

CORK SCHOOL OF ART.

THE presentation of prizes to the successful students of the Cork School of Art took place at the close of the past month in the theatre of the Royal Cork Institution.

THE MAYOR presided.

After the formal opening of the proceedings, the head master (Mr. James Brennan) read the report for past year, as follows :—

REPORT.

I have the honour to submit the report of the school for the year ending June 30, 1876. I am happy to state that the past year has been one of great success, not alone from the continued good attendance of students at the school, but from the character of the prizes gained; and this is mainly owing, I believe, to an increasing aptitude for doing good and careful work, which is developing itself year by year, and may, I trust, yet become a characteristic feature of this school. The number of students on the roll during the year was 217—116 of these attended the day classes, and 101 the evening classes. The number who presented themselves for examination in the second grade freehand, geometry, perspective, and model drawing, was 61, and of these 26 were successful. The number of drawings sent to South Kensington for examination was 467. In the national competition we obtained a national silver medal and two Queen's prizes of books. As the silver medal in the stage for which it was awarded (viz., flower painting from nature) is the highest prize given, I think we may reasonably congratulate ourselves, particularly as the competition includes all the schools of art in the United Kingdom. The Department of Science and Art also awarded 17 third grade prizes of books for works sent up; one student was awarded a free studentship, and one, having completed all the subjects of the second grade, receives the full certificate. By a minute of the Council on Education issued about five years ago, schools of art established prior to 1869 were allowed to teach the first three subjects of the science division, viz.—plane and solid geometry, machine construction and drawing, and building construction. We at once availed of the permission, and although at first the number of students attending for these subjects was very small, and indeed still continues comparatively so (considering the population of the city, and the advantage a knowledge of these subjects confers in some branches of technical education), yet the success has been great. Almost every year since the formation of these classes I have had to report that *all* the students presenting themselves for, examination were successful, and this year I am happy to repeat it. Five students obtained Queen's prizes: in plane and solid geometry, 3; in machine drawing, 8; and in building construction 9 were successful. Mr. Mathew Mullins has again obtained the highest prize awarded by the Society of Arts for the technology of carriage building, viz., second honours and £10; the competition being open to students from any part of the United Kingdom. The amount of steady perseverance exhibited by this student is deserving of special remark. He has gone on steadily, passing each examination from the second elementary stage upwards, until but one more remains, that for first honours. I trust we may be able to congratulate him on its attainment next year. The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Cork, Sir George Penrose, following the example of his predecessors, kindly offered prizes to be competed for. The competition in some of the stages has been exceedingly keen. These prizes are productive of great benefits to the school, causing a sustained interest on the part of the students. Fifty-four works were sent to London, where the awards were made by an examiner of the Science and Art Department. The lending library attached to the school has been largely availed of; over 500 volumes were taken during the year. The President of the Queen's College has kindly announced his intention of making the Botanic Garden attached to the college available to the students of this school, and that during the summer months cuttings of the plants will be sent to the school for the purposes of study, thus supplying a want that has long been felt. The conversazione of the Literary and Scientific Society, lately held at the Assembly Rooms, has to my mind proved that many of the citizens of Cork are in possession of really good pictures. A great benefit would be conferred on the school, in the absence of a local public gallery of pictures, by an occasional loan for a short period of paintings suitable for the purposes of study. I need scarcely say we would take the greatest possible care of any entrusted to us. In conclusion, I trust that the movement now on foot to provide better accommodation for the School of Art may be a successful one. No one except those thoroughly acquainted with the work can appreciate the disadvantages under which we labour. The students must be prepared to expect the standard of merit fixed by the Department to rise steadily year by year. The Department declares this in its last report; works that were considered worthy of reward twenty years ago would now be passed by; everything

shows that the art knowledge of the country has considerably increased; and surely it is not too much to expect that when every town of any consequence in the kingdom is spending large sums in providing Proper homes for science and art, Cork, with such an inherent love for art, will not allow its art students to be behindhand in the race for want of proper accommodation.

The report was adopted unanimously. The Mayor then distributed the prizes, of which we print a list, with names of pupils:—

PRIZE LIST.

