

culties which photography has not yet overcome. The microscopic reproduction of the lens, which unduly particularizes everything upon which it bears, results in rather a triumph of science than a conquest of art. Herein is its weakness. The human eye sees only what is beautiful, and pleasing, or what impresses itself on the mind, and aided by art it discovers in nature only the elements constituent of this mental impression.

Photography, however, pure and simple, possesses many valuable uses. It is when the languishing genius of the "crayon artist" disports itself in the picture that the climax of usefulness is reached. The rock bottom prices, the subtle and convincing blandishments of the vendor, prepare the victim for the purchase of a "real work of art." Nor does the evil end here. The ghastly presentment is strung up upon the wall, with a loud lacquer frame adorning it. Month after month the children are led into the holy chamber to gaze reverently upon the emaciated nonentity, which they are taught to regard as a high achievement of artistic genius. Poor souls; deluded, ignorant, unconscious of the imposition of the spattering of a hair brush upon a bromide photograph.

To eradicate this evil is not easy, since thousands of such portraits, month after month, have been issued and sold by dishonest or questionable means, and been hung in many a home. To what a depth of degradation has the taste of our people sunk! How long shall art, which by its very nature should be sacred, be openly and defiantly mocked by this disreputable waif of photography. Here is a field for the critic, and for the missionary devotee of art. Enough for photography, which though a welcome guest in the halls of science must ever be regarded as a rude intruder in the galleries of art.

The uncertain condition of national

character will long continue to be more or less a stumbling block in the way of art. The extreme change of fashion, the disregard for established usages, and the consequent lack of appreciation of what is simple and true render difficult the task of naturalizing our art. Yet there are portions of our country affording very considerable opportunities. "There is no nation so poor" said David Hume in one of his essays, "in which art cannot thrive, providing only that the agricultural interests are sufficient for the wants of the people." The native art is always the best criterion by which to judge of the advancement of a people:—not the imported art as some would have us to believe. The imported art may teach technique, and even composition, and it shows us what is being done in the great homes of art. But the work of native men should ever meet with our sympathy and appreciation: like lyric poetry it best reflects, under all conditions, the light and shades of our own home life, our deepest sympathies and our fondest recollections.

The condition just referred to will tend to disappear with the lapse of time. The writer of story must first prepare the way, the public mind must be cultivated: the demand for artistic representation will follow. So in due season our artists will have a well recognized field of work distinctively their own.

The progress of art in the Dominion may be regarded as almost phenomenal. The work of developing it has fallen chiefly upon the artists themselves, who have done much by holding their public exhibitions and private views. What has been accomplished is yet little, however. It is the sweet voice of a faint singer chanting her matin song above the babel noises of the bartering multitude.