

Still, as the semicircle is by far the most advantageous, it ought to be retained for them, as might easily be done, should the house itself be equal to an entire circle, or somewhat more (as is the case at Drury Lane); and to effect this, nothing more would be requisite than to omit boxes entirely between the chord of the semicircle and the proscenium. Were this done, there would hardly be a seat in any of the boxes that would not command a sufficiently favourable view of the stage; while, in an architectural point of view, all the space so given up or lost, as perhaps it will be considered, would be a decided gain, because it would afford ample field for decoration in connexion with and continuation of the proscenium, so that the whole might be made to form a rich architectural framing to the stage; whereas, according to the present mode, the connexion between the boxes and proscenium is too abrupt, and can rarely be well managed; and whenever the boxes adjoining the stage are comparatively empty, they present a forlorn appearance, which does not at all reconcile us the better to their being in themselves a drawback on the general design. There would be another advantage arising from the system here recommended, namely, that as far as the boxes are concerned, there would be a sort of neutral territory between the audience and the stage, highly favourable to scenic effect and illusion. Every one in the boxes would then be seated where he would behold the stage and performance, not only conveniently, but from a proper distance station. The stage ought to be considered as a picture upon a large scale, and when a man looks at a picture of any dimensions, he neither pokes his nose against it nor does he place himself on one side, so as to view it askew, but in such a manner that he can distinctly behold it. In regard to the stage, however, such certainly is not the case with a very large proportion of the spectators in the boxes. Many of them are obliged to take up with places where they cannot possibly see the scene or flat, as it is technically termed, at all, let them twist their necks as much as they will, though *en revanche* they see a great deal more between the wings and side scenes than is either necessary or proper. * *

We shall here put together a few particulars relative to some of the principal theatres hitherto erected; not with the expectation of satisfying the reader, but rather of inducing him to prosecute the object further by his own researches; and the following table, it is presumed, will be found both interesting and useful, as exhibiting a comparative and synoptical view of several of the most important structures of this class:—

	From Curtain to back of Boxes.	Width across Boxes.	Width of Curtain.	Depth of Stage from Curtain.	Height from Pit Floor to Ceiling.	Saloon.
	Feet.	Feet.	Feet.	Feet.	Feet.	Feet.
London.—Opera House	102	75	40	35	54	56×19
Covent Garden	73	63	32	59	60	90×26
Drury Lane	70	70	32	48	52	96
New English Opera	57	55	32	..	..	..
Paris.—Opera	78	52	40	..	52	96
Theatre Feydeau	52	64	48	..	..	..
Cirque Olympique	86.6	83	44	..	..	..
Bordeaux	64	62.6	39.6	70	57.6	..
Milan.—La Scala	94	78	44	..	75	100×24
Naples.—San Carlo	90	76	49	76	80	82×20
Venice.—La Fenice	72	67	42	45	49	56×32
St. Petersburg	102	96	52	99	92	125×30
Berlin	61	58	38	..	43	..
Hamburg	69	68	39	..	56	..
Mentz	65	58	38	..	43	..
New Orleans	73	71	44	..	66	129×26
Dublin	64	62	33	..	..	..
Birmingham	44	45	28	..	..	..
Turin	66.6	52	40	98	..	..
Ghent	68	60	37	..	..	82×40

From this it will be seen that the London Opera House, although of the same extent as the Great Theatre at St. Petersburg, measured on a line from the curtain to the back of the boxes, is considerably less in its other dimensions, and consequently very different in its proportions; it being narrow in comparison with its average breadth, owing to which, and to the contraction towards the stage, the greater part of the persons in the boxes are not placed even at right angles to, but actually turned obliquely from, the stage; as will be seen by the plan of it, and still more palpably by the section, which shows a considerable extent of the side boxes, whose fronts would not be visible in such representation were they at right angles with the curtain. Another great defect is the absence of proscenium, the boxes coming quite up to the opening of the stage, in consequence of which preposterousness in the plan, all architectural expression and propriety are destroyed, and a disagreeable flimsiness takes place, giving to the whole house the appearance of having been hurriedly fitted up for some temporary purpose. Besides which, this immediate contact of stage and boxes would render it almost impossible to cut off the flames from communicating to every part, should a fire break out among the scenery. In Schinkel's new theatre, at Berlin, the proscenium is formed by exceedingly massive walls; and the spectator itself has the advantage of not being extended greatly beyond a semicircle. Covent Garden partakes in some degree of the faulty plan adopted in the Opera House, as the boxes between the semi-

