

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ART.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR:

SIR,—Having read the article in your late issue containing strictures upon the scheme for organizing our new Academy, I have been struck by two or three very decided inaccuracies and one misstatement (may I hope arising from ignorance), which I feel called upon to correct. The misstatement I allude to is, that Canadian artists were the movers in the action which induced the Government during the past session to impose a heavy duty on the importation of European art. In this case I am in a position to prove that the very contrary was the course taken by the artists of Ontario, as represented by our Society here. Great exertions were made at that time to bring influence to bear on the Government to admit all works of art of real merit free; and in the matter of water-colours, I may add that we have now a petition before the authorities to get the duty removed. Your writer is evidently not well informed on the subject in hand,—at least, that is the most charitable view I can take of it. Mr. Jacobi, to whom he refers as having retired to his farm, is with us in Toronto, and is to be one of the academicians. He forms, I believe, only one example of several artists formerly resident in Montreal who have been driven out of that city by the supercilious depreciation with which they have been visited. Millard, who is a member of our Society here, and an annual exhibitor, proposes to work heartily with His Excellency's new scheme. I may add that one of the first artists in Montreal is now only "hanging on" in the hope that the new Academy may do something to remove the weight of prejudice heretofore resting upon Canadian art so heavily. One paragraph in the article in question slightly redeems it, though, I fear, not intentionally. It is this:—The writer says he is consoled that the meeting of the Academy will not come to Montreal for five years, and that in that time there is good hope so great an advance will have been made as to make it *quite satisfactory*. This is, I think, scarcely in accord with the rest. There are several other inaccuracies relative to historical facts with regard to the original founding of foreign academies which time and the fear of trespassing on your space will not allow me to notice.

I am, Sir, respectfully yours,

M. Matthews,

Secretary Canadian Academy of Arts.

ART IN MONTREAL.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR:

SIR,—Mr. Popham, whose distinguished abilities must always command a respectful deference for his opinions, and whose Art attainments never fail to prepossess his readers in favour of his criticisms, has, in his zeal, been betrayed into a rash statement. He writes in your issue of the 10th instant:—Montreal "can boast of larger and more valuable private collections from among the first painters in Europe than that bequeathed by Mr. Gibb to the Art Association; this has been proved over and over again."

The phrasing of the sentence is rather ambiguous; but supposing the author of it to mean thereby "that there are in Montreal patrons of Art who possess oil-paintings by first-rate European artists greater in number and superior in quality to those bequeathed by the late Mr. Benaiah Gibb to the Art Association of Montreal, then I say the statement, as far as my knowledge extends, is incredible; but if it should, fortunately, be true, then the fact is not only damaging to the owners of the pictures, but to Mr. Popham to whom was entrusted for a long time the duty of collecting the most meritorious works of Art for the annual exhibition held under the auspices of the Art Association. The owners of these very valuable oil-paintings may properly be accused of selfishness in withholding the productions of the first (*i. e.*, the best) painters in Europe from our exhibitions, and Mr. Popham may be charged with dereliction of his duty for not obtaining the best paintings in Montreal for the exhibition at the "Windsor" in 1878, where His Excellency, the Rt. Hon. Earl Dufferin, was specially solicited to be present; or Mr. Popham may be charged with a want of appreciation of the works of the first painters in Europe.

There are very few European painters, if any, who have made their mark (R. A.) in the British School of Art, that have been honoured by having their works publicly exhibited in Montreal. I have never seen among the collections of our picture buyers, who "appreciate art of a high character," works by such men as Calcott, Collins, Constable, Creswick, Roberts, and Stanfield Senr.; or Cooper, Landseer, and Ward; or Goodhall, Leslie, MacIse, Mulready, Newton, Uwins and Wilkie; or Armitage, Cope, Eastlake, Frost, Hilton, and Horsley; all of whom have used "brains with their colours."

