EXHIBITION OF
CANADIAN ART
The Twenty-third Annual Exhibit
ion Open at the Art Gallery
IS MARKED BY EXCELLENCE
Much Strong Work Is Shown by the Exhibitors—Hanging Committee
Rather, Too Lenient.

The twenty-third annual spring exhibition at the Art Gallery opened last month with a private view. On the whole, the exhibition this year is an excellent one, although it does seem, as it often has before, that a great many of the pictures deserved a different fate. The hanging committee is inclined to be too tender-hearted. They are so afraid of hurt some aspiring artist's feelings that they often overlook a picture of real merit. This is an error. The sooner the would-be artist finds out that he has neglected his vocation and turns to something he can do, the better. Fully one-third of the present exhibition could well be dispensed with: if it were, the whole would be twice as good. As it is, it requires much time and some ingenuity to pick the flowers from the weeds. There are a couple of dozen canvases that should never have seen the light of day, and yet the public should be put in the way of being haunted by them. It is difficult to comprehend how little and that little good is an excellent motto for a hanging committee.

MR. HARRIS'S PORTRAITS.

The east wall of the large gallery is devoted chiefly to Mr. Harris, R.C.A., and the place of honor is given to an excellent portrait of Mr. Graham. On one side is Mrs. Lindsay, and on the other Mrs. Cleveland Morgan. The former is a wonderful piece of work. It shows Mr. Harris at his best. It is

THE ART GALLERY SPRING EXHIBITION.—"Moonrise," by Elizabeth A. McNeill Knowles.

force rather than an outgrowth of an uncontrollable love of nature that seeks for expression.

Mr. Kenneth MacPherson has several small and excellent landscapes. One of them, a river running by some trees, is especially good. Strong and modern. Another, a bleak landscape, is reminiscent of some early English artists, bears the curious title of "An Excellent Situation for a Golf Links," or words to that effect. At this rate we shall have our artists labelling their productions, "Delightful site for a summer cottage," "Excellent stretch of green for a cricket crease," or, if it contains a stream, "Probable pool for trout fishing."

It is quite like old times to see Mr. Pinhey decorating our walls again. Of late his eyes have prevented him from working, and we are glad to welcome him back. His small landscapes are quite a new style and possess an undeniable charm. Exceedingly well-modelled trees in the foreground and a hazy blue distance—such are their distinctive features.

Hammond, the painter of misty boats in a misty sea, exhibits a large picture of low life at St. John. The arrangement is most harmonious, particularly in the grouping of the boats in the fog and the sea, but it is somewhat marred by a false note in the color scheme. The whole thing is a symphony of sunset shades, but the line Work note is the green-blue bands around the hulls of the schooners. It has been impossible for the artist to resist in sounding this note too loudly, and it makes a discord to our artistic ears. It is so emphasized that it suggests stained rather than sea-worn paint on an old schooner.

BRYMNER, DYONNET AND CULLEN.

Mr. Brymner is a most conscientious workman. If it were only possible to him to infuse some soul into his work, he would be altogether admirable. It fails to come up to the standard that Mr. R. B. Greenfield sets in his recent book on landscape painting, namely, to depict (the picture) should convey the feeling of pleasure and content by its beautiful coloring and form and its fine technique. It should reveal the poetry and imagination of the artist's vision, and it should communicate his thought, and it should communicate his thought and his feeling to those in sympathy with his ideas.

The poetry and imagination of the artist's vision! There is the pivot of the whole question. A barn by the wayside, painted exactly like a barn is not enough. It must go deeper than merely fill our sense of accuracy. Curiously enough, quite near by, there is an illustration of our meaning, by a yeoman and unadventured artist, Helen Anderson. One very small, very simple, sketch of a barn, just a hayrick in a field, suggests somehow a far deeper feeling than many of the more pretentious pictures. It possesses the glimmerings of a soul.

In No. 30, "Early Morning," Mr. Brymner is at his best. It is a typical scene down the lower St. Lawrence, and beside conveying the charm of the fresh unspoilt day, suggests the patient, unselfish life of the French Canadians, "the daily round, the common task."

