

the peasants admired him, particularly the children. There was one old man of eighty, Jap van der Krap, whose chief interest in life was his daily conversation—in French—with M. Hanicotte. The only words he knew were: "Il fait beau temps." These he had learned in his youth when he had served with his regiment in France, but he repeated them, rain or shine, and then swaggered back to his friends saying, nonchalantly: "I've just been talking a little French with M. Hanicotte." The artist's paintings deal almost exclusively with the life of the little village he understands so well. He paints only large pictures for galleries and will sell none of his sketches. No visitors were allowed in his studio, but I was admitted the day before my departure under promise of secrecy and saw the great work which he had been painting for nearly three years.

It is difficult to decide on the merits of an artist from a few examples of his work. A one-man show of paintings by Besnard, which I saw in Paris, was the most astonishing thing I have ever seen. He is a painter that works with remarkable surety of touch, combined with lightning-like rapidity, and such a variety of subjects! I am also familiar with his ceilings in the Opera Comique and in the Hotel de Ville, Paris, but the nine pictures on view in Toronto are totally different from anything I have previously seen. They are all eastern subjects, bizarre, sometimes hideous—dancers with faces painted bright yellow, repulsive old beggars—yet to me they are fascinating.

GASTON LA TOUCHE is another artist whom I have long worshipped from afar. He is a master draughtsman, especially interested in unusual effects of light. One of his paintings—a fountain at Versailles in the Gallery of the Luxembourg, was for some time my favourite painting, and though "Hallali" and "A Summer Night" could not be counted his greatest works, they are among the most interesting things in the collection. Henri Caro-Delvaile was once the most popular painter in Paris, and "The Lady with the Hydrangea" is a fine work of art, though not at all typical of his work. He is better known by his conventional groups of fashionably dressed women, often out of doors and in sunlight, which he paints with light, broken colouring. Alfred-Philippe Roll, president of the Societe Nationale des Beaux Arts, and one of the foremost French artists, is represented by five pictures and a piece of sculpture. He is an extraordinarily versatile painter, famous for his battle-pieces. But all French artists are versatile. To be a landscape painter pure and simple, often signifies a lack of knowledge of the figure, and the Frenchman evinces a preference of subject in art, but knows no limitations.

NOW that colour reproduction has so greatly improved, the work of foreign artists will become more widely known. The most familiar names in the catalogue, to many people, are those who have worked in commercial mediums. The posters of Cassiers, who exhibits in the Belgian collection, have had a wide circulation. Boutet de Monvel is known through his book illustrations, and Paul Helleu, who exhibits an interior of the Cathedral of Rheims before bombardment, is celebrated for his dry-point portrait etchings. Photographic reproductions may give one a good idea of pictures such as "Saint Cecilia in the Catacombs," by Cave, or "The Sword," by Agache, for in these the drawing is far more important than the colour, and the surface is perfectly smooth, but the work of the so-called impressionists, who paint light in its prismatic colours, must be seen to be appreciated, and our opportunities in Canada are very rare.

"EVERYONE has two countries, his own and France." This may not apply to the majority of Canadians, but to the lucky few who spent some of their student days in Paris, it is certainly true. My visit to the French Section of the Fine Arts Department was like a return to that other loved country, and it is good to see that Canadians have this splendid opportunity to become familiar with modern French art.

The paintings by our own artists stood the test of comparison very well. They represented the best pictures shown at the large exhibitions held during the year and contained a higher percentage of landscapes than in the French section. The figure subjects were confined chiefly to portraits, or arrangements of one figure, but there is a tendency to be less conventional and, fired by the inspiration of the French masters, our artists will doubtless take fresh courage to paint life and light with its movement and brilliancy rather than the traditional "studio pieces."



Hallali, by Gaston La Touche, (above), is a gorgeous spectacle of Autumn colouring. The blue of the water, the red coats of the hunt, are bathed in sunshine and a shower of golden leaves.

The Cathedral of Rheims (Before the Bombardment), by Paul Helleu (below), is a charming interior by an artist who is famous for his dry-point portrait etchings.



The Man in Pink (left), by Albert Besnard, a versatile painter whose ceilings in the Opera Comique and Hotel de Ville, Paris, brought him universal renown.

The Lady with the Hydrangea, by Henri Caro-Delvaile, at one time the most fashionable portrait painter in Paris.