circular portion and the stage are carried, not at right angles to the latter, but sloping towards, and consequently inclined from it. Had the boxes been continued on the sides for no more than a third of their present extent, this would have been of comparatively little moment; but as these sloping sides are projected to such a distance that an entire circle might be described between the centre box and the proscenium, the spectators in the boxes nearest the stage are better stationed for reconnoitering the audience, than for viewing the scenery or the performance. Therefore, at least three of the boxes on each side should have been shallower than the rest. The plan of Drury Lane is decidedly preferable in every respect to that of Covent Garden, as well in the arrangement of the vestibule, staircases, and approaches, as in the form of the spectator itself. It would indeed have been better had it not exceeded a perfect circle, that is, had the distance from the centre box to the curtain been no more than the diameter of the pit. Yet, notwithstanding that the general form itself is good, it exhibits an adherence to the erroneous practice of continuing the boxes beyond the semicircle facing the stage. We will not be so rigorous as to insist that they should in no degree be suffered to extend beyond that diameter or line, but most assuredly, the less they were to do so the better.

We have now extracted at some length from this admirable work; but we only fear that, although at some extent for our columns, not sufficiently to gratify the wishes of the reader. We know, indeed, that although ancient knowledge may be useful as the basis of our studies, we shall only be able to carry them on effectively by attention to the progress of the present. To all those, therefore, who are desirous of ascertaining the actual state of art in the metropolis, and of availing themselves of it, we can only refer them to this work, which will not only give them food for their observation, but teach them how to exert it.

It has thus been our lot to criticise a work devoted to criticism, but such is the fate of all publications, and to which our own must submit. Criticism must take its food from everything like death, for, in the words of Horace—"Pallida mors equo pulsat pede regum turres, pauperas que tabernas."

We feel happy, however, that, as brethren, it has not been our fate to disagree; but that on the other hand we are enabled to bear testimony to the correctness with which the editor has carried out the principles declared in his preface. Publishers are but too little looked upon in these things, but we must bear in mind that they are entitled to something more than the organ-blower's meed. There is much judgment to be exerted in the choice of a work, and often much boldness in the manner in which expense is incurred, and he who well carries out a great work is as well entitled to praise for his discrimination and public spirit as the author or editor himself. We are happy, therefore, in affording our tribute to the manner in which the publisher has complied with his duty, and not the less so that he has chosen in Mr. Leeds, one whose exertions deserve to merit the confidence of the public as much as his own.

Collection des principaux Monumens d'Architecture Byzantine, Gothique, &c., de la France. Paris, folio, 11th number.

Ornemens Classiques exécutées d'après les Peintures Originales de Jules Romain et de ses Elèves. Paris, 4to.

These publications are the fruits of our Parisian neighbours' rage for the Renaissance. The first is the introductory number of a work on the early architecture of France, and includes the Byzantine, a style of which we know little in England. The second is a collection of the arabesques of Giulio Romano and his pupils; and they are both works of reference of which we have a deficiency here.

Herculaneum und Pompeii Vollständige Sammlung der Vis aus den neuntigen Tag daselbst entdeckten Malereien, Bronzen, u. s. w. Enthaltend sammtliche in der Antichita di Ercolano, dem Museo Bourbonica und dem ubrigen bisher erschienen Werken, mit Neuern noch unedirten Aegenstanden vermehrt. Von H. Roux et Ad. Bouchet. Deutch Bearbeitet von Dr. A. Kaiser. (Complete Collection of all the Herculaneum and Pompeian Paintings, Bronzes, Mosaics, &c., described in the Antiquities of Herculaneum, the Bourbon Museum, and the latest Works. Translated into German from the French of H. Roux, sen., and Ad. Bouchet, by Dr. A. Kaiser.) Hamburg: Meissner.

This splendid work is to be completed in two hundred numbers of four plates each, great octavo, six of which have already appeared. The first division of the work, containing the paintings, is to consist of architectural ornaments, groups of figures, single figures, friezes, landscapes, and mosaics. The second division includes statues, busts, lamps, &c. The work is cheap and well got up, and cannot fail to promote the knowledge of these elegant styles.