

# JOHNSTONE GRAND INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION.

REVIEW BY THE PAISLEY CORRESPONDENT OF THE "GLASGOW CITIZEN."

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STRANGERS travelling along the pleasant and well-conducted line of the Glasgow & South-Western Railway, frequently exclaim with some surprise, "What town is that?" as they obtain the first glimpse of Johnstone, stretching far and wide below and rearing its numerous chimney stalks in the air. Johnstone is indeed a place calculated to elicit words of surprise. Seventy years ago it had no existence as a town. "The Brig o' Johnstone" had then a "local habitation and a name," but any houses which were there must have been very inconsiderable, as the population of the place in 1782 consisted of only ten persons. Since that time, Johnstone has grown up into a bulky manufacturing town, and its population exhibits an increase scarcely paralleled in Scottish statistics.

As seen from the railway, and indeed in its external aspect as viewed from any point, Johnstone has by no means a lively or inviting appearance. It is neither picturesque nor elegant—neither a "sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain," nor a locality for the gaieties of fashionable life. On the contrary, it has rather a forbidding look at first. Dinginess pervades the plain and cheap looking structures which predominate in its architecture—its streets, particularly in wet weather, are somewhat muddy—and its atmosphere, somehow or other, has a kind of smoky, greasy, uncomfortable taste.

On entering it, the town is seen at a glance to be a workshop—machinery sends forth its solemn, monotonous sound from almost every building, while men and women, boys and girls, are everywhere plodding at their tasks as if they strove to emulate the machinery in industry. Cotton mills and engineering establishments, all in full and noisy operation, are to be seen and heard in almost every quarter of the town. "This now," the stranger naturally thinks to himself, "is an industrious, enterprising and prosperous, but dull and unintellectual community. Here all is work, work, on the part of the employed, and nothing but anxiety to turn that work to advantage and make money by it on the part of the employers. Here all is material and utilitarian. The nobler part of human nature—with all its pure and elevating tastes, sympathies, affinities, aspirations and enjoyments—is never called into exercise—the people live unreflecting as the machinery among which they toil—and when their physical strength is exhausted they are succeeded by others, just as worn-out machinery is replaced by new. There is no mind here for anything beyond the gross matters connected with the daily task." Such might seem warrantable *a priori* reasoning in the circumstances and yet it would be utterly delusive. Let the stranger, or any one, oppressed by an uncomfortable sense of the materialism of Johnstone, walk up Macdowall-street, and there, where the flag projects from that large but unpretending building on the left, enter and look around him. He will feel as if transported by magic to a new world—to a brilliant and wondrous scene in Fairyland. The sounds of machinery are indeed still in his ears, and numerous specimens of the engineer's art are before his eyes; but a strange, delightful revolution has already passed in his mind, and he now feels, as he surveys these varied and wonderful creations and adaptations, that machinery has its *poetry* as well as its prose. Other poetry, besides that of machinery, exercises its potent spell there. With the light of day, or rather the feeble darkness which has lately been diffused in the air, completely shut out—amidst a flood of artificial light, streaming from a thousand points—in a mild atmosphere, perfumed by a fountain of *Eau de Cologne*, and resounding with music—the visitor walks and looks along vistas lined by a vast number and variety of articles, useful, interesting, beautiful and curious. For some time after the transition from the open air has been made, it is difficult to dispel the general notion of magic and fairy land; but, by degrees, a belief in the reality of the scene, as one produced by the labour, the skill, the enthusiasm and the taste of man, acquires possession of the mind, and then the visitor begins gravely to examine the component parts of the great and really striking assemblage.

