although entirely independent of the Society, has taken the place of the triennial exhibition which that body had held regularly since 1821. Its last exhibition, that of 1850, was indeed thrown open to all the world; but no trouble was taken to obtain contributions from abroad; and the space would not have permitted many foreign articles to have been introduced. On the 24th of June last, Mr. Dargan made the liberal offer to put down £20,000 for a grand Exhibition on condition that the Society would permit the building to be erected on their lawn. This was readily agreed to. Mr. Dargan's expenditure has grown to nearly £100,000; and the building has increased in the same ratio, until it has covered not only the lawn and gardens, but also the court in front of the Society's house, which it completely surrounds. The Marbles exhibited by the Royal Society form part of a much larger collection which it is now making, and for which a new museum is to be erected. For this purpose the Society have set aside upwards of £2,000,—subscriptions have been made to the extent of £800,—and Government has promised a grant of £5,000. The object in view is very important to Ireland. At present, for want of the necessary stimulus, the working and conveyance of the native marbles are both costly,—but there is no intrinsic cause why they should remain so. The Society intend to furnish their entrance hall with architectural fittings worked in Irish marbles. A door-case in fine red marble, two large tables in green Connemara, and a fount in black marble, are included in the collection now shown. There can be no doubt of the value of such efforts as these. The native marbles of Ireland are very beautiful,—some of them quite unique; and if the Exhibition draws attention to them, and leads to improvements and greater