

for in his rude way he displays much more innate perception of the harmony and contrast of colour than many of the millionaire merchants, wealthy bankers and others who compose our upper and middle-class, who give grand entertainments in splendid mansions, the whole of the "Art treasures," in which, including the pictures (save the mark) more often than not have no other value than a very few paltry dollars. It is a humiliating fact that we are, as a people, much given to display of a cheap and nasty order, and shoddy, sham and cheapness satisfy and please us as a rule.

Under such circumstances it is not surprising that those who persist in pursuing Art as a profession and a means of subsistence should be regarded as a species of semi-lunatics, of whom the best that can be said is that they are harmless, but from a long acquaintance with many of them, and exceptionally good opportunities for comparison, it is not too much to claim that in general intelligence, good breeding, knowledge of the world, and that honest desire to do with all their might whatever their hand findeth to do, they are at least on a par with our lawyers, politicians, doctors and professors of education.

In connection herewith two errors are common: 1st. That because a man chooses to make a living by his pencil in the creation of objects of beauty, he must needs be ignorant of values and those obligations between man and man known generally as business; 2nd. That Canadian artists are less clever relatively than the classes of men before mentioned. Can a comparison be made between the average Canadian artist and the average Canadian lawyer of necessity to the disadvantage of the former? The writer cannot admit any, though no doubt both might suffer by comparison with their European counterparts. The proof that this is fairly put can be found in the number of talented artists who, being unable or unwilling to struggle here under the want of support or recognition of their abilities, have left us, finding remunerative employment, and in some instances achieving reputation, in other countries.

It is unfortunately "the thing" to sneer at Canadian artists—as if art instinct and ability were matters of geographical fixity. Genius is cosmopolitan—belonging to no particular country, climate, or class of society. Giotto, the ignorant, unlettered shepherd, found a vent for his genius by drawing with rude implements on the rocks and stones in the fields, but he became the founder of the most glorious school of painting the world has ever seen; and the vague, untaught groping after the beautiful, born of the rocks and streams and skies of his mountain home, bore immortal fruit in the works of Raphael, Michael Angelo, Guido, Correggio and the Carracci; and as if to prove that climate does not restrict or control genius, in these latter days a school of artists of great original talent and power has grown up amidst the bleak winds and the fogs and snows of the little Kingdom of Norway—a native school of art that is everywhere respected has found substantial recognition in a country very much poorer than Canada, who then shall say that we have not the men or the means. Pride may justly be felt in such painters as Jacobi, Fowler, Fraser, Sandham, Millard, O'Brien and others, men whose works always contain a thought either subjective or objective, and that thought well expressed; men whose presence and labours cannot but benefit the community.

Surely it will not be disputed that he who with slight materials at his command can create things of beauty which delight, teach, and elevate, is worthy as much respect as he who by mere plodding along on the beaten track has learned enough of law to confound, or he who sits on the Bench to deliver judgments which are habitually disputed by his peers, or he who while experimenting kills instead of cures his patients. It would be hard to convince the writer that Landseer, who amassed a fortune of nearly a million sterling, or Turner, whose personality was sworn to something less at his death, or Millais, whose magnificence is to-day the talk of England, can be accused of less shrewdness than the bankers and speculators who affect and appear to glory in ignorance of, and indifference to, art as something beneath their notice. Take Frith, for example, who not many years ago obtained eight thousand pounds for a single picture, on Millais whose price for a bust portrait (the work of a few hours) is five hundred pounds, and say ye who dare, that the money king Vanderbilt, who by sharp "transactions" which, while enriching him, wreck and ruin the homes of hundreds of his fellow speculators, is a greater or better man than these who honestly get rich by the production of works which for ages will live for the admiration, pride and benefit of millions of their fellow beings. "Every dog has his day," and brighter days are in store for art and artists in this Canada of ours. The time is not remote when in this "wooden country" a gentleman will be known, not by his fine house, his horses or his balance at his bankers, but by his culture, by the fittings and surroundings of his home,—in a word, by "the gentle life" when none may afford to speak of art slightly unless he wishes to publish himself as low and grovelling and sordid, of the earth earthy. No doubt, in the mean-time, much will have to be suffered by those who bear the standard, but as hitherto they will bear it uncomplainingly; they do not hope, they cannot look for any great reward in their own day, but they will be satisfied if they can be certain that the feet which in the future travel the road they have made may not be bruised and broken in the journey; they have faith in the good time coming, though they wait a little longer.

