

at, rejected, finally accepted and patronized, the latter perhaps the most trying experience of all. It was only when Paris, Munich, London saw virtue in them that they came into vogue. This is not particularly creditable to the "commercial atmosphere of Glasgow," but it is true. Yet unless the Glasgow school had persisted, and unless the group had held together and remained on their native soil, one of the most important of recent artistic developments would probably never have existed.

That the Glasgow school has survived "commercial atmosphere" notwithstanding, is encouraging to artists who may elsewhere be struggling for a livelihood under similar conditions. The commercial man likes to patronize art, he likes even to spend ostentatiously upon its patronage; but he likes to be sure that in addition to a picture for hanging upon his walls, he may have an investment for his money. He likes the "active stock" of a well known name; and as most of the well known names are those of artists who have no longer need for a livelihood, the results of commercial patronage of pictures are inflated prices for the passee in art, and starvation prices for the non-arrivee. But one day some at least of the non-arrivee will arrive and pictures that are now selling for a few dollars will be purchasable only at a ransom; while some of those that are now fetching extravagant prices, may be a drug in the market. Then the commercial investor and patron of art will discover that he has made a bad bargain, and that it had been even better for his pocket had he bought of a living artist and so helped to keep art alive, than to have been a dealer in the pictures of the dead, and so have helped to kill it. All this is not without serious meaning on this continent where schools of art are struggling into existence, fighting on the one hand against Cockney and centralizing influences, and on the other to keep the wolf from the door, while large sums of money are being transferred from one dealer to another in the ostensible service of art, and to the real imperilling of its existence. Merely to awaken the cupidity of the amateur picture dealer were after all an unworthy business; it were better if the diffusion of knowledge of art should ultimately reach those who are able to exchange for the products of it, the wherewithal for the artist to live, and that instead of merely indulging in Pocerantism, those who buy pictures should know and should buy good contemporary work. I am told, though I trust the information is incorrect, that not a single picture was sold from the excellent little exhibition of pictures held by Canadian artists in this city recently. How is it possible to stay the tide of immigration from Canada on such terms as these? JAMES MAVOR.

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OTHER PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS.

To say that all platitudes were at one time profound truths is in itself a platitude, but one not altogether devoid of significance. Many a hackneyed phrase was, when first uttered, the spontaneous expression of poetic fancy. Many a well worn formula was once the courageous utterance of untrammelled thought. The sonorous epithets of Homer are merely af-

fectations to-day. The glorious word—pictures of Milton with us degenerate into bombast. We can look at the sea and fancy that it smiles, but it is not for us to speak of its "innumerable laughter." We can imitate, but we cannot recall. If our age has gained in experience, it has lost a naivete, which no studied simplicity can replace. The poets who are the genuine products of our century speak of progress, of combat, of doubt, they are not children pouring forth deathless strains of melody, unconscious of any purpose, doing "what is right without knowing it." They are typical of their age even the greatest of them—Wordsworth, Tennyson, Shelly, de Musset, Hugo, Browning. Each of these creators is essentially the product of his time and of his race. There is a conscious struggle for a recognized end in the most exquisite lyrics of Shelley. There is the same life-purpose visible in the impassioned eloquence of Hugo. We discern it in the calm of Wordsworth, we feel it in the storm of de Musset. Tennyson is distinctly national in his sympathy with the new hopes and possibilities of his race. With Browning modern subjectivity has reached a climax.

And it is well that they have shouldered the burden of the present instead of simulating the insouciance of the past. It is right that they should voice new aspirations instead of repeating old maxims. Life to them has been complex. There is not the rapture of children of those earlier times who chanted the artless joys and sorrows of an age when life was lived rather than spoken about. They have struck a deeper note, but the simpler music had a charm of its own which no art can ever recall.

It is the spirit of the age which forbids it, which makes it impossible. There are some, however, who cannot render articulate the vague whispers of this spirit. They would go back to simpler grooves of thought. They would give us archaic phrases moulded in a flexible rhythm, quaint settings for a modern sentiment. And as we read these productions it seems strange to us how the charms and the freshness of the word-pictures have vanished. We feel that it is the husks and not the grain which is offered to us. It is not the words which have changed, but the people who utter them. And in changing themselves they have rendered the old simplicity impossible. In the artificial and the spontaneous alike there is often the quality of grace. But in the one it is the outcome of mere form, in the other it is the harmony of word and thought. We see many of these soulless imitations in the metrical exercises which are ambiguously styled current literature and in a confused way we recognize that "what was imagination is imagination no longer."

There have been, however, poets in the true sense, who have never caught the spirit of their age. Some have been silent, others have gone back to the past for inspiration. Grey was not born for the times in which he lived, and in the words of Matthew Arnold he "never spoke out." The marvellous boy of Bristol produced forgeries more wonderful than realities. Strange associations cluster around the name of Chatterton. Madman, dreamer, humourist, a writer of forgeries and a genuine poet, it is impossible to class him

—like Homer and Shakespeare "he stands alone." His short life was as a nightmare, not without exquisite pictures. The mingling of contrasts which composed this extraordinary nature seem to find expression in his "Will" and that is as inexplicable as his life.

The "Rowley Poems" are not classed with the letters of Junius. We have no need of recalling the icy criticisms of Horace Walpole to substantiate the acknowledged fact that the priest of St. John's Church and Thomas Chatterton were one and the same person. The forger's poetry has lived because the man was real. He has taken back from the past the stronger and less subtle forms of human emotions. He has not merely taken the form, he has caught the spirit. He died at the age of seventeen by his own hand, but he left two names in the literature of his country—Chatterton and Rowley.

It is wonderful, this titanic effort to create anew the past in the present, which is so different from burying the present in the past. All honour to this madman poet whose writings ring true through all their borrowed forms. To him the term splendide mendax may be in a sense applied, but there is nothing false in his poetry. There is a gloom which lurks throughout even his lighter verses. Such lines as:—

See! See! the pitchy vapour hides the lawn,
Nought but a doleful bell of death is heard,
Save where into a blasted oak withdrawn
The scream proclaims the curst nocturnal bird.
are the outpouring of an imagination powerful, but diseased. He has given a brief picture of his life in these dismal words:—
Few are the pleasures Chatterton e'er knew,
Short were the moments of his transient peace;
But melancholy robbed him of those few,
And this hath bid all future comfort cease.
Such indeed he was, but his was no ignoble triumph. Alien to his own age he created phantasies of another, kindred to his soul. In spite of his age he spoke out, and in spite of all his faults, the world is not yet weary of listening.

CLOUDS AT SUNSET.

Adown the western sky on crimson'd tide
The sun-god slowly sinks and floats and falls
Toward that great city, on whose far-off walls
The sentinels of day are faint descried,
By Sunset's gleaming portals, open'd wide
To give him entrance; there still Echo calls
With wailing music thro' funeral halls,
Mourning a monarch fall'n in his pride.

Silent from East, where once victorious rose
The day-beams seeking refuge in the West,
The legion of the night, in blackness dress'd,
Hurls the dark javelins on its fleeing foes,
And o'er the blood-red plumes of Even's crest
The lonely pall of death and silence throws,
JAMES T. SHOTWELL.

Strathroy, Ont.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MANITOBA SCHOOL CASE.

To the Editor of The Week:
Sir,— So much has been written and said in public discussions in this matter, that it is with some reluctance I venture to obtrude on your generous columns on the theme. I say theme, for it strikes me that much—if not most that has been ad-