

and educational handbooks. Only Canadian aspirants to authorship need apply."

This is, beyond cavil, a legitimate appeal; but unfortunately there is no address given to which the interested persons may apply. That Canada has writers capable of first-class work in some—or for the sake of argument let me say all—of these departments of prose literature is granted; although they are not numerous.

The whole of the eminently readable books by Canadian authors would not make a decently-sized lending library, and the difficulties in the way of addition are great, though perhaps not insuperable.

Mr. Mercer Adam very pertinently asks to be shown "how these additional writers are to be employed and remunerated, before they are disengaged from their present presumably profitable occupations?" I believe Mr. Mercer Adam has asked this same question before, and, so far as I am aware, no satisfactory answer has been given.

I would ask in addition: "Is there really any proper demand for native literary wares in Canada?" What I have heard from many authors and publishers leads me to believe that the demand that does exist is so small as to make it a matter of grave doubt when or how to publish any book. "S. A. C." will probably remember that a certain volume of dramatic and other poetry was delayed several years "owing to the inertness of Canadian interest in Canadian literature." Is the present time more propitious for adventures in the field of Canadian publication? Perhaps Mr. George Martin or Mr. Arthur Weir might enlighten us all on this point. It is extremely doubtful, and a matter to which an off-hand answer cannot be given; but I think the evidence that could be supplied by the majority of authors and publishers of Canadian books, issued say in the last ten years, would not be sufficient to establish a belief that more prose is really wanted from Canadian authors by Canadian readers. There are some who would welcome any good book, Canadian or otherwise, to their library; but the most of Canadian readers probably prefer the circulating to the private library.

Certain enthusiasts, who believe that everything Canadian is therefore good and to be encouraged and applauded, may hold other opinions; but do they not perhaps measure the intellectual requirements of their less book-hungry brethren by their own abnormal appetites?

It is hardly denied that books published during the last decade by Canadians in Canada have not been justly remunerative to their authors, and the reason is that there does not exist a sufficiently interested reading class in Canada to give Canadian writers employment. I know my views will be regarded with disfavour by some, and especially by those who attempt to pass counterfeit for coin of the literary realm, and succeed in doing so—among themselves. I have called attention before to the spirit of false pride and servile adulation that permeates much of what is called criticism to day. It is amusing to read and hear the indiscriminate eulogies bandied between some writers. The shuttlecocks of flattery are tossed about by the battledores of vanity in the game of mutual puff.

"Tickle ye one another," seems to be the text of life for a certain class of literary aspirants. Faults and follies, glaring and naked, are overlooked, and the jam of praise, which cannot of itself preserve, is plastered over many a mouldy crust, in the hope of deceiving the palate. The strong hand of impartial criticism, which should be ready to smite hard, if need be, is so afraid of putting itself into a sling that it is often covered with the kid glove of interest, and offered all round to be shaken. This is not only a mistake, but a crime. It does manifest wrong to those whom it affects to assist.

I do not wish to be mistaken and misrepresented as before. This is not stated to be a general rule with Canadian writers; but I know that the evil exists, and in no small quantity, and I do not hesitate to affirm that its presence, in any degree, has a most damning influence on any literary development. More prose of this kind should certainly not be wanted. Fortunately it is self-destructive; but it destroys that which it feeds upon also. Many a firm hand has been made unsteady by intoxicating draughts of flattering applause without any corrective.

There is a large visible quantity of good prose annually given to Canada in newspapers and periodicals, and that is the form in which it must be chiefly administered to a people so fully occupied with its daily business as to enjoy little leisure for deeper reading and higher culture. A few of our writers are using outside opportunities of literary labour successfully. Several books by Canadians have been published in England and the United States, and it is only by competition in the larger spheres of literary activity that a just recognition and reward can be gained. There are individual alternatives. Any person can publish his work at his own expense and accept the results. A rich publisher might issue a Canadian library from patriotic motives, to which more prose would always be welcome, the author to be rewarded by the honour of representation.

But until the Canadian reading public can be convinced that the best books are not written and published out of Canada, in all departments of literature, they will continue to ignore the pretensions of those who believe the term Canadian to be a guarantee of genuine and literary excellence. In the meanwhile let me ask Erol Gervase to tell us how the "more prose wanted" is to be obtained, and to suggest that, if that pinner for more prose has exhausted the stock of what already exists as prose, there is a great deal of the so-called poetry that could well be included under that head. Yours truly, SAREPTA.