Toronto.

## THE CONCEIT OF TORONTO,

WITH THE VIEW THAT OTHER CITIES MAY KNOW.

No. II.

I received a gratuitous suggestion to-day from one of our numerous musical prodigies, to the effect that I would have the goodness to confine my attention more to institutions and manners than to so personally point at particular classes, such as our musicians, painters and poets. My musical marionette blushingly admitted that—"Eh! I am not, eh! what you might call a regular full fledged musician, you know." This was said in such a way as to leave no doubt on my mind but that he was a second "Blind Tom." However, I thanked him for his candour and pocketed his suggestion; acting upon which, I would humbly, very humbly, discover to an unsuspecting public a few of our glaring local conceits. I will deal gently with the delicate subject, for indeed I am nervous myself and do not wish to irritate a sore spot in anybody else's nerves.

When some one requested me to decide a dispute as to which was the higher, our St. James' Cathedral or that of Cologne Cathedral, I laughed, and explained that the summit of the weather-cock on St. James' Cathedral would not reach the ridge of the roof of Cologne Cathedral by forty feet. "But what has this to do with the conceit of Toronto? We do not suppose our edifices are as fine as those of the Continent!" Do we not? I rather think we do. Our numerous guides and directories for each succeeding year inform us that our architectural triumphs are unequalled. Any loyal Torontonian will claim for our white (?) brick Cathedral—with its neatly covered galvanized-iron spire and three or four hundred crockets (the iron is slightly buckled but still durable), four coats of excellent linseed oil paint (the last coat an extra on the contract), and disilluminated clock showing four faces (one of them cracked)—the palm over all churches of this occidental hemisphere. "There's nothing can touch it in the whole of the United States of America." Now this is very consoling to know that our little mixed early English and decorated Cathedral stands pre-eminent. The more modest of Canucks occasionally make an exception in favour of the Fifth Avenue Cathedral of New York City.

Strangers to Toronto are astonished at the vastness of our resources, our wealth, our enterprise, our great knowledge of ourselves, our excellent harbour (?), our smokestacks and especially our inexhaustible supply of mud for the streets.

Take a page of one of our guide-books and you will find that we have a park which, for beauty and simplicity, compares favourably with anything Canada can produce, or even the vast North American Continent—aye, or the whole world. If I appear to use a sort of hyperbole, it is but to show the absurdity of the thing, which is an outrage on common sense. The beauties of the park are: A shabby monument in a ridiculous position, fast falling into decay, although scarcely yet ten years old; a disgusting frog-pond; a flag-staff, the cost of which was \$200—it stands 100 feet high, and is six inches out of perpendicular; a laughable flower-yard 100 feet or so, surrounded by a picket-fence painted imperial green (this garden is occasionally mistaken by visitors to the park in the fall and spring for a sort of meadow for collecting stubble for horses); something that goes by the name of a fountain; two guns taken at the Crimea; and a few clumps of trees, interspersed at irregular intervals in this picturesque field of husbandry, sculpture, flowers and things, complete the total of the most agreeable park above the torrid zone. A civic appropriation some time ago was not permitted to be sufficient to fence this field in. The only redeeming feature about the place is the villas erected there. The park itself is a laughing-stock and disgrace; and yet there are people who have the courage to tell us to our face that our park is really lovely—it is beautiful—so refreshing in summer, and O —; but I have not a good memory, and I really cannot remember what they say, except that one gentleman had the temerity to inform us at a public lecture (after the manner of the magnesians, light) that he had travelled through Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati, and San Francisco and the Yosemite Valley, but he actually saw nothing to equal our own Queen's Park (fact). Great Caesar! what have we poor Torontonians done? Our civic imperfections are our pride. We do not see them as imperfections, but through a glass darkly imagine them the great institutions of a rising and popular city. What is most to be deplored is the fact that we believe all that is flatteringly said of us; we take it all in; we are the most credulous people in existence in regard to ourselves; we have much to be proud of, and it faith we live up to our privilege.

I think it is not sufficiently understood that we were very successful last year over our great Industrial Exhibition. The affair has been hushed a little, more so than an affair of its magnitude demanded; but we rejoice to know that next to the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia, the Industrial Exposition (better known as "the fair") of Toronto for 1879 was the most unsuccessful rehash of its great prototype of 1851 that America has seen; of course we have been naturally jubilant.

The guide-book says of the old *Crystal Palace* (the present building is the