

**CIHM
Microfiche
Series
(Monographs)**

**ICMH
Collection de
microfiches
(monographies)**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1994

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur
- Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure
- Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.

- Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur
 - Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées
 - Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
 - Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
 - Pages detached/
Pages détachées
 - Showthrough/
Transparence
 - Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression
 - Continuous pagination/
Pagination continue
 - Includes index(es)/
Comprend un (des) index
- Title on header taken from: /
Le titre de l'en-tête provient:
- Title page of issue/
Page de titre de la livraison
 - Caption of issue/
Titre de départ de la livraison
 - Masthead/
Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

- Additional comments: /
Commentaires supplémentaires:

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	14X	18X	22X	26X	30X
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12X	16X	20X	24X	28X	32X

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

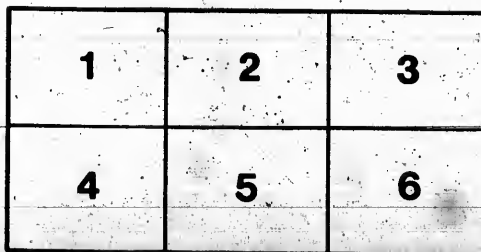
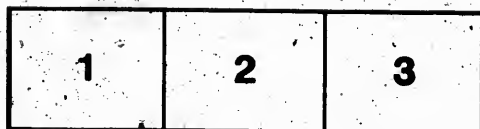
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library,
University of Toronto Library

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

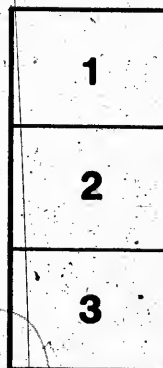
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library,
University of Toronto Library

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



1.43
1.50
1.56
1.63
1.71
1.80
1.88
1.96
2.04



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1853 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 298 - 5888 - Fax

EXTRACT FROM PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT

— OF THE —

Colonial and Indian Exhibition

AT SOUTH KENSINGTON

1886.

REPORT

— OF —

MR. HODGSON, R.A.

— ON THE EXHIBIT OF —

CANADIAN PICTURES.



TORONTO :

PRINTED BY BINGHAM & WEBBER, 29 ADELAIDE STREET, EAST.

8091128

The following is that portion of the report of Sir Charles Tupper, G.C.M.G., C.B., Executive Commissioner of the Canadian section of the Exhibition of the Colonies and India, which refers to the Collection of Pictures exhibited by Canadian artists:

FINE ARTS.

"In this department, also, Canada has asserted her supremacy among the Colonies. An English critic, writing in the *Magazine of Art*, says:—"While walking among the Canadian pictures you can imagine yourself in a good European gallery much more easily than you can if, you are in the fine art collection of any other Colony." Another critic said:—"A school of clever landscape painters, inspired by grand mountain and river scenery, appears to have been formed in Canada. The names of Forbes, Fraser and L. R. O'Brien may be mentioned in this connection. Two views of Quebec lent by Her Majesty the Queen, are good examples of Mr. O'Brien's art. Some of his water-color paintings are also deserving of special commendation. One of the best works in the gallery is the 'Meeting of School Trustees,' by R. Harris. * * * *Regarded as a whole the contributions from Canada are full of interest and promise.*"

During my absence in Canada, Mr. Cross approached His Excellency the Governor-General, who was then in England, with the view of obtaining a report from some English artist of standing upon the works of our painters. His Excellency was pleased to approve of the suggestion, and, with his unflinching interest in all matters affecting the credit of the Dominion, exerted himself to obtain such a report. Lord Lansdowne succeeded in securing the kind offices of Mr. J. E. Hodgson, R. A., Professor of Painting and Librarian to the Royal Academy, whose criticisms and suggestions are full of most valuable instruction to our artists, and are made in a spirit of thorough good will, while they are, at the same time, accompanied by words of praise and encouragement very welcome from an artist of Mr. Hodgson's standing. I introduce his report here.

TO SIR CHARLES TUPPER, G. C. M. G., C. B.,
&c., &c., &c.

