



Written for the  
CANADIAN HOME JOURNAL  
by M. L. FAIRBAIN.

THE Toronto Art League held their yearly winter exhibition at the Matthews' gallery for two weeks last month, at which were shown not only the usual oil and watercolor studies, but the original pen-and-ink and wash drawings for the Calendar, which has now grown to be a feature of our Canadian Christmas literature, if, indeed, such calendars come under that head at all, and not under art.

Mr. BRIDGEN's most ambitious sketch, "Rocks and Sea," was rather spotty, and not equal to the scene on the St. John harbor, which was given with breadth, and showed good drawing. "Departing Winter," while monotonous in the browns, gave a fine impression of the fields with lingering patches of snow. Mr. Bridgen's work is uneven, but he never fails to show something in advance of former work, so that the knowing ones look for his best. Mr. Crouch's book-plates were well executed, making the book-lover long to possess one. Mr. Holmes's treatment of a picturesque subject in the "View of St Denis on the Richelieu" was rather hard, but with good color; the figure in the other study of the old windmill was well expressed.

Mr. JEFFRIES' handling and point of view have usually something personal, and out of the ordinary. He gives a fine impression of the first stirrings of spring in his "Melting Snow," when the air is fresh and clear, but the snow still lingers in places. A view of houses and fields through "Autumn Rain" was peculiar, while pleasing. Mr. W. Alexander had good effects and crisp handling in his "Old Windmill on the Richelieu" and the camp scene. Mr. Blatchly's "Mower," Mr. Manly's "Large-se of Summer," a poppy field in bloom, and "A Heavy Rain." Mr. D. F. Thompson's "Low Water," quite decorative in effect, are all worthy mention. Mr. Manly's color and treatment in "A Heavy Rain" are something in the manner of Mr. L. R. O'Brien's pleasing color schemes.

LITTLE space is left for mention of the Calendar, which is, perhaps, even better than in former years, if comparisons must be made. The waterfront in Mr. Manley's "To Feed the World" is excellent in grouping and massing of light and dark. Mr. Holmes has caught something of the rhythm of the worker in the man with the scythe in "June and July"; Mr. Jeffreys' conception in "The Golden North," and "The Mines," is very novel; and, indeed, the work all through is so good it would be hard to pick and choose for description. It is not too late to possess yourself of this calendar, which is at once artistic and distinctively Canadian, appealing to our æsthetic taste as well as patriotism.

It is claimed by the art historian, Dr. Ludwig Jelinek, that the famous Sistine Madonna in the Dresden Gallery is not the original picture, but merely a copy. The picture, it seems, bears evidence of having been mended, thus tallying with a description of a copy which was damaged by the fall of the altar over the tomb of St. Sixtus. The original is said to be either in Rome or Piacenza, whither the director of the Dresden gallery has

journeyed to find out, if possible, the truth about the matter.

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AMONG the interesting antiques of the Wernicke collection soon to be sold in New York are the silver-mounted leather drinking set that belonged to Cromwell, a massive centre-piece made by Thomiro for Napoleon, and the state couch of the mad King Ludwig.

Miss Muntz gave a talk to the students of St. Margaret's College one evening last month, on "Millet and His Art," illustrated by reproductions of the artist's pictures, which were passed around, being too small to be seen at a distance. Many of these are quite as fine in technique and sentiment as the "Angelus," though not as widely known. Miss Muntz gave a sketch of the artist's life, his struggle with poverty, and his hardy-earned and late achieved success, emphasizing the object of his art, which was not to paint pretty things, but to give voice to something in the peasant life which the world seldom heard—to express himself, in a word. His models were never beautiful men and women, and yet there is always beauty of the highest kind in his work. Miss Muntz spoke most warmly and sympathetically about the great Frenchman.

THE Camera Club last month held their annual exhibition in the Club Room in the Forum Building, at which some most artistic work was shown. The judges, Messrs. Manly and Stanton, awarded the gold medal to Oliver Lippincott, the silver medals to A. Walpole Craigie and W. B. Blackhall. Several portraits by Miss Weil, mounted on plain dull background, quite unlike the conventional mount, were very fine. The Arizona scenes by Messrs. Blackhall and Buntin were too artificial in arrangement; views like "Sol's Twilight Kiss" by W. B. Blackhall; "A Wet Night," by Frederick Lawrence; all those shown by John Dumont; "In the Gloaming," by W. H. Moss; "Sunset on the Kankakee," by George T. Power, and many others, are poems, while for exhibition of technical skill, apart from interest in the subject, the list would be much longer. "The Moqui Bells" is, no doubt, about the finest example of this. There were many charming examples of portraiture which showed a keen eye for artistic effect in the posing, as well as printing and mounting, in addition to thorough knowledge of photography. The membership is open to non-residents.

