

## ART IN CORK.

ON the evening of the 21st ult. the Round Room of the Theatre, Cork, was the scene of a brilliant gathering to witness the interesting ceremony of distributing the prizes won by the pupils of the School of Art in the past year. The Mayor (Alderman GALVIN) presided. In commencing the evening's proceedings, his Worship said :—

It affords me much pleasure to be here tonight for a second time in my official capacity at the annual distribution of prizes to the students of the Cork School of Art. I am doubly pleased at being able to congratulate the students on the progress they have made during the past year, which I may safely say is mainly owing to the ability and good management of your respected Master, Mr. Brenan. Though he has given a considerable portion of his time to our Exhibition, yet we can all perceive by the beautiful works of art executed by his students, and which are exhibited here to-night, that his zeal for the success of this school has been untiring. I perceive by the programme that a report will now be read for you on the working of the school for the past year, and as this report is rather a comprehensive one, I shall not occupy your time any further just now, so that we may as quickly as possible arrive at the not least interesting portion of our programme, the distribution of the prizes. I will now call upon the Head Master (Mr. J. B. Brenan, R.H.A.), to read his report.

## REPORT.

The total number of individual students attending the School was 248, being a decrease of 21 on preceding year. This decrease is observable in the morning class (winter session) only. The total for the morning classes were 139, and for the evening classes 113. 41 students were successful in passing the second grade Art examinations in freehand drawing, geometry, perspective, and model drawing; 11 obtained the mark "excellent," and 13 second grade prizes were awarded. One student obtained the mark "good" at the examination in advanced perspective. 613 works were sent to South Kensington for examination; 8 third grade prizes were awarded; and one National prize for painting a head from life. The total number of Art prizes was 22, being 3 in excess of those obtained last year. A free studentship was awarded to Achilles Bradish. The total number of students attending the science classes taught in the School of Art was 20. In the examinations, 4 students were successful in plane and solid geometry, obtaining two Queen's prizes. Two were successful in "machine drawing," obtaining two Queen's prizes. Six were successful in "building construction," obtaining four Queen's prizes. The total number of science prizes was eight, being two in excess of those obtained last year. Robert Scott, Esq., J.P., kindly offered two silver medals—one for the best head painted from life, the other for the best head from life shaded in chalk. 86 works were submitted for competition. The medal for the painted head was gained by Richard Baker, and that for the shaded head by Henry J. Scully. 95 works were sent in, in competition for the Mayor's prizes—45 from the morning class, and 50 from the evening class. The examiners reported very favourably on the general character of the works submitted. The committee was given permission to institute a class for the study of the principles and practice of design. I have been greatly pleased with the interest taken by the students in this class and as its advantages become more widely known, I trust it may prove to be an important feature in the school; of course, its benefit will be best experienced by those who have acquired a considerable power of drawing the human figure and freehand drawing. The Exhibition just closed was not without its influence on the school. The students were enabled to see pictures in the Loan Collection, of a class which has not, for many years at least, been seen in Cork; and through the kindness of the Department of Science and Art and the Executive Committee of the Exhibition, the National Competition drawings were for the first time exhibited in Cork. The value of this exhibition to the Art students was incalculable. They were brought face to face with the best works executed in the various Art Schools throughout the kingdom. It is hoped that we may inaugurate the opening of the New School of Art next year with a similar exhibition. We have now on loan a collection of 32 works from South Kensington, which represent the best works for some years (there are six or seven gold medal works amongst them).

