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BENEVOLENCE.

AMATEUR ART EXHIBITION.

Mrs. Baldwin opened the Royal Amateur Art Exhibition at 12, Belgrave-square, yesterday. The ceremony took place in the fine dining-room, the walls of which are hung with family portraits. Countess Bathurst, who lent the house, said what pleasure it gave the committee to welcome Mrs. Baldwin there, and hoped that she had been pleased with the beautiful things in the exhibition. Mrs. Baldwin made a short but effective speech, in which she expressed her opinion that the arts were a gracious gift from Heaven, and that she approached all fine art with awe and reverence. She said that she was feeling rather like a swimmer about to plunge into an unknown pool, and greatly fearing to go beyond her depth. Painting and authorship were the chief arts, she thought, because they went on through generations.

Sir Frank Dicksee, president of the Royal Academy, said that he had not supposed that he was to give an address until he saw it in the newspapers, and that he had prepared nothing. What had impressed him most in a hurried round of the exhibits was the absence of any following of transient fashion and the sanity of the art expressed. The present-day fashions, he thought, would not provide portraits which would be a grace to future generations. If ladies liked to have their waists appear where artists knew their hips to be it would be unwise so to paint them, and if the artist really loved his art he would not do it. Sir Frank also spoke of the necessity for the study of technique, as obligatory in art as grammar in literature. He then proceeded to give the awards which, he said, he had not judged nor paid for, therefore all the pleasure and honour were his. Mr. de Laszlo had acted as judge for painting and experts for the needlework and handicraft sections.

Mrs. Baldwin wore a long tunic dress of dark blue crêpe de Chine, the front of soft red crêpe de Chine, fastened with a blue and red enamel buckle. A hat of blue silk was worn, trimmed with dark blue ostrich feathers. Countess Bathurst was in golden brown velvet and crêpe de Chine, and had a brown velvet hat with brown cross ospreys sewn flat round the crown. A long darker brown cloth coat with leopard skin collar and cuffs was worn. The Duchess of Rutland was not present to receive her prize. The Duchess of Wellington, who was in dark brown and wore a black hat trimmed with ostrich feathers and having the brim lined with pearl grey, was on the committee chairs beside Mrs. Baldwin, and with Lady Ermytrude Malet, all in black, near her.

The Marchioness of Sligo, in dark blue, with a black ribbon trimmed straw hat, acted as chairman. Mrs. Anthony Wingfield called out the names of the prize-winners, among whom was Grace Countess of Wemyss for a charming little statuette called "Puppies"—a Georgian dandy with a small spaniel under each arm. This little work had a narrow escape, for, on a window being opened, an embroidered picture was blown down on the dainty little model. The glass was broken, but the "Puppies" remained intact. Lady Danesfort won a silver medal. Mrs. Baird had a special prize for a needlework picture of Braemar, and she exhibited another of Deeside. There were too many prizes and certificates to enumerate. Sir Frank Dicksee had something nice to say to every winner.

A wonderful panel of needlework which hung over the baluster of the first-floor landing reaching more than half-way down and more than two yards wide was the work of Mr. Bowring Hanbury, who had never previously exhibited. He said it had taken him six months to do. Many of the ladies replied that it would have taken them six years. Among others present were:

The Duchess of Buckingham and Chandos (herself an artist of ability, who was wearing a long, Paisley-pattern, fur-trimmed coat and a brown velvet hat trimmed with brown feathers), Lady Susan Birch, Lady Ada Boyd, Lady Inglefield (who, with Mrs. Hornsby Drake, was showing Buckinghamshire lace), Lady (Francis) Lloyd, Lord Leigh, the Dowager Lady Cranworth, Lady Huntingfield, the Hon. Mrs. Sidney Marsham, Florence Lady Garvagh and Miss Burrell, Mrs. Sharman Crawford, Mrs. Francis Brenton and Miss Eileen Brenton, Mr. Harold Lowther, the Hon. Lady Burn, Mrs. Hussey, Mrs. Ho't Macpherson, Mrs. Leeming, Mrs. George Pinckard (who bought a pot of most realistic blue hyacinths made out of compressed cotton-wool), Lady Cory, Mr. R. G. B. Lombe, Lady Salter, Lady Struthers, Miss Bradshaw, Lady Dallas, Mrs. Ernest Farquhar, Dame Alice Godman, Mrs. Christie Miller, Miss Anne Tennant, and many more.

The exhibition will be open to-day and to-morrow, from twelve-six, admission 2s 6d. The Loan Collection (1s extra) is of etuis, clasps, buckles, and mirrors of antique and historic interest. The charities benefiting are the East London Nursing Society, the Infant Welfare Centre, Stepney, and the Working Ladies' Guild.