Brussels museum—with the above signature are remark­able instances of the perfection attained by the artist when he may be supposed to have been scarcely twenty. His touch is of the rarest delicacy, his colour at once gay and harmonious. Both Waagen and Smith express the opinion that the works painted from 1645 to 1650 speak most highly of the master’s abilities. We may venture to add that a considerable number of earlier productions would have been sufficient to immortalize his name. He was little over thirty when the Antwerp guild of St George enabled him to paint the marvellous picture which ulti­mately found its way to the Hermitage Gallery in St Peters­burg,—the Jubilee Meeting of the Civic Guards, in honour of their old commander, Godfrey Sneyders. Correct to the minutest detail, yet striking in effect, the scene, under the rays of a glorious sunshine, displays an astonishing amount of acquired knowledge and natural good taste. This paint­ing, one of forty among many of the master’s earlier and later productions,@@1 leads us to mention another work of the same year (1643), now in the National Gallery, London (No. 952), an equally beautiful repetition of which, dated 1646, belongs to the duke of Bedford. A hundred and fifty figures are resting after a pilgrimage to some holy shrine or some miraculous well. The hungry travellers are waiting for the meal which is being prepared for them in several huge caldrons. Truth in physiognomy, distribution of groups, the beautiful effect of light and shade, command our warmest admiration. A work like this, says Waagen, stamps its author as the greatest among painters of his class. That, however, a subject of the kind should have been accepted as a “feast” (see the National Gallery *Catalogue)* may tend to prove how little, from the first, Teniers thought of dramatizing. Frankness in expression and freedom in attitude certainly guided his preference in the choice of a model, and we may even suppose him to have occasionally exaggerated both. He seems anxious to have it known that, far from indulging in the coarse amusements of the boors he is fond of painting, he himself lives in good style, looks like a gentleman, and behaves as such. He never seems tired of showing the turrets of his chateau of Perck, and in the midst of rustic merry-makings we often see his family and himself received cap in hand by the joyous peasants. We may also observe that he has a certain number of favourite models, the constant recur­rence of which is a special feature of his works. We even meet them in a series of life-size portrait-like figures in the Doria Pamphili Gallery in Rome,@@2 as well as in a picture belonging to Mr H. R. Hughes, and the man here repre­sented as a fishmonger is unmistakably the painter’s brother, Abraham Teniers, judging from the portrait Edelinck has left us of this artist.

Teniers was chosen by the common council of Antwerp to preside over the guild of painters in 1644. The arch­duke Leopold William, who had assumed the government of the Spanish Netherlands, being a great lover of art, employed Teniers not only as a painter but as keeper of the collection of pictures he was then forming. With the rank and title of “ ayuda de camara,” Teniers took up his abode in Brussels shortly after 1647. Immense sums were spent in the acquisition of paintings for the archduke. A number of valuable works of the Italian masters, now in the Belvedere in Vienna, came from Leopold’s gallery after having belonged to Charles I. and the duke of Buckingham. De Bie (1661) states that Teniers was some time in London, collecting pictures for the duke of Fuensaldaña, then acting as Leopold’s lieutenant in the Netherlands. Paintings in

Madrid, Munich, Vienna, and Brussels have enabled art critics to form an opinion of what the imperial residence was at the time of Leopold, who is represented as con­ducted by Teniers and admiring some recent acquisition. No picture in the gallery is omitted, every one being in­scribed with a number and the name of its author, so that the *ensemble* of these paintings might serve as an illus­trated inventory of the collection.@@3 Still more interesting is a canvas, now in the Munich gallery, where we see Teniers at work in a room of the palace, with an old peasant as a model and several gentlemen looking on. When Leopold returned to Vienna, Teniers’s task ceased ; in fact, the pictures also travelled to Austria, and a Flemish priest, himself a first-rate flower painter, Van der Baren, became keeper of the archducal gallery. Teniers never­theless remained in high favour with the new governor- general, Don Juan, a natural son of Philip IV. The prince was his pupil, and De Bie tells us he took the likeness of the painter’s son. Honoured as one of the greatest painters in Europe, Teniers seems to have made himself extremely miserable through his aristocratic leanings. Shortly after the death of his wife in 1656 he married Isabella de Fren, daughter of the secretary of the council of Brabant, and strove his utmost to prove his right to armorial bearings. In a petition to the king he reminded him that the honour of knighthood had been bestowed upon Rubens and Van Dyck. The king at last declared his readiness to grant the request, but on the express condition that Teniers should give up selling his pictures. The condition was not complied with ; but it may perhaps account for the master’s activity in favour of the foundation in Antwerp of an academy of fine arts to which artists alone should be admitted, whereas the venerable guild of St Luke made no difference between art and handicraft : carvers, gilders, bookbinders, stood on an even footing with painters and sculptors, however great their talent.@@4 There were great rejoicings in Antwerp when, on 26th January 1663, Teniers came from Brussels with the royal charter of the academy, the existence of which was due entirely to his personal initiative.

Teniers died in Brussels on 25th April 1690.@@5 A picture in the Munich gallery (No. 906), dated 1680, represents him as an alchemist, oppressed with a burden of age beyond his years. From this date we hear more of his doings as a picture-dealer than as a painter, which most probably gave birth to the legend of his having given himself out as deceased in order to get higher prices for his works. David, his eldest son, a painter of talent and reputation, died in 1685. One of this third Teniers’s pictures—St Dominic Kneeling before the Blessed Virgin, dated 1666—is still to be found in the church at Perck. As well as his father, he contributed many patterns to the celebrated Brussels tapestry looms. Cornelia, the painter’s daughter, married John Erasmus Quellin, a well-known artist (1634-1715).

Smith’s *Catalogue Raisonné* gives descriptions of over 700 paint­ings accepted as original productions of Teniers. Few artists ever worked with greater ease, and some of his smaller pictures—land­scapes with figures—have been termed “afternoons,” not from their subjects, but from the time spent in producing them. The museums in Madrid, St Petersburg, Vienna, Munich, Dresden, Paris, London, and Brussels have more than 200 pictures by Teniers. In the United Kingdom 150 may be found in private hands, and many other examples are to be met with in private collections throughout Europe. Although the spirit of many of these works

@@@1 The Hermitage *Catalogue* ascribes to Abraham Teniers the portrait of a bishop. This painting is, however, by David, and represents the celebrated bishop of Ghent, Anthony Triist, with his brother Francis, a Franciscan monk.

@@@2 Under the name of Weeninx.

@@@3 It was not until recently that the MS. inventory of this collection was discovered among the papers of the prince of Schwartzenberg in Vienna. It was published in 1883 by Adolf Berger. In 1658 Teniers published 243 etchings after the best Italian works of Leopold William’s collection, which, with the portraits of the archduke and Teniers, were brought together as a volume in 1660, under the title *El Teatro de Pinturas.* @@@4 The separation was only obtained in 1773.

@@@5 The date is often wrongly given as 1694 or 1695.