Over Three Hundred Pictures Displayed At The Art Gallery

A Delightful Work.

Aurice Cullen, R.C.A., in his "Moonlight on the Canoe River" has achieved the ethereal quality of the moonlight poetically denominated silvery. The picture, of still, deep water and trees on the farther bank, is all in black, or what is almost black, the sky is uniformly steely, and yet the light is sufficient to give the misty amplification of the misty clump of trees that traces the picture. Mr. Cullen's other pictures are "Early Spring," "The Dam," and "A Northern Brook" in winter. Mr. William Brymner, C.M.G., P.R.C.A., has put much of sunlight into his landscapes than formerly. One is sorry he has no figure studies in this exhibition, remembering the one exhibited last year, and which went to the National Gallery. His "A Lonely Grave" at Loulsburg, N.S., has the idea accented by the purple tones of the western sky and the ocean, with the light falling on the middle distance and the stone-marked grave also some weight in shadow. Two other canvases are sunsets.

Another Fine Type.

Something solid in a shifting world is the "White Head" painted by Mr. Robert Gagné, R.C.A. (Toronto). A misty sky, a tall cliff softened by haze, and rising nearer, a wall of granite with the water dashed into spray against its base—the strong immovable rock and the unstable and fleeting mists are finely blended and contrasted. J.W. Beatty, R.C.A. (Toronto), has painted "Early Spring" in a manner that is striking but effective. He has got away from the traditional blue-shadowed snow, and while his treatment at first glance seems flat and undramatic, there is in the line breaking away and showing green at the edges, the dark water underneath, the evergreen shrubs and the beeches, which have kept rustle through the winter, the trunks of trees still bare, and the tint of the snow, the suggestion of the melting of winter's ice chains and of moisture-filled atmosphere. F.M. Bell-Smith, R.C.A. (Toronto), has on canvas a rather delicate page of Canada's military history, a manoeuvre at the much criticized Camp Borden. More characteristic are his "Cloud Girt Glaciers," "Burgess Pass," D.C., and "St. Mary's." G.H. Horne Russell, A.R.C.A., has three fine paintings. He has probably never shown a more finished piece of work than the "Clam Diggers," in which the artistic feeling is carried out with assured technique. Three small boys in different attitudes are digging clams beneath a sky resplendent with moonlight, the tide marking the sand bar, the surf breaking on the beach, the setting sun painting the water. A most delightful picture is "Irland" by Miss Clara S. Huggett, A.R.C.A., Toronto.

Pierret's "La Grand Mere." The patchwork effect of the mantel is charming, with its flowery draperies and flowers. The other is three or four roses on a copper plate. The exquisite tints and texture of the delicately curved petals are etched with fidelity, and the dull copper reflects faintly the rosy gleam. Another admirable flower study is "Dahlias" by Miss Clara S. Huggett, A.R.C.A., Toronto.

E. Dyment, R.C.A., shows a portrait of Mr. Sturges P. Stearns, a finely executed and finished piece of work. Mr. T. Mower Martin, R.C.A. (Toronto), paints the thing as he sees it, which happens to be comfortably as the ordinary person sees it, too. "Marguerite, in the Laurentians, in which he has caught the atmosphere of our hill-country. The road leading over a rise suggests illimitable spaces of hill and valley to the mountain peak glimpsed in the distance. There are trees partly shading the wayside, and a touch of pastoral life in the sheep grazing through a gap in the fence. Charles De Bolla shows one of his delightful fantasies of children, and a winter landscape. "Depression," in similar low tones. Georges Delfosse has a large canvas, "Contemplation," a lady before a mirror. The figure is well modelled, and the texture and drapery of her silken gown are well managed, as is also the lamp light falling on the embroidered scarf, whose graceful movement seems to bear the contemplation. W.M. Cutts, A.R.C.A. (Pott, Perry), has a strong piece of work in "The Passing Storm." The light is breaking through a wreath of dark clouds above the horizon, and the water lashed by the storm still drives in foamy crested billows and swirls about the dripping rocks in the foreground. Arthur D. Rosaire, A.R.C.A., has in his chosen theme to express the"Play Hour" something quite different from anything he has shown before, and is one of the good things in the exhibition. Homer Watson, R.C.A., has four pictures, painted in cool, quiet tones, a "March Evening" with moonlight, "December Dawn," "Breaking Winter," and a "Sugar Cabin." A. S. Buxton, A.R.C.A., is following his chosen path to express his thoughts and decided contrasts in shadow effects, and is making progress. His "Way's Deep Cross, Autumn" is one of his best pieces of work.

The Madonna and Child" follows the conventional conception of the quality of pathos in it. The picture is in modelling and composition, centering the attention on the Child, who has the eyes far apart and delicately powdered chin. Mrs. Lynn loves in children. There is something a little too stiff in the pose of the two. One of the women is a grasping narcissus and the other a lily, holding them like stiff little scepters.

