

REFLECTIONS

BY THE EDITOR

ART, architecture, sculpture and poetry are the insignia of national rank. Wheat fields, lumber yards, railways and departmental stores tell something of the prosperity of a people; but their literature and their art reveal the national character. Literature and art are broad terms, and include educational institutions, periodicals, books, public buildings and parks, art galleries, theatres and plays, musical compositions and organisations, and even house furnishings and dress. Everything which indicates the public taste in matters not connected with the business of money-making is more or less closely associated with literature and art.

Until recently Canada was so busy in opening up a new country that it had little time to study nature for the sake of its beauty, to erect buildings which were ornamental as well as useful, or to manufacture articles for their ornamental value as well as for their usefulness. Gradually, however, it has dawned upon us as a people, as it came to the Greeks and Romans in the ancient days, and to Italy in the middle ages, that there is something higher and nobler in life than mere money-making or business-getting. Having created our country, we are now beginning to beautify it. Having won our homes, we are attempting to fit them with furniture, ornaments and pictures which please and allure. Our poetry, our architecture, our painting and our music are becoming more refined and more pretentious. We are slowly learning that art has a value for art's sake.

CANADA has not yet reached the stage where art galleries are considered a necessary part of the national equipment. The nation has a small collection of pictures at the Capital, but the majority of people regard it as not more important than the gilding on the mace which lies on the House of Commons table. There are a few annual art shows in the larger cities, attended by about one per cent. of the population. There is a reasonable explanation of this, because this is a country not far removed from the elementary struggles.

Nevertheless, there are signs that we are passing from the elementary stage to higher things. Art is being talked about and occasionally patronised. Toronto is to have an art gallery soon, thanks to the bequest of the late Professor Goldwin Smith. Winnipeg got so far the other day, that it voted on a by-law to erect an art gallery, though unfortunately without success. Montreal has the nucleus of a civic art collection and museum. Soon it may be different in many cities.

ART lovers in Ontario have a rare opportunity during the present fortnight to see some excellent canvases by modern British and French artists. The fine fireproof Art Gallery of the Canadian National Exhibition at Toronto contains some sixty odd pictures imported for this year's display, and nearly one hundred and fifty native productions. This is, without doubt, the best collection ever shown in Canada at an annual exhibition.

The British and French pictures imported this year are valued at \$150,000, but the excellency of the show cannot be gauged by an estimate in dollars, as well as by a glance over the list of famous painters. This list includes the best known names of France, England, Scotland and Canada. Among the French are Gaston La Touche, Claude Monet, Gustave Courtois and Dagnan Bouveret. Among the British are Sir W. Q. Orchardson, Alfred East, Lord Leighton, Sir Luke Fildes and Mr. Charles Napier Hemy, who was elected to full membership in the Royal Academy in June. Scotland is represented by Sir Noel Paton, Peter Graham and D. Y. Cameron; Canada by Brymner, Cullen, Grier, Knowles, Reid, Staples, Watson, Beatty and a number of others almost equally well-known.

TORONTO'S annual art show has not attained to such pre-eminence without years of labour and a generous expenditure of brains and money. At first the art display was wholly Canadian, supplemented by an occasional collection of copies of famous old masters owned by some enterprising dealer or showman. Copies and fakes were soon found unsatisfactory, and the Exhibition sent representatives to England to negotiate loans of genuine original masterpieces. At first only half a dozen were imported annually, as only that number could be secured. Finally, a resident London agent

was secured, and the loan collection grew until it has assumed its present magnificent proportions. The local Art Committee, under the chairmanship of a director, meets about February and decides on the general character of the exhibition. It prepares a list of desirable pictures and artists and forwards this to the London representative. He then begins correspondence with the larger galleries and collectors, and makes arrangements for as many on the list as he can secure. He supplements this with such pictures as he himself thinks advisable, or as opportunity offers. About the first of August these are all collected at Liverpool, packed in sealed cases, and sent out in one shipment. As soon as they arrive, a Hanging Committee takes them in hand and arranges them on the walls, with the Canadian pictures, with a view of the best possible effect from a spectator's point of view. This year's hanging committee consists of five artists: Mr. William Brymner, president of the Royal Canadian Academy; Mr. Homer Watson, representing the Canadian Art Club; Mr. Wyly Grier, president of the Ontario Society of Artists; Mr. J. W. Beatty, A.R.A., and Mr. Owen Staples, O.S.A.

PROBABLY the most notable picture in the gallery this year is Sir William Quiller Orchardson's "The Borgia," painted eighty years ago. The recent death of this great artist makes this masterpiece the more interesting. His work was always marked by subtlety, dainty drawing, and dramatic intensity. "Her First Dance" is one of his earliest and most famous successes, while "The

First Cloud" is almost equally well-known to collectors of plates and readers of illustrated magazines. The latter is in the National Gallery. These two pictures exemplifying his extreme daintiness, or his supreme refinement, if the phrase is preferred. "The Borgia" is equally refined in drawing and colour, though the subject is somewhat forbidding. A man of the middle ages sitting at a table watching a guest slowly dying as the result of poison administered in his wine by his avaricious and flinty-hearted host, is not a subject which is pleasing in itself. Yet Orchardson dealt with it in such a manner as to create a masterpiece which reflects credit on his name so long as it adorns a gallery. Some day the art committee may bring out one of the famous Orchardson portraits so that we may have a chance to see the other side of the work of this noted academician.

LOVERS of animals will appreciate "Tigers At Dawn," by the late J. M. Swan R.A.

A splendid example of this artist's work was shown last year, but was somewhat overlooked by the public. It is interesting to note that a fund is now being raised in England for the purchase of a collection of his drawings still in the hands of his executors to be hung in the national galleries. Sir Lawrence Alma Tadema and other prominent artists are behind the movement. Swan was a master of the art of observation as well as of the art of painting animals as they are.

MR. CHARLES NAPIER HEMY, R.A., painter of marine pictures, was born in Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1841. His first academy picture was exhibited when he was twenty-four, after which he went to Antwerp and studied under Baron Leys. Since 1870 he has lived and worked in England. Two of his works were recently purchased for the nation by the Chantrey Trustees. "The Squall," which is shown here this year, is from the Dudley Art Gallery.

HOLMAN HUNT, second of the pre-Raphaelites, is represented by his small realistic painting, "The Shadow of Death." It represents Christ in the carpenter shop, standing erect with arms outspread; the shadow of his figure forms a cross which brings visible forebodings to the mind of his mother who is present. For the pleasure of seeing this famous, if unsuccessful, painting by the author of "The Light of the World," we are indebted to the trustees of the Leeds Gallery.

THE French pictures are vastly superior to those shown two years ago, and "The Death of Henri Regnault," a large canvas by Frederic Levé, is given the place of honour. Gaston La Touche, one of the greatest of modern colourists, is represented by a flashy picture of a theatre crowd. "The Bather," by Bougereau, is a modest study of a nude female figure.

Among the Canadian pictures, William Brymner's figure study, Wyly Grier's portraits and J. W. Beatty's landscapes are worthy of special note. Gagnon and Cullen have several light-coloured canvases which are original, to say the least.



General Baden-Powell, as the Father of the Boy Scouts

Drawn by J. K. Gardiner.