

that to single out individual canvases for special comment is a very difficult task, but as the desire of those of our people who are sufficiently interested to follow the development of Canadian artists for a definite statement as to the why and wherefore of the merits of the pictures, it will no doubt be interesting to mention a few of the most striking canvases in the exhibition.

THE following, let it be distinctly understood, is the modestly expressed opinion of only one man who has spent some eighteen years of his life in the study of art in Canada and half of Europe. It should not be taken as absolutely final, as it is only to newspaper critics and connoisseurs "outside the profession" that this prerogative of finality is accorded in matters pertaining to art. On entering, the visitor's attention is at once attracted by a very commanding group of pictures, the central canvas of which, No. 315, entitled, "A Portrait-Study," is by Mr. Curtis Williamson. Why he so modestly calls it a "study" is hard to understand, as it is in reality a splendidly dignified portrait of a young lady in a black costume, which, contrary to orthodox custom, is not rendered with black paint, but with a beautifully luminous quality of colour which suggests black, and therein lies its great merit.

Another example of this artist's work is No. 314, a study this time if you like, but full of fine colour in a low key, the calmly, dignified lines of the great office building sharply contrasting with the tumbled-down shacks in the foreground, a masterly interpretation of the old and new in the downtown district of a rapidly growing city.

Another canvas that attracts one's attention in this group is "The Ravine Road," No. 304, by Mr. Homer Watson. Standing a short distance away from the picture one feels the straining of the horses. One can almost hear the voice of the driver as he calls to his team. And yet, upon nearer approach, one discovers that the whole thing is merely suggestion. The harness is not there, yet one feels it. The buckles and straps, the spokes in the wheels, have not appealed to the painter; it is the spirit of the scene that he has endeavoured to convey, leaving all the details to the imagination.

Mr. Harry Britton has two fine canvases on this same wall, "The Interior of a Sail Loft," No. 30, and "The Fisherman's Wife," No. 31. The first is, no doubt, the better of these. It has more envelopment, air, atmosphere in it, the rendering of the sail, upon which an old fisherman is at work, being particularly fine. In No. 31 the figure is well painted, and all that occurs to the left of it, but that portion to the right of the figure is paint and you feel it at once.

Mr. Albert H. Robinson also has a fine canvas in this group, No. 249, "Murky Morning on the Thames."

There is another picture in this room, No. 51, "The Critic," by Miss Florence Carlyle. If the edges of the figure were as well handled as the colour and textures of the flesh it would indeed be a great work, but as it is, they are too hard and unsympathetic.

GO from this to another canvas of an altogether different character, No. 76, "October Moon," by Maurice Cullen. Note the beautiful, soft mellowness of tone and colour throughout the whole composition and ask yourself—could I not live with this beautifully suggestive thing longer and not tire of it, finding something new each time that I gazed upon it? It is greater art and yet should not perhaps be compared with a figure subject. Then go to No. 289, "Youth and Sunlight," by A. Suzor Cote, and there you will perhaps realize more fully the comparison. This is perhaps the most striking canvas in the whole collection of splendid things contained in the gallery, full of glorious sunlight, a thing that should be placed where the people of this country could see and enjoy it for all time, as no doubt it will be, for the art commissioners cannot overlook a canvas of this calibre. In No. 290, "Old St. Louis St.," the same artist falls short of many of his previous efforts along similar lines. It is too literal.

Mr. Bell Smith has a large mountain picture which is his best effort this year. It is broader, bigger in its handling than many of his other renderings of the same class of subject.

Mrs. Reid has a charming little canvas, No. 246,

"Morning Sunshine," which is thoroughly convincing in its values.

Miss Laura Muntz and the des Clayes sisters are other women painters whose works rank with the best in the gallery.

Mrs. McGillivray Knowles has a fine canvas, No. 162, "Peace," but we miss the larger, more im-

we expect from this painter. Mr. Walker has exhibited much better paintings at the Canadian Art Club, of which he is President.

