

Views and Reviews in the World of Art



"Firing a barricaded house at Villersexel," by A. de Neuville.

Courtesy of Knoedler & Co.

in the quotation I promised you in rebuttal for the earlier one. Said he, and only a word here and there need be changed to adapt it to the present situation:

"The art of to-day must wane because its life principle is rooted in a decrepit old regime of the holy Roman kingdom of the past. Wherefore, like all decaying survivals of that past, it remains most unregeneratively antipathetic to the present. It is this antipathy and not the troublous times that is so harmful to art. On the contrary, troublous times are salutary to it.

"As of yore in Athens and Florence, so now, art unfolds her most beautiful blossoms in the midst of the wildest war and party storms. Of a truth those Athenian and Florentine artists lived no egotistical, isolated, art absorbed lives, with leisurably poet's heart closed to the great sorrows and joys of their time. Their work on the contrary was but the dream mirror of their time; they themselves were manly men whose personalities were as powerful as their artistic talents.

"... The Archbishop of Paris hopes for salvation in the cholera, in death; I await it in freedom, in life. Therein do our faiths differ. I believe that France, out of the sentient depths of her new life, will breathe forth a new art. And this heavy task is demanded of the French people, of the French, the light hearted, fickle people whom we so often liken to a butterfly."

"But the butterfly is also the symbol of immortality of the soul and of its eternal rejuvenescence."

Independent Artists To Show in a Tent

The Society of Independent Artists announces to the public its second annual exhibition to be held in the Moorish Gardens, 110th street and Riverside Drive, beginning April 20 and continuing till May 15. Arrangements have been made to erect a theatre, which was once a huge open air theatre, with a large tent and to erect screens designed to display at the very least 1,600 works, giving space to exhibitors between the number of 800 and 1,000. This exhibition, judging from the number and importance of the entries already received in response to the announcement and invitation sent to members and artists all over the country, will constitute the most important exhibition of the year, in that it will provide an extensive survey of the work produced and the quality attained by those artists who may be termed "the young and insurgent," by the open minded among the academicians, by the artist of accepted radical tendencies, by more or less isolated artists scattered throughout the country. It is to be expected that there will be the same

large proportion of exhibitors from countries other than the United States as there was last year.

Last year's show in the Grand Central Palace, which offered such a comprehensive review of the art world and introduced to a public made up of both the connoisseur and the "man who knows nothing about art, but knows what he likes" many artists of reputation among cliques but unknown to the general world, was the first of a permanent series of exhibitions; permanent, because the society, disregarding the question of art values and the problems of aesthetics for the time, built its purpose in holding the exhibitions upon the real need of the contemporaneous artist to communicate with his contemporaneous public without the interference of the private opinions of juries or the arbitrary distinction of prizes. The society was founded upon the common sense view of the pressing question of the insurgent artist and the "Academy," using the word in a generic sense, upon an appreciation of the right of the individual artist to "a place in the sun" of public attention and upon a sufficient confidence in the ultimate verdict of enlightened men.

The programme of the society is identical with that of the Societe des Artistes Independants in Paris, whose exhibitions are now the "classicus Locus" of the great names in modern art. The history of art since the beginning of the Impressionists is the catalogue of the Societe des Artistes Independants. As a well known critic pointed out, the first prize winners in the Salon for thirty years are forgotten men, while thirty men from the Independants exhibitions include such names as Manet, Pissarro, Whistler, Sisley, Renoir, Monet, Rodin, Picasso, Matisse, Cezanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin; names to conjure by—names which to-day mean whole schools and influences directing the current of art to-day. The catalogue of the first exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists outlines the purpose and programme to be followed in this manner:

"The society has been incorporated under the laws of New York for the purpose of holding exhibitions in which all artists may participate independently of the decisions of juries. The need for such a society must be clear to all who are familiar with the conditions of the art world. On the one hand, we have the frank statement of the established art societies that they cannot exhibit all the deserving work submitted to them because of lack of space. On the other hand, such exhibitions as take place in private galleries must, by their nature, be formed from the ranks of artists who are already more or less known; moreover no one exhibition at present gives an idea of contemporary American art in its ensemble or permits comparisons of the various directions it is taking, but shows only the work of one man or a homogeneous group of men."

Speaking of the success of the Societe

in Paris the catalogue says: "The reason for its success is to be found in the principle adopted at its founding and never changed. 'No jury and no prizes.'"

The first clause of this watchword was foreshadowed by the great Ingres when he said in his report to the Commission Permanente des Beaux Arts, over sixty years ago: "A jury, whatever be the means adopted for its formation, will work badly. . . . I consider unjust and immoral any restriction tending to prevent a man from living from the product of his work." As a matter of fact this opportunity to exhibit unhampered has brought representatives from every school from the most conservative to the most radical into membership in the society.

The second principle of "no prizes" received its best explanation and indorsement when M. Renoir said in an interview five years ago that the thing needed for the placing of artists on an equal footing before the public, their final judge, was the abolition of the artificial distinction of prizes.

There are no requirements for admission to the society save the acceptance of its principles and the payment of the yearly dues of \$6. All exhibitors are members and are thus entitled to vote for the directors and on the decisions made by the society at its annual meetings.

The exhibition this year will be held out of doors under a great tent in the Moorish Gardens on Riverside Drive. All advantage is being taken of the pleasant time of the year and the ideal location to make the exhibition popular and attractive to the public. Last year, although the crowds were large at the Grand Central Palace, it was thought that many people objected to going into a hall more or less stuffy when the weather outside was so pleasant. This year that objection will be met by the outdoor nature of the arrangement. A good secure circus tent in which the pictures and sculpture will be perfectly safe from any inclemencies of the weather has been obtained. The directors are especially enthusiastic over the plan because the light secured by using canvas will be the best possible light for viewing the works. The alphabetical method of arranging the pictures will be adhered to this year, with some latitude, however, granted to the hanging commit-

tee in arranging single sections of the all in regard to large and small pictures. John Sloan, the president of the society elected at the last meeting, has definitely completed the plans for arrangement of the screens on which the pictures are to be hung. His plan, the details of which will be revealed later, does away with the

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