The present Exhibition, for which the public are indebted to the directors of the Johnstone Mechanics' Institution, is a highly creditable affair to these gentlemen, and to their friends in and around the locality who have contributed to its production. Johnstone, whatever its external aspect in the eyes of

strangers, possesses a population leavened, at least, by men of great public spirit, professional skill and enterprise, scientific attainments, general intelligence and cultivated tastes. A few such men soon impress their characteristics on a population, and the combination of such men for any purpose produces an effect which seems almost miraculous. Accordingly, Johnstone, which has been increasing in public spirit and intelligence in at least the same ratio as in population, was quite prepared to appreciate and support an undertaking of this kind; and the leading spirits of the locality, the directors and patrons of the Mechanics' Institution, were the very men to undertake and carry through the project. The men, too, quietly, with all their capabilities for the task, have been materially assisted by some of the fair members of the population of Johnstone, as the Exhibition itself abundantly testifies. Numerous evidences of the genius, enthusiasm and refined taste of the softer sex are to be met with there; and as an additional, although not intentional, attraction, the fair ladies of Johnstone themselves, a few of whom are worth going any distance to see are occasionally to be met with there too.

But enough of preliminary disquisition. We must now see what sort of materials the Exhibition is composed of. Perhaps the whole might be arranged as belonging to four principal classes, machinery, manufactured goods, the fine arts, and curiosities—the last a very miscellaneous department, in which there might be considerable sub-division. The number of articles exhibited is 1073, or rather that is the number of lots in the catalogue. In many instances, one lot contains numerous articles; and several contributions, some of them important, have been received since the catalogue was printed. Of course, we can do no more at present than glance cursorily at a few things in each department. The catalogue, which merely names the articles, occupies nearly thirty pages.

In Machinery, as might be expected in a town like Johnstone, the Exhibition is strong and striking. The ground floor of the building—a mill of considerable size, fitted up for the occasion—is entirely devoted to this department, with the exception of a refreshment-room on the left. The specimens of machinery exhibited are 54 in number, all of which are worthy of careful inspection; and, as many of them are in active operation, showing the purposes for which they are intended and the wonderful manner in which they serve these purposes, the sight is at once highly interesting and instructive. The following strike us as being among the more remarkable things in this department:—

No. 1. Eccentric Turning Lathe, by Mr. John M'Dowall, Jun., Johnstone.

No. 2. Braiding Machine, exhibited by Mr. Wm. Paton, Johnstone. This, seen in operation, is a very remarkable little machine—a French invention—for the manufacture of braid.

No. 3. Screw Pump, by Mr. John M'Dowall, Johnstone, with Jet-d'eau set upon it by Messrs. Malcolm Muir & Co., Glasgow. Affixed to this specimen is the following inscription:—"Screw Pump, invented by John M'Dowall, engineer, Johnstone, for which he received a medal and silver plate from the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, value £15. This model raises 40 cubic feet of water per minute. A pump on this principle was erected about 6 years ago, for Col. M'Dowall of Garthland, for draining Bar-Loch. It raises 400 cubic feet of water per minute."

Nos. 6, 7, & 8. Nut-cutting Machine; Shaping Machine (circular and linear); and Slotting Machine; by Messrs. Thomas Shanks & Co., Johnstone. These are very remarkable productions.

No. 9. High Pressure Steam-Engine of 5 horse-power, made expressly for moving the machinery of the Exhibition. This, besides exhibiting excellent workmanship, is interesting from the fact that it was manufactured by the workmen of Messrs. John M'Dowall & Sons at their overtime, and presented by them to the directors of the Mechanics' Institution.

No. 11. Condensing Beam-Engine, by Mr. George Millar, Paisley.

No. 13. Bobbin-turning Machine, wrought by M'Naught's Patent High-Pressure and Condensing Engine combined, made by Messrs. Shanks & Co., Johnstone—exhibited by Messrs. J. & P. Coates, Thread Manufacturers, Paisley.

This machine, invented and patented by Thos. Coates,

Esq., of Ferguslie, is one of the wonders of the Exhibition. It throws off upwards of 40 bobbins per minute. Fed with little pieces of wood, previously prepared by another machine, it almost instantaneously converts these into perfectly formed bobbins. The operation, as the block comes in contact with the cutting apparatus and the superfluous wood is squirted off into the air, reminds one of blowing the seeds and down from a dandelion—puff, and the thing is done.