EVEN those who know him but slightly will feel that the world, not the art world only, is poorer far by the death of Mr. L. R. O'Brien, which occurred a few weeks ago. His dignified and courtly bearing is something it is pleasant to remember, and his unfailing kindness and thought for others.

THE second son of Lieut.-Col. E. G. O'Brien, one of the first settlers near Barrie, he was born on the shore of Lake Simcoe. Though intended for an architect, his taste led him in the direction of art. As early as 1873 he was vice president of the Ontario Society of Artists, which position he held until 1880, when

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the Royal Canadian Academy was founded, of which he was chosen president, and continued until 1890. Artistically speaking, Mr. O'Brien may be said to have "discovered" the Rockies, and many are the pictures of this period owned in Canada and the States. Later on his choice of subject was very different, and his object was not so much to give a topographically correct reproduction of any place, as to render the pictorial effect seen on a quiet river or a rugged cliff with an opalescent mist behind, or some marine effect that was sure to hold charm of color and balance of composition.

SPEAKING one day of some book mentioned in course of conversation—it was one of Black's—Mr. O'Brien said he preferred such a book as a guide to the usual guide-book, which he avoided with particular care, often thereby losing something he might have enjoyed. But the route of the globe-trotter and tourist was very distasteful to him; he preferred to make his own discoveries, the discoveries after his own heart. F. Baring Gould, and Hardy, and Barrie, and Blackmore were others whom he had studied as guide-books, much to his own profit and enjoyment as well as the good of his art. It was but a little thing, but showed something of the man.

Mr. O'BRIEN kept wonderfully in touch with his times, always refraining from belittling the work of younger men with other methods; in-fact he was not uninfluenced by impressionism, though not violently. But he never reached a point where it could be said his work retrograded; his handling seemed but to become freer and looser, and his touch surer. His pictures are to be found in the best collections in Canada, and in many in England, where some of his finest subjects were chosen. There is one at Windsor Castle and another at Osborne which were painted for the Queen. Mr. O'Brien supervised the illustrations for "Picturesque Canada," published by the Cassels of London some years ago, contributing a goodly number himself.

The little card of invitation bearing an etching of Toronto seen from the bay, which was Mr. Owen Staples' announcement of the exhibition at his studio, was the most artistic thing of its kind since a certain one issued by the late Palette Club, and it certainly was the means of attracting many visitors during the week.

LOOKED at as a \* whole, Mr. Staples' work shows great improvement in drawing, there is greater decision and freedom. A view of Toronto, similar to the etching; a well lighted and attractive view of a blacksmith's shop; an out-of-door study of figures in a garden, good in values but not in proportions; the figure of an old man standing erect and quiet in his punt fishing, almost a silhouette in the surrounding light; a bit of delightful wood-

land, and several fine flower pieces, were among the best of Mr. Staples' studies. His handling of pastel is excellent, going beyond in effect the work in oil, in our opinion.

THE ceramic artists have been very busy the last two months, for the demand for decorated china for Christmas presents has been greatly beyond other years. The exhibitions also were numerous, those of Miss Hendershot, Miss E. M. Martin, Mrs. Boulbee (Miss Hainsford), and others, following in succession and overlapping.

As exhibition of arts and crafts is being arranged, for to be held in the gallery of the Ontario Society of Artists some time in April. It is the first thing of the kind that has ever been held in Toronto, and will be looked forward to as marking an era in the progress of the applied arts. To quote the circular issued by the committee, "The chief object to be obtained is that it will place our city in line and in touch with the widespread movement to bring out and dignify the art instincts of the people." Manufacturers have welcomed the idea with delight and the prospects of success are excellent. Fuller particulars will be given later.

## An Academy Alphabet.

A's the Academy—what a poor show !  
B is the Boredom we feel when we go ;  
C is the Critic, so down on art shams ;  
D is the Daub he so heartily dams ;  
E is the Eulogy, often not meant ;  
F for the Failures, some ninety per cent.  
G is the Gush to which ladies incline ;  
H for the Horrors they hang on the line ;  
I's the Injustice outsiders complain of ;  
J for the Jokes which the hangers seem  
    vain of ;  
K's the Kick-out the Impressionists get ;  
L is for Leighton, the suave Baro-not ;  
M's for the Meetings arranged 'neath the  
    clock ;  
N is the Nude, Mrs. Grundy to shock ,  
O for the "Oh's!" of enrapt country  
    cousins ;  
P for the Portraits accepted by dozens ;  
Q is the Query, "Why are they dis-  
    played?"  
R's the Rejoinder, "It's all good for  
    trade";  
S is the Sculpture, which nobody sees ;  
T is the art Talk at our five o'clock teas.  
U's the Umbrella we leave down below ;  
V is the Vanity bred at this show ;  
W's the Wail of the men left outside ;  
X the X-pressions of those who are  
    "skied";  
Y is the Yawn which we give as we roam ;  
Z is our Zest when it's time to go home.  
    —London Truth.

- *London Truth.*

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