

# Presentation by Writer to Limerick Art Gallery

ON last Thursday afternoon the distinguished Limerick writer, Miss Kate O'Brien, presented a portrait of herself by the late James Sleator, R.H.A., to the Limerick Art Gallery. Stating how pleased she was to make the presentation, Miss O'Brien added: "I know James Sleator would be pleased, too. He was a very distinguished and accomplished painter; he liked this picture, and he would be glad to know that his work is going to hang in my home town."

James Sleator was a pupil of Orpen and was formerly President of the Royal Hibernian Academy. The portrait, which is in oils, was completed in 1947, a few months before Sleator's death.

One of the distinguished gathering present on Thursday afternoon, Mr. C. V. O'Malley, has known Miss O'Brien and the O'Mara family for a long number of years, and he spoke for the citizens of Limerick, too, when he said he was very proud that her portrait will be hanging in our Gallery. Also hanging there is a portrait of the famous operatic tenor, the late Joseph O'Mara, and he and Miss O'Brien have done as much as anyone to raise Limerick's cultural status in this country and in the world.

Miss O'Brien, who is now living in England, has travelled extensively in Spain. "I am

very fond of Spain," she told me. "I worked there as a young woman and I like to go back as often as I can."

## NEW BOOK

She has not yet decided on a title for a new book she is writing. The theme is constancy (the study of a married life) and the setting begins in France, goes to Ireland and Spain, and back to Ireland and France. She hopes to have it completed by Easter and it will appear probably next winter.

Miss O'Brien told me that we have a very good poet in Desmond O'Grady. He has just returned to Rome from Harvard, where he spent two years.

Desmond and Miss O'Brien met in Sicily at the Congress of the Community of European writers. She represents Ireland in this body, and is a

member of the Council.

Next week, Miss O'Brien will lecture on Spain to the P.E.N. Club in Dublin.

Referring to Limerick, she told me the city is developing very fast and well. We are doing very well on slum clearance and our housing is better than in many towns she has seen. "I have always loved Limerick," she added; "I think it is a beautiful city, and I have always loved coming back."

She does not approve of the plan to fill in a section of Arthurs Quay, and from what she has heard of the project, she thinks it is deplorable. Like most of us, she admires the lovely stretch of the river from Thomond Bridge and beyond.

Miss Kate O'Brien with her portrait by James Sleator, R.H.A., which she presented to Limerick Art Gallery last Thursday.

