

The Sheffield Daily Telegraph.

No. 11,454. Established June 8, 1855.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1892.

Price 1d.—If delivered, 1d. per week.

SPRING EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS.

The exhibition of pictures at Messrs Marshall and Sons' Gallery, which opens on Monday next, is of exceptionally wide and varied character. An unusually large number of eminent artists of the British School are adequately represented, the collection being more judiciously, both in quality and quantity, than any hitherto brought together in one gallery in the town. Several painters are seen in all their versatility of talent, such as E. Heath, one of the most many-sided of modern artists, whose powers are brilliantly displayed in a remarkable group of works covering the different classes of subjects in which he excels. E. M. Wimperis, R.I., is also fully represented in his delightful transcripts of typical English scenery; John Barr, in his humorous treatment of domestic and rustic life; W. J. Stayer in characteristic renderings of landscapes under morning and evening aspects; George Shalders, with his deep realisation of the poetry of Welsh mountains and water; T. Cresswell, R.A., D. Roberts, R.A., H. Moore, A.R.A., F. F. Poole, R.A., Colin Hunter, A.R.A., James Webb, Lambert J. Pott, J. W. Oakes, A.R.A., E. W. Lander, A.R.A., E. Croft, A.R.A., T. Collier, R.I., J. F. Herring, E. Dennis, J. C. Horsley, R.A., J. Orrock, R.I., Keady Halvewell, E. Niles, T. B. Hardy, W. H. Pigott, E. Macaulay, James Poole, and many others. The works of Wimperis fully maintain the high reputation of previous exhibitions. In "An Old Lock on the Ouse" (11), Wimperis, with his accustomed power and breadth, conveys the impression that he is developing more and more the Constable character we have formerly noted in his works. Only the hand of time is needed here to mature what nothing except age can impart. "A Backwater on the Ouse" (12) and "A Ford on the Brook, Radlow" (13) are also fine examples, displaying broad and powerful treatment of the landscapes to which he is partial. "Edinburgh Castle" (14), by D. Roberts, R.A., is one of a kind which is rarely seen in exhibitions. The scene is from the Grassmarket, the famous place in the old town of "Edina, Scotland's darling seat," where so many of her noblest sons died the martyr's death. The grey old castle, which dominates the fair city from every point of view, looms overhead, the stern rocks on which it is perched being in striking contrast to the struggling buildings below, where a few figures give life to the scene. The subject is rendered with power and dignity worthy of so great an artist. "The Inn Crafters" (15) is sure to attract general interest. Colin Hunter, A.R.A., has not, so far as we remember, been represented in any former Sheffield exhibition, and this example will excite varied opinions. Those who are unfamiliar with that kindly life which was the home of St. Columba, and the wonderful colours of sea, sky, and coast, will be disposed to doubt the fidelity of the general effect depicted. Here are skillfully presented the bright, gleaming, sandy shores which are characteristic of the west coast, and particularly of the islets set in the western waves; the sea, which reflects so faithfully the greenish blue so peculiar to this part, is singularly translucent, and mirrors the many tints and changes wrought by wind and cloud, and numerous as the rainbow, only in tones of green and blue. These marvellous effects, which are the delight of artists who are drawn to Inna and the West more every year, are largely attributable to the whiteness of the sands and the clearness of the water in which, at the depth of 60 fathoms, objects can be seen "as in a looking glass." A graceful girl in the foreground is a perfect example of technique in figure painting, and lends welcome life to the view of the lone land so famous in Scottish story. The exhibition is remarkably strong, as we have indicated, in works by E. Heath. Prominent amongst these is "Returning from Border Foray" (16), which is one of the happiest and most characteristic of this artist's productions. A band of men trooping, returning in the early morning light, have had a most successful raid; in the foreground are the mottled and weathered cattle, head down, as evidenced by their ears, which also betray fear of the spear with which the raiders are accelerating their pace; the ruse-guards of the raiders can be seen looking anxiously behind, scanning the horizon to see whether they are being pursued. The picture is a vigorous presentation of "the good old times" which are so much better to read about than to live in—the days when the good wife of the Border (Scotland) would indicate by empty dishes at dinner that the ladie was empty, and it was time her husband was