

clothed in a garb of mediæval quaintness, and personal beauty is sometimes necessarily disregarded.

SIR JOSEPH NOEL PATON has taken a high position in the Scottish school, of which, generally, we can scarcely write in terms too commendatory. He was born at Dunfermline, on the 13th December, 1821. Although his Art-education was, so to speak, of the most desultory kind, the circumstances of his childhood and early youth tended in no ordinary way to the development of his artistic perceptions. His father—a Fellow of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries, and well known in connection with the damask manufactures of Dunfermline, and as a collector of Scottish antiquities—surrounded his children, from their earliest years, with old books, old prints, old pictures, casts from the antique, and whatever objects could stimulate the imagination and expand the mind. The locality in which the family resided, Woovers' Alley—a small but secluded and singularly picturesque spot, one of the bends of the glen wherein stand the venerable ruins of the Abbey and Royal Palace of Dunfermline, with its burn, rocks, trees, and laurel thickets—was calculated to encourage romantic habits of thought, and to foster a passion for the minuter beauties of inanimate nature, which, it is evident, has to a considerable extent tinged all his productions. Another circumstance may be alluded to as aiding in the developing a constitutional tendency to the more romantic phases of Art. Through his mother, a lady of great nobility and unselfishness of character, who, like most Highlanders of her time, whether male or female, was deeply versed in traditional lore, Sir Noel could claim close kinship with the chiefs of one of the most ancient and chivalrous clans of the North, whose deeds of daring in the Jacobite ranks supplied the earliest subjects for his childish pencil, and a knowledge of whose position as the representatives of the ancient Celtic Earls of Atholl—and, through them, of the family which occupied the throne of Scotland from the eleventh to the fourteenth century, and from whom, through Robert the Bruce, the Stuart race was descended—could scarcely fail to exercise an influence on the character, habits of thought, and feeling of a youth so constituted, and surrounded by everything calculated to foster such tendencies.

We have in these preliminary remarks somewhat of a key to the after career of this painter. In 1843 Noel Paton came to London and studied for a short time in the schools of the Royal Academy, receiving from

Mr. George Jones, R.A., then Keeper, much kindness and courtesy. His artistic teachings began and terminated with the instruction given by Mr. Jones. Before the period just alluded to he had, however, exhibited some proofs of early talent in illustrations, supplied gratuitously, for the *Renfrewshire Annual* for the years 1841-2. On his return to Scotland he painted and sent to the Royal Scottish Academy, "Ruth gleaning," his first exhibited painting; this was in 1844, when he also produced a series of designs, in outline, illustrating respectively Shelley's "Prometheus bound," and *The Tempest*; these were etched and published through the liberality of Mr. Lewis Pocock, F.S.A. The year 1845 was marked by the cartoon exhibition in Westminster Hall. Young as the artist of whom we are writing then was, he boldly entered into competition with many of the most eminent painters of the day, and not without justification, for the Royal Commissioners awarded to him one of the three prizes of two hundred pounds for his cartoon of "The Spirit of Religion," a work which showed a mind richly endowed with poetic imagination, and, at the same time, evinced an amount of technical attainment which called forth the favourable notice of some of the most distinguished artists of the time. In this year he also executed a series of etchings, illustrating the late James Wilson's poem, "Silent Love," and about this time he made several admirable drawings for Mr. S. C. Hall's "Book of British Ballads."

Passing over two charming illustrations of fairy-land—a world with which Sir N. Paton has frequently made us acquainted—"The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania," exhibited at the Scottish Academy in 1846, and "Puck and Fairy," in the same gallery the following year, we again arrive at Westminster Hall, where, also in 1847, another competitive display was opened to the public, that of oil-paintings. To this he contributed two works, "The Reconciliation of Oberon and Titania," and "Christ bearing the Cross." For these joint productions, so dissimilar in character, yet each with merits peculiar to itself, he received one of the three prizes of three hundred pounds. The former of the two pictures was purchased in the most liberal spirit by the Royal Scottish Academy, and is now in their gallery. In this year he was elected Associate of that institution. To its annual exhibitions he sent, in 1850, the year in which he was enrolled Member of the Scottish Academy, "The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania;" in 1851, "Thomas the Rhymer and the Queen of Fairie" (engraved), and "Nimrod the Mighty Hunter;" in

1852, "Dante meditating the Episode of Francesca da Rimini," "The Eve of St. Agnes;" "Flight of the Lovers," and a beautiful specimen of sculpture, a basso-relievo representing "Christ blessing Little Children." The "Oberon and Titania" picture just mentioned is a different work from that of 1846, and was bought for the Scottish National Gallery by the Royal Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in Scotland.

