ART ITEMS.

—In the Island of Murano, the seat of the ancient manufactory of glass, we have just held this last autumn a praiseworthy exhibition, with the purpose of reviving that essentially national industry.

—Mr. Layard, on leaving London for Madrid, placed on view in one of the corridors overlooking the Horticultural Gardens, Kensington, his interesting collection of Italian paintings. It is rich in works of the Venetian and Lombard schools immediately preceding Titian's time.

—The fine copies made by photographers of splendid modern engravings do a serious damage to the success of the latter. A great modern work—the copyright of Corregio's Antiope by Teschi—is being shamefully pirated by photographers, and in Parma itself. A subscriber made complaint to the secretary that a costly publication should thus be cheapened and rendered common. In reply, he received an assurance that the abuse had not escaped the observation of the authorities, and that a more efficient law of copyright might be passed and enforced.

—At the Royal Academy, London, is now opened a highly interesting borrowed gallery of 252 pictures by the old and dead masters. Among the principal contributors are the Queen, the Marquis of Bute, the Marquis of Westminster, and Lord Leconfield, the last sending works by Leslie. Also among the contributors are the well-known names of Lady Eastlake, Mr. Thomas Baring, Mr. Ruskin, Mr. Gillott, Mr. Pender, and Mr. Henry Huth—the last lends Holbein's grand portrait of Sir Thomas More, once exhibited at Kensington. Works exhibited are a Holy Family, by Michael Angelo, a profile of the Louvre *Vierge aux Rochers*, by Leonardo, and a copy, by that master's pupil Marco d'Oggione, of the Last Supper, Reynolds's "Tragic Muse," and Gainsborough's "Blue Boy."

—The report of the meeting held by the Art Committee of the Union League Club, on the 23d November last, is furnished us by the kindness of a member, Mr. S. P. Avery. The meeting was held to promote the formation of a great art-museum. Among the addresses that of Prof. Comfort was especially well considered and practical. He pointed out that the present time is a sort of crisis; that private art collections in Europe are being very rapidly absorbed by public museums, which will never let them escape again, and thus most valuable opportunities for securing important and unique works of ancient and modern art are passing away, perhaps forever.

Prof. Comfort likewise indicated, as an encouraging example, that the largest museum extant has been collected entirely within the last fifty years. It is that of Berlin, and is celebrated for its historical series of sculpture, exhibited in the most complete collection of casts in the world. The immense statue-gallery cost but a sum equivalent to 300,000 dollars of our currency, and the cost could be duplicated and sent to us to-day for a far less amount.

—Speaking of casts from the antique, the *Nation* last week had some very just strictures on the contempt with which they are regarded by rather intelligent spectators when they themselves on having seen the original marbles. True, about the antique statue there is a glamour, an adventurous sense of time's buffetings and history's revenges; but in the pure way of art, the cast is a better work than a restored antique, with its patches of divers tints, its conspicuous seams around its limbs, its nose of a different degree of polish or translucency from the face, and all the obvious discrepancies between the ancient and its continuations. The plaster, though of inferior beauty to the half-transparent marble, is homogeneous, and represents the pure form divested of accidents.—One consideration the *Nation* did not find occasion to mention, namely, that a cast has always seems to "sink in" that is, a figure in marble seems narrower than the same shape in chalk, and the limbs of the Apollo appear much more slender than those of the plaster cast of precisely the same dimensions.

—The San Donato collection of Florence, worth ten million francs, will be sold in Paris between the 25th of February and the 28th April. We are indebted to Mr. Avery, likewise, for a translation of the catalogue, which contains some interesting details, and was furnished him by the experts, Messrs. Pull & Mannheim, in advance of the publication at Paris of the list, which will not be issued in time to allow of its insertion here before the beginning of the sales. The collections of San Donato are composed of pictures of the ancient and modern schools, drawings, sculptures, works of art, furniture and curiosities of every quality, which will be sold in a series of ten entirely distinct sales, in a special hall, No. 20 Boulevard des Italiens, at dates carefully indicated in each catalogue. "What traveler (says a writer in the Paris *Chronique*) in passing by Florence has not desired to visit the celebrated villa of San Donato, to which the beautiful promenade of Cascine leads, but not every one may penetrate who wishes; closed to common place curiosity, it opens its doors meanwhile to all the true virtuosos of Italy, whose a great and legitimate reputation in the innumerable *chefs-d'œuvre* which it contains. Nothing has not heard enthusiastic reports of its pictures, statues, precious furniture, arms, crystals, porcelains, enamels, and a crowd of artistic curiosities of all sorts? Ah, well! all these treasures without number are to be sold this winter in Paris, and to be dispersed, we have the assurance, under the hammer of M. Pillet, assisted by Mtd. Petit and Mannheim, who direct this sale, the most extraordinary they have ever been called upon to make. Living away from Florence, where he has not been for more than ten years, settled down in Paris, brother of the *chef-d'œuvre* of a lord too small to receive the extensive collections of San Donato, the prince has resolved to turn over to the public these superb works, which were not created to ornament an abandoned villa.

