

The resemblance to Lewis's worthless ballad, which the Professor finds in Coleridge's immortal poem, is literally that there is a wedding in each; that in one the festivities are disturbed by a spectre knight, who carries off the bride, and in the other a wedding guest is stopped on his way to the feast by an "uncomfortable" mariner, who insists on telling his tale. There is music in both. Are not these "comparisons" too much after Fluellen's fashion—"There is a river in Macedon, and there is also more over a river in Monmouth, and there is salmon in both." It is of a similar style of criticism that Coleridge speaks in a prefatory note to *Christabel*. "There is among us," he says, "a set of critics who seem to hold that every possible thought and image is traditional; who have no notion that there are such things as fountains in the world, and who would therefore derive every rill they behold flowing from a perforation in another man's tank."

In his critical remarks, Professor Brandl makes a curious slip which, trifling as it may seem, is not without significance. He tells us that Coleridge introduced all sorts of strange features into the irregularities of the Romantic school—as if Coleridge belonged to the Romantic school, or any other school of poetry. "For example," the Professor says, "the Ancient Mariner swears by his beard, as if he were a Turk." The Ancient Mariner does no such thing. It is the angry wedding guest who adjures the Mariner by that noticeable appendage to his face:

By thy long beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

A small mistake, but one that shows carelessness, and therefore ought not to be made by any one who undertakes to criticize such a poem as the inspired *Ancient Mariner*.

LOUISA MURRAY.

PRESSED VIOLETS IN A BORROWED CLASSIC.

Wise "old heathen" who were living
Twenty centuries ago,
What aromas sweetly modern
From your tedious pages flow!

Breath of violets, strangely mingled
With Demosthenes and Greece;
Arts of war and laws Platonic,
Hiding these shy arts of peace.

Friend, I see you, absent-minded,
Turning these wise pages o'er,
Leaving here for safer keeping
Those sweet flowers that she wore.

None would search here, you were thinking,
Or would seeing understand,
How she gave them you, half jesting,
With a pressure of the hand.

Friend, I think these old lawgivers
Far too ponderous for my mind.
Thanks for leaving, absent-minded,
Something I could read, if blind.

I have pondered truly, deeply,
What the wise and ancient say,
But the truest thing I read here
Is a tale of yesterday. —Overland Monthly.

ART AND MUSIC.

THE EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS.

The combined Exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy and Ontario Society of Artists, the opening of which we noticed last week, is one of considerable merit, and it is only to be regretted that interest is not taken by the general public in such an exhibit for its own sake. It must be conceded that Art in Canada is far in advance of the public taste; so far in advance, indeed, that it appears at times doubtful if public appreciation will ever overtake it. The effort now being made to build a public gallery, be it understood, is to pay for laying the bricks; the painters are presumably contributing their work for nothing. A very generous arrangement truly, but, after the example set to us by the younger colony in Australia, it is one that should cover us with lasting disgrace. The present temporary gallery, notwithstanding its makeshift surroundings, is cool and tolerably well lighted. Although there is no attempt yet made in work of an imaginative character, the technical painting is perhaps better than ever before. Mr. Glazebrook, of London, an old exhibitor at the Grosvenor Gallery, sends a portrait (174) that is quite good enough for any exhibition. The handling is free and confident, with a fine appreciation of textures, without any attempt at the brush-marks, brag and paintiness that young painters of the so-called French school so often affect. The colour is good, fully modelled, and full of vitality. It is far and beyond the best portrait in the room; probably the best that has ever been exhibited in Toronto before, if we except Stewart's portrait by Oulless. Immediately beneath this is a little picture, "Harmony" (175), by R. Harris, in front of which it will pay one to bring a chair and sit for a half hour. The painter has

