

JULY 11th, 1890.]

ART NOTES.

patrons. "It was after dinner on Friday last," says Voiture, with proper regard to details; "the blanket was produced, in spite of my remonstrances, and four of the strongest men in the neighbourhood were ordered to hold the corners of it. One thing I can swear to—nobody ever went so high as I did on that occasion, either before or since; nor, indeed, had I ever dreamed in my wildest visions of ambition that fortune would have elevated me to such a height. The last hoist they gave me sent me up among a flight of cranes, which were rather frightened at first, I think; but, on getting a nearer view of me, they evidently took me for one of those pigmies with whom the cranes, as you know, have been at war from time immemorial. And so they began to let drive at me with their beaks, until I felt as if I had a hundred swords thrust into me; and one of them, seizing me by the leg, followed me with such pertinacity that he did not let me go until I had fallen into the blanket. On the whole, I consider that the exercise was of rather too violent a nature, perhaps, for a person in such delicate health as I am."

This was in the seventeenth century. As time went on, we can trace a little improvement in the manners and customs of the day, of which the affair of M. De Boissat will serve as an example. This gentleman was celebrated for his acquirements, and, more particularly, for the facility with which he wrote Latin verses; he was, likewise, one of the first members of the newly organized French Academy, since so renowned. De Boissat had committed the indiscretion of speaking disrespectfully to the Countess de Sault, at a masked ball to which he went in feminine apparel. For this delinquency he was seized and caned by the servants of the count. But De Boissat was not the man to submit quietly to an insult like this; nay, he had even the bad taste to resent it. He was a man of position, however, independent of his literary reputation, and he had Richelieu to back him, besides. Yet, with all these advantages, it took more than a year of negotiation before De Boissat, the academician, could succeed in obtaining redress for the outrage perpetuated upon him. At last his influence prevailed, and his honour was satisfied. The flagellating retainers of the count were ordered to kneel before him, and a cane was put into his hands, to be used upon them as he might see fit. But it is stated that De Boissat had the magnanimity to be satisfied with the concession and that he did not use the cane.

Later than this, however, the man of letters, in France at least, was liable to have his back acquainted with the cane if he allowed his turn for satire to overlap his discretion. De Bautru, a well-known wit, and, like De Boissat, a member of the Academy, was flogged by order of the Duke d'Epéron, for having lampooned him. Some time afterward, one of the ducal satellites by whom the order had been carried into execution, seeing De Bautru pass, mocked at him by imitating his lamentations while under the rod. "By my word," said the discomforted wit, coolly, "that is a very remarkable echo. It has not done reverberating yet!"

Of all the poets to whom the cane was familiar, however, we believe that none can compare with Desbarreaux, who, it must be acknowledged, generally brought his indignities upon his own head. His practical jokes were many and vexatious, and he paid for them, accordingly. Once he was thrashed severely by a stalwart footman, whose wig he sportively knocked off as he was handing about a tray of refreshments. Again, he received a terrible caning at Venice, for the unpardonable act of lifting up the canopy of a gondola, and enacting the part of "Peeping Tom." He was also chastised for some impudent railery, by Villequier, who first threw a bottle at his head, and then gave him one thousand kicks, well told; and he was beaten nearly to death by some peasants of Touraine, who attributed to his scurrilous conversation a hard frost, by which their vines were nipped.

Coming down to the eighteenth century, we believe that there was no writer who could compete with La Harpe for the ribaldry of his lampoons, and the frequent chastisements received by him in consequence of them. One of his most pertinacious scourges was a certain M. Dorat, who, it was said, used to spend a round sum annually on carriage hire, in pursuit of La Harpe with hostile intents. This gave rise to the following facetious advertisement, which circulated at the time:

"A society of amateurs, having offered a prize last year to the person who should exhibit most skill in playing upon *la harpe*, this is to notify that said prize has been adjudged to M. Dorat. Next year, the same society proposes to give another prize to him who shall succeed in eliciting from *la harpe*, by means of a pair of drumsticks, the sweetest and most harmonious sounds."—*N. Y. Ledger*.

TRUSTWORTHY evidence has at last been obtained as to the thermal value of moonlight. Mr. C. V. Boys, one of the professors of South Kensington, by means of his well-known quartz filaments, has produced a thermopile of almost incredible delicacy. By this remarkable apparatus he can render sensible the heat of a candle up to the distance of a mile and three-quarters, and by directing the minute disc of the instrument to the moon he has shown that the warmth received from its reflected light is equal to that given out by a candle at twenty-one feet distance. Observation seems to show that, although the moon's face is under the blaze of an unclouded sun for fourteen days, it remains comparatively cool, and that whatever heating it does ultimately receive is rapidly gained and as rapidly lost.—*Court Journal*.

