Artists’ Society Exhibition.

The doors of the Ontario Society of Artists swung open yesterday for the thirty-fourth annual exhibition, which, if lacking in pictures of sensational merit, at least presents one hundred and fifty works of a high average standard. There is still a lack of notable story-telling or historical pictures, but one can find scores of canvases of the everyday scenes of Canadian life—the harvest field, the mountain stream, the old homestead, the shadows and mists of October, or the snow fastnesses of winter. The Hanging Committee has grouped the pictures with an intelligent method, avoiding clashes in color and wide contrasts in merit. One misses the work of quite a number of the old-time exhibitors, but, on the other hand, there are productions from some of the younger artists which give promise of uncommonly good pictures in the years to come. In this short review only a few of the exhibits can be even referred to.

On entering one is immediately attracted by Mr. G. C. Reid’s striking panel, “The Iris,” wherein a woman is arranging some of those delicately beautiful flowers in a vase. The figure stands in a strong light from a window, and around her the shadows gradually intensify and relieve her graceful form. Mr. Reid also exhibits a couple of decorative canvases with evening clouds and orange glow. Mr. F. M. Boll-Smith has a story-telling canvas entitled “Grandmama’s Minature,” wherein a little girl stands beside her grandfather studying a miniature, the old gentleman’s face reflecting the thoughts of his old-time love, his eyes moistening with the tender recollection. “St. Paul’s at Daybreak” and “The Sailor End’s Return” are two of Mr. Boll-Smith’s delightful fruits of a journey to England. In “The Departure” Mr. W. B. Atkinson has told in a few simple lines a strong story of the poetical life of the shepherd leading his flock from the stable.

A fine note of originality is struck by Mr. F. S. Challenger in his panel, “Indian Spearig Fish by Torchlight.” This represents early life in Ontario, and in its bold outlines of trees and trails of torch flames over a bluish-green ground it forms one of the most striking pictures in the gallery. In a couple of farm scenes Mr. Challenger gives some beautiful summer tones of Ontario life. A very small canvas by Mr. Franklin Brownell tells of “Home Lessons,” where mother and children together are spending happy hours in the soft indoor lights of evening. In “The Fog Bell” Mr. Robt. F. Gagen has put atmosphere that strongly suggests the wind-swept, rock-bound coast where lurks a thousand dangers to the vessel half hidden by the fog.

Mr. J. W. L. Forster’s principal exhibit is a fine portrait of Mr. Speaker Sutherland of the House of Commons, representing that elegant gentleman in his official robes and unfolding dignity, standing as if to address the House. Mr. Curtis Williamson exhibits a portrait of a young gentleman, the simplicity and revelation of character in which must give the artist a high standing among Canadian portrait painters. Mr. Mower Martin’s friends will find him in a new sphere. His picture of “At Moonrise” is a strong bit in an impressionistic vein, masses of trees and clouds, with a house and window light, being relieved against the rising queen of the night. Another veteran, Mr. F. A. Verrier, is represented in a familiar field, in his “Bisons, Frosty Morning,” a class of subject where he stands almost alone and unrivalled. There is rather too much deep shadow in “Exit, Lord Sun,” by Mr. C. M. Manly, but the sunset has a richness that gives the canvas a striking effect. There is an easy pose in Mr. Wylly Grier’s portrait of Mr. W. B. McMurrich, K.C., leaning back against a table, and a good facial likeness, but one is disappointed in the flesh tones.

Among the new workers, Mr. Lewis J. M. Grant deserves high praise for his rich, well-balanced “Tea Time; English Cottage Interior.” Mr. Fred S. Haines steps a long way forward by his “An Intruder,” showing an ugly cur breaking into a domestic occurrence between a mother dog and her puppies. Mr. Harry Britton scores one of the successes of the exhibition in his “October,” showing a profusion of pumpkins and autumn foliage. Mr. W. Cutts’ mountain torrent has a wealth of life and cool tones. Elizabeth A. Knowles has a couple of decorative canvases of promising merit. Mabel Allington Boyd in “A Girl and Some Hens,” while not showing perfect technique, gives evidence of an originality that is refreshing.

In sculpture Mr. Kathleen B. Robinson has a bust-relief portrait of President Heywood’s real-life quality, and Mr. J. L. Henan Banks presents a bust of Dr. Horshin and a panel of “The Round Up.”