Taken altogether, it must be said that the Royal Canadian Academy Exhibition of 1913 is a more virile and representative collection of pictures than has been seen for many a year. It at least aims in some degree to interpret modern Canada, which the average Royal Canadian Academy Exhibition of a few years ago did not. It gives some prominence to the work of younger painters not yet elected members of the Academy. It has the advantage of being shown in a gallery that gives every picture at least a good average chance of being seen to some natural advantage. And it is to be hoped that the progress made by the Academy in this exhibition will be continued from year to year, so that the Royal Canadian Academy may become thoroughly representative of Canadian life as well as of Canadian painters.

Josef Hofmann

Character Impression of Probably the Greatest Living Pianist

IT is a long while since the world in general made a ten-years idol of Paderewski; and a much longer time since a more easily pleased generation paid homage to Rubenstein. Most of us have heard the popular piece entitled, "When Ruby Played."

Most of us have called Paderewski "Paddy." But nobody as yet has written verses about the playing of Josef Hofmann, and nobody, so far as we know, has yet called him "Hoffy."

Josef played in Toronto last week, with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. And though there have been bigger programmes given in recital and bigger ovations tendered to such men as Paderewski and Kreisler, the violinist, it is quite certain that there never was in this country a bigger musical half hour than when Hofmann played the Concerto No. 1, in B flat minor of Tschaiakowski, with the accompaniment of the full orchestra.

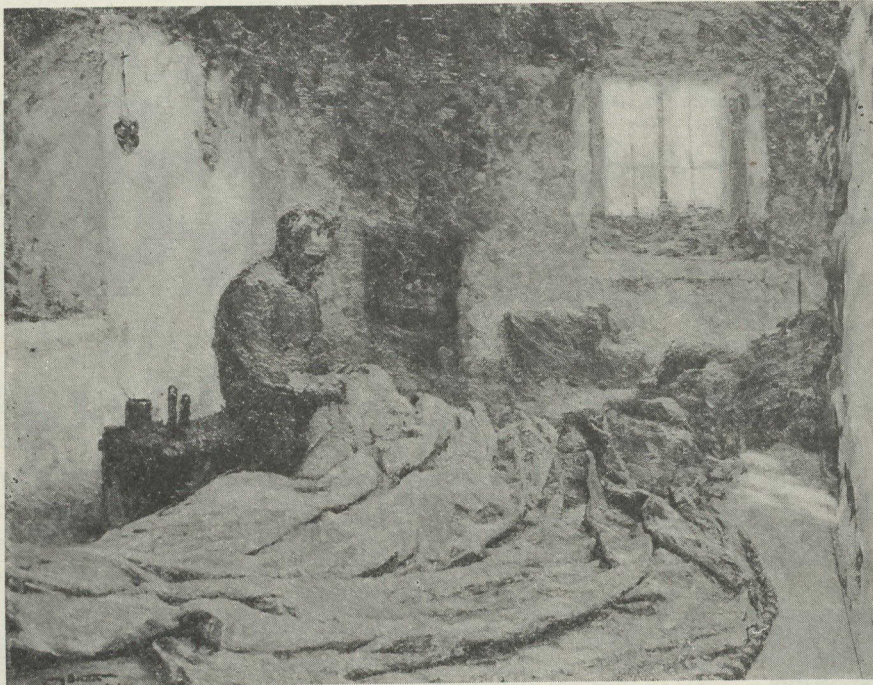
Now, it really doesn't matter supremely what Hofmann played. To half that audience he might have been quite as interesting if he had made up something as he went along. But piano audiences have changed since the days of "Ruby" and "Paddy." People who go to hear a great pianist now expect to get more for their money and their time than the audiences that heard Rubenstein and Paderewski.

Hofmann comes on the stage with a slight stoop; a thick-set, serious-looking little man who never smiles. He planted himself firmly on a long cushioned stool and signalled to the conductor that he was ready to begin.

And from the moment he struck in with the orchestra until the final grand cumulative climax in the last movement of a long concerto, he had every man, woman and child as interested as though he had been a great actor or a great orator.

