

THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

On the 20th of May, 1867, the "first stone" of the Royal Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences, of which we present an illustration, was laid with all due solemnity and ceremonial by her Majesty the Queen; and now, at the end of little over two years, the vast building is nearly completed, and is only waiting to be covered in by its vast roof to allow of all its interior fittings and arrangements being set up. In form it bears some resemblance to a Roman amphitheater, although its material—namely, red brick faced with terra cotta—goes far to destroy the illusion. Still, it is only justice to the architect to admit that the general effect of his work is both pleasing and imposing. Its magnitude will be best indicated by giving the exact dimensions in figures. The long diameter of the outer wall is 272 feet, the shortest 238 feet, the length between the porches 338 feet, the breadth of the ellipse 332 feet, and the height 135 feet. The interior is arranged to accommodate comfortably an audience of 8,000, to be divided as follows: In the arena, situate in the center of the building, 1,000 can be accommodated for the musical performances, and when the space is not occupied, by a flower show or an industrial exhibition. The amphitheater, which rises gradually all round the arena under the boxes, will hold 1,400, the boxes 1,100, the balcony 2,500, and the gallery 2,000. The boxes have already subscribed for it at \$5,000 each, and a great number of the single seats at \$500, but it is calculated that between 5,000 and 6,000 sittings will still be available as a source of revenue for carrying out the objects of the hall. The building is now complete both as to its outer and inner walls, between which, it should be mentioned, run vast and airy corridors for promenade as well as ingress and egress. The next great work will be the fixing in its place of the immense roof of iron and glass, for the purposes of which the whole interior of the building is at present filled with a perfect forest of scaffolding. This roof will be the greatest span of any work of the kind yet erected. Its long diameter will be 219 feet 4 inches; short, 185 feet 4 inches—an immense weight, it will be said, to be self-sustained. As, however, the calculations have all been made for lead, where glass is only to be used, there is every reason to calculate on its strength and durability.

The only remarkable feature remaining to be noticed is the great organ in course of erection by Mr. Willis, the builder of the organ in St. George's Hall, Liverpool. Its dimensions will be 75 feet wide at the base, 44 feet in depth, 60 feet in width, and high 100 feet. There are to be 112 steps, and the bellows is to be kept going by two steam engines of from 6 to 8-horse power each. The largest organ at present known is the great organ at the Crystal Palace, but in the Kensington instrument the smallest pipe in the front will be longer than the longest pipe in the interior of its Sydenham predecessor. It is expected that the whole work—building, organ, and approaches—will be finished so as to open simultaneously with the projected International Industrial Exhibition in 1871, and that one of the earliest uses to which it will be put will be the ceremonial distribution of the prizes which will arise out of these exhibitions. The entire programme of its contemplated uses comprehends congresses, national and international, of science and art, performances of music on the grandest scale, distributions of prizes by public bodies, art and science conversazioni, agricultural, horticultural, and industrial exhibitions, and the occasional display of pictures and sculpture. For this latter purpose there will be an immense top-lighted gallery running all round the hall. It is satisfactory to be able to add that, in a building which is intended to accommodate assemblages of 8,000 persons, due care has been taken to provide ample facilities for entrance and exit.—*London Artizan.*

Substitute for Fire-Brick.