No. 14. Sectional Model of Marine Side Lever Condensing Steam-Engine, by Messrs. Murdoch, Aitken, & Co., Hill-street, Glasgow.

No. 22. Model Locomotive Engine, by Mr. Allan Loudon, Dalry.

No. 37. Hand Planing Machine, by Messrs. Thos. Shanks & Co., Johnstone.

No. 42. American Patent Cast-Iron Railway Wheel, by Messrs. Craig, Fullerton, & Co., Paisley.

No. 44. The Original Model of the first attempt at Screw Propulsion, made at Irvine in 1837. Exhibited by Mr. Marshall Dick, Irvine.

No. 45. Working Model of Patent Oscillating Steam Wheel, by Mr. John Weems, Johnstone. A curious production by one of the most ingenious and active men connected with the Exhibition.

No. 49. Jacquard Pattern Punching Machine, invented by the exhibitor, Mr. John Cunningham, Beith. This attracts considerable attention.

No. 53. Balling Machine, double flyer (new invention), Messrs. Finlayson, Bousfield & Co., flax-spinners, Johnstone.

Besides these there are numerous interesting specimens from Messrs. J. & W. Houldsworth, Glasgow; Mr. Peter M'Intosh, Glasgow; Messrs. Craig & Donald, Johnstone; Mr. M'Coll, Glasgow; Mr. H. Purnell, Glasgow; Messrs. Higginbotham & Gray, Glasgow; Mr. Alexander Mitchell, Glasgow; Mr. Peter Crawford, Paisley; Mr. Neilson, Glasgow; Mr. Kibble, Glasgow; Mr. John Downie, Greenock; Mr. John Smith, Johnstone; Mr. Clark, Jun., Mile-end, Glasgow; Mr. John Craig, Paisley; Wm. Houston, Esq., Johnstone; Mr. Forrest, Paisley; Mr. Alexander Crawford, Paisley; Mr. David Burgess, Glasgow; Mr. Beckett, Kilmarnock; Mr. Robert Blair, Johnstone; Mr. Blackwood, farmer, Kibbleston; Mr. Robert Love, Johnstone; Mr. Robert Hood, Stone-law Colliery; Messrs. J. & W. Knox, Johnstone; and Messrs. Platt & Shelley; all of which are worthy of consideration.

Manufactured Goods, in a great variety of materials, are profusely interspersed with other contributions, in the large flat above the one occupied by the machinery. It is quite impossible to give here anything like a description of these goods or even to record the names of those by whom they are contributed. The following are a few of the exhibitors in this department, and jottings of the goods exhibited.

Messrs. Wylie & Lochhead, Glasgow. Numerous beautiful specimens of Tapestry, Window Hangings, Window Cornices, Paper Hangings, Carpets, Rugs, &c. Mr. S. Woolfield, Glasgow. A variety of Writing Desks, Card Receivers, &c.

Messrs. Paterson & Neilson, Linwood. Union Printed Shawls—white, green, amber and scarlet.

Mr. Robert Kerr, manufacturer, Paisley Portraits of Louis Philippe and J. M. Jacquard, and the "Duke D'Aumale's visit to a Weaver's Shop"—admirable pictures, woven in the loom. These, by-the-by, instead of being classed among manufactures, belong to the department of the Fine Arts.

Mr. Clinkscales, Johnstone. Royal Gems—specimens of Bookbinding.

Mr. Alexander Chapman, cabinet-maker, Johnstone. Rosewood and Yew Furniture.

Messrs. Newall & Co., Glasgow. Specimens of Wire-Rope, &c.

Messrs. W. & R. Smith, Mauchline. A great variety of beautifully made and decorated articles—Work Boxes, Glove Boxes, Trays, Baskets, Fancy Boxes, &c.

Messrs. Alexander M'Kenzie & Co., Glasgow. Large and handsome Mirrors, &c.

Messrs. Cochran & Provan, Glasgow. Sideboards, Silk Damask Hangings, Drawing-room Chairs, Embroidery, &c., all very beautiful.

