

THE INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC
EXHIBITION AT GLASGOW.

[BY OUR SPECIAL COMMISSIONER.]

THE splendid collection of photographic pictures now to be seen in the suite of rooms known as the Institute of the Fine Arts, in Glasgow, only proves still further a fact that, after all, needs no proof—viz., that the Scot is thorough in all he undertakes; and it is only fair, therefore, to say at the outset that it is the finest assemblage of really good photographic productions that it has ever been my good fortune to see. How much hard work it has entailed only those who have laboured in a similar direction can justly estimate; and when it is known that Messrs. Annan and Miller pulled down the pictures from the principal wall of the large gallery, and made an entirely different arrangement in order to get a more striking *coup d'œil*, one need not be surprised that a great success has been the reward of their zeal. As an old photographer accustomed to look with pride at the annual show in Pall Mall, I could not help longing for just such a splendid home for the pictures brought together year after year by the Photographic Society of Great Britain. All the galleries (and there are six of them) are lit in the most perfect manner; and, in consequence, many pictures that I have seen before in Pall Mall in the corners of the room on a dull November day gain so much by the stronger light that they almost seem new productions. Of course, many of the photographic works are old friends, but there is an unusual amount of entirely new work, and for this result great praise is due to the energy that must have been displayed by the Glasgow Society's committee of management. The exhibition was open to the members of the press on Tuesday about mid-day, and later on I saw a fine subject for a picture. While the guests were partaking of the liberal luncheon spread at one end of the gallery, the judges were evidently desperately struggling to complete their labours, for they were seen frantically rushing from room to room to verify the awards, or to settle some debatable point; but evidently a moment came when they could work no longer, for they were now to be seen eagerly clutching chairs that they might sit down and rest during the luncheon so well earned. When they had settled down to serious work with knife and fork, the famished workers were surrounded by a little crowd, who looked on with almost wolfish eagerness. This seemed most unaccountable, for full opportunity had been given them to satisfy their hunger. I soon found out, however, that it was not cooked meats that they craved, but "copy." It was a race between the evening and morning papers to get first publication of awards. One hour more and it would be too late for the evening publications. An inspection of the long list published last week will show that it could not be replicated in a minute—hence the assemblage of the materials for this epic picture, which, unfortunately, *was not produced* by the graphic art of photography. In the evening the principal gallery was well filled with a brilliant audience, notwithstanding the torrents of rain that had fallen all day. The fair dames of Glasgow also do nothing in a half-hearted manner, if I may judge by the full evening costume adopted by most of them, and the consequent life and brilliance given to the opening ceremony.

The Lord Provost, in a commendably short speech, commenced the proceedings, and the president, Mr. J. Morison, called upon Mr. Valentine Blanchard for a few

remarks on the Exhibition from the judges' point of view. Mr. C. W. Hastings and Mr. J. D. Welford also briefly spoke in its praise, and, after a vote of thanks to the Lord Provost, the gay throng moved about the rooms to inspect the pictures, whilst a capital orchestra went through a well-selected programme of music. When the principal room had sufficiently thinned, an impromptu ball terminated the proceedings.

An examination of the list of awards will show a large number of well-known names, but, whilst very naturally many pictures already distinguished by medals at other exhibitions are to be found on these walls, I am extremely pleased to see a large quantity of new work of the highest quality.

Of course, it is needless to speak of pictures already described in these pages. I shall therefore, as far as possible, pick out work new to me for notice. I am pleased to be able to say that pictures that stand out in consequence of vile taste in mounting or framing are very few and far between, and therefore the general effect is very good indeed. Great taste has been displayed in draping the room with material of harmonious colour, to give effect to the pictures, and all unavoidable spaces have been filled with drapery of the same colour. There is, in consequence, a unity and completeness rarely seen out of London.

Mr. Warneuke, of Glasgow, has produced some striking portraits of large size. "Ethel," a sweet, sunny-faced child, combines boldness of light and shade with delicacy in the details. "Desdemona," by the same gentleman, is the portrait of Mr. Herman Vezin's accomplished pupil. It is an oblong picture, and the figure is extended on a couch with hand on chin. The expression is well done, and the light drapery very delicately treated. There is also a very powerful portrait of Mr. Herman Vezin as Othello. The facial expression, as might be expected, is very fine, and the whole picture shows great skill on the part of the artist, with a slight exception: the lens employed was too short in focus, and the folded arms are, in consequence, out of drawing and unduly magnified; they show capacity, however, to strangle, and so far there is fitness.

Chancellor and Sons exhibit a very beautiful profile head called "Juliet." The lighting is unusually fine.

Tunny and Co. distinguish themselves by a series of portraits, also of large size. The most striking is of a lady most graceful in pose, but spoiled by a mass of dark, which runs through the picture in such a manner as to rob the figure of its necessary support. This is a great pity, for it is an unusually beautiful picture, and so little was needed to make it all right.

Mr. Van der Weyde has gained a gold medal for a group which is certainly one of the most perfect ever produced by the aid of the camera. Four beautiful girls in white are, apparently, watching from a balcony some interesting scene. Simple and unaffected is the pose of all four, and there is, apparently, the grace of unconsciousness; and yet, when it is known that the sitters are the beautiful Dorothy Dene and her sisters, it only shows what may be accomplished by an artist, assisted by accomplished sitters. The varied textures of the white dresses are rendered with consummate skill.

Mr. Harold Baker is again to the front with well-dressed models. Dorothy Dene, in classical dress, is one of the best. All the pictures show great skill in the management of pose and arrangement of drapery on the figure.