Among the Pictures
At the O.S.A. Exhibition.
The exhibition of the Ontario Society of Artists, which opens to-night at the gallery in King street west, is the thirty-first held by the society, and is behind none of its predecessors in either size or merit. The catalogue informs us there are 118 oil paintings, 23 water-colors, and three pieces of sculpture. To ascertain their merits we must use eye and understanding.

It is rather a bewitching thing, going into a gallery hung on every side with what is most attractive. To do the things fairly, perhaps the best way is to sweep the horizon in a general way first, without allowing oneself to be drawn into too great intimacy with any one picture, until some idea has been formed as to the whole, then to give as much detailed study as time allows and demands.

In glancing through the catalogue one sees names that have not been there for many an exhibition—Mr. Percy Woodcock, Miss Harriet Ford, Mr. Maurice Cullen, Mr. Franklin Brownell—each artist as these, besides the usual contributors, this ought to be a good exhibition, and that is just what it is.

Mr. Atkinson exhibits two large canvases, of which "Trev Bridge, Devon," makes the strongest appeal, but somehow the artist gives a far more sympathetic rendering of nature in a smaller canvas, "The Stream by the Wood" (41), in which there is a more personal note and greater truthfulness.

Nothing could be more charming than the figure of the little child in "The Toilet" (85), by Miss Munson. The modelling of the flesh in the plump little back is delicious, and all the accessories—the mother and the furniture—merge into a background of subdued, rich color.

"The Coming of April" carries a weird feeling of spring, undefined and pleasure-giving. Still another of Miss Munson's illustrations are from Longfellow:

"Oh, Holy Night! From thee I learn To bear what man has borne before."

The artist is not altogether happy in her conception of "Night," in whose attitude and expression is none of the caressing tenderness to be expected from the words.

For splendid technique and good workmanship the two pictures by Mr. Maurice C. Allen are to be commended. The truthfulness of values in the night scene of "Dorset Tower" and the fine handling in the stormy water about "The Reef" are the kind of art the artist loves.

The work of Miss Florence Carlyle must prove vastly interesting to everyone; it certainly can never be accused of dullness or lack of originality. There is a full-length portrait of little Miss Mary Paddick (34), who looks at you pertly with a very self-conscious air that is severely winning and not in the least childlike. How cleverly her cloak and cap are painted! With what ease and assurance a sweep of the brush indicates the girl! It is "Sargentsque," the artist may tell you, and your own inner consciousness tells you it is a mighty clever thing—but yet—yet—you have misgivings that it is a bit superficial.

Perhaps you will realize this still more should you glance at a canvas under this portrait, "Study of an Old Man" (59), by Miss E. Miller. It is a well-drawn character, an old man; it is painted in quite a low tone, but if you care to examine it carefully you will find much subtle modelling, an elusive expression manifested in the eyes. The artist here has sought for what lies beyond the outer seeming, has tried to give something of the man himself.

To return to Miss Carlyle's work, there are many fine things in "Amen" (22)—the light of flight from the window behind the knowing white figure, the piercing air; the bent of the old lady so pathetically rendered—indeed, there is so much in it that it would make two complete pictures, and whether or not, but rather gain by the absence of the other.

The number of portraits is unusually small. Mr. G. W. L. Forsyth sends in an excellent one of the Rev. Dr. Mulgrew, seated in easy position, the right arm on the table beside him, the left resting on the arm of the chair, the face strongly, yet without any suggestion of horror or fear, and carrying the impress of strong individuality.

Of Miss Clara Hagarty's two portraits that of "Alice" (50) is much more felicitous, with the one drawback that with the eyes lowered much of the expression of the face is lost. But the graceful handling of the figure, the treatment of the string of photographs lying on the lap, and the subdued colors of the background, make a most successful whole.

The three street scenes (France) show a distinct advance on anything of the kind Miss Hagarty has done before. They are broadly treated, full of color and movement, and the figures expressively given.

The largest canvases in the gallery is Mr. G. A. Reid's decorative panel for a dining-room. It is in a very light key, conveying a pleasant, out-of-door feeling; a group of women and children are in the foreground, and two applegatherers at work beyond, and then a far distance of sunlit meadow, winding stream, and blue mountain. "A Study in White" (150) from the same brush, really does not suggest white in any part, not even the dress, but does give a most delightful play of color in the bit of yellow seen between grey doors, light dress of the bending figure, and a strong blue note in the rug at her feet.

Miss B. S. Tully shows simplicity and refinement in her "Twilight, Drumhurgh" (100)—snowy street bordered by low stone houses, all dim and gray in the coming dusk, save the glow from one window. In "Silo Cutting, Meadowvale" (101) the same artist gives fresh, crisp color in the newly cut grass filling the high wagon and a sense of wind and movement. In this artist's work there is always an enveloping atmosphere and a unity of thought that satisfies the artistic sense.

Mrs. Reid is most happy in "Afternoon Sunlight," (70) in which the form ground is in shadow from a high wall, a shadow thrown, luminous and full of reflection, while beyond and above the wall the air, the tree, and the roofs of houses are steeped in warm afternoon sunlight. "Dawn" (75) is a poem of the early days before the morning star has faded.

"Moonrise" looks a little, but it is splendidly handled.

Mr. Staples shows careful drawing in "Young Lion Eating," but the chunk of red meat is revolting. Why not show the splendid animal at his best, calm, dignified, benignant, as he at times gazes down on us from his cage?

There are many well-studied, sympathetic renderings of landscape in this larger gallery that are well worth attention, though many me on small canvases, that bare a human mind can really do justice. Among these are Miss Mary Winch's "Flowers on the River Bank" (110), Mr. J. H. Beatty's "Evening on the Scheene" (7)—twilight and tender color and the slowly creeping lilies—Mr. Woodcock's "James Creek," near Brockville (108), Miss Spurr's "The Valley Going to Sleep" (88), H. Britton's "In the Cove Stables," Miss Crawford's "Peaches" (24), and Miss Harriet Ford's delicately modeled "Study of a Head," in a flat, somewhat decorative manner.

The water colors this year show greater variety and better work than usual, the authorities say, but, to quote a certain author, "that is another story" for which there is no room at present.