The Royal Canadian Academy.

A Critical Review of the Exhibition In Montreal, in Which the Toronto Studios are so Well Represented.

From Our Own Correspondent.

Montreal, March 21.—This year's Royal Canadian Academy is not in the faintest degree representative of this year's art. It may be regarded in two lights: First, as a sort of semi-finals for the St. Louis Exhibition, and, second, as a sort of Made-in-Canada exhibition for the benefit of Montreal. Most of the Quebec Province pictures are seen, and most of the Ontario pictures that are shown have not been seen by Montrealers, though they are an old story to Toronto. Leaving out the consideration of novelty, however, it is an extremely interesting show, though even with a ten-years' crop to choose from the committees have not succeeded in keeping it entirely free from non-rationalities or monstrosities.

The exhibitors to whom most honor is due is undoubtedly Mr. G. A. Reid. He submits eight works in oils, one of which is the subject of our second edition of his works. Mr. and Mrs. Hammond's patronage, "The Mortgage," but the majority purely decorative and almost mural in character. The chief, "A New Day," represents the figure of a woman, just arisen to a standing posture, in a soft sunrise light, while another figure sinks into darkness at her feet, separated by the meadows and hills of the fall. The whole thing is indescribably soft and harmonious. Speaking of harmony, Mr. Reid's well-known panel, "Music," is praised and shared with only one other work in the show, that of Mr. W. H. Artington's "Dancing Girls," which is a study in soft light, and also the work of Mr. C. A. William- son, one of the great Dutch character studies, all of them of equal technical excellence, enormously dear to the Dutch. Mr. Reid's "Angel," on the other hand, is a study in almost Rembrandtesque, and always as unmodern as they could possibly be. The whole ten are studies of peasant characters, frequently quite without accessories, and on backgrounds of the most suggestive kind. Mr. Reid's "Evening" is a study in soft light, and also the work of his efforts. The worst that can be said of Mr. Reid's work is that it is extremely slight and the narrowness of its range rather qualify the perfection that he has attained within that range. It is in the World to tell a Reid from any other picture; it is often exceedingly strong in the product of strong individual observation. The Return of the Fishers" is rough as to brushwork, and perhaps a little crudely in its sunlight, but it is very bright, breezy and spirited.

Miss Currie Leitman's still-life shows an exquisite girl study, "Entwined," and is brilliantly clever and well-handled portrait sketch, "The Young Sculptor." If the latter be an indication of the line she proposes to follow, her work may bulk large in future.

Mr. Edmund Morris has five landscapes, in which the size of the brushwork is quite disproportionate to that of the picture. To blend them one has to stand so far off that they become insignificant. Old Fort, Toronto, is a good example.

Miss Gertrude Spurr has five landscapes, very brilliantly colored and rather botanical in subject-matter. "Devils," though a little too full of peculiar flowers, and the others are only less so in degree. "Pentre'd," a Welsh garden and mountain scene, is easily the best, and is decidedly pleasing.

Of all the pictures, whose oils are of no great significance, has one water-color—a pastel, but it is exquisite. It is entitled "The First Snow," and has a soft, sweet, delicate air about it that is very suggestive.

There are some good things coming out of other places. Mr. John Macnay has "The Great West" represented by Frank X. Artington's lively and Bar-ber-like sketch of two tur- rons. Four pictures of ex- travagant color are by WA. ONTARIO. B EARNEY are shown. The THORON of those earlier years are shown. Miss Mary Stetson, unfortunately, wholly at the other end of his works.

None of the pictures shown so far have received any particular attention, or by any Canadian landscape. Three of these are good portraits, "Phantom Ship," a marvel of ghostly suggestiveness, with its moon hidden behind the "black sand of the" painted ves- sel, and the phosphorescent crawling of the water around the misty "Flying Fish." Mr. Franklin Brownell, of Ottawa, shows besides a not very interesting portrait of Dr. Wardrop, an exquisite little female interior, "Motherhood," and another, "Smith's Bay," which is beyond criticism for its rendering of humidity and cloud shadows.

Mr. William Brymner, who is uniformlly unfortunate in his faces, has two fine oil landscapes, both showing the real atmosphere of air that prevails a few days of every summer, and five water-colors. A Miss Muriel Ryan, whose local-ity is apparently unknown to the committee, though it is present. Mr. Brownell, exhibits a "Reverie," that arrests the attention in spite of its complete simplicity and quiet. His work is mature, thoroughly original, and full of poetry, and it is safe to say from this single example, that decorative and aesthetical acquisition of the Academy exhibits.

Miss Atha Haydock, of Mon-Real, is another new comer whose sun- light effects and good composition in a
large picture called "Spring in Yokohama" will at once earn her a good standing.