"This winter we should know, at a period (continues the same letter), the price it is possible to obtain, in the nineteenth century, for Titian's pictures—for San Donato possesses two, most authentic and magnificent, a portrait of the Duc d'Urbin, and a "Venus at the Bath," and Leonardo, one of Sebastian del Piombo, a noble personage, and his own portrait, and a "St. Francis," glowing with ecstatic faith and painted with a ray of the sun; of Paul Veronese, a portrait of *la bella Nani*; of Memmeling, a "Saint Veronica" of perfect grace; besides important works of Carlo Dolci, of Gelli, of Tintoretto, of Ribera. Of French pictures there are—Hesse's "Lazarus rising with his sisters," which Bonington has given the characteristic of exquisite color; the "Jane Grey" placed as pendant to the "Francis I. Hawking," by Schefer, two works which the engraver has made famous; five compositions by Delaroche, remarkable as much for the magic of their color as for their grand disposition; Italian scenes by Leopold Robert; animals by Troyon, eleven pictures by Boucher; a ravishing Tragonard, in which we seem to feel the fresh fragrance of love; two charming compositions of Greuze, and, by the same artist, twenty most alluring heads, each more exquisite than the others, and for which Diderot has not found sufficient exclamations. Among designs and water-colors, there are examples of Decamps, of Johannot, of Isabey, of Beaumont, of Roqueplan," Jewelry, chinn, bronze, lacquer, armor and furniture complete the immense collection. "This is one of the opportunities (remarks the N. Y. *Evening Mail*) which one has not even to be recalled a second time, in order to be put in mind of the great address on the importance of immediate action in regard to the formation of a museum of art in this city. In advance of the organization will not some action be taken by some of our wealthy citizens to combine and raise up a sum of money sufficient to secure such objects as will be indispensable to a museum in this city, and either agree to present such purchases or hold them until funds are raised by the institution? Thus provided, one or two competent persons could be authorized to attend the sale, and besides the years of time gained, from $100,000 or $200,000 double the amount could be saved."

[From the Saturday Review.]

FRIENDSHIP.

If friendship is hard to maintain between man and man, it is still more so between man and woman; so hard, indeed, that most people hold it to be impossible. Yet many women think it feasible; all wish it; and probably a few have proved it. But these are necessarily so few that they cannot be taken as a class, nor their experience accepted as more than the proof of a rare possibility. Still, there are hundreds of women to whom a man's friendship is their ideal of human affection. They do not want the excitement of flirtation, the peril and consequences of serious love-making; they want only the security and assurance of simple friendship; but an intense friendship—none of your vapid general country and universal charity affair—a friendship that means devotion and brotherhood in one, and that insures exclusiveness in its own degree. Not necessarily exclusiveness in all relations, but only in its own; for many of these friendships develop women who are ready cheerfully the fact of the wife, who seldom sympathizes with her husband's platonic attachments; but if the wife will suffer them they will permit her, and make the best of such obstruction as she may come. They are rarely obstruction as she may come. They are rarely Here and there an old family lawyer or doctor, who knows all about their affairs and their people, and has the whole row of household skeletons off by heart, sticks by them through good times and chances of their lives; and the world does not talk, for somehow a long professional connection seems to give a kind of prescriptive right to close personal friendship, which prevents all idea of evil. This is sometimes an old love for the man who married, and makes a good husband enough, retains so much feeling for the old lad of his youth, and probably passing into the fading flower, as to take her affairs in hand, and protect, her interests, perhaps at considerable trouble to himself, and have her constantly to his house like his sister—as he tells his wife—and treat her by her Christian name, and making her almost one of his own family, with simply the housekeeper between. This can be done sometimes with good sense, good temper, and steady principle all around. But even these principle all around. But even these principle all around. But even these