

high character, and are able and willing to pay its price, is unfortunately at present insufficient to sustain here for any length of time artists of really second-class reputation from a European standpoint. In Montreal, where meritorious works of Art are bought oftener than perhaps in any other place in the Dominion, and which can boast of larger and more valuable private collections from among the first painters in Europe than that bequeathed by Mr. Gibb to the Art Association of this city; this has been proved again and again. The few of Canadian youth of art talent who wisely completed their studies in Europe, returned to us, it is true, but to leave again after a longer or shorter sojourn. Some went back to Europe, or, to Australia, or to the United States, like Russell and Perry, and Wyatt Eaton. Way (if he may be called a Canadian) still remains in Switzerland. Millard returned to, and remains, we believe, in England. Jacobi, like another Cincinnatus, has retreated to his farm, and doubtless finds there more profitable employment than he could now by his pencil."

Most of the foregoing is true, and it was the discovery of this unfortunate and unnecessary condition of affairs that caused His Excellency the Marquis of Lorne and his Royal Consort to endeavour to remedy it. I say unfortunate, because it cannot be considered as a benefit that those who, by the writer's own shewing, are able to hold their own with the art talent of other countries should be compelled by lack of encouragement to leave their native land; and I say unnecessary, because there is much wealth wasted in the purchase of the failures of great artists abroad that could have been well spent in stimulating these men to produce good works amongst their own people, to whom the exercise of their genius would have been a benefit.

I would remark that the writer speaks from false premises when he includes Perry and Jacobi in the list of exiles, for only a few hours ago I had the pleasure of seeing both artists at work, as they have been for years, in a more congenial atmosphere than that of Montreal. Having been acquainted with Mr. Popham, I am willing to bear testimony to the interest he has always shown in works of art of a certain class. I qualify this statement from no desire to commit an injustice, but truth compels me to state that native art has never had a very warm champion in him; but, as far as his sympathies could allow him, I believe him when he alludes to the kindly words and substantial encouragement he has always been ready to bestow on art merit that has appeared to him superior to house-decoration or scene-painting. Of course it would be presumptuous in me to inquire how far this extended, but I may venture to express a hope that when good things were going, Edson, Sandham, John Fraser, Raphael, poor lost Vogt, and some others, came in for their share; for I am sure that they have all given evidences of talent superior to the ordinary house-painter, though, as a few scene-painters have from time to time been elected to the charmed circle of the Royal Academicians, I cannot speak with the same assurance as Mr. Popham.

But, in all kindness, if he has not extended a gushing and overflowing patronage to local artists, he is by no means singular, for many persons with ample means and some judgment in Montreal have from time to time thought it more judicious to invest their money in the purchase of inferior works by foreign artists, whose chief and only merit too frequently consisted in the technique (method of making) that he speaks of with such apparent reverence, and evidently considers as the highest end that our Canadian painters may attain to,—works devoid of either intention, thought or feeling, simply and only exhibitions of mechanical dexterity in the use of materials—brush-work—the very lowest form of art-expression, according to all great artists, from Reynolds to Leighton.

If space permitted I could easily mention a long list of names of men eminent in art, whose knowledge of "technique" was very slight indeed, to prove to his satisfaction that he puts a preposterously high value on that one quality; and fully as many who were never, nor ever will be great, who possessed it in the highest degree. It may not be out of place, however, to remind him of Turner's celebrated answer to the person who inquired what he mixed his colours with: "Brains! Madam, brains!" Given for the Canadian artist brains, the technique will take care of itself.

I have a suspicion that Mr. Popham is not well informed as to the qualifications of the original professors of the Royal Academy, or he would not have sneered at the prospective professors of the Canadian Academy with the quotation, "Ex nihilo, nihil fit." Reynolds, its president, was notoriously deficient in drawing, and the rest of the professors were not by any means up to the standard of other countries; but, despite their lack of teaching material at the beginning, only a man blessed with the boldness of ignorance would dare to say that the Royal Academy of to-day is not at least on a par with any kindred institution in the world.

The suggestion that two or three able artists from abroad be induced to settle here and accept the title of Academicians with the concurrent duties is eminently unpractical. Able painters could not be induced to leave their associations to live in an utterly uncongenial atmosphere for the love of art, or in the spirit of art missionaries, nor could any financial inducements which we are likely to be able to offer avail; for able and reputed painters abroad receive all the financial support they desire. The suggestion to raise a fund to send deserving students to Europe to perfect their studies is equally valueless. Not being behind the scenes, Mr. Popham of course cannot know that only a very

small proportion of such prize-winners ever succeed in doing any more, their art-lives from that point being generally over.