Miss Florence Carlyle should perhaps have been mentioned before, but her great picture "The Tiff," has been in the public view in Toronto for many months, and her only other exhibit, "Reminiscences," is considerably below her standard.

Mr. F. S. Coburn sends from Antwerp two oils and a water-color, whose common feature is the extra-whiteness they achieve for light falling on blank-washed wall. Incidentally they are clever peasant studies.

Mr. Maurice Cullen, a Montreal experimentalist, has got six pictures past the committee. That Mr. Cullen is honestly and industriously experimenting for an effect, and will probably get it some day, one cannot doubt; but one does not understand the reason for horizontal lines of alternating smooth and rough brushwork right across his pictures.

Mr. Edward Dyonnet, of Montreal, shows two creditable portraits and a tree and river study called "The St. Lawrence at Beaupre." Mr. Colin Forbes' sole exhibit, portrait of Rev. James Barclay, D.D., was seen at the last Toronto Exhibition.

Mr. Clarence A. Gagnon again proves himself the most promising of "Le Jeunees de Montreal." His "Ozon Paving" is extremely poetical and well designed, and he has used all Dutch methods of lighting in his "Weaving Rag Carpets" with excellent effect.

"A Gem of the Show."

Mr. J. Hammond, of Sackville, exhibits six pictures, varying in extraordinary degree in quality. His "Puji" is Japanese to a fault, including bad perspective, and his "Summer, New Brunswick," is quite as unkind as a Nova Scotia man could be expected to be to that subject; but his "Misty Morning" is a gem of the show, almost Tournierian in its depth of mist and its gleam of fog-laden water, and several others are almost as good.

It being quite impossible to say anything new of President Harris' portraits, it will be recorded that there are seven of them, all showing his superb technique, and that five are ladies, one Dr. William Osler, of Baltimore, and one Mr. John Hope.

Mr. William Hope exhibits two important and powerfully-drawn landscapes, in deep tones and strong brushwork, both suggestive of Innes in more ways than one.

Mr. E. Chaves Miller, of Toronto, has an unusually clever study of an old man's head, thrown backwards in an unreserved burst of merriment.

Miss Sophie Pemberton, of London, is one of the most important of the one-work exhibitors. Her "A Livre Ouvet," two girls in evening dress reading, have been fire just beyond them, is a little like Miss Carlyle in style and brushwork, and thoroughly satisfactory in its treatment of the figures and drapery.

Mr. J. St. Charles can get more life and movement into his pictures than any Montreal painter. In these portraits of Judge Champagnon, a man painted by a man—is unapproachable, except by his "Mousquetaire Lisant," which is a fighting man, painted by a fighting man.

Mr. F. A. Verner has two oils and two water colors, of which only one water color is in any way important. "Forgot, Lake Simcoe," a group of figures in a swimming canoe, is not much more than a magazine illustration, but as such it is good.

Mr. Homer Watson has three undescrbed landscapes, two of which have apparently been shown before. All are of great strength and beauty, but they exhibit no features save those which have for several years made Mr. Watson's work notable.

The Water Color Collection.

Of the artists exhibiting in water color only Mr. Brighden would be easily the chief were it not for Mr. Manly's one landscape already noted. He has four of his softest, most decorative and luminous landscapes, of which "The Valley" is a gem. Mr. George Chavignard, whose residence is given as Montreal, has four Belgian scenes, brilliantly skilful and rather shallow.

Mr. R. F. Gagen has five scenes of the extreme east and extreme west of Canada. His technique is as aggressive as ever. One looks at his great glaciers and feels that one is looking not at the great glacier, nor even at Mr. Gagen's conception of the great glacier, but at a water color part of the great glacier, and that the water colors and the brush are fully as important as the glacier itself.

Mr. Mower Martin has three water colors, none of which is remarkable.

Mr. Dickson Patterson shows two clever pastel landscapes, and a brilliant scenic design—a mermaid with tassled tail, catching fish—on a rough stained canvas.

Mr. William Smith, of Montreal, has four seascapes of considerable delicacy and feeling.

The Apostle of the Ugly.

The four oils of Mr. P. Beaumont are left for separate mention, because Mr. Beaumont, in defiance of his name, has constituted himself the apostle of the ugly. His "Madame F." is a piece of brutality in flesh and yellow which should scarcely have been admitted to the gallery on grounds of decency if not of art, and his "Mother and Child" is open in less degree to the same criticism. That he can do brilliant work is shown by his portrait of Dr. Villeneuve, but even that is almost insulting in its suggestion of animalism. Mr. Beaumont's work is not poetic.