

FINE ARTS.

FIFTY-FOURTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN—EIGHTH AND CONCLUDING NOTICE—THE CENTRAL GALLERY AND SCULPTURE ROOM.

We owe many thanks to the Hanging Committee of the present exhibition of the National Academy of Design for changing the name of the corridor to "Central Gallery," and raising the average quality of the works hung in that former purlieu of the Academy galleries. One of our most disagreeable duties was to wade through the large number of hopelessly mediocre pictures annually hung there, in order to pick out a few good works placed among them, and to make notes on the water color and black and white exhibit. This latter now forms part of the rather limited attractions of the Sculpture Room, and though the array of flower pieces to which the west wall of the Central Gallery is devoted is rather formidable, there is this year some satisfaction to be got out of the other three walls. If the average quality of the pictures is not as high as in the other galleries, still it is so much higher than we ever expected to find it that we are devoutly thankful. While grateful for so much to the Hanging Committee we have to quarrel with them for two acts. By what process of artistic reasoning can they justify the hanging over the door leading to the East Gallery of Stanley G. Middleton's "By-road at Shankin, Isle of Wight" (99), or, higher still, on an adjoining wall, of Edward Sanguinetti's "The Token" (80)? Such treatment is not fair to either man, when many worse works are hung lower down. But we must make some little allowance for the committee, for are they not inflicted with occasional academicians who send in works of the stripe of J. B. Stearns' toy "Cattle" (84) and Robert W. Weir's "Christ on His Way to Emmaus" (91), for which custom demands a place on the line.

Mr. Middleton's picture is a clever landscape, after the manner of Harpignies, and more so. The light and shade are well managed, the masses too blocked out and the sunlight good. Mr. Stiepevich's picture can hardly be seen well enough to hazard any very critical opinion. The composition is excellent, the color seems pleasing and the drawing good. On the line near these works is a pleasing example of Percival de Luce, "Children Gleaning" (93), which has the same motive as one of his exhibits at the Water Color Society's display. His lifelike head of a girl (59) is one of the most striking pieces of work in the galleries. The expression is natural, the modelling good and the flesh tones admirably true and luminous. Near it is a fine little study, "A Musician" (64), by F. E. Wright. Clement N. Swift tells an animal story well in his "The Unprovoked Attack" (65). A strongly, yet simply painted large "Still Life" (69), is by Robert Koehler. A couple of clever studies are J. H. Twachtman's "Views in Venice" (71 and 73). That he is equally well able to handle home subjects is shown by his "Winter Landscape" (42). One of the cleverest bits of paintings in the exhibition is George H. Smilie's "A Dull Day" (85)—a delicious little work. A pleasing little motive, quite well carried out, is seen in V. G. Stiepevich's "Le Bon Curé" (92). W. H. Davenport's "Little Shaver" (93), is rather good. A superb "Portrait of a Boy" (96), is by Feodor Encke. The expression is admirable, and the very soul looks out from the eyes. In modelling and flesh tones the work is masterly. J. G. Brown's "A Sunny Day" (102) would have been better if he had painted it out of doors and as simply as his admirable fisher studies which hang on an adjoining wall. "Becalmed, Fishing Boats" (103) is an excellent little example of Arthur Quartley. J. B. Halsey's "In Mischief" (107) has a charming motive and is well painted. The figure of the pretty girl is good, the color pleasing, and the treatment throughout fresh and effective. A well toned Frère-like little picture is Frost Johnson's "The Young Ornithologist" (117). Next to it is a work which does much credit to Alfred Kafpes, "His Pipe and His Paper" (118). The old fellow is painted in a dashing, effective way which is refreshing. We note a good head on a *plaque* (119), by Mrs. Henry Peters Gray, and F. A. Francis' pleasing "Portrait" (120). George W. Maynard has painted a pair of healthy children very naturally, though he has made them rather pale, in No. 121. We are glad to see another J. B. Sword, "After a Good Day's Work" (123). J. D. Strong is true to his name in his characterful "The Puritan" (124). On the line under this is J. T. Peale's well told story, in the uninteresting English style of thirty years ago, "Recitation for Grandpa" (126).

Over the door leading to the North Gallery is one of the notable works of the exhibition—Thomas Eakins' strong portrait of Dr. Brinton (128). The painter is an uncompromising, stern realist, and to the predominance of this quality may be ascribed the chief defect of his work. He makes no concessions to the picturesque and arranges for no concentration of interest in his pictures. He gives the carpet at the Doctor's feet with as much strength and care as he does his face. He paints to reproduce rather than to interpret, and the result is that he does not satisfy. You admire the extreme skill shown in the work, but the latter produces no emotion. Technically it is admirable. In pose, drawing, expression and relief the figure is excellent, and, with all its faults, it is a wonderful piece of painting.