Elizabeth M. S. Crawford: national silver medal prize for still life painting and Mayor's prize (1st) for flowers painted from nature. Albina Mahony: national book prize for apples painted from nature in water-color, and Department prize for group painted from nature, Mayor's prize (1st) for same. Mary Coghlan: Department prize for ornament shaded from its cast in chalk; and Mayor's prize (1st) for do. M. Louisa Dixon: Department prize for apple blossom, painted from nature. Ellen Exam: Department prize for antique figure painted from the cast in monochrome. Mary Exham: Department prize for antique figure shaded, from the cast, and Mayor's prize (1st) for same subject. Mary Gool: Department prize for Ornament shaded from the flat, and Mayor's prize (1st) for same subject. Kate Graves: Department prize for group painted in oil from nature; Mayor's prize (2nd) for same subject, and prize for excellent in model drawing. Lizzie Perry: Department prize for group painted in oil from nature, and prize for excellent in freehand, pass in geometry and model. Ellie Ransome: Department prize for ornament shaded from the cast, and Mayor's prize (2nd) for do.; pass in model. Susanna Schultz: Department prize for ornament shaded from the flat. Jane Seymour: Department prize for ornament shaded from the cast; Mayor's prize (1st) for do. Lizzie Walker: Department prize for flowers painted from nature. Elizabeth Woodroffe: Mayor's prize (2nd) for studies of fruit, &c., from nature. Mary Taylor: Mayor's prize (1st) for ornament shaded from the flat. Edith Graves: Mayor's prize (2nd) for ornament shaded from the flat. Sarah A. Addey: Excellent in model drawing. Helen Booth: Second grade certificate for freehand perspective geometry, and model drawing. Annie Dunscombe: Excellent in freehand. Henry Jones: National book prize for antique figure, painted from the cast: Mayor's prize (1st) for do. Richard H. Holland: Department prize for reduced copy of frieze from the Parthenon, modelled from the antique. B. T. Leader: Department prize for group, painted in oil from nature. Micah J. O'Connell: Department prize for monochrome from the cast, in oil; Mayor's prize (2nd) for do. Richard H. H. Willis: Department prize for figure shaded from the cast, and Queen's prize, first advanced, for building construction. Ebenezer E. Julian: Second grade prize for excellent in freehand, and Mayor's prize (2nd) for ornament outlined from the flat. Wm. J. Hornibrook: Mayor's prize (1st) for ornament shaded from the cast; pass in freehand and model. James O' Sullivan: Mayor's prize (1st) for figure outlined from the flat. Cornelius Lynch: Mayor's prize (2nd) for do. John Meade: Mayor's prize (2nd) for architectural drawing. Charles Elwood: Mayor's prize (1st) for machine construction and drawing; certificate for do., second class advanced. Daniel J. O' Mahony: Mayor's prize (2nd) for do., science certificate for same, 2nd class elementary. Mathew Mullins: Second honours, certificate of the Society of Arts, and £10 for technology of carriage building, and Queen's prize for first class advanced plain and solid geometry. Robert Fleming: Queen's prize, first-class advanced for machine drawing. Eugene Crean: Queen's prize, first-class elementary for building construction. William O'Connell: Queen's prize, first-class elementary for building construction. Michael O'Meara: Mayor's prize (2nd) for ornament shaded from the flat. CERTIFICATES (ART DIVISION).—Isabel Hughes, freehand drawing; Peter J. Keelan, geometry and model; Flora Lane, freehand and model; James Leahy, freehand and model; Percy Lewis, freehand; also Esta O'Callaghan, John A. O'Connell, Michael O'Meara, George Perrott, James A. Perrott, Louis Roche, Minnie Runciman, Charlotte Stopford, A. C. Swan, Jennie Hackett, (model), Alice Harding, Mary M'lvors, Helen O'Mullane.

CERTIFICATES (SCIENCE Division).—Practical, Plane, and Solid Geometry.—James Leahy, 2nd class elementary; Michl. Donovan, do.

MACHINE CONSTRUCTION AND DRAWING—Charles Elwood, 2nd class, advanced; Daniel J. O'Mahony, do., elementary; William McBride, do.; Charles Warrenner, do.; George Perrott, do.; Henry E. Brown, 2nd class elementary; John E. Hill.

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION.—M. J. O'Meara, 2nd class, advanced; James Leahy, 2nd class, advanced; Thomas Callanan, 2nd class, elementary; John Watson, do.; Michael D. O'Meara, do.; Alert W. Barnard, do.

Professor Armstrong read an address to the students of the school, in the course of which he remarked that it appeared to him that the cultivation of the art of painting was in these islands attended with peculiar difficulties, and he doubted whether it was an art for which their inhabitants had exhibited any strong instinctive predilection. Some of these difficulties were, the absence of artistic traditions, the gloom and damp of climate, and the want of such models of antiquity as those which were so familiar to the races of southern lands; but some of these unfavourable conditions were being rapidly neutralised. He congratulated them on their success during the past year, and wished them a life as artists of lofty enterprise and adequate achievements.

Mr. Denny Lane said he disagreed with Prof. Armstrong when he put such a low estimate on the performance of Irishmen in art, and he also, disagreed with him as to the causes he had given. Prof. Armstrong alleged that under this dull and humid climate we could never come to see these glorious forms and scenes which built up the imagination of the ancient sculptors and painters of Italy. If that were the producing cause of the great artistic collections in former days, why did it not remain so now? Why was it that in every exhibition in recent years Italy, except in sculpture, was in the background? He remembered in the great International Exhibition of 1862, where works of art from all parts of the world were exhibited, the first of all artists was Galtès, a Belgian out of the fogs and swamps of Belgium. Where were the Italians? They were in painting (to use a sporting expression) "nowhere," and even in sculpture they were excelled. Now, in speaking of Irish artists, he would not speak of Maclise or Hogan, but he would mention two others; these were Foley and McDowell. He would ask anyone that had studied sculpture, Where had there been in ancient or modern times such works as the "Youth at the Fountain," and others, the productions of Foley? Let them look at the Albert Memorial! And sculptors of the world were sought after for the purpose of this work, and two Irishmen were selected from amongst the entire group. Were they to be told then that they exaggerated their artists? He agreed with Prof. Armstrong it was a foolish thing to think too much of them, but it was disheartening to the young student to be discouraging his works. There was, in his opinion, very great capability in this country in an artistic point of view, and if that capability got a fair chance it could be developed to an important degree in European art. Mr. Lane went on to say that on one occasion he visited the Royal Academy. There were three remarkable works there, and one of the three was a picture called "The Widower." That was taken from the commonest of subjects and yet was he to be told there was not as great pathos in that as in any of the works of Sophocles? Men had assured him they could not stand by that picture without shedding a tear. He was not one of those that believed in the great tragic works of the Greek heroes. He saw tragedies around him every day. He believed the real mission of the artist was not to go into the gallery exclusively and study what muscles Angelo drew, or what smiling faces Correggio painted—he was to go into the great gallery of nature. He (Mr. Lane) had seen more variations of the sky in Killarney in a single day, notwithstanding the humidity of the climate, than he had in Italy for a week.

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