The Fifty-First Exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy

By H. Poynter Bell

The fifty-first exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy, held in the galleries of the Art Association of Montreal, is a better one in many ways than the last exhibition which the Academy held in that city; but, though the general air of discouragement, which seemed evident then, has gone, the exhibition is not altogether a satisfying one. It looks as if the artists of Canada had such a poor opinion of the taste of Montreal that many of them think it hardly worth while to exhibit there. Education of public taste might well be one of the duties of the Academy, and no place is more in need of such education than Montreal. Further, the exhibition can not be considered as giving a good annual review of the state of art in Canada, which must surely be one of its proper functions. Works are exhibited by only little more than half of the members of the Academy—Academicians and Associates—and it is not without interest that one third of all the exhibitors are women.

As is usual in Canadian exhibitions, the greater part of the pictures on the walls are landscapes, some of which are little more than sketches. And also as usual the painters of the landscapes can be very roughly divided into naturalists, who concern themselves seriously with natural values, and formalists, in whose pictures values are more or less made subject to decorative ends. One of the leaders of the first class is Mr. Maurice Cullen, who shows only one picture this year. In this he keeps to his customary snow and dark water, with more open space and atmosphere than usual and a cheerful effect of rosy light on the distant hills. The larger of Mr. J. W. Beatty's two pictures, a winter scene in B.C., has a distant light of the same kind; it is the best picture that he has shown in Montreal for some years and has a good quality of space and colour. Mr. Homer Watson has three pictures in his familiar autumnal browns and, in contrast to these, a "Sketch in May" in tender greys and light greens—fresh but a little sad. Of Mr. Wilfred Barnes' two pictures, the study of afterglow light at Brattleboro is the more successful in his rather hard and strong manner; Mr. Loveroff and Mr. E. A. Dalton also show pictures in which strong colour is used effectively. There is an attractive study of morning haze and colour at Baie St. Paul in the better of Mr. Paul Earle's two exhibits, and of morning haze again, with some good trees in the foreground, by Mr. George Griffin, while Mr. Kilgour shows typical winter lighting and atmosphere in his two pictures, particularly in "Hurrying down to the Lowlands."
Mr. Pilot's two pictures of Newfoundland are not of his best; the one of "Lifting Fog" is the more interesting.

There are only few marine pictures. "A Breezy Day," by Mr. Horne Russell, is painted with all his sure understanding of the sea; in his "Seining the Weir" the trees and the poles on which the nets are hung make a very interesting sort of pattern behind the figures in the foreground. Two pleasant sea sketches are shown by Mr. George Fox.

Mr. Coburn has sent a picture of an unusual, long and narrow shape, in which a long panorama of distant hills is painted with much truth; his Percival's of Bonsecours Market and Mr. Burgoyne's of a mountain torrent.

Among the landscape decorations of a more formal kind Mr. J. E. H. MacDonald's "Rain in the Mountains" is an outstanding example—a simple arrangement of forms and plane surfaces with some attractive colour. His "Hilly Farm" is unlike most of his work and its tone and colour rather suggest the work of some followers of the English Pre-Raphaelites. Mr. Harold Beament's "Rocky Headland" is a fairly ambitious and rather successful composition in browns. The "Cathedral Mountain" of Mr. Lismer is a rugged picture of rocks, in

usual sleigh with two horses is in the middle of one half of the foreground. Mr. James Graham's studies of ploughing and potato planting are well lighted landscapes with figures; Mr. Raoul Barre's "L'Etang" is a very effective little picture of a pool shaded by trees, with a girl bathing; Miss Alice des Clayes has sent from England a clever sketch of horses and a plough. Mr. G. A. Reid's large "Dark Canyon" is a sombre and rather formal landscape; he also has a good study of Canadian life in his water colour of a saw mill. The pictures by Mr. Herbert Palmer and Mr. Ross Perrigard do not show them quite at their best. Small pictures and sketches of interest are Mr. Hennessey's of houses in the hills of Quebec, Mr. Mickle's of fishermen's houses at Percé, Mrs.

