Successful Efforts to Break Away from Conventional Form are Shown

**VERY FEW FREAKS**

5-4-21

Marked Improvement Manifested in the Work of Some Younger Artists

It is a pleasant duty to have to record that the thirty-eighth Spring exhibition of the Art Association of Montreal, open at the Sherbrooke Street galleries, shows the most marked improvement in any one direction that has been evident for years past. This improvement is chiefly concerned with the portraiture section which is the most striking feature of the exhibition. There manifest a determination to break away from conventional form, and yet to keep well within the limits of gen-

eral appeal. Among the pictures in this section are: `The White Peacock,' by Miss Gertrude des Clays, whose subject is an impressive and well-delineated bird; and `The Jade Necklace,' an ambitious composition in which a girl in a purple dress is handling a jade necklace while seated beside a green vase which contains autumn leaves. Her manipulation of color is quite promising, and she also shows originality in treatment in her painting of `The Immigrant,' while `The Northland,' in which Mr. Cullen excels—and both in `Spring on the Cache River' and `A Laurentian River' we find such deft handling of snow tones, of ice, and of the last days of dying winter as are rarely to be seen. Mr. Cullen has the happy knack of creating atmosphere, and one almost seems to feel the chill in the air at times. Mr. Percy Woodcock takes us back to a Seine landscape in `On the Seine, France,' a canvas somewhat larger than we are accustomed to expect from him, and also executed in a different style, but one not whit less attractive or less convincing than his smaller landscapes in soft grey and greens.

Mr. Homer Watson contributes two paintings— `The Red Oak' is vigorous in tone and brushwork, and in `The Bare Village' softer tones are used with skill. Mr. Charles W. Simpson has a large canvas of `The End of the World,' in which he handles barges and dull water with considerable attention to toning and shading, and the possibilities of combining sunlight and shaded tones to soften harsh features.

From Mr. William Brymner, C.M., there come three typical canvases—two scenes from the Louisbourg coast, which he is so fond of painting, and an evening landscape at Ste. Famille, P.Q. Sea and sky are broad-

ly treated in the two former, and the sharp setting of the dark outlines of church and houses against a vivid sunset in the latter is interesting.

Mr. Wilfrid Barnes pursues his studies of cloud-laden skies, and in `When Common Ways are Dressed in Twilight Charm' he has achieved something that suggests he is steadily feeling his way towards a medium he will exploit with distinction.

Broad treatment that tends to lose itself is found in the work of Miss H. Mabel May and Mr. A. H. Robinson. Miss Gwenloyn Kyle shows a delightful sensuous sketch, with green parasols featured against a vividly sunlit sea and shore—none of the best things she has done for a long time. One notes also attractive canvases by Clarence Gagnon (two good pastels, one in rich warm tones), J. St. Charles (particularly a charcoal drawing of a girl), John Johnstone, F. S. Co- burn (typical logging scenes), J. C. Franchère ("La Grande Mère"), Milne Berthel des Clays (a delightful little sketch of an old cottage), Milne Alice des Clays (who sends from England two charming scenes at Old Country Inn), A. Wilkie Kilgour, Rita Mount (a portrait in pleasant tone), Hal Ross (a portrait in pleasant tone), A. Dickson Patterson (two portraits in low tones), as well as work that marks distinct advance from Mrs. E. A. Mc Gillivray Knowles and Mr. F. McGillivray Knowles.

The sculpture is conventional. The etching section contains some excellent work by Mr. Herbert Raine, whose mastery of this medium is now acknowledged in circles beyond his native land. The water-colors are rather disappointing, indicating little attempt towards originality, either in subject or in treatment.

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