

designed to call forth and reward Canadian talent in the various fields in which it is found. But while these exhibitions do something in bringing the different specimens of art before the country, in inspiring a spirit of emulation among our amateurs, enabling each to improve in the light of good-natured, if not very skilful, criticism, what has been done of an organized kind to draw forth the talent of the country, and cultivate this talent to at least such a degree as would make it useful and profitable? Some little was done under the care of Dr. Ryerson; after long and persevering efforts, some imitations in plaster of ancient and modern statuary, and some copies of pictures, many of which are said to be pretty well executed, have been collected. But how few have an opportunity of seeing these, and how confined their influence for good even at the best? It is true we are too young a country to require much in this department; and too poor, in one respect, to afford the patronage necessary to support art and artists as they ought to be sustained. Still we are aware that large sums are annually invested in productions of this kind; that this sort of expenditure will go on yearly increasing, and it is highly desirable that the little that is done should be of such a character as would improve and cultivate rather than vitiate the taste. The Ontario Government might easily make a worse use of a portion of the surplus than in opening and endowing one or two good schools of art, so that they who wish to devote their time and talent to this pursuit might have the advantage of such instruction as would at least start them on the right road. In future, Ontario will never be without a class of amateur artists; when these shall reach the dignity of professionals it is difficult to say; but there is no difficulty in saying, that while the class is here it would repay the country to improve it.

10. ART EDUCATION.

The House of Commons in England has recently had under discussion the merits and demerits of the Royal Academy and the subject of art education. There comes a time in the life of every nation when the advantage of fostering art and directing its progress becomes evident, and when it is realised that by leaving it uncared for, to grow as best it may, the growth is uncertain and unsteady, and the result a wild flower or a weed. There have been during the civilized ages of the world various sources from which art has derived that nourishment which made its existence possible. In one era it has been the Church, in another the Court, that has administered the fostering aid. In the days when the Church was an ameliorating influence in the midst of rugged and barbaric life it was natural that art should find its first friends in the cloister, and should spread only as lawlessness declined and civilization grew. Every nation has taken its own time to turn aside from harsher things to notice the flower that struggled for life amidst rebellions and conquests and kingdoms overthrown. In centuries gone by, when art in England was to its present development as a child's drawing to a figure by Leighton, it had in Italy already made such progress as to have established itself in the position and with the consideration attaching to it of a living and important interest. The love of art and the desire to possess its treasures spread slowly northward, and it is only within a lifetime that public interest in England has manifested in its popular advancement and culture. The great painters of the Stuarts' time were not Englishmen, though the names of some of them are so intimately associated with English galleries; and others of the Georgian era, Gainsborough, Reynolds, Hogarth, and others whose names are household words, sprung up of themselves and, like Topsy, may be said to have "grewed." But in the time of George III. an attempt was made to do something for the promotion of art by means of an art organization, and with the assistance of that monarch the present Royal Academy was founded. It has answered the purpose indifferently well. Of itself it has not done much, by reason that it became of commercial value, and has since been kept, as far as possible, a close borough by those who could force their way into it. But it drew public attention to art, it made patrons for art, it excited emulation among artists, and amongst those who desired to buy the works of artists who could make for themselves a reputation, it begat a love for art in its twin forms, painting and sculpture, and it drew so much interest upon the subject that rivals for public favour appeared, and the popular demand for investigation and amendment of the first institution was heard on several occasions in the House of Commons. Such institutions, as they grow old and prosperous, are apt to fall behind the requirements of the time, and the present moment finds a fitting champion of development in that energetic reformer, Sir Charles Dilke. It is not only in painting and sculpture that England during the past generation has been moving with slow steps to perfect her art. In music the fostering institution has been rather more or direct tuition, and some whose reputation as musicians is

world-wide, owe much of their success to the aid they have derived from its timely encouragement.

It is time that we looked around in Canada to see what prospect exists of our taking our proper place in art, as we do in commerce and manufacture. We have not to live through centuries of darkness and barbarism, as had the European nations. England has lived through her barbaric times not merely for herself, but for all those communities sprung from her people. Her experience is ours; we know, or should know, as much—no more, no less—as she knows; and when we find the question in art recurring in her Parliaments, we may ask ourselves whether it be not time to cast our thoughts in that direction ourselves. We have in Ontario a "Society of Artists," which, though established in 1872, is beginning to do good work. It is as yet entirely a private society, and having had to establish itself by the merit of its works, it is in a more healthy condition than it would probably have attained had it at first depended upon Government aid. The Society has held an annual exhibition, sometimes in one building, sometimes in another, and gradually public attention has been drawn to the institution. Its object is to encourage and foster original art in Canada, and membership is open to all who may follow any of the various branches of delineatory art as a profession. The Ontario Government have this year granted the Society \$1,000, which has been expended by them in fitting an Art Gallery in the new building now in course of erection on King street, a few doors west of Yonge. The Gallery is sixty by thirty feet. Adjoining it are rooms to be let as studios, and in the main gallery will be the room for the School of Art in connection with the Society. Any person, on paying certain moderate fees, can here study drawing under the direction of the artists of the Society, who, in return for the assistance they have received, purpose to give their services gratuitously. The Society of Arts' building is rapidly approaching completion, and this year the Society will hold their next exhibition in their new gallery. In connection with this exhibition is an Art Union, the prizes of which, instead of being chromos and prints, are original sketches by Canadian artists. This Society is the nucleus required in Canada. It starts as did the Royal Academy in England, and there is no reason why it should not journey, if not on the same plane, at least in the same direction. Much, however, will depend upon the artists themselves. Other things being equal, their work will be preferred to that of painters of scenes less familiar to the people of the country. There is abundant scope for an artist in choice of subject, and his principal drawback is the shortness of the season. This should affect quantity rather than quality. If the work sent to the Society's gallery is good—and it should be the best the artist can produce—the public will quickly afford that patronage for which art in its early youth had to seek from the Church and the Throne. The Society has commenced well, and is doing a good work; it is probable that with occasional and judicious assistance, when that may be necessary to further the Society's efforts in the public service—such, for example, as the development of their School of Art—a thriving and, in its own sphere, admirable institution may be established in Canada. We think, however, that Canadian scenery, the natural existence of which is so quickly passing away, and Canadian figures are yet to create a market for themselves if artists will give such study and painstaking as will produce really good work. Canada has shown that in some manufactures she does not require a lifetime to push into the front rank: let the same spirit actuate her in art.—*Globe*.

VII. Books Received.

From BELFORD BROTHERS, Toronto:—

The Gold Thread. By the late Norman Macleod, D. D. A beautifully illustrated Juvenile.

The Old Lieutenant and His Son. By the late Norman Macleod, D. D. Reprinted from *Good Words*.

The Starling. By the late Norman Macleod, D. D. Reprinted from *Good Words*.

Wee Davie. By Norman Macleod, D. D.

St. Elmo. A Novel. By Augusta J. Evans Wilson.

Their Wedding Journey. By W. D. Howells.

Helen's Babies. With some account of their days; innocent, crafty, angelic, impish, witching and repulsive. By their latest victim.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. By Mark Twain.

From WILLING & WILLIAMSON, Toronto:—

Lectures on the Study of Words. By R. C. Trench, D. D., Archbishop of Dublin. (London: Macmillan & Co.)