

There is no civilized country in the world where "lynching" is of as frequent occurrence and attracts so little attention as in the United States. And be it remembered these lynchings are not carried out on the spur of the moment, the criminal having been caught redhanded by a violent and hot blooded crowd. Nor are they done by the rowdy and disreputable elements of society. In very many instances the criminal has been arrested and securely lodged in jail, there to await his trial, when a body of respectable citizens, frequently members of the local "Law and Order Society," takes the matter in hand and marches to the jail: the doors are broken open, if need be, and the wretch dragged forth, soon to swing at a rope's end from the branch of a convenient tree. The work is done quietly and deliberately, the doers of it knowing that the criminal if left to the ordinary course of justice would in all probability get off scot free. Such scenes are of frequent occurrence throughout the States. They excite no outcry, raise no indignation, lead to no inquiry. They are tacitly accepted as the necessary corollary to a weak and corrupt judiciary. Nothing can be more disgraceful to the United States than the recurrence of such events as these. It attests both the badness of the system and the incapacity of the people to make it better. Throughout the vast extent of the British Empire I doubt if it would be possible in modern times to parallel with one instance such events as month after month occur throughout the States: and the most painful view of the matter is that there seems to be no progress towards improvement.

To what can we attribute such a condition of affairs? There is no such national difference between us and the people of the United States as will account for such markedly different results in the administration of justice. I believe it is to be traced entirely to the evil political system, that drags judicial appointments into the foul arena of political and party strife. It has been truly said, that "When men are sufficiently honest to be entrusted with the election of sheriffs and judges, they will cease to require sheriffs and judges." That such a condition of honesty has been attained in the States, none who have any acquaintance with the people will assert. Judges, sheriffs and prosecuting attorneys, those who have directly to administer the criminal justice of the land, all have to pass through the political machine. Their election takes place annually, or it may be once in every two or three years. They are essentially party men, who have so far been sufficiently zealous and active in the service of party as to deserve the reward that election to office—and emolument—implies. Like every other politician in the States, these men must march under the orders of "the caucus," that horrible excrescence on party politics that has reached full growth in that country. The man who will not help his party is not the man that the caucus delights to honour. The man who will not help his friends when he has it in his power to do so is not the man to stand high in the favour of "the party" when election day comes round again. These judicial positions are all so many rungs in the political ladder, and he who is minded to climb higher must see to it that he makes himself "solid" at every step. Liberal subscriptions to campaign funds are expected and exacted; due regard must be paid to the behests of "the caucus" and to the interests of party. It is impossible to believe that men, looking for and desiring re-election, can be blind to such considerations when in the execution of their work. Election day is always before them, and the effect of their various public acts upon the votes of the electors can never be lost sight of. A little judicial leniency, a slight straining of a technical plea, a small dereliction of duty, may result in the escape of a felon from justice, but, on the other hand, it may retain some valuable votes that would otherwise be lost. For it must be remembered that all are party men, and that the other side will go against them whatever they may do. Nor must the money view of the case be lost sight of. They have probably had to pay pretty heavily to "the caucus" for having been taken in hand and "run" for the position, and must therefore have an opportunity to recoup themselves. Not long ago there was published a table showing the amounts assessed by the Democratic "caucus" of New York City on the candidates for judicial positions before that irresponsible body would undertake to run them for office. The following are the prices at that time charged:—

Supreme Court Judge.....	\$20,000
City Court Judge.....	one at 10,000
City Court Judges.....	two at, each 5,000
District Court Judges.....	seven at, " 3,000
Surrogate.....	10,000
District Attorney.....	10,000

When we reflect that the salaries paid to those men are not large we may well enquire: How can they afford to pay such sums to secure their election? And the full and complete answer to this question would probably throw light upon fouler spots of the judicial system than have yet been seen.

When Canada is slowly drifting towards a political, and it may be a national, change it behooves us all to look at the question in its various lights. Annexation to the United States is not to be considered merely in its trade aspect. Those who talk so lightly of it seem to forget what a grand and noble heritage we are asked to part with. Annexation means adopting the forms and institutions of that country with all that these imply, and all that these bring in their train. We now enjoy a pure and noble judicial system, probably the best the world has ever seen, and it would be the supremest folly on the part of Canadians thoughtlessly to change this because we think

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it may enhance the price of town lots or give us our coal at a lower rate. Canada's best and noblest future lies before her as part of the great British Empire, and her energy and endeavour in coming years could not be better spent than in achieving the Federation of the Empire.

