

length Sir Joshua said : "It is time for us to be going." "Just wait a moment," replied the young man, "till they get him down." So enchanted was he by the representation, that he seemed to forget that he was not looking at a real transaction.

Here also may be seen Rubens'

#### ELEVATION TO THE CROSS,

a companion picture to the one above alluded to. Though somewhat inferior to that, it is yet a magnificent work; it seems instinct with life. The master's thorough acquaintance with the anatomy of the human frame is strikingly shown in the figures of Christ and his executioners. The horses are noble and life-like, and a dog has been introduced to give greater diversity to the scene. On the right wing is a group of women and children, with horror depicted in their countenances, behind them the Virgin and St. John; on the left, mounted officers, behind whom are the thieves, who are being nailed to the crosses by the executioners.

#### THE ASSUMPTION,

another of Rubens' pictures, and fairly ranking with those just described, also adorns the interior of this great edifice. The Virgin is beheld among the clouds, surrounded by a heavenly choir, below whom are the Apostles and numerous other figures. In this picture Rubens has been pleased to represent the Virgin by the portrait of his own wife—a practice quite common with him in his paintings. "Fat Mrs. Rubens," irreverently observes an old author, "is planted as firmly and comfortably among the clouds, as if in an easy chair, gazing with phlegmatic composure on the wondrous scene which she witnesses in her aerial flight, and betraying not the faintest symptom of ecstasy or emotion."

Quite a number of other celebrated pictures of Rubens' may be seen in the Antwerp Museum, which is the finest picture-gallery in Belgium, containing 600 pictures, most of them collected from the suppressed monasteries and churches of Antwerp. Here, for example, is Rubens'

#### CRUCIFIXION.

This picture is remarkable for its dramatic effect, and is by no means deficient in sentiment. Longinus, the Roman officer, mounted on a grey horse, is piercing the side of the Saviour with a lance. The penitent thief, a grey-haired man, is invoking the Saviour for the last time. To the left in the foreground stands the Virgin mother, whom Mary the wife of Cleophas in vain endeavors to console. Farther back, St. John leans against the cross of the impetuous thief, weeping. Mary Magdalene, on her knee at the foot of the cross, implores Longinus to spare the sacred body of her Master.

By many persons this picture is considered to be Rubens' *chef d'œuvre*, and deserves the minutest inspection. It is marked by none of the inaccurate drawing which mar some of his other works, and the composition and coloring are almost inimitable. The writhing agony of the impenitent malefactor, whose legs a soldier has just broken, is depicted with startling fidelity, while the expression of the other is composed, although worn by suffering. The face of the Magdalene is remarkably beautiful, expressive of horror and supplication, without being distorted. The whole composition is a striking example of that marvellous boldness of imagination in which Rubens is unrivalled. Here also is Rubens'

#### ADORATION OF THE MAGI,

which contains about twenty figures over life-size, besides camels and horses in the suite of the Three Kings.

Also his

#### DOUBTING THOMAS,

with the two accompanying portraits of

#### BURGOMASTER ROCKCOX AND HIS WIFE.

This last picture was greatly admired by the learned and accomplished B. B. Edwards of Andover, who saw it thirty years ago, and thus wrote concerning it : "I would give the whole of Texas, Oregon, and California, for one portrait by Rubens in the Museum at Antwerp,—that of the burgomaster, Nicholas Rockcox."