

bells rang softly over the hills; everywhere the night dews reflected in diamond splendour the shimmering light of countless stars; how sweet the mingled scent of flowers and new-mown hay—a double sweetness stealing through Nature, and felt by none of her children more keenly than the nightingale, who, perched on bough and bush, poured forth her wedding chorus!

Count S. drank in the beauty of the night and all its ideality with a heart attuned to Nature's harmonies, and thought that never before had he heard the nightingales sing as they were singing now.

At Lodi the postilion had taken the precaution to procure two very strong horses, lest the innkeeper at Casal Pusterlengo should be short of post-horses, which might easily be the case should an extra courier-post have arrived before themselves.

True, the prospect of a lengthened waiting in the middle of the night at a lonely country inn, was not particularly enlivening, yet Count S. looked upon this suggested contingency as more a creature of the postilion's fancy than a possible reality, and bade him drive on and leave the rest to Providence. Backed by the generous *pour-boire* of his master for the time being, he did as he was bid and fairly flew over the rest of the drive. Scarcely were the poor beasts harnessed and he himself in the saddle than huzza!—with whip and cry he urged them forward; like some dark spirit, his black mantle thrown back, his long hair flying,—he hung over the two white horses, the light calèche swayed from side to side, the astonished orderly holding on like grim death to the slight railing of his seat, and houses, trees, bridges, and milestones appeared to flee from them in terrified haste as they rushed past. In less than an hour the next post-house was reached, and they saw the glimmer of a single light in the little village of Pusterlengo.

REN.

(To be continued.)

MORTAL OR IMMORTAL!

If thou art base and earthly, then despair.
Thou art but mortal as the brute that falls.
Birds weave their nests, the lion finds a lair,
Man builds his halls,—

These are but coverts from earth's war and storm,
Homes where our lesser lives take shape and breath;
But, if no heavenly man has grown, what form
Clothes thee at death?

And when thy meed of penalty is o'er,
And fire has burnt the dross, where gold is none,
Shall separate life, but wasted heretofore,
Still linger on?

God fills all space; whatever doth offend,
From His unbounded Presence shall be spurned;
Or deem'st thou He should garner tares, whose end
Is to be burned?

If thou wouldst see the Power that round thee sways,
In whom all motions, thought, and life are cast,
Know, that the pure, who travel heavenward ways,
See God at last.

—FRANCIS HENRY WOOD: *Kingsthorpe Churchyard.*

THE ONTARIO SOCIETY OF ARTISTS.

ANNUAL EXHIBITION.

It is to be hoped for the credit of this Society, to whom the Toronto public are largely indebted for Art culture and education, that their best works in oil have crossed the Atlantic, to adorn the Canadian department of the Colonial Exhibition. With this idea we feel that great allowances may be made for the paintings now hanging on their walls. We trust the worthy body will forgive us for condemning the present exhibition as the worst they have given us for several years. Many well-known and rising artists are conspicuous by their absence, notably Paul Peel, Harris, Forbes, and Dickson Patterson; the last named contributing only a small flower piece. Nor do the new members of the Society adequately fill the places of their predecessors, with the exception of Mr. G. A. Reid, whose portraits are decidedly good and spirited: his largest canvas, No. 4, representing a lady, in out-of-door costume in the act of drawing on her gloves, though a trifle heavy and sombre in colour, is at the same time strikingly life-like and natural; no doubt a faithful portrait of the original, it has at least character and originality, which cover a multitude of sins. Mr. Reid exhibits another small picture "A Mexican Cow-boy" No. 27, which is a clever and effective bit of colour, recalling the genre painting of the French School. We cannot congratulate him as much upon his treatment of nature. Passing over his very verdant Sheep Meadows, Nos. 17 and 32, to his more ambitious canvas, No. 53, with the poetic title "Twixt Night and Day," we are brought face to face with what appears to be a

mirage, but on closer examination proves itself the coast study of a Breaking Wave. In this picture, sky, sea, and shore are all blended in one confused whole, with a setting sun suspended above the scene and three curiously parallel lines cutting across the middle of the canvas.