DEAR SIR,—Lord Lansdowne has requested me to convey to you, in writing, my opinion of the pictures contributed by Canadian artists to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition. His Lordship seems to be of opinion that the verdict of a painter, who, from his years and position, must necessarily have had a great deal of experience in the matter of art education, is likely to be useful to the young and rising school of Canada. It gives me great pleasure to do this, apart from the general principal conveyed in the

old adage of "*navita de ventis narra!*," solely on the ground of the varied interest attached to the Exhibition itself. I am not acquainted with any of the Canadian artists, so that I trust that the remarks I am going to make, whatever other value they may have, may at all events claim the merit of being perfectly genuine and disinterested.

My first impression on making a careful survey of the pictures, was, that Canada already possessed in Mr. L. R. O'Brien a very considerable and accomplished artist, and in Messrs. John A. Fraser, F. M. Bell Smith, Paul Peel, Homer Watson, P. G. Wickson, W. Brymner, and R. Harris, others who promised, if well directed, to attain to still higher distinction. Good direction is, I think, the one thing needful; a country which has already produced so much talent and energy, has no doubt plenty more in reserve; the pictorial resources of nature appear to be boundless, whilst the life of the people, so much less removed from primitive simplicity than is the case in our old world, supplies that element of picturesqueness for which we are compelled to search far and wide and often in vain; in a word, everything seems to me to favor the production of a noble and original school of painting. But as it is foolish to forget our gratitude for the good things we enjoy, by dwelling upon others which we hope to possess some day, I shall take in review the present Exhibition before I venture on general remarks.

The fifteen contributions of Mr. L. R. O'Brien, P.R.C.A., are all admirable. In his oil pictures, possibly from want of familiarity with that stubborn material, he is less ambitious than in his water-colors. I especially miss the figure element which he introduces with great skill into the latter. His view of Quebec by sunset, however, shows no want of skill in manipulation—it is well drawn and executed with a spirited touch. The "St. Lawrence from the fort of Quebec" is also a very impressive picture; the aspect of that mighty river which seems to dwindle ocean-going ships to the proportion of fishing boats, sends the imagination travelling backwards through thousands of miles of great lakes and rivers, and I try to conjecture where the first drops of that great mass of water began their long pilgrimage to the sea. But, as I said before, it is in his water-colors that Mr. O'Brien is most impressive, and most at his ease; the merit of these drawings is great enough to bear comparison with the works of the chosen professors of the art who have for so many years had their local habitation in Pall Mall East. "Portage at Chute de Diable," "September on the Saguenay" and "Mount Eboulement" are beautiful landscapes; but the two drawings which appeal most to my imagination are the "Voyageurs on the St. Maurice, and the lovely sketch of "Sunrise on Lake St. John;" this may be partly owing to reminiscences of Washington Irving. The Canadian voyageur paddling his canoe amongst those vast inland waters,

is to me like a creature of half mythical romance, I long to hear of his exploits, and am delighted when he is visibly presented to my eyes.

Mr. John A. Fraser, R.C.A., is the next largest contributor to the Exhibition. He is an artist with whom I venture to express very hearty sympathy. In several respects he may appropriately be called the pioneer of a new School of Art. He seems to have gone forth into the outer wilderness in search of the picturesque, and on the evidence of the scenes he represents, in the solitudes of the far West, he must often have startled the eagle and the "grizzly" by the unwonted apparition of an easel and sketching umbrella; he shows the same daring spirit in the subjects he chooses and the natural effects he tries to represent. I feel too much genuine admiration for his efforts to indulge in promiscuous commendation; I do not think that he has been completely successful; but his failures, as far as they go, are worth a great deal more than successes achieved on the beaten paths, along which less original painters are content to plod. With Mr. Fraser I may conveniently mention J. C. Forbes, R.C.A., whose new oil pictures—"Mount of the Holy Cross," "Rocky Mountain Canon," and "Mount Stephen,"—evinced the same pioneering spirit. In the latter there is a palpable want of mastery over the material, which is apt to prejudice the professional eye. There is an unpleasant redness in the coloring for instance, but the resolute and careful drawing, the earnestness and fidelity to nature are in every way admirable. With a little more practice and experience we may expect better results. Mr. Fraser's drawings, notably the "Percé," "Mount Stephen," "Mount Hermit," and "Summit Lake," have, to my mind, more of the new world in them than anything in the Exhibition, at least as I imagine the new world which I have never seen. My impression of it derived from books, if such may be called impressions, represent a country which, to borrow a metaphor from the studio, the Great Artificer has established before laying on those glazings and scumblings with which artists are in the habit of completing their work; there is less mellowing of tints than in our hemisphere, and a more rigid insistence upon outline, and I thoroughly applaud Mr. Fraser, painting in his own country and to the manner born, in his efforts to grapple with the artistic difficulties of such an atmosphere; if he is not thoroughly successful, and if a certain rawness is observable in his pictures, time and practice will, I feel certain, bring ultimate triumph. A more serious indictment to be brought against him, is carelessness in the matter of form. The same atmosphere which would enhance the vividness of coloring, would also bring the accidents of outline into more prominent relief; and it is a fact based upon subtle artistic laws, on the effect produced on the minds by synthesis of effect, that were the outlines more clearly defined, as for instance in the pines on

