ART EXHIBITIONS.

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT SOCIETY.

In the fourth annual exhibition of the National Portrait Society, now open at the Grosvenor Gallery, 51A, New Bond-street, there is not much to write about. This is due mainly to the presence of several canvases which have been previously shown in London and already noticed in our columns. Among the number are Mr. William Strang's vigorous portrait of himself, "The Red Fez" (97), and "The Mirror" (70), also a forceful work. The latter would be better, we think, were the attendant-dresser out of the picture. There seems to be insufficient room for her in the space between the girl in white and the background; besides, she disturbs the coherence of the design. The principal figure is admirably painted.

Near to "The Red Fez" hang three pictures by Mr. Augustus E. John, which are amusing in a tiresome way. His portrait of "Miss Iris Tree" (99), which is beautiful in colour, may resemble that lady, but we "hae oor doots," the painful posturing is so like the usual posturing of Mr. John's female models in his droll comments on Mid-Renaissance pictorial types. The "Two Disciples" (98) takes us farther back to the mummy portraits of Greco-Roman days, while the "Fisher Lad" (100), with the luminous profile and pleasant colour, brings us back again to the Fifteenth Century and Piero della Francesca. One day, perhaps, Mr. John will permanently lay aside his retrospective spectacles.

Mr. W. Russell's "Miss K. Mayer" (101) is cleverly but too deliberately constructed; "The Nu: Femme brune" (105), by M. Armand Rassenfosse, is manipulated in wax to a dead inflexible surface, which forms a strong contrast to the pliant handling in M. J. Ensor's "La Femme du nez retroussé" (110). This pliancy, however, becomes somewhat loose in M. Ensor's larger picture "Musique Russe" (194), which is, nevertheless, harmonious in colour and faithful in characterisation. Mr. W. J. Leech's portrait of "Captain C. J. F. Leech, R.F.A." (76) is an old work, but its sterling qualities make it once more welcome. Mr. Philip Connard's "William Cleverly Alexander, Esq." (71) is happily expressive; the trickiness of the "Poet," by Mr. F. C. B. Cadell, is emphasised by the sounder technique and sentiment of Mrs. Laura Knight's "Mallows" (74). Mr. John Lavery is not at his best in either of his contributions, nor is Mr. Fiddes Watt guilty of self-emulation. Mr. Walter Bayes justifies his new manner in the clever masonry of the planes and harmonious colour of "K.B. in Red" (128), and these qualities are scarcely less certain, if differently presented, in Mrs. Betty Fagan's "Will Fagan and Friend" (137).

Mr. Howard Somerville is responsible for two portraits (141 and 178) that reveal sincerity of motive and promise rather than originality; and Mr. P. A. de Laszlo's talent is best displayed in his portraits of "The Dowager Lady Leconfield" (125) and "Sir Philip Sassoon, Bart., M.P." (120).

Among other portraits that attract are "Madame" by Mr. Ambrose McEvoy, the "Children of the Right Hon. Reginald McKenna, P.C., M.P." (122), by Mr. Harrington Mann, "Miss Katherine Robb" (119) by Mr. Oswald Birley, the charming "Panel Portrait" by Miss Madeline M. McDonald, "The Vicar" (209) by Mr. Gerald Festus Kelly, which is better hung than it was at the Royal Academy, and Mrs. Laura Knight's delightful "Bob" (89). The statuary by MM. Rik Wonters and Victor Rousseau is accomplished.

BRITISH MUSIC FESTIVAL.