

animal. The elephant was made to lie down and the Doctor applied nitrate of silver to one of its eyes, whereupon the elephant uttered a terrific roar of pain. The operation, however, was so successful that the sight of the eye was restored, and the Doctor was ready on the following day to operate on the other eye. As soon as the elephant recognised his voice, it lay down of its own accord, placed its head on one side, curled up its trunk, and drew in a deep breath like a human being about to submit to a painful operation. When the operation was completed it uttered no sound but a sigh of relief, and gave every manifestation of gratitude.

A somewhat similar incident occurred at the Alexandra Palace a few years ago, and is related in the pages of "Nature," the hero in this case being a large monkey afflicted with toothache and abscess on the jaw. He appeared to be in so much pain that a dentist was consulted. As the poor animal was at times very savage it was decided to administer nitrous oxide gas before trying to remove the offending tooth, and for this purpose the dentist and his assistants tried to get the monkey into a bag. He showed fight and gave promise of being very troublesome until the dentist managed to get his hand on the abscess and either gave relief or else suggested to the monkey by this means what was his intention. The monkey's demeanour changed entirely, and he submitted, not only to an examination of his mouth, but to the extraction of the tooth without the aid of gas.

These two animals may have been exceptional among elephants and monkeys respectively in the fortitude they displayed, but there is no question as to their perception of the relation between cause and effect.

Notes on Art.

THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS.

This Exhibition, the earliest herald of Spring in the Art world, is a difficult one to review. Year by year, we see the same subjects, treated by the same hands, and, unfortunately, this Exhibition lacks the two or three important works, such as we saw last year. Although there is the usual want of interesting subjects and much indifferent and commonplace work, it is pleasant to observe the continually growing love of lovely effects of nature; the representations of clouds and atmosphere are surely growing in beauty and strength.

No. 30, *An Autumn Morning*, by Ernest Parton, is an exquisite study, full of beauty. No. 61, *Autumn Mist*, by Phillip Stretton; No. 77, *Where the Streamlet glides*, by W. Follen Bishop, with its new effect of sunset; and Arthur Severn's beautiful picture, No. 87, *Clouds at Sunset, Lancaster Sands*—are all charming examples of studies of nature lovingly understood.

One of the most original compositions here, is the very clever picture by H. R. Steer, No. 97, *New Tyres for an Old Post-chaise*, strong both in drawing and colour, new in the grouping of the figures; and here

again we see in the delicate ascending cloud of smoke—most successfully painted—the striving after, and attainment of, simple, natural effects.

All these pictures are in the West Gallery; and before leaving it, look at *Weed Burning*, by T. Austen Brown, No. 105; *Moonrise*, by J. Aumonier; *Storm Brewing in the Pyrenees, Biarritz*, No. 142, by H. Pilleau; No. 139, *On a Balcony at Sestri Levante*, by Frank W. W. Topham; No. 185, *An Anchorage in Woolwich Road*, by Hubert Medlicott; and the tender silvery picture by G. S. Walters, No. 47, *Hayboats at Anchor off Greenwich*.

In the Central Gallery there are many works bearing the familiar names of well-known painters, such as Val Davis, Mrs. Henriette Ronner, J. Aumonier, and F. G. Cotman, the last of whom contributes several studies, which are, unfortunately, somewhat small and sketch-like, and do not show the brilliant originality of his *Whitby* of last autumn. The most interesting of his pictures in the present Exhibition is No. 217, *Steaming into Lincoln*—not so striking as last year's work, but nevertheless exquisite. There are very few figure pictures of any interest—No. 315, *An Arab Café, Damascus*, by Mrs. Murray Cookesley; and, near it, No. 308, *The Narrow Way that Leads to Destruction*, the latter very clever and humorous, an oriental group, the central figure having just let fall a tray of crockery. There are two more which we will mention in this gallery—No. 309, *A Mill Pond at Wroughton*, by Joseph S. Harrison, and No. 319, *In Pastures far away*, by J. W. Schofield.

In the East Gallery there is a very ambitious picture, No. 472, *Nimue*, by H. M. Rheam, which it is impossible to pass without notice; but it must be confessed that it is difficult to imagine that the hard grinning face of Nimue could have so charmed Merlin as to have led him under the stone which held him fast.

On the whole, the Exhibition though it does not contain much work of exceptional merit, is on a higher level than usual, and is free from really bad pictures.

A Book of the Week.

"A YELLOW ASTER."*

DURING the last few weeks, "A Yellow Aster" has been more talked about than, perhaps, any other novel since "The Heavenly Twins." Within a very few weeks of its publication it has gone into five editions. It is the last boom in books, and, in consequence, it has been difficult for subscribers to procure copies from Mudie's, or whatever other circulating library they affect. Curiosity is naturally aroused about a book which has been so much talked about, and it was with pleasurable feelings of anticipated interest that I opened the book. The interest, however, diminished gradually through the first two volumes, which are singularly devoid of life. The characters are invented and set up to propound certain theories of the author's, and these theories they never fail to illustrate, in season and out of season, by behaving in the most

*"A Yellow Aster." By Iota, Three volumes. Hutchinson & Co., London. 1894.

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