"Mount Hermit," more clearly defined and more individualized, the coloring would appear less harsh and exaggerated.

This seems an appropriate place to mention the charming drawing of Niagara contributed by H. R. H. the Princess Louise, which indicates the same courageous attempt to grapple with Canadian coloring. As I imagine it, the burning intensity of that wall of liquid emerald which hangs over the ledge of Niagara, is strictly inimitable by art, but the mimic presentment given by this drawing enables us to form a vivid idea of what the reality must be. If royal birth has hitherto been an obstacle to the production of good art, it may fairly be said that H. R. H. has been the first to prove that that obstacle is not insuperable.

Mr. Paul Peel, A.R.C.A., is, I understand, a young man, and is evidently acquainted with French ateliers, and he has imbibed many of the precepts which are current in such places. His hand and eye have been trained and he has learnt the orderly management of a palette and brushes.

His picture entitled "Admiration," representing a boy blowing soap bubbles, is painted in a firm and masterly way, all the resources by means of which relief is obtained have been employed with knowledge and judgment. The picture is complete so far as it goes, and leaves very little to be desired. "Return of the Harvesters," the most important of his contributions, and the largest picture in the collection, bears evidence of the same training and acquirements. I imagine the scene to be laid in Brittany, but a doubt arises in my mind, which in my ignorance I am unable to solve, as to whether the peasants in French Canada may not possibly have retained or adopted the costume which we are familiar with in the north-west of France. The conception of this picture is poetical, but in the carrying out as I shall endeavor to point out when I come to general remarks, youth and inexperience have had to wage a somewhat unequal battle with the special difficulties inherent in a large scale. The same resources which are adequate in a small picture, fail when applied to a large one. The effect produced on the eye is not one of relative, but absolute proportions, and a blank space may represent the same area in a large as in a small picture, but the eye judges of the absolute size of that blank space, and pleased or offended accordingly. "Covent Garden Market, London, Ontario," is another of Mr. Peel's thoroughly successful works. It is well drawn and the execution is firm and scholarly. His other works I will mention incidentally later on.

R. Harris, R. C. A., another young aspirant in figure painting, is represented by four pictures. These are full of promise and in the "Meeting of Trustees," &c., there is evident achievement also. The character of the backwoods trustees, big with brief authority, is admirably given—it is a sober, earnest, conscientious work; all I will venture to say, and not at all

in the way of disparagement, is, that in that far off adumbration, which we call the representation of nature, of which alone art is capable, large sacrifices have to be made. The scale of nature is so many octaves more extensive than that of art, that though we endeavor to imitate her harmony we are compelled to reduce its compass. Lightness and darkness in nature melt into each other by infinite gradations; and if we follow her accurately at one end of the scale we shall find ourselves without resources when we come to the other. We must take an average of nature, and do the best we can, or the thing most generally suggestive of truth, with that. It seems to me that Mr. Harris has followed nature a little too closely and conscientiously at the dark end of her scale and has failed to render her brilliancy in a way at all proportionate to her gloom.

Homer Watson, R. C. A., another young artist, seems to me to be quite on the right road. Saving and excepting certain objections which I need not apply to him personally, but to the school in general, his work is thoroughly satisfactory. It supplies the primary requisite of a work of art, namely, individuality. Without going into metaphysics and the abysses of Fichteism, we may safely assert that the variety and versatility of external nature are only made apparent to us by their appeal to peculiar mental constitutions, and what Charles Lamb called the "corregiosity of Corregio" was in reality a revelation of something existing in nature which had hitherto passed unnoticed. We associate certain effects with individuals, such as sunset glow with Cyrt and cavernous gloom with Rembrandt, as they were really the discoverers of the one and the other; and I should consider that any professor or teacher of art who objected to any peculiar rendering he might observe in one of his pupils, was venturing into regions where he had no business. I think that Mr. Homer Watson sees nature in his own way; perhaps in a somewhat weird, inhospitable and cheerless way, but it is his own, and-if any word of mine can carry encouragement to him I would bid him persevere and express the thing that is in him. All I would venture to suggest applies strictly to the language, not to the motive impulse, of his art. All he has got to say is compatible with careful drawing of parts, such as leaves and bushes, and the impressiveness and terror which he wishes to convey in his fine picture of the "Saw Mill" can be rendered without an unpleasant inky hue in sky and water.