THE ROBIN.

BIRD of the golden bill and ruddy breast!
That from the apple-bough this glorious morn
Pipest thy few rich notes, as if in scorn
Of all who seek than thee a longer rest,
Art thou forgetful of the mossy nest,
Where thy impatient mate awaits forlorn
The meal thou went to seek for those new-born
Unfeather'd fledglings which thy marriage bless'd?
Behold! the brown hawk sails the lambent air
With tireless wing, and that quick angry chirp,
Proclaims a sparrow fighting to usurp
The nest another built with so much care;
Then homeward, Robin, be thy dight pursuing
Lest too long dallying prove thine own undoing.

SAREPTA.

ART NOTES.

IN the *Art Journal* we read: Artists all tell the same tale that year by year the standard of admittance to a place on the English Royal Academy walls rises higher. Much of this is due to the cycle of lean years through which we have been passing. Nowadays, when buyers are not only few but more discriminating, it requires education, talent and thought to be bestowed or the picture may as well have remained unpainted. Academicians no longer retain to themselves the best and largest part of the walls; nineteen of the members only send one work each, and eleven others but two each; and of the total number of pictures exhibited only one in ten are the work of the R.A.'s. This moderation speaks well for the old members of the Academy.

Mr. Herkomer's picture of The Chapel of the Charterhouse has been purchased for the National collection from the Academy walls for eleven thousand dollars. The money is from the Chantry bequest.

A well-known dramatist is said to have observed of Hogarth's works that they were a constant encouragement to him, because he felt in looking at them that none need despair of immortality. The same may be said of David Wilkie, whose earlier subjects of the Blind Fiddler type, although commonplace enough, have a charm which always attaches to true transcripts of every-day human life with its joys and sorrows.

Apropos of Alma Tadema's principal picture of this year, which is now being exhibited in London, England, *Portfolio* says: The growing fashion of assisting an art exhibition with descriptive and biographical literary accompaniment is not wholly commendable, as the tendency is to prejudice the spectator apart from the merit of the work itself. It might also have stated that a great deal of the literary work aforesaid is simply advertisement!

"Can we think," said Mr. Richmond at the late Liverpool Art Congress, "of Giotto or Michael Angelo drawing away for days without one single motive to prompt but to copy something with a stump on a sheet of white paper? Can we see Sandro Botticelli neatly finishing a dreary drawing of a naked life guardsman in order to obtain a premium or medal? Emphatically we answer, No! If art education, instead of being mechanical and monotonous, is to encourage the student and to develop what skill and intelligence there are in him, the first step to be taken in our schools is to abolish the system of elaboration of shading with stump and point, and render forms by the brush.

TEMPLAR.

THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS.

ACCORDING to arrangements entered upon at the last Winter Session of this organization, the Convention for 1889 met last week in this city. In an age of conventions it may be thought that the special one dealing with the divine art is not likely to create more than a passing interest. Yet on this occasion, at least, questions of so much importance were dwelt upon and discussion ran so high, that sympathy with and appreciation of the points raised were largely participated in by the members and friends present.

The society appears to be doing good work, but, from the remarks embodied in the President's address and the Secretary's report, it is possible that it may be enabled to do still better work in the future, the whole standing of the society being affected by the resolutions adopted in favour of entrance examinations. To raise the standard of membership is undoubtedly to promote a more genuine musical culture. At the same time, ample provision will be made for such musicians—belonging rather to the executive than to the theoretical side of art—as may wish to join so worthy and ennobling an assembly. The country visitors were numerous, and must have been highly delighted with their reception. The trip gave such an opportunity of seeing the Normal School, Trinity College—where the Ladies' Reception was held—and of hearing several of our leading executants. To have heard the performances of the Conservatory String Quartette alone must have amply repaid the friends from a distance. The Programme Committee worked well together, and decided upon short but excellent programmes, introducing to the Society such artists as the quartette alluded to, Miss Da Ore, a young violinist of undoubted talent, Miss Maud Burdette, Mme D'Auria and Mr. Dinelli. The selections embraced the famous Tchaikowsky andante, a Mendelssohn quartette, a Mendelssohn concerto, a Handel concerto for the

organ, and a charming "Capriccio Pastorale" for piano and strings from the gifted pen of Signor D'Auria. The essays were fully up to the requisite mark, and the new feature entitled "Question Box," afforded some amusement and a good deal of solid instruction.

