

The National Gallery and its Possible Relation to Education in our Schools

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THE National Gallery of Canada, situated in the capital, was founded over thirty years ago, and yet comparatively few outside of the artist fraternity know of its existence. It was established in 1881 by the Royal Canadian Academy of Art with the help of the Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne and good Princess Louise, whose help in the development of Canadian art is always remembered with grateful appreciation.

The first home of the Gallery was in the Supreme Court Building on Bank Street, Ottawa, but it was soon moved to the upper floor of the Fisheries Building on O'Connor Street, where it remained till three years ago when the great new Victoria Memorial Museum gave it a home in its east wing.

There the collections are arranged on three floors, and consist of about three hundred original paintings, both Canadian and foreign, a few drawings, engravings, designs, and etchings, several halls of sculpture, copies of well known European sculpture, and as well a few original examples of Canadian sculpture.

The foreign sculptures suffer in our esteem on account of their not being original. But as the original works are not available at any price, and these that are here are fair copies in plaster, we may as well be content. And so there may be seen many of the well known works of sculpture, such as Venus de Melos with her arms broken off, the great and terrible Laocoon group with the serpents strangling to death the priest and his two sons, Michael Angelo's Moses in indignation, Apollo Belvedere, and a hundred more, from ancient to mediaeval times.

The paintings and drawings are not divided into schools, but are rather arranged in the gallery to present an agreeable relationship of size and colour. Altogether they number about three hundred, more than half of which are Canadian. By far the larger proportion of the pictures are recently modern, though some are of earlier period, one as far back even as the Egyptian period, done in wax in the second or fourth century, A.D.

There are a few early Italians, only two Spanish, one of them a Goya of recent acquisition; of the French, the *pleine-air* Babizon painters have a considerable representation; the British painters, particu-