Mr. F. M. Bell Smith, A. R. C. A., is no novice, to judge by his firm touch, and what I may call the judicious reticence he is able to command when speech is unnecessary. His picture of "Last Rays, Bay of Fundy," tempts me to forget Canada and to generalize. It seems to me as good as most landscapes which are being painted in these days; but then Mr. Bell Smith must remember that very great landscapes are not being painted, and there are still new worlds for him to conquer. His pictures are a trifle

French, perhaps; there is just a little of that parade of art which is so offensive in the landscapes which hail from Paris; just a suspicion of self-assertion. The good people of Canada live farther from France than we do; they have not been bored to death as we have; they have not been daily told by Frenchmen: "See how clever we are," "how well we know how to do things," "in that place in your picture you must put a flat tint with a palette knife if possible," "that must all be dark," "it is the law," and so on; and Mr. Bell Smith, with his artistic training and fine eye, might well afford to set such things at defiance. As he walks on the sea-beach and drinks in the pure Atlantic breeze, and watches the green waves rolling on the sand and splitting themselves in spray upon the rocks, he would do well to let love of nature and beauty be his only guide, and I don't think it will lead him far astray.

W. Brymner, R. C. A., is a talented artist who shows in a more marked degree the influence of French teaching. His best picture, in my opinion, entitled "Crazy Patchwork," has all the characteristic excellencies, or let me call them truths, for which modern French art is remarkable, giving a scene in which a number of objects of different colors are grouped together; that art is mainly pre-occupied with rendering the exact value in point of lightness or darkness which those objects have respectively to each other, and this one truth has been rendered with an accuracy which may be reckoned as a new achievement in art. Mr. Brymner has accomplished this in his "Crazy Patchwork" and in "A Wreath of Flowers." The former picture is, moreover, carefully and skilfully drawn and painted. It has also an agreeable, silvery tone of color. This artist has naturally a good eye and delicate appreciation of tone—in itself a rare gift—and he is capable of producing beautiful work. All that appears to me to be necessary is a more extended sphere of effort, as, for instance, an endeavor to unite grace and beauty of form and feature with the charm of tone and aerial perspective, which he already excels in.

Of Albert Bierstadt, who is not a Canadian, I need say nothing. He has often exhibited in Europe and the value of his work has been fixed by very competent critics.

Allan Edson, R. C. A., deserves a word of hearty commendation, especially for his landscape in water-colors. It is a beautiful harmony in grey and gold, with a clear limpid sky. There is nothing better in point of color in the collection. The grey trunk on the right with the autumn leaves clustering round it, very subtle and full of fine artistic feeling.

William Gill. The three drawings by this artist are in a very pure style of water-color, neatly and deftly executed in single washes. I should like to see Mr. Gill's work on a larger scale and with a more ambitious theme. I may make a remark here which applies also to Mr. Edson and

indeed to all the Canadian landscape painters. There seems to me to be a want of character and individualization in their drawing of trees. I ask myself which of these is the maple, the sumach or the hemlock, of which I have so often read, and I cannot answer the question. These trees might be growing in Sussex or Kent. Grand Pré, the country Mr. Gill paints in, at once recalls Longfellow's "Evangeline," and I think of the opening lines:—

This is the forest primeval; the murmuring pines and the hemlocks
Bearded with moss in garments grey, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand,

There is more local coloring in these lines than in scores of Canadian pictures. This is a defect which the artists should certainly correct.

F. A. Verner must practice assiduously, to overcome a certain clumsiness of handling which mars his good intentions. His subjects are very interesting to us who live on this side of the great salt lake. They record things which I suppose are doomed to pass away. The buffalo may already be classed with the Great Auk and the Dodo, and the aboriginal Red Indian, in flannel shirt and trousers, no longer reminds one of the noble savage in his warpaint who stalks so majestically through the narratives of Fenimore Cooper.