Mr. C. H. Bousfield, Johnstone. Specimens of Silk Tabarets, and Silk Damasks and Tissues, manufactured chiefly in Spitalfields.

Mr. James Pinkerton, cabinet-maker, Paisley. Pole-screen, Dressing-glass, Pillar and Claw of Table, &c.

Messrs. Cunningham & M'Kenzie, Paisley. Specimens of Carpeting.

Messrs. A. Mathieson & Son, Glasgow. A variety of handsome Planes, etc.

Messrs. John Little & Co., Glasgow. Moderator Lamps, Papier-Mache Trays, &c.

Messrs. W. H. Kerr & Co., Worcester. Rich collection of Porcelain Ware, and Picture of contributors' Exhibition room.

Mr. George Smith, Johnstone. Drawing-room Table, Ladies' Work-table, and Clock-cases—exquisitely finished.

Mr. A. Watson, saddler, Johnstone. Full set of plated Cart Harness.

Mr. John Simpson, turner, Paisley. Pair Bowling-green Bowls, and Stand and Trencher.

Mr. James Yates, Ironmonger, Johnstone. Papier-mache Portfolios, inlaid with pearl.

Mr. James Pollock, Stockwell-street, Glasgow. Small Horse, in Harness, which obtained a prize in the Great Exhibition.

Messrs. Finlayson, Bousfield & Co., flax-spinners, Johnstone. Samples of flax grown in different countries, Linen Threads, common and satin finished, and patent Silk Thread, and Shoe Thread; with the prize medal obtained by the contributors at the Great Exhibition.

Mr. Samuel Wilson, Candleriggs, Glasgow. Miscellaneous collection of Gutta Serena Picture-Frames, &c.

In the department of the FINE ARTS a number of very interesting contributions appear. Several productions of the late lamented James Fillans, all of whose works are now invested with a deep and melancholy interest, are to be seen here. Mr. Lamb, architect, Paisley, contributes a fine cast of Fillans' majestic bust of Professor Wilson. Mr. Caldwell, writer, Paisley, exhibits an exceedingly graphic little group—one of Fillans' early efforts in modelling—representing Jamie Gemmell, a droll, dissipated tailor, who used to be well known on the streets of Paisley, supported between two men, one of whom carries Jamie's shoe which has come off. There is much humour and truthfulness in this production. Provost Farquharson of Paisley exhibits another of Fillans' early productions, "The Poor Petitioner," in which there is great expression. Mrs. Fillans, widow of the sculptor, exhibits Fillans' beautiful allegorical representation of the "Birth of Burns," and throughout the Exhibition there are other works from the hand of this departed son of genius. In the Exhibition, although not in the catalogue, there is an admirable bust of Cardinal Wiseman, contributed by himself, but which did not arrive till after the catalogue was printed. Mr. Shields, the active and intelligent secretary of the institution, was kind enough to show us the Cardinal's letter which accompanied this contribution. His eminence, who seems to have a dash of liberality about him, speaks in a frank business-like style, and writes a beautiful hand. There are some good sculptures, in different materials, contributed by Captain Stirling of Glentyan, and other gentlemen, and numerous specimens of various degrees of merit from the establishments of Messrs. G. Nanetti and B. Luchessi, Glasgow.

In Paintings there is a good deal worth looking at. On the ground floor, almost immediately on entering, Howe's large picture of the late Dr. Cochran of Clippens, on horseback, presents itself. It is very disadvantageously placed, however, and it has received barbarous treatment since last we saw it, some twenty years ago, in Clippens House. It is greatly to be regretted that such a picture should have fallen into the hands of people who apparently cannot appreciate it. This was a work of which Howe himself was justly proud. Up stairs one of the most striking pictures is a Murillo—"Beggar Boys eating Fruit"—the property of Thomas Barclay, Esq., Cochrane Mill. If this is not a genuine Murillo, it is at all events a very fine copy, well worth studying, although like almost all the pictures here, it is rather disadvantageously placed for inspection. Thomas Speir, Esq., of Culdees, exhibits a few good pictures. Two of these, cabinet paintings, stated in the catalogue to be original portraits of Charles the Second and his Queen,

