

shadow of doubt. But, considerable as the amount of the prize-money may be, it should be remembered that the great bulk of the fund will be devoted to another purpose, namely, the erection of a suitable building for the reception of the objects to be exhibited. There is no "ground-rent" to be paid. The Government have consented to give a site for the purpose. But, as it appeared, at the meeting held on the 30th of last June, at Buckingham Palace, the cost of erection and use of materials will reach a very heavy amount. One gentleman, Mr. FULLER, named 30,000*l.* as a suitable sum, but Mr. THOMAS CURRIE, a man of experience in such matters, if any may be found, on that occasion declared it as his conviction that not less than 50,000*l.* would be necessary for carrying this part of the design into effect. Builders' estimates are proverbial, and probably a large addition must be made to Mr. CURRIE's calculation before the work is completed. Now, it is just here that there is the greatest chance of jobbery, and of some dirty underhand proceeding for the benefit of individuals. We cannot too early or too strongly impress it on the attention of those who are charged with the organization of the exhibition, that, if they would see the subscription lists filled, every part of their proceedings must be susceptible of the most public, and even of the most carping investigation. They must court, not avoid publicity. They must remember, above all things, that, let them be never so innocent in intention, if there be a hole for a suspicion to creep in, they must prepare themselves for misinterpretation. We do not say this will be the line of conduct of reasonable men, who give themselves the pains to examine carefully into the subject, but, as regards the great mass of the public, suspicion is easily set afloat, and still more easily adopted. We warn them, then, as they would not defeat their own object, that their dealings in reference to the building contract, be not only straightforward, but well-judged. With discretion and honesty of intention let them unite the greatest frankness, and take care that full information of their proceedings is constantly laid before the public, and no doubt all will be well. As far as matters have gone yet, a great point has been obtained. It would be a pity that so meritorious a scheme as the contemplated Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations should fail from any error in judgment on the part of those who are appointed to conduct the design to completion.

We cannot but think, and we say it with the very greatest regret, that his Royal Highness Prince ALBERT has been ill-advised in the first important step which the Society of Arts, under his responsibility, has taken in the matter of the Exhibition of Works of the Arts and Industry.

There are two ways in this country of undertaking and carrying to completion an enterprise of so much national interest and importance. These are, to effect it either through the medium of parliament and of the government, or else by means of an appeal to the public for funds and for support. In the former case a vote of parliament is required, and it would of course be sought by a statement of the views, the ends, and the probable expenditure of such an undertaking. In case of a more direct appeal to the wealth and intelligence of the nation it is usual to do so by means of a committee, consisting of those who interested themselves in the affair and originated it, and who were able to place a certain stake of wealth and responsibility in it.

We are sorry to say that in the present case neither of these modes has been adopted. The originators of the scheme have merely brought their ingenuity and activity, and before proceeding to any great public subscription, or clearly testing the readiness of the public to subscribe, or learning the conditions on which the wealthy public were likely to subscribe, they have at once covered themselves with the mantle of his Royal Highness, and evidently rely more upon his name and influence to raise a subscription, than upon the wants or desires of the great manufacturing interest of England to accomplish this great exhibition.

We must say, we think this in the first place unfair to his Royal Highness, who is brought forward to ask of the country, what the country was very willing to do of itself, without being royally besought. We have no doubt there will be large subscriptions. They ought to have been allowed to come forth as the spontaneous produce of industrial patronage and pride, not as in the present case, the offering of loyalty or attachment to the head of the royal family. We have no doubt that so sincere is the loyalty of this country, that at the call of her MAJESTY or of her royal consort, a million swords or purses would be instantly drawn and laid at their disposal. But these are extreme appeals, and should never be had recourse to except on most vital occasions, and, above all, on occasions requiring them. Now, this was not required by the Exhibition of Industry, even though it were to cost an hundred thousand pounds. However, it was decided otherwise. The Prince was brought forward to make the appeal. And every one looked to the next step, that of a committee of eminent men, in the front rank of science, of influence and of wealth, whose very names would have been a guarantee for a large subscription in the first place, and for its due and trusty management afterwards.

Instead of this, no such committee is collected or named. A royal commission is talked of, indeed, having for its attributes the determining the nature of the prizes, the selection of subjects, and so on. But for the first great preliminary employ of money, calculated at 50,000*l.*, with that the Commission is to have nothing to do. This duty, agreeable or disagreeable, lucrative or otherwise, is undertaken by the Society of Arts. We are really very sorry for this, and it places the Prince before the nation in the very last position that a prudent counsellor, or one acquainted with English habits, would have recommended.

This arrangement having taken place, and all things being comfortably settled, quite "under the rose," the Society of Arts make a first trial of their skill and experience in administration. At the moment of coming before the public with a subscription,

a moment and an act in which the result should have been if not felt, they enter upon a report, which display an utter want of subscription altogether.

First of all, the Society of Arts, in its management and lead, declares that it will be for none of the expenses,—prince and princess,—it adds that it is obviously necessary for the subscription will cover even the pounds necessary for the prizes, and that a contractor, a man who has evidently a better opinion of the subscription than the Society of Arts, will form with him one of those alms only to be met with in the gambling table, and in the hands of MUNDY lay down a hundred or to be lost. We will not say of such a bargain, with which the unbusiness character of Prince ALBERT has been mixed up. For after-times, it would be equal to the Royal Highness to perceive that MUNDY had made a hundred great national exhibition, or ruined by the venture.

In these remarks we have not a word of asking for a subscription of national and European interest, only consulting, but calling into management the leading manufacturers of industry in the country. Arts must not have ventured upon the hands did they not rely upon the name of Prince ALBERT to carry them, and enforce a triumph over every opposition. In this calculation we are correct. Prince ALBERT's name is correct. His whole conduct amongst us has made him attract a feeling of loyalty and attachment which man bears to the QUEEN. But we ought to have wielded or have purpose could have been attained by government, or by the country and industry, and taste. The Society taken to do without either, and to the name of the Prince's name. This sheds of glory and illustration upon the society; but every ray of the kind and impolitically subtracted, from royal brow.