Frank Anderson's "Spring" (27) is a remarkable little work—a plant growing in a rock crevice among dead leaves. Among the flower pieces on the west wall we note a couple of water colors by John Laffarge, the lower one (26) a very fine work; a number of good pieces by Mrs. Julia Dillon, and examples by Agnes D. Abbott, G. Thompson Hobbs, Cornelia F. Bradley, Oscar R. Coast, J. E. Baker and Louis C. Tiffany. Andrew F. Bunner's "The Riva, Venice" (1) is a clever work which lacks in darks. W. M. Harnett's "The Social Club" (44) is so good in its way that we wish he would choose more artistic bits of still life to paint. We note "Game" (32), by Reuben Johnson; "Fruit" (38), by W. M. Brown, and "Grapes" (2 and 34), by A. J. H. Way.

Passing down the stairs we reach the sculpture room. Among the works not already noticed here is an admirable little model of a group of "Force, Law and Prosperity" (605), by Daniel C. French. The figures are well contrasted in action and repose and form harmonious lines with each other. The female figure of Law is dignified and in good action as she raises the tablet. The lines of the body of the other female, Prosperity, are graceful and full, and the figure is well posed. The reposeful body of vigorous Force is well modelled. F. Debois' bust in plaster (606) is admirable; J. E. Kelly's first display of his work in modelling, "Sheridan's Ride" (605), though full of crudities, does him credit in what is for him a new line. E. Virginia Wade's "Sleeping Peri" (586) and "Ophelia" (593) are pleasing. We are glad to see that cameos are exhibited, there being five examples of the work of L. Zoellner. A refined and very artistic bronze memorial tablet (594) is by George W. Maynard. Among the works in water colors and black and white on the walls we note clever pencil studies, a fine water color of an old man and a negro study, by Henry Muhrman; a fine water color, "An Interview" (546), by P. P. Ryder; a couple of examples of Hugh Newell; excellent etchings by J. W. Falconer; engravings by W. J. Linton and Fred K. Yuengling; a fine little head in water color, by J. C. Beckwith "Au Bois" (564); a pen drawing (565), by H. P. Share; William Walton's excellent conceit, "Decoration—The Queen of the Red Chessmen" (576); an admirable flower panel (592), by Miss M. L. Grant, and some amusing and clever tiles by Mrs. M. P. Thompson, illustrating "The Story of Rip Van Winkle" (603).

ART AT HOME.

The New Orleans and St. Louis loan exhibitions are attracting much attention.

George Brown's pictures are now on exhibition at a Boston gallery prior to sale. The artist will return to Italy.

We hear that the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum, of which William E. Dodge, Jr., is chairman, are quietly pushing the matter of the subscriptions to the fund for the purchase of the Avery collection of Oriental porcelains, the King collection of gems and the other purposes mentioned in the circular lately issued. Steady progress, we are glad to say, is being made, and though the list has not yet been made public we are given to understand that a good sized sum has already been raised, the amounts subscribed ranging from \$100 to \$5,000, and the trustees doing their full share. The annual meeting of the trustees and members of the incorporation will be held at the new building in the Central Park on the 12th inst.

The Corcoran Gallery of Art has just purchased and placed on exhibition seventeen portraits by Healy, originals and copies, from the collection of T. B. Bryan. Fifteen of them are of the Presidents, from Washington to Lincoln, all being represented except Harrison. The two remaining ones are of Martha Washington and George Peabody. The former and that of Washington are from Stuart's original studies in the Boston Museum, and those of John Adams and Jefferson after work of the same hand. John Quincy Adams, Jackson, Van Buren, Tyler, Polk, Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan, Lincoln and Peabody are Healy's originals or replicas. That of Taylor is after Amans'. The collection of the Presidents was painted by Healy on an order for Louis Philippe for the gallery at Versailles.

THE MUNICH EXHIBITION.

The Munich International Art Exhibition, which is to be held in the Crystal Palace, will, as before announced, open on July 20 and close on October 31.

Works of art will be received from artists of all nations, subject to the indorsement of a jury of artists already elected by the Munich artists. Works should be sent in to the jury by May 31, but works from the Paris Salon and the United States will be received up to July 15. Early application for space should, however, be made by intending exhibitors to Conrad Hoff, chairman of the Art Committee.

The committee, through Gustave Sonthelmer, who has lately arrived in this city from Munich, cordially invite American artists to contribute. In this matter concerted action should be taken. The Academy of Design ought to take steps looking toward a good representative American exhibit. If things were properly managed we could make a much better showing than we did at Paris.