

to the Congress, and it would be an immense pity if the valuable information which they would then give were not collected and retained in a permanent form. She estimated the cost of printing these transactions at £300.

Arrangements are now in progress for a large public meeting in support of the political enfranchisement of women, to be held in the Queen's Hall during the week of the International Congress of Women at the end of June. After negotiations between the International Council and the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, it has been decided that the meeting shall be held under the auspices of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. A large attendance of foreign visitors is expected.

Upon the occasion of conferring degrees in medicine and surgery at the Durham University, last week, much interest was aroused by the fact that a woman headed the list, and had also taken honours in the final examination for the degree of Bachelor of Medicine. Miss S. F. Fox, of Wimbledon, who once more disproves the fallacy of the inferior mental capacity of women, was formerly a student at the London Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, and has latterly been studying at the College of Medicine, Newcastle.

The Women Writers' Dinner now takes its place as one of the most important, as it is also one of the most enjoyable, functions of the London Season. This year the Dinner will be held in the Victoria Suite of the Criterion Restaurant on June 19th. Miss G. M. Ireland Blackburne, Alexandra Club, Grosvenor Street, is this year organizing the gathering.

The Duchesses of Portland and Somerset, both great lovers of animals, are giving their support to the National Anti-Vivisection Society.

The Royal Academy, 1899.

When the great annual picture show begins, there is—to the thoughtful eye—a something touching in the mere aspect of the entrance to the exhibition, even in its courtyard, as smart and happily expectant little groups troop joyously over the stoney way under the unsympathetic, cynical gaze of the lordly coachmen, pompously enthroned on the boxes of the carriages drawn nobly into line down the centre.

It is indeed somewhat difficult to understand why the general public should seem so jubilant and so anxious to pay their good silver for what will too surely send them away in fractious, or depressed, or (if they love painting for itself) in bitter mood an hour or two later. An observable change of *morale* invariably takes place, and the difference in the expressions of the in-coming and the out-going crowds is painfully marked, and cruelly accentuated by those who are leaving, worried, brain-and-eye-weary and distinctly cross, they yet find relief in the saturnine anticipation of the newer victims' fate. Still, a faint sense of human pity exhales in the sigh, "Ah, well! so hopeful was I also! only two short hours ago! Eheu!"

To get the real effect of the year, the spirit of the epoch—it is best to go straight to the long room, Gallery 3, and there stand in the middle for a space, and endeavour to grasp the generally affected tonality of the canvasses, for that will be the prevalent 'colour note,' for the year which will be chromatically sounded and repeated, in and on everything that can be coloured to the taste of the moment. Every shop-window will flare with it, it will overflow in our houses; parks, promenades, and sidewalks will bloom with it, and the tops of the omnibuses will be as shifting gardens of Armida, all ablow with wondrous weird and uncanny floral divagations.

In thus starting hues that will rage and ramp for so long, our artists have a good deal to answer for, to be sure, this year they are greatly modified, for which small mercy let us be thankful, for they had lost their power to startle, and never possessed any to please.

Taking the effect of this year's exhibition as a whole, it seems to be remarkable for its extraordinary want of distinction, its lack of mental effort and its dead level of mediocrity, the pictures that 'give to think' may be counted on the fingers of one hand, and every page of the catalogue might be a simple reprint of any other preceding Academy catalogue of titles and subjects.

The three Jubilee pictures may be called up and attended to first of all—it is only loyal to do so, moreover, they are so exceedingly like one another, that all three taken together, do not offer much for criticism, they are all absolutely ineffective. In Charlton's, the princesses in the rear of the procession are calling her Majesty's attention to the new coat of paint that has been supplied to the other late Majesty, Queen Anne, and thereby causing all heads to turn towards the statue, an interesting incident (?) if a trifle irrelevant. Signor Amato has given free 'high lights' to the row of horses flanks in his foreground, and Mr. Gow attempts no incidents, no emphasis, nor any points whatever. All three of the artists have failed conspicuously.

But not so the subject; what a day that was! and if a painter cannot get inspiration, and the happy moment out of the magnificent material, the picturesqueness brought from the ends of the earth, superadded to the picturesqueness of London, the splendour in costumes and decorations, the ring of emotion in the air, the stir of hearts and the movement of masses—where are they to be sought and found? There is no hint of comprehension in any of these flat, stale, vapid pictures.

One looks for Mr. Abbey's reappearances with a certain expectancy of originality and interest, but this year his fitful fancy merely takes the form of asking riddles that a baby in arms could guess. "Who is Sylvia?" why she is an exasperating young person who is fully conscious that she has put on her gown (and her figure too, for the matter of that) wrong side before, and is trying to palm off the mistake as the 'dernier cri' in the mode of form.

Mr. Abbey's other conundrum answers itself, the poor lady is evidently returning from the dentist's. Clapping one hand over her mumpish cheek, and convulsively clutching her horrified swain, with the other, she pours forth the agonies of days of toothache and the climax at the local tooth-drawer's—without the gas—we can all sympathise!

(To be continued.)

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