I would not have challenged any statement made by Mr. Popham in his recent article "A Canadian Academy of Arts," had he not been a member of the Council of the Art Association of Montreal, as in that capacity, his words will, naturally, be supposed authoritative—not in the least degree exaggerated—were it not that strangers to the condition of Art in Montreal may be led to imagine that many of our private collectors possess oil-paintings rivaling those bequeathed to the Nation by Messrs. Vernon and Sheepshanks.

Mr. Popham says: "All undeserved fame is but sarcasm in disguise."

Considering that neither the present nor the past Councillors of the Art Association of Montreal have been the possessors of collections of oil paintings by the best painters in Europe, Mr. Popham is perhaps, unwittingly, sarcastic to his confreres. No connoisseur can conscientiously say that Montreal can boast of larger and more valuable collections of pictures than the one bequeathed by the late Mr. Benaiah Gibb, whose memory and generosity is to be commemorated by a brass plate, as soon as the citizens will subscribe a sufficient amount to defray the casting and engraving thereof. Some men, like *Toroute* and J. W. G., may write satirically and sarcastically upon this delayed tribute to the memory of the "first benefactor of the Art Association," I simply regret the fact.

Thos. D. King.

TRADE—FINANCE—STATISTICS.

RAILWAY TRAFFIC RECEIPTS.

COMPANY.	Period.	1880.			1879.	Week's Traffic.		Aggregate.	
		Pass. Mails & Express	Freight	Total.		Incr'se	Decr'se	Period.	Incr'se
Grand Trunk.....	Week Jan. 17	\$ 41,174	\$ 136,718	\$ 177,892	\$ 172,326	\$ 5,566	.....	3 w'ks	\$ 40,414
Great Western.....	" 9	30,715	69,160	99,875	59,248	40,627	.....	2 "	63,944
Northern & H. & N. W.	" 15	5,794	11,155	16,949	16,415	534	.....	2 "	3,641
Toronto & Nipissing..	" 7	1,315	1,525	2,840	1,903	937	.....	1 "	937
Midland.....	" 14	1,443	1,483	2,926	2,163	763	.....	2 "	1,714
St. Lawrence & Ottawa	" 10	1,117	1,190	2,307	1,678	629	.....	fm Jan. 1	1,165
Whitby, Port Perry & Lindsay.....	" 14	550	732	1,282	1,227	55	.....	"	495
Canada Central.....	" 7	1,843	1,945	3,788	2,971	817	.....	1 w'ks	817
Toronto, Grey & Bruce	" 10	2,252	4,502	6,754	3,574	3,180	.....	2 "	5,773
Q. M. O. & O.....	" 15	2,470	1,826	4,296	4,150	146	.....	2 "	572
Intercolonial.....	Month Nov. 29	46,571	71,052	120,623	121,413	.....	790	5 m'ths	53,964

BANKS.

BANK.	Shares par value.	Capital Subscribed.	Capital Paid up	Rest.	Price per \$100 Jan. 21, 1880.	Price per \$100 Jan. 21, 1879.	Two last 1/2-yearly Dividends.	Equivalent of Dividend based on price of Stock.
Montreal.....	\$200	\$12,000,000	\$11,999,200	\$5,000,000	\$136 1/4	\$135 1/4	10 6	7 1/2
Ontario.....	40	3,000,000	2,996,000	100,000	70	61	6 6	8 1/2
Molson's.....	50	2,000,000	1,999,095	100,905	74	81	6 6	8 1/2
Toronto.....	100	2,000,000	2,000,000	.....	120	115	7 7	5 3/4
Jacques Cartier.....	25	5,000,000	5,000,000	55,000	58 1/4	29	5 3/4	9 1/2
Merchants.....	100	5,798,267	5,506,166	475,000	86	77 1/4	6 6	7 1/2
Eastern Townships.....	50	1,469,600	1,381,989	200,000	98	90	7 7	7 1/4
Quebec.....	100	2,500,000	2,500,000	425,000	.....	.....	8 8	.....
Commerce.....	50	6,000,000	6,000,000	1,400,000	114	100 1/4	.....	7
Exchange.....	100	1,000,000	1,000,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
MISCELLANEOUS.								
Montreal Telegraph Co.....	40	2,000,000	2,000,000	171,432	90 1/2	101	7 7	7 3/4
R. & O. N. Co.....	100	1,565,000	1,565,000	.....	39	42 1/4	4 1/2	11 1/2
City Passenger Railway.....	50	.....	600,000	163,000	80	78	5 5	6 1/4
New City Gas Co.....	40	2,000,000	1,880,000	.....	115	107	10 10	8 1/4

