

interest, notwithstanding that the same is a contravention of this by-law.

Provision is made for the punishment of persons guilty of infractions of the by-law. The extreme penalty is \$50 fine. The convicting magistrate has power to order the offender to remove or pull down the building or erection which has been put up in violation of the by-law. If the defendant fails to remove the building by the time ordered by the magistrate it shall be lawful for the City Engineer, City Commissioner or any other person authorized by the City Council to pull it down at the expense of the owner.

This ordinance is very good so far as it goes, but it is, as we have said, but a first step. A sanitary regulation of this kind should go farther than defining the narrowest limits within which dwellings may be crowded together. To be effective, it must seek to regulate the interior arrangement and construction of the cheaper class of dwellings to an extent that will insure as far as possible the health of their inmates.

THE 17th annual exhibition by the Ontario Society of Artists, which was held in the Canadian Institute in Toronto recently, was successful beyond the expectation of the members, a very large number having viewed the pictures exhibited. There was also many more pictures sold than at any of the previous exhibitions.

We do not profess to criticize the pictures, preferring to leave that to more able hands. We may say that there were some good works, showing that our artists are capable of great things if encouraged; many that were worthy of commendation, and a few that should not have been there at all.

We can see no reason why a hanging committee should not use some judgment in the selection of pictures. It must be understood that those persons who are capable of judging as between a good and bad picture will wonder why the poor pictures were hung, while those unable to distinguish the good from the bad, will be puzzled as to what is good and what is bad artistically. The weeding out of the bad would benefit the public, but not nearly to the same extent that it would the artists themselves. There is no inducement for a good man to exhibit where he is likely to be placed as on an equal standing with a very poor man, or one only beginning to win a position. Make it more difficult to gain the admittance of a picture to an exhibition, and the more highly will the privilege be valued. But the strongest argument for the adoption of such a rule is, that the public should not see at any exhibition of the Ontario Art Society, pictures of ordinary or doubtful merit. The object of holding the exhibition should be to educate the public in art, and that cannot be done by placing before them for their admiration pictures of doubtful merit, or possibly none at all. The fear of offending a brother artist should not weigh when the interests of the Society and the public are at stake. The hanging committee could be selected from among those men who exhibit but few pictures, but who are nevertheless capable of judging the qualities of a picture, and who would not hesitate to weed out the bad.

There is another matter on which we would like to make a few remarks, and that is the values placed on the pictures. Every man has the right to place his own value on his work, and we do not see that anything like corresponding values can be placed on the pictures. There is no doubt but that as matters stand the values placed on some works are very much higher than those placed on others of greater excellence. This is not, however, our principal cause of complaint, but rather that values are placed on pictures which nearly every man in the room knows is a "fancy" one. There are but few pictures which cannot be had at a very liberal discount by those who choose to adopt the not very enviable position of beating down the artist, or if it cannot be had, then one can be assured that in a few days or weeks it will be offered at much lower figures, or

very possibly go down under the hammer of the auctioneer. We should like to see the artists mark their pictures at the very lowest figure they will take for them, and refuse to come down even one cent. The confidence of the public would thereby be gained, and they would not, as they now do, refuse to buy for fear they may find out later on that they paid more for a picture than they need have done.

If the public were assured that all the pictures on the walls at an exhibition of the Society were good, and valued in the catalogue at something like their proper artistic value, they would not hesitate to buy as they now do. We have not the slightest doubt but that there are very many persons who would buy pictures of our artists if they were assured, first, that they were getting a good picture, and secondly, that they were not paying more than it was worth. A man who knows a good picture from a bad one will not hesitate to buy when he sees a favorable opportunity, but the man who has no confidence in his judgment as to the merits of a picture, will hesitate, and if he has any common sense, will refuse to buy as matters now stand.

The Society does not seem to care what the sketches are like which they allow the subscriber to select from. At the last exhibition there were a number of good sketches, but we may safely say that that there were very few in the portfolio on the last day. That such was the case, reflects much credit on the subscribers. They seem to have been able to select the sketches having the highest merit and leave the rubbish. Now we think that all sketches from which subscribers are allowed to select should be good, and who should be better judges as between the good and the bad than the Society? The Society should not hesitate to throw out all inferior sketches for fear they may be charged with favoritism or jealousy. By accepting poor sketches, and allowing them to be palmed off on their subscribers, the Society is doing a wrong to those who are supporting it, and also to itself.

All artists believe that the public requires to be educated in art. We should like to enquire how that is to be done by allowing them to take to their homes wretched water color drawings. The artist may say that they get value for what they pay for—for what can they expect to get for \$5.00? But such is not correct. A bad water color is worth nothing, and the subscriber has given \$5.00 for it. Where does he get his value? No! the Society should see that no subscriber can by any possible means get less than value for his money. Suppose he receive more than value, as many do, no harm results, but the opposite. A good picture is sent out to exert an influence for good upon the tastes of the people for art, and to induce them to buy better and more expensive ones in the future.

Harm to art can only result from allowing poor, or worse than poor pictures, to go into the homes of our people under the auspices of a Society of Artists. If artists do not wish to paint good pictures for the Art Unions, then for the good of art in this country, the Ontario Society of Artists should not allow them the privilege of painting bad ones. We are sanguine that if the artists will do credit to themselves and paint the best pictures of which they are capable, it will result in benefit to themselves both in reputation and remuneration.

We are of the opinion that no pictures should be hung at the exhibition which are in the hands of parties other than the representatives of the Society, for disposal. It is not seemly that anything approaching a regular sale of pictures should be allowed at an exhibition. The value of the pictures are in the catalogues, and they should be sold at those figures or not at all. It is a bad policy to allow the purchaser to believe that he can obtain a picture at a lower rate by making offers which very often bear no relation to the value of the picture. Agents should therefore not be allowed to urge upon a prospective purchaser of a picture those in which they are interested, nor to lower prices to induce a man to buy a picture he would not otherwise buy, to the loss of an artist who does not desire to adopt similar methods.