

AMERICANS AS ART WORKMEN.

Substantial Recognition Shown by Paris Exposition Judges to Two New York Concerns.

Foreign Correspondence NEW YORK TIMES.

PARIS, Sept. 8.—It is no revelation to the American visitor at the Exposition to learn that, in machinery and clever labor-saving devices, the United States exhibitors take a front rank. In matters of mechanism, the inventors and artificers across the Atlantic acknowledge no superiors. It is only when it came to the matter of adornment, whether for the person or the home, that there was some doubt on the part of Americans as to how their fellow-countrymen would line up when compared with the French, the Germans, and the English. The exhibits themselves are the final test in such a case.

Now that the awards have been announced, it has been a matter of much gratification that the judges have shown substantial recognition of the worth of the American artisan's art in the bestowal of prizes for such work done in the United States. The fact is that all that is most noteworthy in art craftsmanship in the closing years of this century is seen at this exposition, whether in stained glass, in furniture, in textile fabrics, in wall papers, mosaics, pottery, glassware, enamels, or in silversmithing, and in each one the United States displays originality and wins trophies.

The credit for the distinction attained is almost wholly due to the exhibits of two New York City establishments—Tiffany & Co. and the Gorham Manufacturing Company.

In silversmithing, which work enters largely into the home life of Americans, the Gorham Company of New York has achieved a notable triumph. Its exhibits in silverware are elaborate, ingenious, and remarkably artistic from every point of view. All the new processes in the decoration of this metal are shown in the collective exhibit, embracing articles of the most diverse character, from the smallest silver teaspoon to a magnificent solid silver toilet table, with all the necessary toilet articles, the latter being valued at 100,000f.

There is no art in which the hammer plays so important a part as that of the silversmith, for there is no metal which responds more readily to this treatment, and it is the designs of hammered ware as shown by the Gorham Company that evoke the highest praise. They are original designs, not copies, and show the artistic idea as well as the most consummate work of the expert craftsman. The bowls, vases, cups, and salvers are unique, elaborate in decoration, and have grace, quaintness, strength, and elegant finish. In many pieces there are settings of jewels and colored stones, representing not only great value but introducing fine color suggestions.

The installation of the Gorham Company is in a pavilion prominently located in the United States Section of the Palace of Varied Industries. The scheme of decoration is fine, the ceiling and frieze being carried out in rich color effects, and the whole elaborately and sumptuously finished.

One exhibit which attracts great attention is the eighteen-carat gold loving cup presented to Sir Thomas Lipton by friends in New York, which was made by this company. Another rare exhibit is a chalice in silver elaborately carved, set with precious stones and ornamented with twelve rich illuminations in enamel, each one of which is a veritable painting. There is also a toilet set in richly carved ivory, inlaid with gold. It is composed of five pieces, and is valued at \$2,000.

In nothing, however, is the display more elaborate or more interesting than that in hand-wrought silver, to which they have given the name of Martelé. This exhibit comprises a large number of pieces in various forms, such as dinner sets, dessert services, loving cups, bowls, centrepieces and tankards in the most unique designs, after-dinner coffee sets, &c. This style of manufacturing silver is original with the Gorham Company, and it attracts the highest admiration from the connoisseurs in art from all countries. Each piece is hammered from the bullion, and was made especially for the Paris Exposition. The work in this Martelé collection was commenced four years ago, and was completed only about the time of the opening of the exposition.

In leather goods the Gorham Company also received a Grand Prix. Its exhibit in this line consists of over 100 pieces, made chiefly from elephant, buffalo, and lizard skins. The mountings of the articles are in original designs, and show the most skillful workmanship. One article on display is a leather traveling bag composed entirely of black lizard skin, containing a large variety of toilet accessories, all of eighteen-carat gold.

The Gorham Company received altogether two Grand Prix, one for silverware, one for leather goods, also three gold medals and three silver medals.

Tiffany & Co. of New York have made an inimitable and interesting exhibit here, and are delighted with the splendid recognition accorded them. They have been awarded three grand prizes, one each for gold, silver, and leather; three gold medals for stationery and printing, and three silver medals for hunting outfits and cutlery.

In their display here, particularly in gems and fine work in precious metal, they have thrown the gauntlet at the feet of the world, and in domestic silverware the most remarkable results are shown. The installation is conspicuous for its artistic beauty and the elegant articles of luxury shown in leather goods, stationery, and engraving.

One of the wonders of the Paris Exposition is the Adams gold vase in the Tiffany exhibit, which is valued at 150,000f. From top to base it is purely American in design, character, and material. Every branch of the jeweler's and lapidary's art has been brought into play in this superb piece of work, in the cutting of the tourmalines from Maine, rocky and smoky crystals from North Carolina, the hammered work, chasing, carving, and enameling.

Another specially attractive exhibit is an ivory-carved, silver-mounted tankard. The carving in the ivory is very elaborate. The base is a wonder of silver hand craftsmanship, being wrought into a phalanx of exquisitely carved elephants which rest upon a dais consisting of a design of marvelously depicted crocodiles. A massive elephant, beaten in silver, surmounts the tankard.

There is one toilet set of eight pieces in solid gold, valued at nearly 25,000 francs, exquisitely chased and wrought, with enamel settings and jewels. In one toilet set displayed there were two finely etched and gold-mounted perfume bottles, which are valued at 5,000 francs each. One of the wrought novelties is a rattlesnake, the scales of which are mounted in silver and opals, and the rattles are American fresh water pearls, the head of the snake being an immense pearl.

A silver tea set, designed in the form of American Beauty roses and flowers, is an exquisite production of craftsmanship, and is valued at 110,000 francs. A costly exhibit is a silver gilt Italian dinner service of 190 pieces, valued at 160,000 francs. Another dinner set—a George III. service of 219 pieces—is valued at 215,000 francs.

In leather goods there is an exhibit of a hunting outfit, consisting of elephant skin mounted in copper. Also another of buffalo skin mounted in silver. In their exhibit of leather goods they have used 270 different kinds of leather, taken from almost every animal known, including frogs and elephants, lizards and crocodiles, rattlesnakes and lions.

In lapidary work—in diamonds and other precious stones—there is a prodigal exhibit that is almost unsurpassed, both unset and mounted, in every conceivable form. Everything is of strictly American design and workmanship and the products in the precious stones exhibits are from American mines and fisheries.

The installation of the Tiffany exhibit is very handsome. It is made especially attractive by its brilliant lighting and elegant finish. The inlaid floor is made of American woods, laid by American workmen, and the whole is characteristically American and sumptuously elegant.