

was here during the winter, which I hope will depart from us before very long—(applause and laughter)—a collection which bore testimony both to the taste for good works of art prevailing amongst your citizens and also to their disposition to make the best use of the treasures in their possession by rendering them accessible to the public. (Hear, hear). An English statesman spoke the other day of a good picture as being a “portable pleasure,” and I have always believed that it was the duty of those who were fortunate enough to have acquired such portable pleasures not to keep them to themselves, but to give their fellow-citizens every opportunity of sharing in their enjoyment.

While, however, we are proud of the works of art already in our possession, and delighted when we see one of our citizens bringing into the Dominion some priceless gem from a foreign gallery, we shall, I think, be even better pleased should the time come when these treasures may be sought not outside the Dominion, but in the studies of Canadian artists and in the form of works of art representative of and characteristic of a native Canadian school. (Applause.) That is an instalment of national policy which the staunchest free trader might, I think, accept without hesitation.

But, ladies and gentlemen, if we are ever to have a school of our own it appears to me that an organization such as that of the Royal Canadian Academy is absolutely indispensable. The age in which we live is one of combinations, and, in the case of the fine arts, concerted action is even more indispensable than it is in other pursuits and professions. (Hear hear). Without such an organization as ours little can be done towards giving a proper direction to the efforts of those who have adopted the painter's profession, or towards enabling the public to judge of the work of our artists as a whole, as they are able to judge of it at these exhibitions. In this respect the painter's work occupies a position differ-