are very beautiful. Whether these are authentic portraits, we are not aware. They have been carefully preserved, but one can scarcely help thinking that they are a little too fresh for their reputed age. There is no artist's name given in the catalogue, an omission, by-the-by, which has been made in the case of almost all the paintings. Mr. Speir, among other pictures, exhibits two admirable landscapes, the one described as "Fall of the River Mauchline in Culdees Park," very like the style of the elder Nasmyth; and the other an exquisitely finished little picture described as "Swiss Scenery." Belonging to Mr. Hugh Loudon, Johnstone, there is a large and very good painting, on panel, described as a "Dutch Burgomaster." Near this is a "Portrait of Miss Janet Young, Ardrossan—painted by Mr. John Stevenson, a self-taught artist, only 18 years of age." Here is something worth looking at and thinking about. We do not so much mean the lady herself, although she is evidently a pleasant, good-natured, kindly soul, who would welcome one to a cup of tea with great frankness—it is the "counterfeit presentiment" of her which the youthful artist has given. There is a character about this portrait which indicates the possession of rare and promising abilities on the part of the painter, and speaks prophetically of future eminence. Miss Young seems to be an artist of some character herself. She contributes a piece of needlework—"Queen Margaret"—which possesses much freedom from the conventionalities of the sampler, and is characterised by spirited drawing and some expression. Mr. J. B. Millar, of Paisley, has a portrait of himself in chalk—a good likeness, carefully and artistically wrought, and with a thoughtful expression. In chalk, there is also a good head of James Watt, by the late John Henning, drawn in 1803, beside which there is a Medallion of Watt, by Henning, Jun. These are contributed by Mr. John Gray, of Greenock. Rather a striking painting is a "Moorish Girl," by Crawford of Edinburgh, contributed by Mr. Thos. Shanks, Johnstone, who received it a few years ago as an Art-Union prize. Belonging to Mr. James Hosie, Loans, Troon, there are two or three Chinese paintings on glass—a King, a Queen, and a Judge—very brilliant and striking. Mr. John Urie, Buchanan-street, Glasgow, exhibits some good specimens of Photographic Portraits, and of Wood Engraving. Mr. George M'Kenzie, carver and gilder, Paisley, also exhibits a case of very pretty Photographic Portraits on Glass. Mr. Alexander Hamilton, Paisley, exhibits two or three landscapes of that romantic character—such as the Pass of Killiecrankie—in depicting which he has long been noted for excellence. A number of paintings of various degrees of merit are exhibited by Dr. M'Laren, Johnstone—Baillie Connell, Paisley—Mr. Hugh Loudon, Johnstone—Mrs Wighton, Johnstone—Mr. M'Bride, Glasgow—Mrs Stirling Campbell, Johnstone—and other ladies and gentlemen. Lots of engravings are also exhibited by Mr. John Finlay, Buchanan-street, and Mr. Hastie, Stockwell-street, Glasgow.

In the miscellaneous department of CURIOSITIES, which embraces objects of almost every conceivable and some very inconceivable kinds, the attractions are numerous and great; but the remaining space at our disposal will not at present allow us to enumerate, far less descant on, a tithe of those we could wish to point out. Almost nothing is more remarkable, in connection with this Exhibition, than the hosts of curiosities which it has drawn forth from their private hiding-places. Considering the limited district of country from which these have been drawn, the mind cannot help speculating on the vast stores of curiosities which must exist throughout the land. Many of these possess an antiquarian interest, in connection with the past history and condition of our own country; while many more illustrate the customs, manners, condition and products of foreign countries, and indicate the adventurous character and habits of Scotland's sons, who visit every region of the globe, and send or bring home to their friends mementoes of what they have seen and been among. Of historical relics we have here the "Drumlog Flag, being the Standard of the Covenanters on 1st June, 1679"—"Apron and Sash worn by a Lady at Prince Charlie's Mother's Marriage"—"Sword used in defence of Prince Charlie"—"Sword used at the Battle of Culloden"—"Wine Jug used by James First of England, and presented by Prince Charlie to the

