

For

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ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY.

Features of the New Exhibition.

PORTRAITURE AND FIGURES.

A general survey of the exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy, which opens to the public on Saturday, does not reveal any sensational departure from precedent. The space at the disposal of the Council has not been curtailed this year, as last, by the hanging of large Continental pictures on a scale to exclude meritorious work by the younger artists.

The loan works this year are comparatively few, and play their due part in adding to the interest of the exhibition. A large picture in the main gallery by Burne Jones, from the Liverpool Corporation Gallery, perhaps reveals nothing new about the eminent pre-Raphaelite which the ordinary visitor does not know. The Whistler loan picture, on the other hand, has a distinct modernity and freshness of interest. Many will be interested to see Sir James Guthrie's "The Stonebreaker," painted when the former President of the Academy was under the influence of Bastien-Le Page, with its rendering of the hardy independent workman type, less familiar now in Scotland than it used to be.

A first glance suggests that more use might have been made of the wall space without overcrowding. There are still complaints that the younger generation are not getting adequate participation in the exhibition. That is a matter on which, without the facilities of the Hanging Committee, no opinion can be ventured. The representation of the Academicians and Associates is fully up to the standard of previous years. There is, of course, inevitably much that is merely repetition. On the other hand, there are indications of an increasing sureness of execution and widening of the vision on the part of several individual artists.

Portraiture Exhibits.

The portraits of Mr Fiddes Watt, who shows for the first time since his election as an Academician, are of the reliable character which his work in the past leads one to expect. His "Lord Ashmore" is capable and admirable in likeness, and its fidelity in rendering character without suggesting any great inspiration. Mr David Alison, R.S.A., enhances his reputation for portraiture by this year's exhibits. The portrait of his fellow Academician, "Pittendrieh MacGillivray, Esq., L.L.D.," is a forceful rendering of character; while for suavity, and its pleasing colour harmony and nerve, his three-quarter length portrait of "Mrs William Reid" makes an interesting and attractive exhibit.

Mr Malcolm Gavin, A.R.S.A., is strongly represented with three portraits which have style and refined colour. His portrait of "Miss Stewart" has both restraint and richness, while that of "Dr Devon," of the Prison Commission, has unmistakable vitality. Capable work is also shown by Mr Henry Kerr, R.S.A., whose portrait in oils of "Wm. Cuthbertson, Esq.," with the head well modelled, strikes one as truthful and convincing; Mr John Bowie, A.R.S.A.; Mr Wm. Walls, R.S.A., in a dainty and appealing rendering of "Sydney Easterbrook"; Miss Dorothy Johnston, whose "Mrs E. W. Paterson" has an agreeable air of serenity. A notable portraiture exhibit on loan is P. A. de Laszlo's "Mrs Blackie," with its remarkable vitality and dexterity in the rendering of the dress fabrics. "Sir Ludovic Grant," a presentation portrait by Mr Glyn W. Philpot, R.A., is prominently hung in one of the smaller rooms.