



SHEEP WASHING—FROM THE PAINTING BY HORATIO WALKER, BY PERMISSION N. E. MONTROSS

quaintance with, the work of one of our fellow countrymen, who is well known elsewhere, must be forgiven, but at least it need not continue. Our cousins over the line have grown to appreciate him, thinking, perhaps, that we are not otherwise in things of art. This good opinion might be best shown by a quotation from one of the keenest art critics of the New York press, who has this to say with regard to one of Mr. Walker's pictures, "The First Gleam" :—

"The theme is simple, but in its treatment we have an epic. The mystery and the majesty of the morning are in these labouring forms, and the canopy of fire and cloud. In the driver we see no 'man with a hoe,' dull, hopeless, dragging his way through an existence that means no more to him than food and shelter; it is a man who, though brother to the ox, feels joy and purpose in his work; a man in whose air there are resolution and command; a man into whose life has come something of the calming greatness of Nature. He is sprung from the earth, and the strength of the soil is in him. His environment is of a splendour kings cannot command. The freshness and the fragrance of the morning are around him, and distances

recede into glowing infinities. The immense sky, shot with rays and shadows, is pouring its light on a freshened earth, and the curtains of the night are rolling away before the sun. Life, power, joy are the meaning of the picture."

Horatio Walker was born at Listowel, Ont., in 1858. His art career began while yet a boy, when he had a habit of sketching at odd times with all sorts and conditions of material. His training in art is very simply stated: it consisted of the old-fashioned process of going to nature, and the other process, equally old, of keeping on and on and on. The first pictures, real oil paintings, he ever saw were in Toronto, in 1872. They proved most unsatisfactory to the art-hungry youth to whom they gave nothing but the keenest disappointment, his instinct telling him these were not that for which he longed. Later, in the same city he saw a number of old English pictures which were as a shower in a desert; as water to a thirsty soul.

Continued work from nature brought increased power to the young artist.