woman whose hospitality he received when under hiding, previous to his reaching France, after the rebellion of 1745"—"Vial containing Prince Charlie's Hair"—"Telescope, being the identical one used by Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar"—"Ladies' Work-Box, presented by Warren Hastings to Lady Cringleton"—"Sir William Wallace's Boot and Key of Castle at Elderslie" (exceedingly apocryphal)—"Part of the Body of William the Lion," &c., &c. This last item is rather a curious one, but not so much so as another specimen of old bones exhibited. This is a little folding case, similar to those employed for enclosing daguerreotype portraits, minutely subdivided into about 64 compartments, containing the bones of saints, some of which precious relics are set round with pearls and valuable stones. This, although a little article in itself, is great as a curiosity. What its history is we have not learned. It is exhibited by Mr. John Howie, Kilmarnock. A good many old Bibles—none of them, however, more ancient than the beginning of the 17th century—are exhibited. Some of these are very much worn, while others—one, in particular, a handsome, brass mounted volume—seems to have been treated with great respect, and very seldom opened. A curious volume in MS.—"Original Records of the Brechnal Kirk, Kilbarchan, 109 years old"—is contributed by Mr. Gemmell, teacher, Bridge-of-Weir. Some articles of daily use—such as a "pair of Table Knives, 477 years old"—a "pair of Waistcoats, upwards of 180 years old"—and two "Figured Satin Gowns, 150 years old"—are very curious to look on now. Sir Robert Napier of Milliken; Mrs Mary A. Wighton, Johnstone; Capt. Maitland, Cartside; Mrs. Stirling Campbell, Johnstone; Capt. Blair of Blair; Mr. Jas Caldwell, Kilbarchan; Dr. Stirling, Johnstone; Mr. Daniel Brown, Johnstone; Captain Stirling, Glentyan, and a host of other friends, contribute an almost endless variety of curiosities. As for the number of Chinese and Turkish Slippers—Indian Mats—Australian Blankets—War Weapons from savage countries—Chinese and other Idols—Stuffed Birds—Fish Bones—Mammoth Teeth—Minerals—Coins—Jewels—and other curiosities in the collection, it would require an entire arithmetician and an entire newspaper to sum up and record them. They are legion. Many of them, however, are worth noticing. Among those articles which hover between the two departments of Curiosities and the Fine Arts, there are several specimens which call for particular attention, such as, some little "Figures cut in wood by a Tyrolese peasant"—"Three Crests and Arms cut in silver, wholly done with the turning lathe, by Jas. C. Porterfield, Esq., of Duchal"—various models—artificial flowers by different parties—and, in particular, a pair of Eastern Figures in glass shade, by Miss Helen Wighton, Johnstone. These last evince the possession of fine taste and considerable artistic talent, as do also some artificial flowers by the same lady.

In Natural History and Mineralogy, there are many things deserving of special notice, as there are in several other departments of the Exhibition. Perhaps we may be enabled in a future article to direct attention to what it is impossible to overtake on the present occasion. As a whole, the Exhibition is of a highly creditable character, and should be visited by all who have it in their power to do so. It forms a field of interesting study, and a delightful promenade.

In addition to the attractions already referred to, there is a finely toned Organ on the premises, placed there by Mr. Boyd, clothier, Johnstone, and on this instrument Mr. Robert Dyer, the librarian of the institution—an enthusiastic office-bearer, who has done much for the Exhibition—performs very agreeably. The Secretary and other Directors, too, some of whom are always moving about among the visitors, assist greatly by their intelligent explanations and general affability to enhance the pleasure and profit of a visit.

It has been kindly arranged by the Directors of the Glasgow and South-Western Railway, that the late train from Carlisle to Paisley and Glasgow, which passes Johnstone at about twenty minutes past ten o'clock, but which has not hitherto halted at that town, shall for the future stop to take in passengers there, and thus accommodate those who may remain till a late hour inspecting the Exhibition.