

Ontario Society of Artists

... 1897 ...

The President's Twenty-fifth Annual Report.

The past can scarcely be called an eventful year in the Art history of the Dominion, including that of the Province of Ontario.

It has, however, been a healthy one so far as the Ontario Society of Artists was concerned, notwithstanding the dull times still prevailing in all lines of industry and consequent sparsity of patronage, otherwise than under the auctioneer's hammer. The return of old and valued members who had for a period remained aloof, as well as the noticeable increase of interest displayed by others in the doings of the Society, are strong indications of the vitality and usefulness of our organization; and though fashionable society may not seek us as eagerly as it does similar associations in older lands possessing perhaps more literary, intellectual, and artistic culture, it is very evident that there is a fairly large and growing element in our population in which love and respect for Art and goodwill towards its votaries is not lacking.

The Annual Exhibition of 1896 was but moderately attended and purchasers were few. This was not very surprising when all circumstances are taken into account. One important feature of past seasons seems to be missing since the cessation of the old-time Art Union, with its list of subscribers and prospective prize winners, and it seems regrettable that any honorable means of stimulating popular interest should have to be abandoned after serving its purpose for so many years.

An Exhibition held in our neighboring city of Hamilton, by the "Arts and Crafts" Association followed close upon that of our Society here and contained some works of our members.