It seems that there is no likelihood of the quarrel among the French artists being made up. In spite of great concessions by the *Société des Artistes Français*, M. Meissonier and his following will not be conciliated, so the two *Salons* will be continued.

MR. G. F. WATTS, R.A., has shown rare good sense in no longer insisting on his rights as an academician to hang such pictures as he might enter, but has determined to submit, in future, all his works to the judgment of the hanging committee. It would, perhaps, be well if the rest of the R.A.'s would follow his example.

RESPECTING the book of letters by the talented etcher and painter, Mr. Whistler, the *Art Magazine* remarks: "The result is a pitiful record of paltry bickerings and petty ill-nature, which have occupied valuable time that might otherwise have been better spent in devotion to serious art. It is sad to see one of Mr. Whistler's talent show so little sense of dignity that he is ever content to stoop to spiteful, albeit sometimes witty paragraphs, not for his own enjoyment alone, but for the delectation of a *coterie* that may be not inaptly termed the *demi-monde* of art."

It is to be regretted that the honour done to the talented and rising young Canadian artist, Paul Peel, should have been belittled and made, to some extent, ridiculous, by the absurd exaggeration of its extent, consequent upon a misunderstanding of the telegram received by his father. It is sufficient to say that the medal received is the first that has been granted to a Canadian artist, and is an honour well worthy of record, if it does not make the recipient the equal of Constant and Meissonier.

OF the English R.A. Exhibition we read that while few pictures stand out this year as being superlatively above the rest in merit, the exhibition, as a whole, is considerably above the average, the general level being higher than ever; that, moreover, this is to be known as a landscape year, that class of pictures having received much the larger portion of the line space, while figure and history pieces are skied or otherwise retired into the back ground. It is stated, also, that there is an evident and increasing tendency to paint directly from nature, to throw traditions and conventionality to the winds, to ignore composition, and attend chiefly to securing correct tone and values. All this seems to mark the influence that is being exercised upon English art by the French school, although the motto on the title page of the catalogue is taken from Goethe: "The artist has a two-fold relation to nature: he is at once her master and her slave." The new theory that craftsmanship is the beginning and end of art, and subject, story, and human interest of little comparative importance, is one against which all but artists and *virtuosi* must sooner or later rebel. It is, perhaps, the natural results of and reaction against the old idea that story or subject is everything. Some day, perhaps, we shall arrive at the *juste milieu*, and the "good story well told" will be the aim of the artist, and the satisfaction of the amateur. Sir John Everett Millais' "Moonlight," Alfred Earp's "October Glow," MacWhirter's "Mount Etna," Waterlow's "Homewards," Herkomer's "Our Village" are spoken of as among the best, while Vicat Cole, Peter Graham, Aumonier, Walton, Leader, and Henry Moore are all well represented. Among figure painters, Albert Moore has "A Summer Night," one of his wonderfully clever pieces of figure decoration in pink and yellow. Mr. Macbeth shows "The Cast Shoe," which has been purchased by the Chantrey Bequest Fund. Mr. Abbey has "May-day Morn," and the clever Mr. Logsdail has one of his wonderful London views, "The Ninth of November," showing the street filled with the Lord Mayor's show, so dear to Londoners. Jacob Hood, Henry Woods, Horace Fisher, F. D. Millet, and Stanhope Forbes, all have characteristic specimens of their work.

TEMPLAR.

MR. CARL AHRENS, whose picture, "The Day is Done," was so favourably noticed at the late Exhibition of the Ontario Society of Artists, has gone to Hamilton to seek rural subjects.

MRS. ANNA LEA MERRITT, whose painting, "Love Barred Out," was bought in London by trustees of the Chantrey bequest for exhibition at South Kensington, is a native of Philadelphia, who has lived in England with her husband for many years.

"THE VICTORIAN ERA," on which Hubert Vos of London is engaged, promises to be the most gigantic painting known. The canvas alone cost \$2,500, and the space to be covered by paint is 20,000 square feet. The sketches are made on another material and thrown on the canvas by lime light, so that the outlines can be sketched in. The work is done by pupils of Mr. Vos and French specialists.

