

approach the capital city of the province would have an interesting experience, no doubt. It is true the boats of the Canadian naval service are ever on the alert, but they are not built to cope with such ships as an enemy would send to lay the coast towns in waste.

Yet we do not lack protection. Britain's navy is, after all, Canada's real navy. The ships of the Imperial fleet are not only always at our command, but they are generally on hand. In other words, the coast of Nova Scotia is constantly patrolled by the British ships, with headquarters at Halifax. It is no uncommon sight to see several large British cruisers in Halifax Harbour at one time.

Some day Canada may take over this branch of her defences, but until she does the white ensign will continue to do the work it has done so nobly and well for a hundred and fifty years. To-day the

British Government is asking for Canadian sailors for her fleet. Curious as it may seem, the Canadian sailor or the Canadian fisherman does not take kindly to the navy. This is perhaps due to the fact that the service has never been set before him in such a manner as to appeal to his patriotism. Nova Scotia fishermen have left their nets in hundreds to follow the flag on land. Every little village in the province has sent its quota, but the response to the appeal to join the navy meets with very little response from them. When the Canadian navy was first established and the cruiser Niobe came over with flying colours, the fishermen showed no interest in her or her work. The attempts made to get young men from the shore districts to join her utterly failed. When that ship went on the rocks and practically ended her career, she had on board some one hundred and fifty Canadian boys, but not one of

them came from the Nova Scotia fishermen class. And they make the best seamen in the world.

So we have a well lighted and well buoyed coast, and we have the British navy to defend it. This magnificent and highly efficient lighting system is used by the mercantile marine of the whole world. The foreign tonnage plying on this coast pays very little for its upkeep. That foreign tonnage is Norwegian, principally. This is not a case of give and take, for our vessels do not use Norwegian ports. The Norwegian vessel sails over the ocean and receives a warm welcome from the Canadian light-house service. That vessel enters into competition with our own shipping and, having no overhead charges to contend with, outbids the Canadian ships and gets the trade and the benefit of the great outlay of Canadian cash annually put out to keep the lights burning and burning brightly.

ART, ADAM AND ORIGIN

Informal Observations on the Habits of Artists, Dedicated Respectfully to the O. S. A.

ART probably began on a rainy day, and the first artist of any

sort of skill had something wrong with him. I am forced to these conclusions by a study—not of Art—but of artists and their habits. Very healthy people seldom become artists and rarely have a good appreciation of the work of artists. That is one reason for opposing the eugenist. By following the rules of the horse-breeder he would no doubt obtain perfect physical specimens of mankind—with Ford brain equipment. They would be healthy and art would languish. If it weren't for broken legs and bad livers and dyspepsia the world would probably never know what was beautiful, for there would be few artists—worth mentioning.

The first artist made his first drawing on a rainy day. That is obvious. He had got rheumatism wading in the creek near his place trying to spear suckers. His twinges had taught him the danger of going out of doors—if caves had doors in those days—when it was raining. So he remained inside, squatted on a stone with his cranky knee next the fire and prepared to while away the time.

Perhaps if you have been only half sick and kept in the house instead of being allowed to go to the office, you can understand this first artist's experience. He had said everything he had to say to his wife before they were through with the marmalade pot at breakfast. The monkeys, sticking their heads in the door of the cave, had chattered the morning's news and gone along on their route. Thus the morning paper was disposed of. Seeing now that her spouse had nothing to do, the wife suggested he should improve the shining moment by making her some new bone needles for sewing fig-leaves—and he rebelled. He wanted to know why the devil a man couldn't sit quietly at home beside his own fire without being asked to do all the household chores. Anyway—the making of bone needles was a woman's work. . . . So he rumbled and grumbled and fell to brooding about the big fish he had caught on the end of his spear just the day before—and it had dropped off—and the neighbours hadn't believed him when he told them how big it was. Thus, sitting gouching by his fire, he grew morbid and fanciful, and sent his wife for some mud with which he might amuse himself making pots. She brought it and he spoiled the first three pots.

THEN it was he made his first work of Art. His brooding eye fell on the hollows and grooves in his ball of clay—and they saw a FISH! There in the clay was a perfect representation of the very fish that had slipped off his spear the day before. He called his wife. He raved. He pointed. He explained. He even took a twig and improved the work of art by pricking a hole in the clay just where the eye of the fish should have shown more plainly. "Look't!" he shouted. "Look ut that, Eve. Ain't that great. A Fish. Ain't that reality for you? Look at the Chiaroscuro—er—what an excellent composition!"

And Eve, sighing over the dish towel in her hand, said unto him: "Adam—I'd a hang sight rather have you downright sick in bed or else out of the house altogether. You're crazy to-day."

