

Ancient Chairs

A PORTION OF DR. FIGDOR'S COLLECTION

praiseworthy. A set of mahogany chairs upholstered in dark tapestry and a stained-glass fire-screen by Nieuwenhuis, a screen decorated with pearl fowls by Disselhof, a cushion in a neutral rose tint of leather with pink and sage silk inlay, by Mrs. Hingst de Clercq, and examples of the "Rozenburg," "Thistle" and "Delft" pottery, were among the most charming exhibits in this field.

DR. FIGDOR'S COLLECTION OF OLD CHAIRS, VIENNA. BY A. S. LEVETUS.

It will be seen from the photograph reproduced here of one of Dr. Figdor's rooms that he has not confined himself to collecting works of art of any particular period or of any particular branch, though we must confine ourselves in this article to chairs alone. Of these Dr. Figdor has been successful in collecting nearly a hundred and fifty different specimens dating from the twelfth to the seventeenth century. They help to furnish his rooms, with the other treasures he has gathered together, for he

lives among them, and the warmth of the home atmosphere is of inestimable value as compared with the inevitable coldness in museums, where one is warned every moment "not to touch." Besides these he has a number of old pictures, miniatures, illuminations, and other helps to the study of how our progenitors in the days of old passed their days within doors. In the study of benches and chairs such records are of great assistance, for articles that could be easily moved about from place to place soon suffered destruction, while heavy furniture, wardrobes, and suchlike have come down to us in fair numbers. Damaged chairs were as much in the way with our ancestors as with ourselves, and so passed from lord to peasant, as did also other movables, such, for instance, as wedding-coffers, many beautiful specimens of which have been found in Continental stables, where they were used for storing hay or corn for horses, in the same way as they are often used in England.

The chair, though not frequent in olden times, always possessed a peculiar dignity as the place of honour; it had its prerogatives, and demanded respect. Mary Queen of Scots prepared herself to