J. Franchere, A.R.C.A., exhibits another of his characteristic piece of work, "Le Grand Mere." The patchwork effect of the mat is charming, with its flowery draperies and flowers. The other is three or four roses on a copper plate. The exquisite tints and texture of the delicately curved petals are etched with fidelity, and the dull copper reflects faintly the rosy gleam. Another admirable flower study is "Dahlias" by Miss Clara S. Huggett, A.R.C.A., Toronto.

In every Art Academy exhibition the pictures exhibited might be graded loosely in three classes—the work of the artists who are at the zenith of their powers, or who, at least, have actually arrived; that of younger men and women who are gradually finding themselves and whose work shows growth and steady improvement; and thirdly, the experiments of those whose courage, one fears, will always be greater than their execution. An exhibition of pictorial art differs in this respect from one of musical or dramatic art. A school girl who has just achieved "Brown's Jubilee March," for example, would not be welcomed on the same platform with Paderewski, nor would the reciter of "Curfew Shall Not Ring To-night" be admitted into the company of Sir Herbert Tree on a public platform.

An Art Academy exhibition one may find on one part of the wall a study of fruit drawn so badly that it is tumbling off the dish, and not far off an exaggerated study of roses; a woman's head with features all awry, next door to a finished portrait; a flat, wooden little piece of "scenery," and a colorful landscape bathed in light and air. His "Lilies" and the aspiring beginner have a chance to measure themselves with the big men and the masters. The visitor to such an exhibition who looks only for the masterpiece shining like a good deed in a na""vy world," will miss what is really an interesting study, the observation of how the tale among the scholars of their lesson, their development, year by year, and aims to improve in the beginner. The student of psychology will find also interest in reflection. What a leads a man to imagine that a "winter afternoon" should be depicted by a pea-green sky laid on with nice even strokes, a mauve foreground, and a straight zone of partly colored house. He is followed with what looks like blankets drying on a clothesline? What picturesque quality is there in a dilapidated board structure, a cottage, a hill that one should desire to immortalize on canvas? Hoards exposed to the weather do, it is true, take on glints of amethystine color and greens. But why spill on the boards real colors of chromo-yellow and mill? An attempt at the materialistic behavior of an egg omlet with tomato sauce come to grief. It is true that artists of a great modern school have produced such pictures, and such pictures are the only ones which will ever be seen. What is the meaning of the present art? It is the meaning of the art of the present day. It is the meaning of the art of the future. It is the meaning of the art of the past. It is the meaning of the art of the present day.
319 Exhibits There.

The thirty-eighth annual exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts which opened yesterday in the Art Association Galleries on Sherbrooke street, is an extensive one, comprising 319 exhibits, in oils, watercolors, etchings and drawings, and sculpture. In times like these, when the minds of men and women are disturbed and souls are stirred to their depths, it would perhaps be too much to expect greatly outstanding canvases especially as many artists are devoting time and attention to other work than their own. But there are a goodly number of pictures of a high degree of merit, particularly among the landscapes. It is in this form of art representation which dominates the exhibition: there are a few portraits, a number of marine views, a few genre pictures, studies, and so on, but landscapes with woodland and pastoral scenes are in the majority. Some of the well-known Montreal men, Suzor Cote, Morrisseau, and others, are absent this year, but on the other hand there are more exhibits “with letters after their names” from Toronto and other parts of Canada. The R.C.A. exhibition was held in Montreal last summer, and is here today this year by virtue of the facilities for accommodation of our art galleries.

In the grandmother’s work-worn hands, the strip of rag carpet, the balls and pieces in the work-basket, and the real habitant blue of the worker’s apron make up a good color harmony in the interior depicted with fidelity.

Some Freak Art.

Nowadays an academy exhibition would hardly be complete without some examples of “freak” art—or what seems to the conservative critic as such. One would be inclined to award the palm in the “ism” line in the present exhibition to Miss Kathleen Munn, of Toronto, who, in her “Evening Glow,” seems to have superimposed a riot of Bakst coloring on a Cubist foundation.

The cows which are the centre of the “glow,” have hides dappled with squares and triangles of red and purple and orange, they stand before a purple and green checkered body, on a purple and red and olive checkered earth. The same courageous artist shows an “Arrangement” of a lady’s figure, rather snaky in its curves, and still more so in the color of the flesh, pale green tattooed in various shades of color. Perhaps some day the aforesaid critic may have to hide her diminished head and acknowledge that, seen from the truly artistic soul, evening glow does bring out purple and orange geometrical figures on a cow. But at present, such a venture in paint seems crude and meaningless. In the other picture, Miss Munn has achieved a certain opalescent quality in her coloring, with which she might do something, but it seems out of place on a lady’s back.

But leaving this aside, the impossibility of touching even very briefly in one review on all the really good work in the exhibition will indicate to the prospective visitor to the Art Galleries that there is enough to pay for close and repeated study.

E. B.