"Crazy! But look—a fish? . . ." Then the awful truth dawned on him as it has dawned on so many artists since that fateful day. SHE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND HIM! He was a genius.

Of course, I can't judge whether he was or not. Probably it was the way the light fell on the grooves and hollows in the clay that made him think he saw a fish. Perhaps if Eve hadn't had a nervous headache just then—or if she hadn't been thinking about what a fool she was to offer Adam the Apple back in the Garden of Eden—she might have been better natured about it, and SAID she saw the fish whether she did or not. Anyhow, from that day on Art existed—though it didn't extend any further than fishes. This first artist was no fool. He had learned the trick of making a fish in clay. He wasn't going to take chances on his reputation—because in time he did work up a reputation with everyone except his wife—by trying to make some other natural object that mightn't prove so easy.

But the first artist of real ability was no such casual worker as the pioneer in the trade. I have been turning it over in my mind whether it was his leg or his liver or his stomach that inspired him. I have considered, too, the possibility of its being jealousy, and I am inclined to think the most reasonable hypothesis is: His Art sprang from a bad liver, which not only made him morbid, but spoiled his complexion so that he was crossed in love and thus prompted to do his first masterpiece.

"WELL," he said, as the girl flirted her fig-leaf skirt at him and turned off in the direction of her lover's mother's house. "All right for you. If you won't come and cook for me I'll show you—I'll show you there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught!" Saying which, he threw out his chest and drew in his waist line and strutted violently off toward his own house.

To tell the truth he had a headache—having eaten too much the night before, and having mislaid the family sassafras root. He strode gloomily to his studio and picked up a lump of clay, working it violently with his manly fingers. First he made a rude likeness of the girl who had jilted him and then smashed it with a blow of his fist. That amused him, so he made her again—and smashed her again. And then came his inspiration. He would make a clay image of a woman so lovely that every woman in the village would be jealous of her, and he would say she was a girl of a distant tribe who had promised to marry him as soon as he got one of his works of art into the local academy.

For weeks and months he toiled on the making of his beautiful statue. For material, he studied the faces and figures of all the women in his own tribe. From one he took a pretty cheek and from another her well-set eyes, from a third her exquisite mouth, and from a fourth a neck—and so on. And when it was done he committed suicide because—like a later sculptor, he had fallen in love with his own work. But the girl who had jilted him, and who had twins by this time and was losing her figure, gnashed her teeth when she saw the

statue and, going home, took it out on her husband, who was a sheep-herder and not nearly as romantic as she had thought.

Such was the first great work of art.

But to be serious, a work of art is the permanent expression of a fleeting impulse on the part of the artist toward his fellow men. All men have impulses toward other men. Old fashioned kings longed to bring these other people into subjection. Modern masters of industry long for very much the same thing, though indirectly, by accumulating money which can purchase the work and even the outward affection of other men. Beautiful women have had their impulse to enslave men and to make other women envious. Politicians have the impulse to make themselves well thought of by the community. Salesmen spend their lives leading their customers to think well of the goods they sell. Preachers indulge the impulse to show other men what they believe to be the true road to happiness. So it goes—but the impulse of Art is alone a thoroughly generous impulse. It has no ulterior motives. There is nothing dogmatic about it. It is the impulse to record in music, or clay, or paint, or words, the things, or the moods that the artist has seen to be beautiful. His desire is to catch what he saw and record it for the benefit of others. Religious people are sometimes artists—when they forget to be dogmatic and seek only to pass on to other men the happiness which they have found in a certain view of life. When they do that they are artistic. When they succeed in transmitting their meaning clearly to others they are artists. The Bible is filled with the utterances of artists.

It is so difficult for anyone to learn to be efficient in transmitting something beautiful to other men, that artists naturally seem to spend more time developing this side of their work than the other and, to my mind, more important side. It is customary for ambitious parents to assume that their offspring has the gift for Art simply because it can draw a cow correctly, or remember every tune it hears, or make a man's face in plasticine or write little verses that rhyme. It is a common mistake and a very sad one. It is perhaps to blame for the too common notion that an artist is one who makes pictures, statues, music or poetry (in prose or verse). If it isn't actually to blame then at least it is related to this disease of the artists—the craving for facility in expression.

TO be able to handle the tools of art is obviously an essential, but is far from being the end of the artist's striving. A class of people have grown up who have adopted the view that art is this—a mere demonstration of facility. Nothing could be more stupid and erroneous. That puts art on the level with Indian club-swinging and the engraving of the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin, or the balancing of a dining-room table by its south-east leg on the tip of one's chin. Facility in representing a scene is as necessary to the artist as a chisel is to a carpenter. But it would be a poor carpenter who never did more than learn to hit the chisel with a mallet. There are dreadfully many so-called artists who have gone no farther than to be able to manipulate the chisel dexterously.