D. Fowler, R.C.A. This artist's drawings of dead game and flowers are spirited in execution and particularly rich and brilliant in colouring. His partridges seem to me the most successful in point of execution. There are several other exhibitors whose subjects place them in the same category with Mr. Fowler to all of whom I will give a passing word of commendation, and also another of admonition. They must bear in mind that the limited range of their art compels them to employ the utmost delicacy and fidelity of drawing and rendering of texture, and that it is only by technical perfection that they can raise their art to the level of an intellectual enjoyment.

T. Mower Martin, R.C.A., in addition to the pictures of the above class, exhibits a landscape in oil, "Fir Trees," which is broad and effective, and some water colour drawings, amongst which I noticed "Old House at Ancaster," as particularly successful.

Geo. Harvy, A.R.C.A., is only represented by one picture, "In the Annapolis Valley;" but that picture is one of the very best in the Exhibition. There is a sense of repose in its solemn twilight tones, which reminds one of Venetian art. This picture is on the range of high art. Suppose it to be the background to some touching human incident, and as disappointed ambition might be the cause of, and we at once find ourselves on the confines of a high order of things. The ultimate height of refinement to which poet and artist have hitherto reached, is to point out the

sympathy between the aspect of external nature and the mind of man, as in Coleridge and Wordsworth, Michel Angelo and Titian. Mr. Geo. Harvey's work only wants to be a little more firm; one thing seems to melt into another. To be really impressive, each object should assert itself boldly. This is a snake fence and this is a road; there should be no mistake about it.

P. G. Wickson is also represented by a single picture: "The Young Artist," represents an incident which may have been borrowed from the life of Giotto. This picture is, I hope, the work of a young man, and as such indicates promise. It wants careful treatment throughout, especially in the modelling of flesh, and is deficient in the blending of warm and cool tints. The young man who begins by trying to paint all he sees, will eventually learn what is most essential; but he who begins by only telling half a story, will learn perhaps, when it is too late, that he missed the point.

P. F. Woodcock, R. C. A. "Returning from the Well" is the best of the two pictures exhibited by this artist. The composition is very skilful and agreeable, the proportion of the figure to the background and the canvas generally is admirably adjusted; the sunny glow on the farm buildings is also very beautiful. He tells us a good deal, but he also suppresses many things we should like to know; facts about faces, the articulations of fingers and the folds of drapery, for instance. When Mr. Woodcock is older and sees this picture again, he will perhaps be surprised to observe how nearly he ran to missing his point.

Besides the pictures mentioned above I noticed a very well painted picture by F. C. Gordon entitled "Washing day," and another by W. Raphael, R. C. A., called "The Amateur," also a splendid drawing of "Shooting the Rapids," by Washington Friend. But all of those hang rather too high to be well seen in a gallery so badly lighted as the Albert Hall.

So far I have confined my remarks to what appear to me to be the merits or demerits of the individual artists who contribute to this Exhibition. I trust that I shall not be trespassing too much upon the space you are pleased to allot to this report, or on the patience of those to whom it is addressed, if I conclude with a short essay on the general principles which govern art, which principles in the case of a young and isolated school like that of Canada it is important to insist upon.

Dr. Robertson, in his History of America, remarks that amongst the inhabitants of the newly discovered continent, who had had no intercourse with the rest of the world, there were found the same passions and propensities, the same virtues, vices and foibles which had been illustrated by centuries of history and which had been the theme of philosophers and