In 1855 he contributed the grand composition of "The Pursuit of Pleasure," now well known from the large engraving of it. Critics—who are not always reliable judges—are sometimes found to express very contrary opinions of the same work; and this picture was not exempt from such fiery ordeal. But, estimated by results, it found special favour with the public; for Mr. Hill, the eminent print-publisher of Edinburgh, bought it for one thousand pounds, had it engraved, and cleared a very considerable sum by the prints, which were largely subscribed for; having previously disposed of it for two thousand guineas to Mr. Graham Briggs, of Barbadoes.

Hitherto, with the exception of the works sent to Westminster Hall, Sir Noel Paton had not exhibited in London; but in 1856 he commenced contributing to our Royal Academy, thus affording the English public the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the productions of an artist of whom they knew little, save by reputation. The first of these, "Home," was designated by Mr. Ruskin "a most pathetic and precious picture." "The Bluidy Triste," and "In Memoriam," exhibited in 1858, found less favour with this fastidious critic, but mainly on the ground of the gloominess of the subjects; and it may be noticed that unless the artist invades fairyland, the themes of his pictures are more frequently sad than cheerful; even his "Hesperus" (1860), two lovers seated at eventide on a mossy bank, and "Dawn—Luther at Erfurt," have each a tinge of melancholy too obvious to be overlooked; while his "Mors Janua Vitæ" (1866), though designed to convey the most cheering doctrines of the Christian faith, is not altogether free from this tinge of sadness.

We are reluctantly compelled to pass over many works we should gladly speak of, in order to say a few words on those that form the subjects of our illustrations. Tennyson's noble poem supplied the subject of the first picture, "Morte d'Arthur," engraved here. It is a grand theme, treated with a feeling akin to that of the poet's conception, and with great artistic power.

The second of these, "I wonder who lived in there!" will be remembered



MORTE D'ARTHUR.

From a Painting by Sir Joseph Noel Paton, R.S.A.



"I WONDER WHO LIVED IN THERE!"
From a Painting by Sir Joseph Noel Paton, R.S.A.

by many as in the Royal Academy exhibition of 1866. The composition is not an ideal one, but, as we have heard, is the representation of a fact. The scene is the artist's studio, in which, on entering one day, he saw his young son, chin on hand, "glowering" into an old helmet, with eyes full of the stories of chivalry he had been taught or had read. "I wonder who lived in there!" was the boy's remark to his father. The incident could scarcely fail to attract the special notice of a mind so constituted as that of the latter, who saw at once how well adapted it was for a picture both original and pleasing; the result is before us.

These two compositions serve to exhibit the mediæval and chivalric "groove" in which the painter's mind is found so often to run. His pictures, whatever the subject, are always poetical, yet are realistic in treatment; and he may fairly lay claim to the royal and academic honours respectively which have been awarded him. In 1866 the Queen appointed him her "Limner for Scotland," and the year following conferred on him, at Windsor, the honour of knighthood. But it is not only as an artist that Sir Noel Paton has won reputation; his two published books, "Poems by a Painter," which appeared in 1862, and "Spindrift," in 1866, were both most favourably noticed by the press in England and Scotland. "Oskold and the Ellemajds," exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy in 1874, is the most widely known of the artist's later works. In common with many of his other pictures, it points out how high his aims have been; in the choice of subjects for painting he has not on a single occasion that we can recall underrated his own abilities; and if he has sometimes attempted things too hard for him, at others lofty subjects have drawn out powers that could certainly have been manifested in no other way. Oskold is the embodiment of a pilgrim soul fighting his way through the perils of a false world: the Ellemajds are representative of the five senses, beautiful Sirens bent on the cavalier's ruin through their many glittering temptations.

The "Good Shepherd," the property of her Majesty the Queen, and "Caliban listening to the Music," were at the Paris Exposition of 1878.

RICHARD BEAVIS was born, in 1824, at Exmouth, though the early years of his life were passed at Sidmouth. It is possible this residence in a picturesque seaside town had considerable influence on the future direction of his