Mr. Reid's Italian sketches, Nos. 64 and 76, show careful drawing, and good perspective; but we question if even Italian skies and waters are the peculiar blue that he has painted them. Mary Hiester Reid, the artist's wife or sister, has given a better tone of colour in her rendering of the same Venetian Scenes, Nos. 16 and 85. A little figure study also from her brush, entitled "Tempus Fugit," No. 23, indicates that her powers are not confined to the outer world of nature, by any means. Mr. F. C. Gordon is also a recent addition to the Society. His head of "An Athlete," No. 7, is a powerful bit of drawing in the style of Paul Peel, but he has put his best work into this small contribution, his larger picture "May" No. 22, falls into the error of crude raw colouring from which our oil painters appear to suffer as a disease.

It is really refreshing to turn from the garish and gaudy streets of surrounding pictures to Mr. Homer Watson's slightly artificial gray greens. His "Groves of the Hillside," No. 25, shows careful study and detailed work, and is a pleasing picture in spite of its cool tone; his genius however, was not inspired when it called forth No. 42, "The Farm Yard at Eventide." Never were such sheep seen except upon wooden legs; the whole scheme of colour and composition is bad, and suggestive of sign-painting. It does scant justice to Mr. Watson's ability. Mr. Percé gives us some nice natural bits of scenery in the neighbourhood of Preston, Ontario (Nos. 68, 73 and 87), which must surely be a very English locality. We are sorry to admit that we are not admirers of Mrs. Schreiber's artistic efforts, and on the principle that if one cannot say what is agreeable, it is better to say nothing, we draw a veil over her pictures. We should like to do the same over a work of Mr. W. Cruikshank's, No. 24 "Strangers and Pilgrims" which has all the faults of primary colour we have condemned above. His portrait of H. S. Howland, No. 89, on the contrary is a clever and telling likeness of the original. Mr. Cruikshank would do well to confine himself either to that branch of his art or to his black-and-white effects, in which he has achieved great success.

W. L. Judson contributes two promising pictures in "Apple Blossoms," No. 15, (decorative panel) "Le Pain Quotidien," No. 31. Both indicate decided talent, which we shall be glad to see yearly improved and developed. He is not quite conversant yet with the management of his colours; his "Apple Blossoms" suffers from a defective background, too cold and gray in tone to relieve the flowers. Surely a decorative panel is nothing if not effective; this one makes no impression on the eye at a little distance. The scene of "Le Pain Quotidien" we conclude is French, not Lower Canadian. It is somewhat theatrical in style, but there is abundant promise in it for the future. Mr. J. W. L. Forster's portrait, No. 71, is the largest canvas in the room, and shows both talent and ambition. The pose of the lady is good, and the texture of her satin dress remarkably well rendered; but at the same time it is too gorgeous, and suggests the unhappy thought that Mr. Forster and his model, after collecting their most striking drawing-room ornaments have deposited them upon their latest bit of very modern furniture. Mr. Forster is an artist of much real ability: he only requires time and experience to correct his taste.

Mr. G. B. Lawson is another artist of whom much may be expected in the future, if he will make the colouring of his faces less gray and ghastly in tone. His "At the Window," No. 51, is really a clever study of light and shade. Mr. F. W. Bell-Smith is seen at his best in the coast scenes. He exhibits two views of the same spot on the Bay of Fundy, Nos. 60 and 66, which show a careful perception of atmospheric effect in the tones of sea and cloud; and another called "The Breaking Wave," No. 75, identical in subject with Mr. Reid's "Twixt Night and Day," but having the advantage of it in the matter of natural colour and less ideal handling: but breaking waves are not easy to represent and in both pictures the roll is a trifle too regular. Mr. W. Reford has a clever, clear bit of landscape in "A Quiet Road," No. 36, originally treated, and T. M. Martin has excelled himself in his painting of the plumage of "Bluebill Ducks," No. 61, which any sportsman should be proud to possess.

We think it a pity that the Committee did not provide seats in the room devoted to water-colours, especially as this apartment really contains the gems of the Exhibition: it would be pleasure as well as profit to sit and gaze upon the pictures at one's ease and to feast our eyes upon the works of Mr. L. B. O'Brien, who stands surely at the very head of his profession in Canada. For truth to nature, perfection of colouring, delicacy of tone, and artistic conception and treatment, he has no equal on this side of the water; in England, the home of the water-colour