And now I will inform Mr. Popham of a fact of which I presume him to be ignorant. Before committing himself to the formation of an Academy of Art, the Governor General and H. R. H. the Princess Louise took the very wise precaution to invite the artists of the Dominion to form a collection of representative works for their inspection and criticism, and as His Excellency is a gentleman of high culture, who has had the best of opportunities for forming his judgements in art, and Her Royal Highness has been for years a most diligent art student *in the old world*, and is an able painter, I think it may be fairly claimed that their judgment is entitled to as much respect at least as Mr. Popham's. They concluded that Canada possessed good material from which to form an Academy, and there seems no reason why its success should be doubted, if the laws and constitution are so sound and fair as to secure the hearty co-operation of the artists, but it seems strange, if Mr. Popham has given due care to the preparation of his article, that he should have overlooked some weak points in the published constitution.

Possibly it was wise to appoint the first member of the academy, but it is an opinion generally expressed that they should have been allowed to choose their President and Vice Presidents, it may be cited that the King appointed Reynolds, but he was the unanimous choice of the Academicians, and it would be a great misfortune if the institution only partially succeeded or failed through a want of hearty support of the presiding officers, indeed by a lack of confidence in respect for them.

Then the clause "funds:" those who are aware of the profits hitherto derived from exhibitions and donations cannot be accused of timidity if they look with doubt on the probability of a revenue sufficient to cover expenses, when the great distance at which exhibitions will be held, travelling and other expenses are considered. There are other points that seem fairly open to criticism, but the Artists do not feel disposed to indulge in it, they are grateful to His Excellency for the step he has taken, and hope that if anything is wrong, experience will right it, which I believe is a sensible way of looking at it.

I am quite willing to accept Mr. Popham's disclaimer of any intention to say unkind words about Canadian painters; but writing as he appears to do with a sense of a local injustice, he has been betrayed into some very unpleasant, unnecessary and disparaging remarks concerning them, and I am sure, from my knowledge of his kindly, if too impulsive nature that nobody will regret more than himself having done so, and if the art of the country has found a home, even though it be an humble one, in Toronto, no one has any right to feel annoyed, as I infer he does from his concluding paragraph with reference to holding the *last* exhibition of the series of five years in Montreal.

Montreal could, and perhaps should have been the head-quarters; but, with all its wealth, its culture, its beautiful surroundings and commanding position—to say nothing of a peasantry as picturesque as any in the world—it has persisted in such a course of criticism as Mr. Popham has indulged in in his article, and so has driven away its artists. I cordially concur in the hope that when the time arrives for the Academy exhibition in Montreal, a great advance will have been made in Canadian Art, not so much on account of the super sensitiveness of Mr. Popham and some others as for the influence which such progress must exert in refining and educating our people.

Toronto.

WHAT IS POLITICAL ECONOMY?

If anything were wanting to show the necessity for such a society as the new Political Economy Club, it would be found in the ignorance that has been so generally exhibited in the comments which have been dished up during the past few weeks.

The right of free discussion has been not a little imperilled by several circumstances. Questions of great "pith and moment" have been proposed as desirable for public discussion, and have been treated with the intense bitterness of partisanship, not with the sober calmness of the love of truth. The passions do not reason, and hence such a mode of advocacy has aroused bitter animosities and excited rancour. It has given rise to a mischievous ferocity, suggesting that in the interests of peace a restraint may be put upon controversy. To confound controversy with a faction fight, or to attach any stigma of disloyalty to it, and thence to advocate in any way the suppression of public discussion now happily enjoyed among us, is a most fallacious proceeding.

Controversy is an investigative effort of the mind; is the weighing, valuing and estimating of arguments as an aid to the forming of right conclusions concerning the matters under discussion; is an exertion of the intellectual faculties in reasoning, and hence wherever unseemly license occurs there is no controversy, but rather a contravention of the first principles of free thought and impartial speech. It is the duty of controversy to show the force of arguments and to test their soundness; to balance thought with thought, and to place the results of honest examination before the mind, that it may see the results of deliberation; but it is no part of controversy to settle questions or to