Although many persons might question the wisdom of hanging such works along with the ordinary year's work of this school, yet I believe the result to the students will in every respect be most beneficial. The impetus given to the consideration of technical education by the late Exhibition will, I hope, not be without benefit to the School of Art. The lectures delivered by Mr. Alan S. Cole, on "Lace Manufacture," have directed attention to this subject. The Lords of the Committee of Council have authorised Mr. Cole and myself to visit the schools where lace-making is carried on, and endeavour to point out the advantages to be derived from improving the designs for lace crochet work. It shall be my endeavour to place the Art students who may desire to become lace designers in connection with these Schools, so that one step at least may be taken which shall bring our Art students into direct communication with manufacture. It is admitted that both Art and Science are at the foundation of any scheme of technical instruction. The great want is, in my opinion, to connect on the one hand the Art and Science student with manufacture; on the other, the artisan with both Art and Science; and until the manufacturers recognise the value of instruction in both, and directly encourage their workmen to avail of such, I do not see any great chance of improvement. The Messrs. Doulton, of Lambeth (whose splendid exhibit of pottery work you may remember to have seen in the Exhibition), require their young work people to attend the Lambeth School of Art, and each one who passes an examination in the second grade Art subjects, has his or her wages raised a shilling a-week. See what an incentive this is to progress, and doubtless the Messrs. Doulton reap the benefit of their liberality. The School of Art provides instruction in all the branches of Art necessary to the artisan, also in descriptive geometry, machine drawing, and building construction. If the manufacturers could be induced to reward those who, instead of spending their evenings in the public-house or promenading the streets, preferred to learn what would make them better workmen, a great point would be gained. However, whether we shall have a technical school or not, I would earnestly impress on our Art students the necessity of learning drawing and painting thoroughly; I take these terms in their widest sense. If the mind has been properly educated through the eye, and filled with ideas; if the hand has acquired the power to execute these ideas and give them shape, the technical knowledge necessary for any branch of design will soon be acquired. After many years of anxious waiting, a beginning (thanks to the liberality of William H. Crawford, Esq.) has at length been made in the erection of a new School of Art. The building will, in addition to the school, include a public statue gallery for the citizens of Cork, where they will have an opportunity each day and evening of studying works of Art. When the whole school is completed, Cork will be in possession of schools of Art and Science, and statue and picture galleries, of which, I think, the citizens may well be proud. It will remain for the people, for whose use and instruction they will have been provided, to take advantage of them. Those who do so will, I trust, find their lives, and their homes happier; and for those who provided the means, there will remain the proud consciousness that they have under Providence done their duty and benefited their fellow-men.

The prize list ~his year is a long one, and as our limited space prevents us from giving it in full, we content ourselves with mentioning the names of a few of the prize-takers:—

*Building Construction and Geometry.*— Achilles Bradish, Queen's prize, and pass in geometry. Richard H. Good, second Mayor's prize for architectural design, and Queen's prizes for descriptive geometry and building construction. Chas. W. Gray, first Mayor's prize for architectural design, and Queen's prizes for descriptive geometry, with certificate in building construction. John Muir, Queen's prize for machine construction and drawing. Daniel J. Synan, three second grade prizes for excellence in geometry, perspective, and model, with Queen's prize in building construction. C. Lynch, Queen's prize in building construction. Miss A. M. Barry, second grade prize in geometry. Miss M. Hyland, pass in geometry. D. Callanan and P. J. Murphy, second grade prizes in geometry. E. M'Dermott, third Mayor's prize in geometry. John Thomas, Queen's prize in machine construction.

Mr. Scott moved the adoption of the report. For many years that task had devolved upon him, so that he was afraid much that he would say would be a reiteration of what he had said on former years. The business they were engaged in was a most important one, and one that in the present day was enlisting the earnest attention of the people of the United Kingdom. Continental nations, and even America, new as her existence had been, had far outstripped Ireland and England and Scotland in Art-work. He was very glad to find the report dealt so extensively with the important subject of technical education. The result of our negligence in this country in that respect had been that continental countries had gone beyond the United Kingdom in arts and sciences, and consequently in improved manufactures. The Lord Mayor of London had distinctly stated a short time ago, when presiding at a meeting somewhat similar to this, that unless the people turned their attention to this great subject we would lose in the race for eminence in manufactures, and our artisans and people would suffer in consequence. In London they had expended £75,000 in erecting buildings at South Kensington for the promotion of art and science, and they intended expending £20,000 more to provide accommodation for no less than six thousand students, who will be able to pursue their studies there in the branches to which their attention would be directed. The importance of Art in connection with the manufacture of furniture was patent at the present day, and especially in Cork, where the trade had with the past few years been revived by some of our enterprising city merchants. He trusted the school would retain the high place it had hitherto occupied, and that its students would continue to make their mark in the work as many past students had already done.

The Rev. Mr. Delacour, in seconding the adoption of the report, said he thought everyone present endorsed what had been said with regard to the fact that the efficiency of that school was owing to the gentleman who presided over it, and they must also not forget their indefatigable secretary. Mr. Scott had mentioned that the United Kingdom was not in advance of other places, but he would remind them that in ages past the city of Cork had never been behind. He hoped the Cork School of Art would go forward under the presidency of Mr. Brenan. Perseverance was the most necessary thing for young students, who must not be disappointed or discouraged at failure. They should remember that though time was short, art was long, and they should go on—

"Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labour, and to wait."

[Taken from *Irish Builder*, Vol. XXVI, 1884, p.13]