

*Graphic Arts Exhibition at the Royal Academy*

THE GRAPHIC ARTS AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY. BY MALCOLM C. SALAMAN.

IN the Print Room of the British Museum there are four large leather-bound folios, stamped each in gold letters with the name of one or other of the early engravers and the date 1637, while an exactly similar folio, bearing the name of Rubens, with the same date, is a treasured possession of Lieutenant James McBey. Among the blank leaves of these very folios, and some two hundred more, Rembrandt is said to have kept that famous collection of prints which, with artistic ardour, he made for studious reference. One can picture the master turning those leaves of beautiful old Dutch paper—such paper as is the envy of every modern etcher who lovingly prints his own etchings—and studying inti-

mately the proofs that he would take from between those sheets; then one can imagine his amazement could he visit the Royal Academy to-day, and see the walls of its galleries covered with a wilderness of prints and drawings. He would have to realize that, though the connoisseur's way of enjoying the charm of a print—especially an etching—will ever be to handle it with affectionate intimacy as it comes direct from the portfolio or the solander-box, the changed times, having brought the popular picture exhibition into vogue, have also ordained that the claims of the art's increasing popularity must call even the dainty little etching to a crowded gallery-wall. But the master, as he looked along that wall, would recognize, in the best practice of the modern etcher, that the true tradition is still the expressive freedom and vitality of the clean-bitten line which was Rembrandt's gift to the art for



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