abandoned the painty, sloppy manner of former years, also his tendency to redness in the flesh. Terburg, of whom it reminds one, could not have painted it better. It is the most artistic thing in the gallery, if the landscape men will excuse our partiality for figure pictures. "Composing his Serenade" (107) is necessarily less delicate and more off hand in the painting; the right hand has been a trifle slighted, but the movement of picking a mandolin is there. "The Tenor of the Spruce Creek District School" (120) as a whole, is a complete failure. The right of the picture, the serious side, is very fine indeed, but the tenor on the left, the funny side, is not so funny as utterly idiotic. The elbows projecting from the body at the same angle is a bad feature in the composition anyway, and Mr. Harris would do well to rearrange it. The "Chelsea Pensioner" (154) and "A Portrait" (150), an exquisitely modelled gray picture of a little lady who might have sat to Gainsborough, should not be overlooked. Mr. Harris is vastly improved since his last residence in England. The "Father will Return" (127) of Paul Peel, the largest picture in the room, is a variety of subject rather common in Paris, there being so very little thinking required in the composition, and the shops in the Rue de Seine where photographic out-of-door studies are sold carry a large stock of such subjects ready made. From the number of such pictures exhibited every year at the Salon it would appear that the aspiring painter of the wheel-barrow school fully avails himself of his exceptional facilities. The title of Mr. Peel's picture does not exactly fit, suggesting perplexity on the part of Mr. Peel to find out himself what it meant. The figure of the woman is so palpably posed that, unless she intends killing the infant and is considering whether to do it with the scythe or whetstone, photography is very naturally suggested. The manner of painting is common enough, too, in Paris; the "values" on which such insistence is made are readily attained by the exclusion of anything approaching to positive colour, but the ground is seldom of any value, and might be grass, fog, or feathers, and the subject is usually—as in the present instance—painted on a scale a long way in excess of its value. The painting, the workmanship, of this picture is respectable throughout. If there were anything positively bad, it may be, provided it have the least trace of originality to break the uniform respectability of this picture, it would be at least an element of hope. Mr. Foster is rather better this year than formerly. There is less display of cheap finery in his accessories and no "coincidences." The portrait of Jacob Spence (149) is a fortunate subject painted in a downright manly way. It is by long odds the best work Mr. Foster has yet exhibited. Let us hope that the pink-and-white effeminacy that has characterized his work in former years has been permanently abandoned. The colour is a little opaque and "painty," and the shadow side of the face is hardly the colour of the flesh in shadow. "Her ain Fireside" (133) is not so good; the hands suggest the talons of a bird and the fireside is badly out of perspective. "Drawing Lots" (110), by G. A. Reid, is "a screamer" of the very loudest kind. The intensity of sunlight on the red bricks and the inkiness of its shadows attract the eye from every direction, precluding the seeing, with any degree of comfort, anything else on that wall. The picture, although a very old subject, and a very old composition as regards the figures and the wall, is technically very good indeed, if it is rather wanting in atmospheric environment. The sky is the right colour for the side opposite the sun, but there is no difference in its intensity from zenith to horizon, and appears to be an upright plane. The wall being a section and a straight line parallel with the frame is also unsatisfactory. And we are very naturally led to think of its limitations, whether it is a low wall near the ground, as the tree would suggest, or painted from a scaffold away up in the air, as the house in the distance implies. Such little discrepancies as these disturb the mental repose necessary to the enjoyment of a picture. This class of subject is painted about as well as it can be by J. G. Brown, of New York, and it is only a question whether it is worth the candle, and is not an invasion of the legitimate domain of photography. "Gossip" (116) is also a very old subject not very happily treated, the back of the sitting figure is at least four inches too short, making the head look uncommonly large. The painting throughout is hard and wooden, and there is an obtrusiveness of the objects in the room that insists on an inventory being made of the items, and examining each in detail. In fact, to notice everything Mr. and Mrs. Reid sent would be simply to catalogue the whole of their studio furniture and belongings, finishing with two alleged portraits of Mr. Reid himself. A member may contribute fifteen pictures, but they need not be all on the line to the detriment of much better work. Must the Academy be reminded that it is not an auction room? Homer Watson is a man who seldom disappoints. Under whatever influence he may happen to work for the time, there is always enough of Watson in his pictures to impart an individual character, and quite enough of good to be truly thankful for. "Where the Upland Dips to the Shore" (129), his best picture this year, is as modest as nature, large, breezy and refreshing, notwithstanding the sky being a little heavy and purple. "Moonrise" (99) on the same wall is an unobtrusive little picture extremely beautiful, and has the rare quality of being like moonlight. The large picture of the "Saw Mill" (82) is not so good; it is an older picture, and it lacks the simplicity that he has since learned to value so highly. It is a composition. Now to arrange nature a man needs to know a great deal. It seems to us that the mill race is too near the road; a torrent of that description would undermine it in a few hours, and carry the over-hanging oak-tree completely away.

We must reserve consideration of the other pictures for another issue; but we cannot close this brief notice without some reference to the catalogue which, while neatly and even artistically printed, is full of the most inexcusable blunders. We have counted between fifty and sixty, and there may be many more, not only in the subjects of the pictures but in the names of the artists. The whole edition should be suppressed and a corrected one issued.