

theme that will bear a lot of thinking about. It epitomizes the clash of war with man's most ancient piety. No other picture in the exhibition searches life and history quite as deeply. "For What?" is gentler and more human, nearer to the moods in which poetry ranges. The other, (cannot it be given a more compact name, say, "Headstones", or something shorter still?), true to an art which has it in it to be more impersonal than literature is far more objective and monumental. It is as if the very stones were outraged after man had died from the earth. And this austerity is carried out in every line and colour of the picture. Its meaning is clear before it has been seen in any detail. In "For What?" the man is seen before the corpses and the mood of the whole is not instantaneously transmitted. Here, however, the forbidding grays of the tumbled headstones, the flinty landscape beyond, the weight of the inky sky, the fierce arrangement of abruptly terminated straight lines about a yawning hole, speak at once with a voice of fate.

The only other artist who appears to have worked on lines at all resembling Varley's is Maurice Cullen in such a picture as "Dead Horse and Rider in a Trench". Both are Canadian artists. They did not find all their austerity overseas for they have worked on different lines from the men of purely European associations. They must have taken some of it with them from Canada where one of the most tragic-minded of modern artists, Tom Thomson, has already had his brief day. How to explain the presence of a tragic artistic tradition in Canada where there is nothing to correspond in the mentality of the people—though there is in the landscape—may be left to the social theorist; it is quite perplexing.

It may be doubted whether any of the artists yet discussed have worked on the lines that were contemplated for them. There was a great service to be rendered in the strict recording

in terms of artistic truth of the detailed appearance of war. This called for work that was topographical, detailed, cumulative, and sometimes dangerous. Few of the artists have been willing to tackle their work in this exacting spirit; too many of them devoted themselves to gallery pictures with one eye on the public. A. Y. Jackson is a distinguished exception. He has probably painted a larger number of pictures that anyone else and has not allowed himself a single really large canvas. What he has set himself chiefly to record is the character of the devastated country of wire and trenches and ruins. His work is detached and excessively scrupulous. His subtle keying and habitual understatement stand in the way of popularity or even of easy appeal. But to some it is a great pleasure to be able to study at such length the work of a painter who conceals so much masculine strength behind great formal delicacy. The combination is a rare one.

The war-worn chalky terrain of his "Cité Jean D'Arc—Hill 70 in the Distance", is very impressive in its obvious truthfulness. It conveys the sense of a real battle panorama and yet the effect is achieved with extreme reticence. His "Houses in Ypres" is a record of a different sort; it tells more about Ypres as a town that was than many a larger picture. Jackson has scrupulously isolated his impressions in most of his pictures, only now and then allowing himself to collect his observations into something more synthetic and typical. "Riaumont" contains the suggestion of a fine composite front-line landscape, but it is only in his "Copse—Evening" that topography seems to matter little and the summed-up impression everything. This must be one of the most enduring pictures in the collection. It stands in point of technique somewhere between the extremists and the moderates, avoiding the pitfalls of the former and the timidities of the latter. Its content is as slight as possible; a bumpy succession of knolls