



"FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY."—SCULPTURED BY J. THOMAS.

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MR. JOHN THOMAS, the well-known sculptor and architect, exhibits at the Royal Academy three fine works, "Faith," "Hope," and "Charity," which we engrave. They have been executed for a mausoleum now being erected in the Necropolis, Glasgow, for the family of John Houldsworth, Esq. The mausoleum is of large dimensions, of a severe and classical style of architecture, and pure in taste. The entrance is closed with handsome bronze doors, on the outside of which, on bold pedestals, will be placed the statues of "Hope" and "Charity." The interior of the mausoleum is of polished red granite. The group of "Faith" will be placed on an altar pedestal, and lighted from above, through squares of thick glass of a golden hue, with a bright star cut in each. We consider these sculptures to be amongst the best of Mr. Thomas's productions. The "Hope" is noble in character, firm, and dignified in attitude. The "Charity" is replete with kind and benevolent sentiment. In her arms a child is nestling, upon which her face beams with tender affection. The "Faith" is a finely-conceived figure; the face upturned, with a divine expression, as fixed on heavenly works. Two spiritual beings kneel on either side at her feet. The drapery of these figures is gracefully arranged and truthful in texture, and the chiseling of the whole masterly and delicate. When these works are fixed in their positions the mausoleum will be acknowledged as a distinguished ornament to the great northern city.

MR. ALDRIDGE, THE AFRICAN TRAGEDIAN.

WE this week engrave a portrait of Mr. Aldridge, better known as the "African tragedian." His impersonations of the characters to which his colour peculiarly suits him are those of *Zanga*, *Shylock*, and *Othello*. Mr. Aldridge has just returned from the Continent after a long and successful tour of professional engagements. At Sax-Meiningen he was presented by the reigning Sovereign (the brother of the late Queen Adelaide) with the Nassau gold medal of the order of the Royal House of Saxony, and he has also been made member of several scientific and literary Continental institutions. In 1853, on the occasion of Mr. Aldridge's first appearance in his professional capacity at Berlin, his performances were honoured by the presence of their Majesties the King and Queen, the Prince and Princess of Prussia, and the whole of the illustrious Court, and was presented by his Majesty Frederick William IV. (the founder, president, and patron) with the society's massive gold medal. It bears on one side the medallion in relief of the King, surrounded by figures emblematic of the Arts and Sciences, Poetry, Painting, Sculpture, &c. On the obverse is depicted the embellishment representing the Royal Museum of Berlin.

At Sax-Meiningen, last January, after his performance of *Shylock*, Baron von Tillich, the General Intendant, by command of the reigning Sovereign, presented Mr. Aldridge with the Royal Saxon House Order, with the medal in gold; and the month following he was introduced, kissed hands, and received his diploma from his Royal Highness. What enhances this great distinction is, that Mr. Aldridge is the only actor, native or foreign, so decorated. It is, moreover, expressly stated in his diploma that he is permitted to wear the medal next in order to the members of the Royal house of Saxony, and it is accompanied by a beautiful decoration in the shape of a Maltese Cross in gold. The best proof, therefore, that can be given of the appreciation of his merits as an actor and a gentleman by those foreign Potentates is to be found in the fact that he has

been presented with those costly medals and the authentic credentials by which they are accompanied. Mr. Aldridge's career in life has been very remarkable. He was originally intended for the



IRA ALDRIDGE, THE AFRICAN TRAGEDIAN, AS "OTHELLO."

Church; but, having no vocation for that profession, he turned his attention to the stage, and made his debut in New York, in the character of *Rolla*, and was loudly applauded. He then came to this country, and had the good fortune to achieve honours at the Glasgow University; after which he came to London (having still the old leaven of theatrical propensity), and was immediately engaged at several of our metropolitan theatres, at which his impersonations of the characters of *Othello*, *Gambia*, *Zanga*, and other characters suited to his complexion, were so successful that he rose rapidly in histrionic fame; and now in every town of note on the Continent his merits are really and substantially appreciated.

Mr. Aldridge was engaged at Sadler's Wells Theatre, where he performed several leading characters, and then left that establishment for the Olympic. At the conclusion of this latter engagement he withdrew from the stage and went through that course of study and practice which he deemed essential to the acquirement of a sound metropolitan reputation. He then entered on a provincial tour, and acted in succession at Brighton, Chichester, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Exeter, &c. In each of those towns his reception was enthusiastic in the extreme; and, his reputation as a tragedian having reached the capital, he received an engagement from Mr. Calcraft to perform in Dublin, and during his engagement the newspapers spoke in the highest terms of his great and remarkable talents as an actor. He subsequently ran through his list of favourite characters—viz., *Zanga*, *Rolla*, *Gambia*, *Othello*, *Alhambra*, *Mungo*, *Shylock*, *Hassan*, *Fiesco*—in all of which he added to his rapidly-increasing reputation. During this period Edmund Kean came to Dublin, and (having seen Mr. Aldridge play), with that good nature which was so conspicuous a part of his character, gave him a letter of introduction to the manager of the Bath theatre, couched in very complimentary terms. At Belfast Mr. Charles Kean played *Iago* to Mr. Aldridge's *Othello*, and he played *Aboan* to that gentleman's *Oronoko*. Among the testimonials which he received from distinguished members of the profession was one from Mr. Sheridan Knowles. After the fulfilment of several provincial engagements, Mr. Aldridge received an offer from Mr. Laporte, at that time the lessee of the Italian Opera and of the Covent-garden Theatre, and made his appearance at the latter house, April, 1833, in his usual popular characters, and at the fall of the curtain he was called for and enthusiastically applauded; indeed, nothing could have been more complete than his success on those occasions. While performing at Manchester, in 1834, he received a highly complimentary note from Madame Malibran, who stated that never in the course of her professional career had she witnessed a more interesting and powerful performance. In 1848 he accepted another engagement at the Surrey, and made his appearance there in the character of *Zanga*. Upon this occasion the press was unanimous in its expression of unqualified approbation of his acting. As both a tragic and a comic actor Mr. Aldridge's talents are undeniably great. In tragedy he has a solemn intensity of style, bursting occasionally into a blaze of fierce invective or passionate declamation; while the dark shades of his face become doubly sombre in their thoughtful aspect; a nightlike gloom is spread over them, and an expression more terrible than paler lineaments can readily assume. In farce he is exceedingly amusing; the ebony becomes polished; the coal emits sparks. His face is the faithful index of his mind; and, as there is not a darker frown than his, there is not a broader grin. The ecstasy of his long shrill note in "Opossum up a gum-tree" can only be equalled by the agony of his cry of despair over the body of *Desdemona*. In 1852 he went