Toronto, March, 1889. GRANVILLE C. CUNNINGHAM

#### HERO-WORSHIP.

DEAR friend of mine—although it be unknown  
To thee that thou dost reign supreme, the king  
Of my unsighted life—from monarch's throne  
No kingly voice did e'er commanding ring  
Whose dictates were more willingly obeyed,  
Than thy unconscious words; nor e'er essayed  
A subject's zeal more fervently to glean  
His master's wish from gesture, look and mien,  
Than mine; in knowing thus a hero's face  
We lesser men receive some little part  
Of that almighty strength, that God-like grace  
Which makes eternity, and Heaven and space,  
When emptied of the hero's mighty heart,  
Seem but the sepulchre of love and art.

E. A. D.

#### THE FENCE-CORNER.

AT a field corner near the highway two lines of snake-rail fencing meet in an ugly angle. The rails have weathered grayish black, and their abrupt zig-zags are somewhat bizarre, though they could not well be rougher or plainer. Even such deformity can be redeemed by surrounding and reflected beauty, such as winsome children lend to the bent and gray-haired grandparents when playing around their knees. First, there was the elderberry bush that grew in the triangle of grass left by the plough. In the winter it was a loose fagot of stems and broken branches, as bare and dead-looking as the fence-rails themselves. But all through May it was changing daily; the buds sprouted, and then the pale green leaves came and dressed the naked branches in shimmering silk tissue. The leaves grew thicker and darker, and then appeared the broad nosegays of white, pungent-scented flowers; then the hard green fruit, and, last, the rich berries that crush so easily and whose purple juice stains so deeply. The sere, withered grass of last year around the elderflowers' feet was covered out of sight by the new growth of fresh haulms. And now the ugly fencing showed few of its hard lines and little of its wintry colours through and above the elder-flowers' robe. And it deserved a share in the glory and beauty of the living thing. Except for the ugly fence-corner, the whole field must have been given over to the plough and harrow. And then there was the wheat. As soon as the snow went, it came up evenly over the rich brown earth till it looked like the green-velvet cover of my mother's Bible, the one she kept in church. It grew higher and higher, till it had veiled away the dark earth altogether. Very soon it would hide a rabbit; and one day it had grown so tall that the wind caught it and swayed it. After that the shadows chased one another over the field through many sunny days. All the time the grain was rising like an inundation, till only the two topmost rails of the fence showed above the level, green flood. The elder bush could still look over the heads of the wheat, but the grass could not. Then the soft wheat kernels formed at the blade heads, and grew fuller and harder from the dews and rains, and the fat land. The straw-stems grew stiffer, and a clashing murmur went softly through the field when the wind bent the grain. The wheat-ears swayed heavily now, and when they swung forward, thousands together, they recovered themselves with difficulty. They were never long at peace. The rich green of the wheat field in the spring grew paler and paler as the summer advanced, faded into a neutral tint and then deepened into a wonderful gold colour. The grain was ripe. At a distance the field looked white, close at hand it was yellow; and the tide had risen almost to the lowest branches of the island apple-tree. And the centre of it all, the living, young beauty, the grass, the elder-tree with its blossoms and berries, and the gracious man-sustaining wheat was still the ugly, despised fence-corner of rough, gray rails.

ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN.

#### PORTRAIT PAINTING.\*

THE legend of the Thracian maiden and her lover's Silhouette, the growth of the art in Greece, its practice in Rome, and the universal recognition of its place and value in the halls and homes of the civilized world, are matters too well known to be repeated. To claim for it a place amongst the highest arts seems, on first view, a bold venture; but, on review, the names Velasquez, Vandyck, Rembrandt, Reynolds, Hals and Titian himself—men who made portrait painting quite a specialty—meet our enquiry, and compel our respect. The regard great painters have had for portrait subjects is shown not alone by their consenting to paint them, but by their respectful and reverent treatment of them.

With few misgivings for having claimed so much, and with kindest courtesy to those who differ from us, we will at least ask from you the consideration that lovers claim who woo the fairest, cleverest daughters of the town. As

\* A paper read before the Ontario Society of Artists.

breezes which dally with the flowers are sweetened as they pass on, so we shall not lose, but gain by a moment's lingering with a subject common as the flowers but more rare than the secrets of their life or the matchless perfumes they exhale. We glean our subjects from humanity.

