

ENGLISH ARTISTS AND THE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION. — "English artists," observes the London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, "will entertain a high notion of American taste when they learn that the three representatives of this country, to whom medals have been awarded at the Philadelphia Exhibition, are Mr. Fildes, for his picture of The Casual Ward; to Mr. Hall for his *Batting*; and to Mr. Jopling (save the mark) for his—it does not matter what; at the same time neither Mr. Millais nor Mr. Leighton is to receive the decoration conferred by the Commissioners. By the way, it seems that the English Commission has not been a happy family, and that from the very first there were jealousies and bickerings, which ended at last in a general disruption. Had there been a medal allotted for amenity and tact, there is little doubt that, following the precedent which apparently ruled the selection of artists to be decorated, it would have been by unanimous consent awarded to Professor Archer, who is now returning home somewhat sooner than the duration of the Exhibition led one to imagine. His return, however, has been the signal for certain members of the Commission, who had come to Europe for change of air and scene, to go back again to Philadelphia, and to take charge of the various sections of goods and works of art, which were originally confided to their supervision. Altogether the history of our official connexions with the American Centennial has been a scandal, and the occasion of a renewal of a number of those jobs of which at one time it was hoped that South Kensington preserved the secret and the monopoly."

THE great success, says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which has so far attended the trial at Spezzia of the 100-ton gun constructed by Sir William Armstrong's firm for the Italian Government, necessarily calls attention to the two ironclad vessels which have been built by the same Government to carry these monster cannon. One of these, the *Duilio*, is already afloat, and her sister ship, the *Dandolo*, will, it is said, be launched in July next. They are both enormous turret-ships of about the same size as the *Inflexible*, having a displacement of upwards of 11,000 tons each, and they carry armour 22 in. thick on a teak backing. It is doubtful, however, whether they will attain an equal rate of speed with the English vessel; and although they are to be armed with Sir William Armstrong's 100-ton gun, as against the 80-ton variety of the Woolwich Infant to be provided for the *Inflexible*, neither is reckoned by foreign naval critics as being so powerful as our latest ironclad. There is, we believe, no insuperable difficulty either in the way of mounting the turrets of the *Inflexible* with 100-ton guns, should that weapon prove—as now seems possible—greatly more efficient than the 80-ton gun upon which our official artillerymen have hitherto prided themselves. In addition, it is satisfactory to know that not only have these great guns been constructed, but also that the thick armour-plates are being rolled by a private firm in this country. We have thus at hand the means of speedily remedying any inferiority that we may temporarily show at any point. Still, it is well to bear in mind that within two years from the present time the Italians will have ready for sea a pair of first-rate turret ironclads, carrying the heaviest guns afloat, which might well turn the scale in a decisive naval engagement in the Mediterranean. Our interests at stake are of such magnitude that we cannot, as a mere question of marine insurance, afford to run the risk of defeat at sea by any possible hostile combination. Nearly every foreign Power thinks it is, or ought to be, the heir to our large carrying trade; and a blow to our naval supremacy, by whomsoever struck, could scarcely fail to be universally popular. It does not follow, of course, that because Italian politicians have of late been credited with very dangerous designs, they would attempt in earnest to carry them into effect; but the cost of the *Duilio* and *Dandolo* is out of all proportion to the revenue of the Kingdom of Italy, and she has certainly no commercial marine requiring such vessels for its defence. By the year 1878, the day may have passed for these unwieldy and expensive ships—the Germans have already retired from the ruinous competition in large ironclads—and we may find it more effective, more convenient, and cheaper to crowd the narrow seas with rams, swift torpedo craft, and heavily armed gunboats, than to continue to pile together guns, armour-plates, and endless machinery on these floating batteries. But, however this may be, the most satisfactory consideration is that some of the most powerful vessels in their day that have ever borne the English flag were built by foreign Powers.

COMMON ERRORS IN REGARD TO DIET—BEEF-TEA.

Florence Nightingale says, on this subject, that one of the most common errors among women in charge of the sick, respecting sick diet, is the belief that beef-tea is the most *nutritive* of all articles. "Now, just try," she says, "and boil down a pound of beef into beef-tea, evaporate the water, and see what is left of your beef. You will find that there is barely a tea-spoonful of solid nourishment to half a pint of water in beef-tea." There is, nevertheless, a certain nutritive value in it, as there is in tea; we do not know what. It may safely be given in almost any inflammatory disease, but it should never be alone depended upon, especially where much nourishment is needed.

EGGS OR STEAK.

Again, it is an ever-ready saying "that an egg is equivalent to a pound of meat," whereas it is not so at all. Much trouble has occurred from this mistaken notion. It is a question whether, weight for weight, eggs are *equal* to beefsteak. Also, it is seldom noticed with how many patients, particularly of nervous or bilious temperament, eggs disagree. Most puddings made with eggs are distasteful to them in consequence. An egg, whipped up with wine, is often the only form in which they can take this kind of nourishment.

MEAT WITHOUT VEGETABLES.

Again, if the patient is able to eat meat, it is supposed that to give him meat is the only thing needful for his recovery; whereas, scorbutic (scurvy) sores have been actually known to appear among sick persons living in the midst of plenty, which could be traced to no other source than this—namely, that the nurse, depending on meat *alone*, had allowed the patient to be without vegetables for a considerable time, these latter being so badly cooked that he always left them untouched. To all intents and purposes, he really had no fresh vegetables at all.

MILK, BUTTER, CREAM, ETC.

Milk, and the preparation from milk, are most important articles of food for the sick. Butter is the lightest kind of animal fat, and though it wants the sugar and some of the other elements which exist in milk, yet it is most valuable both in itself as fat, and in enabling the patient to eat more bread.

ALBUMEN.

The reason of it is just this: Animals require in their food an albuminous constituent, a starchy one, and another of fat. The first, or albuminous (the purest form of which is the white of an egg), enters largely into the formation of the human body, the muscles being chiefly composed of it.

SUGAR.

The second, or starchy component, does not enter into the structure of the body as such, but is converted into sugar during digestion, and has much to do with the formation of the tissues and heat.

OILS.

The oily parts enter largely into the composition of the brain, nerves, and, in fact, all other portions of the body, and, when broken up and consumed, supply a good portion of the fuel for heat of the body.

COMMON SALT, PHOSPHATES, ETC.

Besides these three mentioned, which are most conspicuous, there are other substances, as common salt, phosphates, iron, etc. These are supplied through food, but our space will not permit more than a mere reference. All food *must* contain these substances in proportionate quantities. If it does not, the appetite craves the one wanted, and if not properly supplied, the part of the body suffers into which the wanting component enters.

BUTTER WANTED WITH BREAD.

To feel assured of this, if the reader thinks a moment, he will remember that no one likes bread alone, but wants some butter with it, which supplies the oily part, and the appetite craves, too, a piece of meat, cheese, or an egg—the albuminous part. We want butter with our rice or potatoes, because rice or potato is almost pure starch, and wanting in fatty matter; so nature says we must *add* the wanting parts.