over the Border for English beer. Altogether a striking and powerful work, which would be a perpetual source of attraction in our Mappin Gallery. "Returning Home from the War" (17) illustrates a scene from Burger's "Lancers," the scene being transplanted to Old London, through the laurel-arched streets of which the victorious mail-clad warriors march to the fanfare of trumpets and beating of drums. A picture vivid with movement and instinct with vigour. Almost as good as anything of his in the exhibition is "Coming over the Downs" (18). The rain-laden clouds are driven aloft by the sky by the wind, which troubles the mounted owner in the rear of his cattle and sheep, the driver behind urging up the baggage; a wisp full of feeling and verve, and thoroughly hearty in execution and execution. "Winter in Norway" (19) is an exceedingly forcible snow scene. A farmer leads his horse, struggling through the drifts; on his back is his wife, sheltering herself as best she can from the pitiless storm, which pelts the poor horse, to whose sides are strapped sheaves of straw. "Qui va là?" (20) a cavalier on outpost duty; horse and man stand against the sky. "Waiting for the Dutch, Beverwijck" (21); "Carling Sand, Norway" (22); "Off Portsmouth" (23); are also noteworthy for their own excellence and as proofs of the varied powers of the same artist. A charming example of Lander, "Stream, Deyl, North Wales" (24), small as it is takes the eye at once. In the foreground the lake with motionless waters mirrors the pines of the mountains, behind which in level lines of crimson, like straight bars of fire drawn from horizon to horizon, the sun is setting in glowing splendour. Lander's pictures are, as a rule, masses of red, heaped up in the sky; Lander's are in horizontal lines across the sky. They are both free to nature—the first is as seen from the peaceful pastoral landscape; the other is from the hills and mountains, and more frequently seen in the summer north, through forest of great pines, than in the softer Southern lands. Near at hand is "Looking over Castle Mouth of Dart," a good example of a great artist (J. W. Oakes, A.R.A.). In "The Ford, Bolton" (25) and "View in Wales" (26) we have two Cresswells, the latter being a work of remarkable quality, although small. The peculiar and delightful humour of John Barr has never been more characteristically displayed than in the jolly interior, "Domestic Troubles" (27). A boy, in the pursuit of knowledge, has been descending the hollows to discover where the wind comes from; the issue is he has found the hollows; the grandfather, with puckered brow, is making shrewd efforts to read the wind-mill, while old granny does her best to show the boy with her mouth; a child watches with intense anxiety grandfather's exertions in the repairing line; tall and stout, with black red in hand and ironing feet, stands the mother looking disapproving at the boy who has done the mischief, and who, for reasons of safety, has run to the door, where he is nursing an which has apparently hit the business end of that hind-end; the lad, winching with pain, evidently fears he has not hit the last of that red, and the mother looks as if she would not disappoint his apprehensions. The picture is bristling with interest. Other good examples of Barr are "The Young Strangers" (28) and "The Bird Trap" (29). Two little gems in rustic figures are Nos. 30 and 31 by F. F. Poole, R.A.; and two views in Wales (32 and 33) by George Shalders, form a beautiful pair, delightful in treatment of mountains, water, and cattle, with a fine poetic feeling throughout. A work which will well repay careful inspection is a small drawing (34) "At Walsbyrick," by T. Collier, R.I. Keady Halvewell is represented by a Mediterranean scene, "Near Antioch" (35), sky, water, and coast bathed in sunlight, a delightfully bright little "bit." In a large figure subject, "A Fair Flower" (36) R. J. Gordon presents a face full of feeling and expression; the pose is graceful, and the accessories of the picture are treated conscientiously, although, of course, they are subordinated to the centre of attraction—the beautiful maiden in amber, whose thoughtful countenance is partly turned to the spectator as she arranges roses in a vase of medieval design. We had that we have left ourselves no space to mention the fine collection of water-colours by W. H. Pigott, T. B. Hardy, and others. "Bathonsay Valley" (37) is a grand picture, and worthy of a place of honour in the gallery of any gentleman who delights in that beautiful coast of the Darwent bounded by that distant hills above Harrogate. The purchaser of T. B. Hardy's fine drawing of "Beaumont" (38) shown by Messrs Marshall last year, should see "Dove" (39) in this exhibition. It would make for an admirable companion. But we must return to the same work in another article.