The result of the election of officers made Mr. Edward Fisher President, and Mr. Aldous, of Hamilton, Secretary. The future of the Society is now an assured and healthy one, and if recitals and concerts of such high value, essays of so much clearness and erudition, and conditions of absolute genuineness are presented to the public another year, there can be no question that the Canadian Society of Musicians is an organization worthy of a long and honourable existence. The next Convention will be held in the summer of 1890, but in what city has not yet been decided.

LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE.*

THESE letters, as we are told in the preface, are selected from a great mass, mainly addressed to the various members of Carlyle's family, and afford an account of his life from his marriage to the period when his fame was about to be established, by the publication of his "French Revolution."

Letters, letters, letters, are like Hamlets "Words, words, words," rather monotonous reading, when they are simply thrown together, with no connecting thread of narrative. After Froude's achievement it is perhaps the fairest way to treat Carlyle. We could have wished, however, for a different arrangement. Anyone who remembers the intense interest with which he read Byron's letters, as edited by Tom Moore cannot help heaving a sigh of regret that the editor had not set himself a more difficult task, and produced, for the reader, a more pleasing result. However, they give us Carlyle as he was, without note or comment. We see him as clearly as if we were looking through Friar Bacon's prospective glass,—a long way off, but kind and genial, notwithstanding his dyspepsia, with his great soul looking beyond the phantasmagoria of time to the unchanging realities of eternity.

To judge from the evidence before us there were never two more affectionate beings than Carlyle and his wife. Thus he addressed her a short time after they were married:—"Dearest wife,—What strange magic is in that word, now that for the first time I write it to you! I promised that I would think of you *sometimes*; which truly I have done many times, or rather all times, with a singular feeling of astonishment, as if a new light had risen upon me since we parted, as if till now I had never known how precious my own dearest little Goody was to me, and what a real angel of a creature she was."

This is not the only passage of the kind. We might select many of the same sort. His praise of her affection, goodness and thrift, was unstinted and constant.

Another feature, not only of this work but of all Carlyle's writings, is his belief and trust in Providence, in a supreme disposer of events, presiding over all the changes and chances of this transitory life. In a letter from Comley Bank to his brother Alexander, at Craigenputtock, he thus speaks of his contemplated removal to London:—"If I go to London, the mansion of Craigenputtock and its silent moors are likely to see much less of us: only, at most, some two months yearly. On this however it were very rash to calculate at present; for that I shall *not* go is certainly by far the likelier issue of the business; indeed the good and evil of the two are so very nearly balanced, that I really care very little whether I go or not; on healthier days I am clear for going and teaching all the Earth to be wise; but again on bilious days I care not one straw what becomes of it; for I think that in the wilderness of Craigenputtock I should be stronger in body, and I feel that the thing which lies in me *will* be spoken out, go whither I may. Surely, surely, it were good for a man to have some anchorage deeper than the quicksands of this world; for these drift to and fro, so as to baffle all conjecture. We will leave the issue, as should ever be done, with the higher powers."

Here is another act of faith, from a letter dated Great Cheyne Row, Chelsea, 25th August, 1834:—"Finally, my dear brother, call, from the depths of your heart, on God to help you, to guide you in the way, for it is not in man to guide himself; and so with your eye on fixed heavenly loadstars, walk forward fearing nothing—for Time or for Eternity."

These Chelsea letters, as I said before, were written just before he became famous. He had, at last, after many disappointments, succeeded in giving "Sartor Resartus" to the public. He had to cut it in pieces and publish it in a magazine first, instead of in the volume in which it was so carefully written. It had attracted attention, and now he was on the eve of a greater success. We see him hard at work every day in his quiet Chelsea home, till 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Then he starts out for a walk. What charming pictures of London life he carries home! "Here, least of all places on earth's surface, quiet never is; a raging and a roaring; all men hunted or hunting; all things 'made like unto a wheel'—that turns and turns. I have grown greatly used to it now; and for most part walk the London streets as if they were peopled with images, and the noise were that of some Niagara waterfall, or distracted universal carding-mill. There is something animating in it too; so that in my walks I generally turn

* "Letters of Thomas Carlyle, 1826-36." Edited by Charles Eliot Norton. London and New York: MacMillan & Co.; Toronto, Williamson & Co.