

THE Canadian War Memorials constitute unquestionably the most complete artistic record of any country's share in the great war, and the most significant manifestation of artistic activity during this period.

In organizing the scheme, the Committee throughout endeavoured to do equal justice to the claims of history and of art. Historical accuracy has been secured by the timely despatch of a band of distinguished artists to the fighting front, at a period of the war when the issue was still in the balance, and when the opinion was generally held that art should stand back until the war was won—as though experience had not proved again and again the worthlessness of "posthumous" war pictures! To ensure artistic success the Committee worked out a schedule of subjects embracing every sphere of Canadian war preparation and war activity, at home and abroad, on land, on water, and in the air, exemplified by typical scenes, each one being entrusted to the artist whose past achievement pointed most clearly to his ability to do full justice to his task. These artists were selected in the most catholic spirit, to represent every school and group, from the most academic and traditional to the most revolutionary and advanced, so that the collection of large decorative paintings, which form the nucleus of the war memorials, should give a fair picture of the artistic conditions which prevailed at the most momentous epoch of the world's history.

Moreover—and in this respect the Canadian War Memorials stand alone among modern ventures of this kind—this series of decorative panels was thought out in connection with an architectural scheme which is to form a suitable and imposing framework for the pictures, so that they will present themselves as an impressive ensemble in orderly sequence. The memorial, when complete, is to have more in common with the Pantheon in Paris, than with the ordinary round of fatiguing and bewildering picture galleries.

Around this nucleus of vast decorative panels has been built up a comprehensive collection of minor paintings, drawings and engravings of war subjects, portraits of generals, statesmen and Canadian V.C.'s, works of sculpture, and a historical section of early English paintings and engravings, directly connected with Canadian history.

While the Committee have made a point of employing as many Canadian artists as possible—a considerable portion of the funds have been placed at the disposal of Sir Edmund Walker for the purpose of commissioning works from artists living in the Dominion—they were determined to avoid giving the Memorial a parochial character, and did not hesitate to distribute commissions also to artists of non-Canadian birth. It is hoped that the result will be found fully to justify their policy.