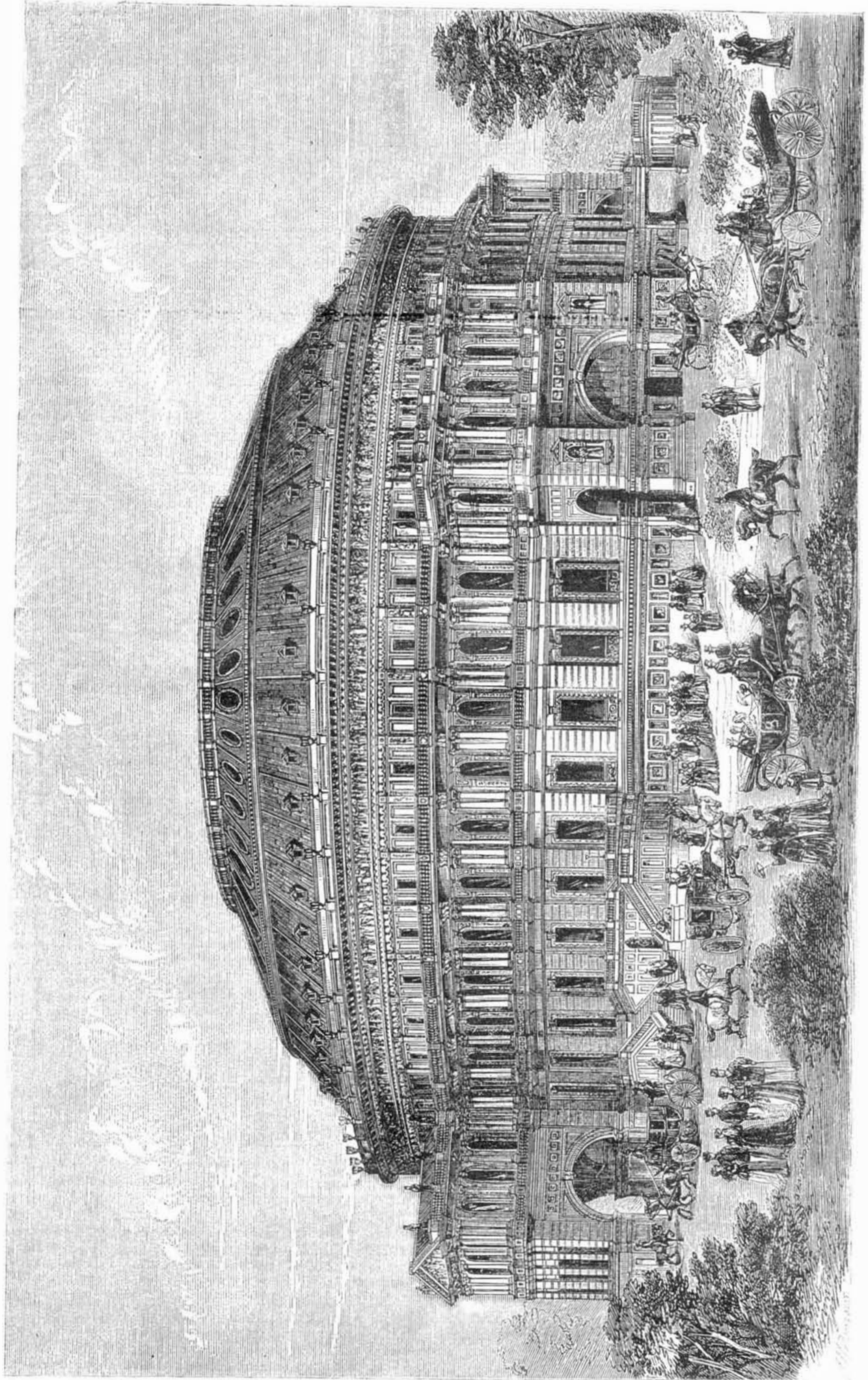
Improvements in the method of using and applying certain materials in an unmanufactured state, in order to form a substitute for fire-bricks or fire-goods hitherto employed in the construction of furnaces in which fire-bricks, tiles, and

other various forms of fire-goods are usually applied, have, according to the *Mechanics Magazine*, been patented in England. Instead of using fire-bricks, lumps, stones, tiles, or other forms of materials or compounds, in construction, burnt or unburnt, powdered ganister stone, quartz, sand, mica, sandstone, or other silicious material, plumbago, lime, baryta, steatite, and magnesia, are used, alone or separately, or in varied proportions with fire-clays, or with each other, or with silicious or other solutions, mixed or not with hair, fiber, saw-dust, shavings, or pulverized coke, or with other analogous materials. In applying the materials in a plastic state, wire may be used as a supporter, or a skeleton or light framework

not be necessary to keep large stocks of varied shapes of bricks, the loss of material and labor in making joints will be saved, while, in case of actual wear, additions can be supplied internally or externally to the structure so that it may be easily and speedily repaired.

Death from the Bursting of a Soda Bottle.

The *Medical and Surgical Reporter* contains an account of a death caused by the bursting of a soda bottle, published to show the terrible nature of accidents incidental to the process of filling glass bottles with carbonic acid water, and with the hope that some additional security may be suggested for



ROYAL ALBERT HALL, SOUTH KENSINGTON, LONDON.

may be used to support the materials while in course of application to the furnace until the material is dry enough. Thus the furnace is built entirely of such materials in their raw or plastic state in connection with brick or other walls, the object being the substitution for fire-goods, and their consequent cost of manufacture, fuel, carriage, and skilled labor, of unmanufactured materials that can be used and applied by cheap labor more speedily and economically. Thus time and expense will be saved in construction, and it will

the better protection of those engaged in the business. The large French-glass soda bottles, five sixteenths of an inch thick, are at present filled with a patent French apparatus with a pressure of 125 pounds. The bottle is surmounted by a metallic cap that closes with a spring when full. The workmen have heretofore been accustomed to protect the face only with a delicate wire screen, having the entire body exposed to those terrible missiles, that are liable at any moment to be hurled with deadly violence against their persons.