It appears from *The Art Amateur* that Millet's "Angelus" remains the highest priced of modern paintings. Meissonier's "1814," which was reported to have been sold in Paris, recently, by Mr. Delahante for 850,000 francs (\$170,000), according to the usually well-informed "Montezuma," brought really 500,000 francs (\$100,000). He adds that Mr. Delahante, who bought the picture from Meissonier, years ago, for 70,000 francs, was so pleased that he sent the artist a present of 50,000 francs.

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

TORONTO COLLEGE.

THE year's work at the Toronto College of Music was well represented recently when no less than six closing concerts were given in the Pavilion and in the College Music Hall. At these concerts the practical work done at the college was displayed in an eminently favourable light by the various pupils who either played the piano, organ and violin or sang. The most important of the series was that given on the Tuesday evening in the Pavilion before a large and fashionable audience. The piano department, which occupied a prominent place on the programme, presented students who proved themselves capable, in a high degree, of performing standard pianoforte concertos with orchestra in a manner which was most surprising and left but little to be desired. In thus developing a taste for pianoforte compositions, which require the greatest technical abilities, combined with trained intellects and artistic feelings, the college is but evidencing the desires of the director and staff to strive for what is the highest in the divine art. While all did excellently, it might seem invidious to mention names, but a special note of praise is the due of Miss Florence Clarke, who played the first movement of the Beethoven concerto, op. 37, with the Reinecke Cadenza, entirely from memory, and in a most artistic manner. This young lady, who has taken the highest averages in the examinations in the piano, organ ensemble playing, theory and history departments, was, after playing, presented with the college medal by Sir Daniel Wilson, President of University College, who appropriately referred to Mr. Torrington's many years of service in the musical interests of Toronto. The violin department was well represented in Mrs. Church, of Lindsay, who played a fantasia in good style. The vocal music at this concert was of the highest order, and was given by some of the finest young voices which have ever been heard in Toronto. Their singing showed that their instructors had endeavoured, with success, to produce sympathetic quality and flexibility of voice, to impart good style and to develop the latent artistic temperament of the vocalists. The Thursday evening organ recital on the noble instrument in the College Hall was one of great interest, and abundantly proved the eminent fitness of the college to give young organists a thorough education in this important division of the musical profession. Undoubtedly the organist comes more into contact with the public than any other branch of the profession and perfect self-reliance is absolutely necessary. Those who played at this concert gave but little evidence of nervousness, their *technique* on manuals and pedals being unflinching and always in accordance with the requirements of their numbers, and in displaying their knowledge of the resources of the instrument the contrasts and effects they produced were in a high degree commendable.

The compositions which formed the programme were thoroughly cosmopolitan in character and selected with a view to embracing all styles of organ music. Miss Clarke, Mr. McNally and Mr. Hall, who played that evening, have passed the severe test required and become associates of the College of Organists (Canada). On the Saturday afternoon and evening the junior departments had their field day, when two concerts were given in the college. These concerts were designed to show parents and friends of the pupils, by comparison, the astonishing results which had been obtained from pupils in the primary and second grades. The programme contained music that was of the best order, though not, technically speaking, of great difficulty, and it must be said that many of the little ones performed their numbers with an amount of self-possession which would have done credit to some of the older students. Much applause was bestowed on the performers who played the violin or piano and sang, for their brave efforts. In the junior departments great care is exercised to give the pupils a thorough grounding in the rudiments of music, which will be seen to be of great advantage to them, as they ascend into the higher grades. The other concerts were equally good and spoke volumes for the amount of earnest and patient work which has been done during the past year. Such matters as musical history have had their full share of attention at the college. In the theoretical department results are proving eminently satisfactory. An examination of a large number of students has been held in this department on a paper furnished by that eminent authority, Stephen A. Emory, of Boston, and the pass list will no doubt be made known in a short time.

BOOTH AND BARRETT will play three months in New York next winter, according to present calculations.

CHRISTINE NILSSON has fallen a victim to the fascinations of the gambling tables at Monte Carlo. She is showing age and begins to look emaciated.

MABEL STEVENSON, the New York girl who has a remarkable power of imitating the song of birds, will sing twice next week for the Prince and Princess of Wales.

"LA MASCOTTE," the greatest success of Audran, is now nearing its 1500th performance in Paris. This probably beats the record of any other opera ever written.

It is said that the Baroness Burdett-Coutts has placed \$125,000 at the disposal of Miss Agnes Huntington, for the organization of an opera company, of which Miss Huntington is to be the prima donna. It is not stated, however, that Miss Huntington will visit Canada and the United States, although it is not unlikely.