satirists since the days of Homer. In art we observe the same uniformity. We, in our time, may be said to have discovered a new art, that of Japan, which has grown to its present perfection without any extraneous influence. In that art we find identically the same principles of contrast, harmony and variety which regulated the art of the Athenians and of mediæval and renaissance Italians; but the uniformity of principle admits of all the dissimilarity which is observable between a Greek sarcophagus, a Florentine cassone and a decorated Japanese screen. That which is uniform constitutes the fundamental laws which govern art and which are founded on nature; that which is various illustrates man's individuality and the endless combinations of which human faculties are capable. The uniformity rests upon laws which may not be violated; the variety has always been governed by the circumstances which surround the artist, by the age and country in which he lived, and by the conditions of his intellectual requirements. It is the main source of interest in art; it helps to explain history and it constitutes the claim upon which reputations are built. In a young country like Canada we must expect the first ventures in the direction of art to be timid. The artists who found that school, and whose example will eventually build up the traditions on which it rests, are in duty bound to be careful that their practice is grounded on principles which are enduring and inviolable; but they must beware of mistaking fashion for principle, and the whims and fancies of individuals for organic laws. They must study, as Reynolds said, the full body of the best general practice. No school, to be worthy of the name, can be founded upon a few examples. The whole range of art must be traversed, and, its laws once ascertained, the individual genius of the artists and the influence of the nature which surrounds them; the circumstances which call works of art into existence, all extraneous influences, in fact, must be allowed their natural and untrammelled sway. It is thus that Egyptian, Greek, Italian and Dutch art were produced. All of these were admirable and of momentous importance to the world, and all of them sprang directly from the requirements of their time and the circumstances which surrounded the artists. What is demanded of the artist, and what he must supply or pay the penalty of neglect and oblivion, is a faithful record of himself, a truthful testimony to the things which he knows and has seen and which he loves. A striking instance will prove the truth of this assertion. Benjamin West, the first artist of note who came from the new world, was unquestionably a man of genius; but we should have been ignorant of the fact, and allowed his reputation to sink in his grave without the tribute of a regretful epitaph, but for two pictures. On two occasions and only two during his long life he escaped from the slavery of conventional ideas and dared to be true to himself. He produced the "Death of General Wolfe" and the "Treaty

of Penn with the Indians," two pictures which the world will not willingly let die. All the rest that he did deserves only to be forgotten; it was a feeble effort to revive an art with which he had no real sympathy and which he himself did not thoroughly understand.

In applying these remarks to the young school of Canadian art, I trust that due allowance will be made for the emphasis which I have thought necessary to use to make my meaning clear. I have put the case in an extreme light, not because it is appropriate to the occasion, but in order that I may not be misunderstood. On the evidence of this Exhibition, I judge that the artists of Canada are sufficiently grounded in general principles, but I observe a tendency to adopt the external form, the peculiarities which belong to individuals, which I regret, and which, in the exercise of what may be called an official duty, I feel bound to object to. I will not repeat any of the numerous common places about England and her colonies, which have been spoken and written since the opening of the Exhibition. I quite share in the general enthusiasm, I go the whole length, in fact, I think it the noblest task ever proposed to itself by a nation, that of spreading the blessings of civilization over the barbarous regions of the earth, and of gathering the benighted nations into the fold of Christ; and I make it part and parcel of that glorious dream that art shall be practised wherever Britain holds dominion; an art which shall be no slavish imitation of foreign examples, but which shall be an indigenous product, which shall have grown up at the source of nature, out of the circumstances, the wants and occupations of the people who practice it. With such ideas it has been rather a shock to me to observe in the Canadian pictures such evident traces of French influence; not the influence of the great French painters, Gerome, Meissonier, Ingres and Flandrin, &c., but of the rank and file of mediocrity, the influence, to speak plainly, of a school which is daily becoming more debased, which is substituting pedantic rules for the freedom of nature,—which is shutting out from us the clear bright air of heaven, and stifling us with the smoke and dust of studios. This is strong language, and I must prove my case. The chief of pictorial difficulties is to preserve unity with detail, to subordinate parts to a whole; no one will venture to deny that he who accomplishes this is passed master. But in the name of common sense, and taking the full body of the best general practice as authoritative, who but a modern Frenchman has ever ventured to assert that the right way to do that is to leave out all detail, and to avoid parts altogether. Yet this is the principle at this moment in vogue in Paris. According to these self-complacent theorists, the world has been toiling and struggling all these centuries, wasting its genius and its energies in a foolish pursuit, that now in the fulness of time has come the last revelation, which has made art easy, and turned the efforts of ages into foolishness. To be