*Contingent Fund. †Reconstruction Reserve Fund.

FAILURES IN 1879.

The figures presented by the Mercantile Agency afford a conclusive proof as to the healthy condition of business. According to the statistics presented in the Annual Circular, it appears that the mercantile failures in the States for 1879 were 6,658 in number, compared with 10,478 in 1878, a decrease of 3,820. But it is in the amount of the liabilities that the decrease is most marked. In 1878 the indebtedness was two hundred and thirty-four millions of dollars, while in 1879 the liabilities were only ninety-eight millions. The following table gives the failures and liabilities since 1872:—

	CANADA.		UNITED STATES.	
	No. of Failures.	Am't of Liabilities.	No. of Failures.	Am't of Liabilities.
1874.....	966	\$ 7,696,765	5,830	\$155,239,000
1875.....	1,398	28,843,967	7,749	201,669,353
1876.....	1,728	25,517,991	9,092	191,117,786
1877.....	1,802	25,523,903	8,872	190,669,936
1878.....	1,697	23,908,677	10,478	234,383,132
1879.....	1,472	29,347,937	5,658	98,149,053
	Number in Business.		Percentage of Failures.	
United States.....	702,157		1 in 105	\$98,149,052
Dominion of Canada.....	55,964		1 in 29	29,347,937

*THE FARMERS' DELIVERIES of home-grown Grain in the 150 towns in England and Wales for the week ended December 27th, 1879, and for the corresponding weeks of the previous nine years and the weekly average prices:—

	WHEAT.		BARLEY.		OATS.	
	Qrs.	Price.	Qrs.	Price.	Qrs.	Price.
1879.....	47,049	47s 1d	68,732	37s 11d	4,275	20s 10d
1878.....	54,384	39s 9d	66,742	38s 3d	3,548	20s 7d
1877.....	38,959	51s 9d	82,214	43s 0d	3,778	23s 4d
1876.....	39,313	50s 6d	67,576	38s 7d	3,470	24s 5d
1875.....	34,557	43s 3d	62,941	34s 6d	2,478	24s 4d
1874.....	37,921	41s 2d	46,935	41s 6d	2,257	29s 7d
1873.....	32,978	61s 8d	59,037	41s 4d	3,471	25s 5d
1872.....	47,965	56s 4d	58,634	40s 4d	5,405	22s 7d
1871.....	47,935	55s 4d	80,166	36s 5d	4,231	22s 5d
1870.....	57,031	52s 3d	59,262	31s 11d	4,257	22s 5d
Average 10 years.....	43,809	50s 5d	64,288	29s 3d	3,713	23s 7d

*The receipts of Live Stock at New York for the last four weeks have been as follows:—

	Beeves.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep.	Swine.
January 12.....	9,110	243	1,016	20,826	38,418
January 5.....	11,768	162	1,030	23,223	26,241
December 29.....	10,619	160	1,135	21,330	23,235
December 22.....	11,590	289	1,250	29,845	33,874
Total 4 weeks.....	42,387	854	4,431	100,224	121,768
Corresponding 4 weeks 1878.....	37,781	251	3,475	76,629	161,910
Corresponding week 1879.....	8,141	69	830	20,494	30,284
Weekly average, 1879.....	10,933	142	2,978	29,005	33,089
Corresponding week 1878.....	10,411	94	823	24,728	49,276

*From New York Produce Exchange.