Man's place in the universe has but to be mentioned, and his self-respect presents at once his reasonable claim to first notice among all the creatures that people earth. Man is first in genius, in power, in responsibility. If we, as fellow-men, regard him in this light, as artists we will so paint him.

Humanity presents for the artist's pencil the highest intelligence, a form the most subtle, and a face that is a never-ending study. But a capable critic has called attention to so many portraits that people the walls of Hampton Court and other mansions as being "insipid, vapid and meaningless." He might also have spoken of the dry, hard and soulless works in various mediums, mounted in huge brass frames, that so largely do duty as portraits in our own midst, and have drawn the inference from these that portrait-painting as an art is not great. But the very mention of such convinces us that there exists, for the purpose of rendering a sublimer transcript of the human face, "an art that nature makes." This art is a quality as special and pronounced in the successful portrait painter as Pascal's penchant for mathematics, or Keppler's for astronomy. As Pascal read divine truth and perfection in numbers, and as Keppler beheld eternal wisdom and power in the mechanics of the stellar universe, so may the artist student find marvels of divine intelligence and some of the beauties of His character in the adaptation of the graceful mechanism of the human form and face to the all-varying play of the human mind upon it. The more earnest and searching the student becomes, the more will he perceive of consistency or harmony between life, character and expression; and the more skilfully will he be able to reproduce it. This study was a master passion with the men whose names we mentioned at the beginning.

Filial thoughtfulness brings the aged for a portrait, and wants it in the truest lines and most faithful colour. While women are fair and men are honourable the highest skill in art will be laid under tribute to do them honour while they live, and to preserve their memory when they have passed away. Mothers, your eyes are not closed to pictures that play in your garden and hall; pictures whose lines are grace itself, and the colours are such as palette or pencil cannot hold—the full flush of health which only the eye of your hope can colour; and lit with sunshine that is made more splendid in your maternal love. Look, fathers, at the ten thousand presentings in the lives of your children of a wonderful developing process through boyhood, youthhood, manhood; girlhood, maidenhood, womanhood; what pictures! pictures! pictures! Is there anything in the portrait painter's art that can successfully treat living pictures like these? There might, there may, there should be.

This all but universal demand for portraiture is (1) in the very constitution of our race; and (2) it is especially characteristic of the great English-speaking family of nations.

1. Historians entablate the deeds of men. Poets spin threads of rhythm and weave them into verse. Volumes are written; yet it is not the privilege of all to read books, for knowledge is not universal; but all men who can see share in what can be displayed in pictures. And when we regard pictures, the character or subject of them having by common consent the greater preference have also the higher value. By this reasoning the representations of men, women and children command, with universal approval, the foremost place. The space given them in the family album will indicate their place in art. The first dawn of artistic effort reveals, in rude carvings, man's natural wish to limn and shape the forms he held in highest respect. Succeeding ages have only improved his skill and whetted a more keen ambition in the same direction.

So has it ever been in art, as in philosophy, "The favourite study of mankind is man."

2. In the commonwealth of peoples speaking the English tongue home life is being elevated to a plane above that of peoples less progressive. Wealth is not being gathered into castles and cathedrals that stand in lonely magnificence while industry and meanness hunt and herd together in discontent or indifference along narrow and unwholesome alleys. It is seen everywhere, in broader streets, pleasanter dwellings, homes into which comes not only heaven's sunlight, but that of prosperity and content. Wealth, for a more convenient application, is two-fold: that of the pocket and that of the mind. Pocket wealth confines itself very largely in our homes to what we eat upon, sit upon and tread upon—furniture; while its more intellectual partner, mind wealth, with well instructed taste, thinks also of an author or two, and a good picture, if it cannot provide a library or art gallery. In choosing pictures we begin where charity begins—at home. Its denizens receive the first thought. For them is chosen the best artist, the highest quality of picture, whether the style be major or miniature, and for medium the most reliable in which the work can be done. We venture to think this is as it should be, for these are the subjects in every way most worthy of our first thought. The conscious greatness of the human being, his myriad-sided nature, his self-respect and self-interest, the testimony of the centuries past, all sustain the demand of the most civilized peoples of to-day that portraiture shall leave the low plane to which it has been dragged by mere likeness taking, and "Come up higher," even to the honoured place prepared for it by men whose names personify a matured art. It is human-