

Extract from
DUNDEE COURIER.

Date

SCOTTISH ACADEMY
PICTURESNotable Exhibits by
Local Artists

By the Courier Art Critic.

The Ninety-Ninth Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy greets the wanderer from Dundee with a friendly gesture, for, if he enters on the left, the first picture he encounters is Sargent's trenchant portrait of "Provost Brownlee." It would be too much to say that this picture, like the solitary "Jock" in the Wiltshire Regiment, had been "put in to stiffen up the battalion." Sargent was, of course, an H.R.S.A., and the Academy had a certain claim on the picture. But on its hanging there was no thought that it would figure as a memorial to the great American artist, and "The Corporation of the City of Dundee" is fortunate indeed in being the permanent owner of so virile a work.

This portrait of the ex-Provost is not the only presentment of a distinguished Dundonian, for in the next room the "Edwin Scrymgeour, Esq.," of Mr John Revel looks down from the walls. "Looks down" is the proper term, the picture being rather "skyed," perhaps by reason of its pervading blue tone. This insistent hue, which is repeated in another picture by Mr Revel, is redeemed by the arresting attitude of the orator and the poetical background of the Law and the Old Steeple.

The Lure of the Shawl.

It is a fearful thing, if one is merely a man, to look around the portraits of men and compare them with those of the women. What a drab lot are most of the men! There is a famous poet here attired in clothes so seedy they would be despised by a bagman, and when a male portrait is telling at all it is by virtue of "character" instead of "beauty." The hopelessness of trousers has baffled even Orpen. But throw round the shoulders of your women one of the now fashionable shawls and you have softness, richness, colour all at once, besides something quite undated and enduring.

In his portrait of "Mrs Chichester Crookshank" Laszlo has demonstrated this to admiration, the gorgeous shawl in its wonderful texture challenging interest with its beautiful wearer. Mr David Alison, who is happiest with men, and has a "G. Washington Browne" full of vigour and breadth, also enlists the shawl in his feminine portraiture with pleasing results. Mr Henry Kerr, generally at home with a man, seems to have found "R. MacGregor Mitchell, Esq., K.C.," too youthful a lawyer to make a characteristic study—one must go to Raeburn's "Lord Newton" to get the real vintage—but his water-colour portrait of "Miss Mary Morton" is handled with rare freedom, and radiates youthful freshness and irresistible charm.

More artful, but perhaps the cleverest piece of portraiture on the walls, is William Nicholson's superb "Mrs Curle." By the device of placing his sitter at a dinner-table, the artist has surrounded her with choice flowers and sparkling glass, exquisitely painted, and given her the animation of conversation. The colour scheme is reminiscent of Orchardson, with something of Orchardson stateliness and reserve.

Charming Childhood.

In that borderland between figure study and portraiture Mr David Foggie, now an Associate of the Academy, shows three admirable studies, "The Revel Dress," having a Spanish note, and its rich reds and black making a strong colour scheme. Mr Stewart Carmichael sends also portraiture, a dreamy-eyed "Rachel," as "beautiful and well favoured" as her Biblical namesake.

Cliff-top children are not altogether neglected by Mr Gemmell Hutchison, but he has come indoors with his "Goldfishes," two little maids and a goldfish bowl, and his "Reflections," a girl in tomato-colour dress with book in hand; both are radiant studies of light. Most bewitching also are the children in Mr Jack Orr's "Dancing Lesson," two children in a daffodil wood footing it to the music of the god Pan, who has materialised out of a hazel tree; a delightful spring-time idyll!

Among landscapes one could not possibly miss Mr Maclauchlan Milne's "Ramatuella, Old Saracen Town." It has the rare honour of being placed on the end wall above a "Still Life" by Mr Frank Brangwyn, and the contrast is piquant—the Brangwyn opulent in deep blues and purples, the landscape on fire with the warm colours of the South.

Glorious Scotland.

Then, lest we should think that all the beautiful places are in foreign lands, comes a group of Scottish painters who have felt the glamour of their own homeland. Mr David Gauld can take a few whitewashed gables with a church tower and clothe the scene with magic light, or, as he does in his "Granary," make a dream picture out of an old mill by the waterside. Mr W. M. Frazer finds a "Misty Morning at Newburgh" full of restful beauty. Mr J. Whitelaw Hamilton covers his canvas with broad swathes of colour, and they resolve themselves into rich golden landscapes like his "Autumn, Glen Spean." The broad Spey flowing softly among the far-rolling Cairngorms finds an interpreter in Mr R. B. Nisbet when he leaves for a time his Perthshire home.

Local Artist's Work.

Scottish landscape is still in safe hands, and an enthusiasm for art is not confined to the larger centres. Among the greater canvases are tiny gems. Mr John W. Bennett, Markinch, is represented by a good interior, "Fisherman's Store"; Miss Constable, Blairgowrie, by an attractive "Going to Work." Miss Huntington, St Andrews, has essayed a very difficult task, the painting of a portrait against a background of tressis

"Fisherman's Store"; Miss Constable, Blairgowrie, by an attractive "Going to Work." Miss Huntington, St Andrews, has essayed a very difficult task, the painting of a portrait against a background of tressis work, and carried it off with notable success. The "Burning Weeds" of Mr James Watson, Broughty Ferry, is a familiar subject treated freshly and with delightful colour. In the Etchings Room are also some of the work of Mr Malcolm Patterson, St Andrews, twin studies of "Ludford Bridge," and the Water Colour Room is enriched by three drawings by Mr Andrew Gamley, Pittenweem. The most striking exhibit in the Sculpture Hall is the fine "Victory" designed by Mr H. S. Gamley, Edinburgh, for the War Memorial, Montrose.

Post-Impressionism.

A very notable point in a review of the galleries is the scant evidence of any influence from the French or British Post-Impressionistic painters. In other quarters there are signs of reaction, and to paint an orange square is no longer taken as a proof of genius beyond the range of a mere "representationist." A landscape by Mr S. J. Peplow and a "Still Love" by Mr Leslie Hunter are characteristic of the school, but otherwise Scottish art remains on the whole conservative.

Some Masterpieces.

A number of notable pictures remain still to be mentioned. Some of them are loan pictures, and all are by men of such outstanding qualities that their names alone indicate things of enduring loveliness. There is a tender, dreamy study by Eugene Carriere entitled "Maternite"; a grim, impressive, and amazingly clever "Shrine," by Mr James Pryde; and a wonderful "Baths of Caracalla," glowing in golden sunlight, by Sir D. Y. Cameron. Mr James Paterson is seen in many moods, in a delightfully sunny "Culross" and a powerful "Back of the Coolins, Skye." Venice in moonlight is mysteriously revealed by Mr Sydney Lee, and there are exquisite portraits by Sir John Lavery and Sir James Guthrie.

When the centenary exhibition comes round it can hardly spread a richer banquet than that which the present Academy provides.

The Guthrie Award has been voted to Miss Laelia A. Cockburn for her picture entitled "A Rough Lot for Sale." The Guthrie Award was instituted five years ago by a lover of Scottish art to commemorate the presidency of Sir James Guthrie.