precise, the new French theory is this. Details and minutiae are unnecessary and irrelevant; what is important is to render the general effect the relief (le saillant) of nature, the broad impression produced by her. If you represent a man standing in a field, you must render the exact tone of his head and his clothes as compared with the tones of grass, of the sky and the trees. When you have adjusted these tones they cannot be laid on too flatly or simply, and then you will have given a perfect rendering of nature, and produced the highest art. Now, in answer to this, I beg humbly to submit, that more than four centuries ago, at the court of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, when Europe was plunged in that state of anarchy and barbarism which we find so graphically described in Walter Scott's "Quentin Durward," there was an artist of the name of John Van Eyck, who painted a picture still to be seen in perfect preservation in the Church of St. Bavon, in Ghent. It represents the mystic scene of the adoration of the Paschal Lamb. It is full of figures kneeling before the enthroned Lamb and it has a rich landscape for its background. It is quite evident to the practised eye, that in the whole of that picture, Van Eyck used his newly discovered French principle (perhaps I ought to say he anticipated it) but only as the basis and starting point, just as the mason lays the solid stones of pillar, capital and architrave before he begins to carve them. Over that groundwork of adjusted tones he patiently and laboriously, but with untiring tenderness, piled Pelion upon Ossa of complicated and beautiful detail. He represented all the folds and wrinkles of skin and the hairs on the heads; he covered the draperies with complicated folds, intricate embroidery, and he spangled the green grass with hundreds of varied flowers; and he was not alone, hundreds did the same. Rubens, of the mighty brush, who covered acres of canvas, did not disdain it; witness a landscape in our British National Gallery, with its foreground covered with brambles, where there are partridges with little black shining eyes, red legs and barred plumage, and a man six inches high who carries a musket with flint and steel lock, you can see the flint. Let us take the question into court before competent judges, and weigh it on evidence, authority against authority, the practice of four centuries against the dictum of a small number of Frenchmen. Or let us appeal to a still higher tribunal, that which sits in our own hearts and feeling. Does this wholesale excision of all little trifles really bring delight? Can we imagine the joys of an early morning in June, where there shall only be flat tones, no daisies or lilies of the valley, no butterflies or robin red-breasts? I, myself, cannot. And, moreover, I do at this present, though an old hand and dubbed Professor, who have laboriously read many a dull book on art in pursuit of knowledge, solemnly abjure all theories and rules, as of authority in the same, other than that of giving pleasure. The beauty of this universe bewilders and intoxicates me;

science informs me that no instrument yet invented can probe the minuteness of its details or the vastness of its expanse. I am happy in the thought and grateful to its Almighty Creator; and when a work of art gives an echo to this sentiment, I take real pleasure in it; when it does not, why then I treat it as mature age has taught me to treat many other things; I shrug my shoulders and take no notice. But I have been led into argument and digression when I was dreaming of a great school of art which has arisen in Canada, and surely of all places in the world there is none more likely to produce such a phenomenon. What special advantages it enjoys! Its people are heirs to all the latest results of civilization, and yet they are in immediate contact with nature, still struggling to subdue her untamed forces. They possess exactly what nations in a high state of civilization have always sighed for, what the Augustan Romans sighed for, the life *ut prisca gens mortalium*. What interest to the world at large, what picturesqueness there must be in the lumberers' camp, the cottage of the backwoodsman, and the hunters' wigwam; and what history they have to draw upon; the French settlements, the wars, the Indian treaties, the annals of the Hudson Bay and North West Companies, must be full of striking incidents and pictorial scenes; and behind the human incidents there is the impressive grandeur of untrammelled nature, the primeval forest, the self-sown vegetation and the rush of waters which are impelled only by their own wild forces. The Canadians are beginning life afresh, but not as people have hitherto been compelled to begin it. They have good coats on their backs and patent stoves to cook their food on. I would they could begin art afresh also; not as red Indians began it on their buffalo robes, but with all the great examples before them, and colors supplied in collapsible tubes duly labelled. I should like to see Canadian art Canadian to the backbone, not reminding me of Patrick Nasmyth or John Richardson or of French Impressionistes; a thing developed by nature in a special soil and climate like a prairie flower, which grows nowhere else, which we import and cultivate tenderly, and whose beauty we admire; but which we cannot thoroughly appreciate or sympathize with until we see it in its native luxuriance, bending to the winds which have blown over thousands of miles of open plains, and watered by the spray of cataracts whose sources have never been explored.

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. E. HODGSON, R. A.,

Professor of Painting and Librarian

to the Royal Academy, London.

41 CIRCUS ROAD,
ST. JOHN'S WOOD,

1st November, 1886.

te-
ght
cho
n I
my
and
in
to
Its
in
ned
on
of
ur-
ck-
aw
of
ici-
the
elf-
eir
as
ats
ey
alo
in
an
rd-
cial
we
we
its
ads
ces