Notice on this wall, a delightful little picture by Dysonnet, a stream tumbling over a shelving rock. It is well worth the notice, a real bit of nature. An artist, who is rapidly forging to the front, is Maurice Cullen. He is diligently Canadian and delights in the continued passage of art in our curious atmospheric effects. In some of these, he has come off conqueror, but
Clarence Gagnon has a couple of delightful pictures. One that especially appeals to us is No. 67, two trees, one near, one farther, against a hazy stretch of distant country. It possesses a wistful charm that soothes and satisfies. A larger canvas entitled "Autumn" is also an admirable bit of work.

Mr. Arthur Cox exhibits several landscapes and one bit of real life. The former are ambitious, mountain, river and cloud effects, almost too ambitious we are inclined to think. The bit of still life, two dried fish lying on a newspaper, is altogether admirable. The flecks of color on the fish are rendered with truth and precision and the effect is most natural.

Sydney Strickland Tully, A.R.C.A., of Toronto, shows several delightful pictures, one in particular, "Sunset at Portneuf," is well worthy of attention. It seems to possess Mr. Greenshields' "poetry and imagination." The same artist shows a beautiful decorative panel, a grove of stately pines, which would be charming to look at over a fireplace in a large room.

Mary Reid, A.R.C.A., is represented by a couple of attractive pictures, "Spring Twilight" and "Last Snow."

The latter is rather too brown in tone, but the spring twilight is charming, depicting as it does with infinite feeling the witching hour of the witching season.

The secretary of the Art Association, Mr. Abbott, exhibits several water-colors, notable for their delicate feeling. One showing a broken dam, with lingering snows on the bank above, is admirably suggestive of the last hours of winter. Another a late autumn scene at St. Anne's, a study of trees and water, has caught the veritable spirit of the autumn. One feels the chill air and seems to see approaching the icy figure of winter.

Mr. Colson, of Ottawa, has a couple of dainty water-colors.

Mr. R. J. Matthew has a number of his characteristic pastel portraits of well-known Montreal people and celebrities. He seems particularly happy in his delineation of Sir William Van Horne. Other artists, whose work will be dealt with later, are Laura Munro, whose work is among the best in the collection, Clara Haughey, Henri Beau, A. D. Rosaire and others.

The present exhibition will be open some weeks.

THE ART GALLERY SPRING EXHIBITION.—"Old Trees," by Clarence Gagnon.

Suzor-Cote is represented by several delightful studies of snow, this "sous la neige," that "sous est neige." It is a condition that we know so well here that we are apt to be critical on the subject. Cullen represents in most cases, sunlight on the snow. Suzor-Cote the dull, greyness of a winter day. The latter are painted in France, the former in Canada, which accounts for the difference. Glorious sunlight on masses of dazzling snow is distinctly Canadian. These grey studies of Mr. Cote's are very charming, very restful. They will repay careful study.

Another of our French artists who is making a name for himself is George Chavignaud, a young man who studied at the Art Gallery and who is now in Paris. One of his pictures in the present exhibition has been exhibited at the Salon. It is strong and clever, reminiscent of the Barbizon school. That is the pitfall of many young artists. They consciously or unconsciously copy the particular school they admire. It is difficult to stray from the beaten track. As we look around this exhibition we see traces of Millet, of Constable, of Monticelli, and many others.

THE ART GALLERY SPRING EXHIBITION.—Mrs. Leenower, portrait by Robert Harris, C.M.G., P.R.C.A.

others he is, in spite of his admirable courage, beaten. As an example of the latter, take his view on the river at Quebec, entitled "Twenty below zero." He desires to represent the effect of dense cold on atmosphere and water. From holes in the ice dense clouds of vapor ascend. But it does not convey the desired impression to the observer, who will probably exclaim, "What does it mean? Is it a waterfall or an explosion?" It may be true, but it is such an unusual condition that few will recognize the truth.

Of the other hand, in No. 45, he has completely succeeded. It is a cold winter day, looking across the river at Quebec. A large building, probably a convent, is visible on the hill-side, and below masses of ice and snow float down the dark current. The water is wet, wet. So many artists paint dry water, water that you feel sure if you stumbled in would not harm you. But this is real water, and the cold is real cold. You positively feel it. This is one of the gems of the present exhibition.

SUSZOR-COTE, CHAVIGNAUD, AND GAGNON.