which the clouds in the sky are hardly to be distinguished from the rocks below; it looks rather like a design for some new kind of mountain. Mr. A. Y. Jackson is inclined to repeat himself in his snow scenes, which are not very important; the tones and values in Mr. Andre Lapine's "Through the Woods" are very unconvincing, nor is its decorative value great, but Mr. Franz Johnston's "Gleam of Gold" is a decorative panel with pleasant colour. Mr. Albert Robinson and Mr. Andre Bieler have done better things than those that are in this exhibition. Though Mr. T. W. Mitchell hardly belongs in this following, he approaches their work in his two pictures, in which contrasts of colour and light are evidently exaggerated.
Portraits do not take so large a share of the wall space as in some recent exhibitions. The portrait of Mrs. Alexander Cameron by Mr. Wayman Adams of New York is one of the most striking pictures shown; a distinguished portrait in which the suppression of the surrounding details makes the figure stand out very vividly. Mr. Wyly Grier's portrait of Mr. F. A. Merrick is as good as his best, both as portrait and as picture; in his smaller portrait study of a girl sitting out of doors, the lighting is not quite convincing. Mr. Ernest Fosberry's portrait of his daughter is full of good painting; it is rather too imposing, too much like a David does not worthy represent Mr. Jongers. A portrait by Mr. C. F. Comfort is a rather stiff study in buffs and greys; Mr. Chas. Macgregor's portrait of Mr. C. G. D. Roberts is of more interest for its subject than for its painting. Of the four portraits by Mr. Kenneth Forbes that of Miss Gweneth Wonham is the most alive and the best as a picture. Two portraits by Mr. Robin Watt, studies of heads by Miss Berthe des Clayes and Mr. de Grandmaison and two heads, rather in the primitive manner, by Mr. Holgate call for notice.

A striking picture is Mr. Charles Simpson's state portrait for its subject and the division of tones in the background, right down the middle of the picture and of the figure, makes an uncomfortable effect. Two portraits are shown by Miss Stella Grier. Her big portrait of Mr. J. Geale Dickson is a clever picture, strong and consistent, but the smaller "Mother and Child" is better still—a bold, gay picture, with bright colour, which, if not a perfect success as an experiment, is one of the most attractive pictures in the exhibition. Both of Miss Marion Long's unnamed portraits are very interesting, particularly "Shadows," which is essentially a study in blocks of light and shade, strong and rather severe. "The Green Jar" is not so good in drawing but is very effective in light and colour. The portrait of the Hon. Athanase "Chinese Lanterns," in which a well-placed figure of a little Chinese girl shares the interest with a pleasant effect of light on the orange colour of some "Chinese Lantern" pods in a jar and the orange and blue of the girl's dress. Mr. Randolph S. Hewton's conspicuous "Sleeping Woman" is a study of a nude figure, larger than life; it is strongly drawn, with hardly a pretence of flesh painting, and the surroundings of the figure take away from its value as a decoration. The interest of Miss Prudence Heward's life size women's heads, "At the Theatre," is chiefly technical. "The Goose Family" by Mr. Frank Panabaker is a rather successful imitation of James Maris. Mr. Paul Caron has some water-colours of city scenes in his usual manner. There are a number
of flower pictures in the exhibition; among the most successful of them are Miss Porteous' boldly painted Peonies, Mrs. Alexander's Hydrangeas and those by Mrs. Cutts, Miss Hagarty, Mrs. Luke and Miss Huddell.

Among the prints and drawings Mr. Herbert Raine's work is, as always, conspicuous. He shows two charming drawings of boats, a Belgian etching and three dry points. Other things of interest are portrait head of General Wolfe. Mr. Laliberte shows some clever small figures and groups of figures and Miss Dinah Lauterman a figure "Le Silence du Tombeau"—imaginative and rather archaic in manner.

Architecture is only just represented, which seems surprising in view of the present importance of architecture, especially in Canada. The more notable of the fourteen drawings and photographs

Mr. Lismier's reed pen drawings, Mr. Watt's chalk drawings of heads of children, Mr. Phillips' colour wood cuts, Mr. Beamert's drawings, an etching by Miss Phyllia Armour and Mr. A. D. Patterson's drawing of the late Bliss Carman.

The most important works in the very small collection of sculpture are Mr. Emanuel Hahn's bold and strong head of Beethoven—a representation much more than a portrait—and Dr. Tait McKenzie's unflattering but probably very true portrait of young A. R. C. Smith. The most amusing exhibits are the drawings by Mr. W. C. Overend and Mr. R. W. Collier, both of whom I visited in the City of Toronto recently.
Houses in the Hills, Quebec

By Frank Hennaway

Beethoven

By Emanuel Hahn, A.R.C.A.