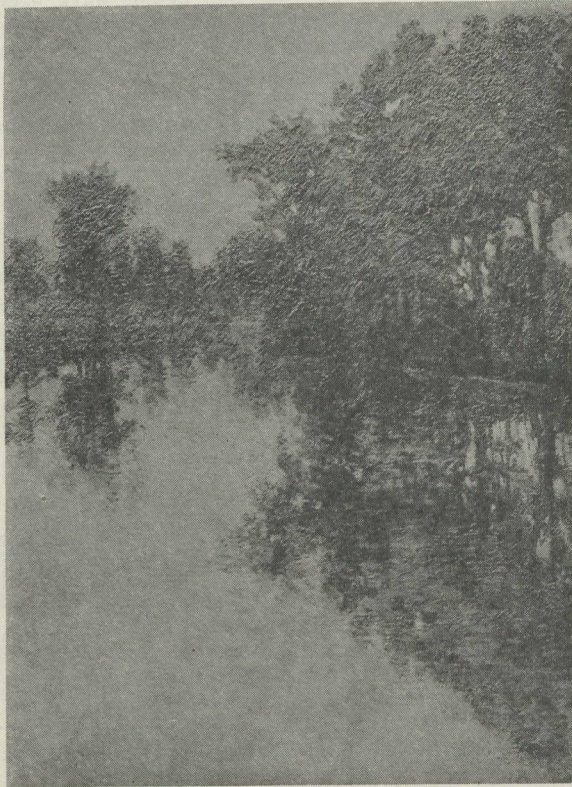
He played to his audience on Thursday evening as though they had never heard a great pianist before. He treated the Steinway—sometimes—as though it were another prize-fighter; sometimes as though it were a child he was caressing. In the big concerto he had everything by way of expression that he wanted. And he did everything with a superb mastery of himself and his instrument. It made very little difference whether the orchestra played or not. He was never drowned by the orchestra. And he never pounded the piano. In those swift, short-arm jabs of that grim little man there is everlasting power and poetry and perfect tone. Better than any living artist he knows how to make a lightning change from a thunderous, full-orbed fortissimo in the bass to a rippling, tinkling, cantabile in the treble. His fingers were like living things each with its own brain. He never once raised a hand above his head; struck never a pose, nor had any uncomfortable episodes with his hair, but as sternly set to business as a motorist in a 90-mile-an-hour race, he chuckled out of that piano prodigies of poetic sound, flung them broadcast over a huge audience that might have been five times as big and been thrilled fifty times as much.

And never for a single moment did Hofmann miss the 'steenth of a note in his technic, never did he let his technic stand in his way, but used it merely as a well-trained machine under superb personal control to produce great and glorious music.



"Interior of a Sail Loft"

By Harry Britton, A.R.C.A.



"Nightfall"

By William Brymner, R.C.A.

portant works of her talented husband, Mr. Knowles, and are disappointed in the small canvases that he has contributed this year.

Mr. E. Dyonnet has what might be considered one of the finest, if not the finest, portrait in the gallery, No. 95, the construction of the head and texture of the flesh being very sound and beautiful.

The president, Mr. Brymner, has several fine things, but his best canvas is No. 42, "Nightfall," which is of a very high order.

Another canvas, small and tucked away in a corner, "The Letter," No. 64, by Mr. F. S. Coburn, is one of the best figure pictures in the whole gallery. It is well worth looking up.

We miss the more important portraits of Mr. Grier, but his small head of W. R. Gregg is excellent.

We must come to a halt some time, and as well here as anywhere, but not, we feel, without mentioning in a general way some of the other fine things in the exhibition. There is "Atlantic Breakers," by Mr. Wm. Cutts; Emily Coonan's charming little figure study, No. 72, "A Girl with a Rose," and there are many others.

It is a great pity that Mr. Horatio Walker made the mistake of exhibiting his "Man Sawing Wood." It is, to say the least, not up to the standard that