(February 7, 1927)

Why an Art Museum?

By Mr. Homer Saint Gaudens.*

President G. H. Sedgewick: Gentlemen, we have a great deal of pleasure as a Club in backing up so well as we can the efforts for our betterment made by the Council of the Art Gallery. They very kindly invited us to a special evening, along with other Canadian Clubs of the city, last Tuesday. I don't know how many of you were there, but it is interesting to note that there were almost seven hundred members of the Canadian Clubs of Toronto who took advantage of that evening last week and who manifestly enjoyed their evening there, and I just want to say to those members of the Council present that we are very much indebted to the members of the Gallery for the invitation extended to the Club, and we hope it will be repeated.

They are trying to develop an Art Museum, and our guest today is going to speak on that subject, "Why an Art Museum?" and I am satisfied that there is no one on this continent who is better equipped in his mentality and training and his power as a speaker to tell us the reasons for an art museum. I have very much pleasure in introducing Mr. Saint Gaudens.

Mr. Saint-Gaudens: I want to talk to you on a little broader subject than "Why an Art Museum?", and that is. "Why Art at all?" What is it about? Why do we need it? Why do we want it in my land, and in your land too, because I feel that in this respect we are both in the same boat?

The outlook on life, as I see it as a very casual visitor here, is much the same as the outlook in my country to me,

*Director, Department of Fine Arts, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh.

and we are both in a rather crying need of something to broaden out our lives, something to expand upon in these years when our physical situation is just about reaching the top of the back. This art thing is very intimately associated with our need of keeping in sight a rather large nigger in this present day woodpile of self-complacency. Because in our own country, if we continue to apply this lackadaisical sort of view toward our spiritual selves that we do toward our traffic problems, we are liable to get into a mental jam before very long that no mental police regulations on earth can ever sort out.

For we are suffering these days from a kind of an emotional nostalgia that puts us in the same position as a lot of sulky youngsters who cannot think of a single toy they have not got.

It is all very well for us to screech of the glories of gazing outward in our wide open spaces where men are mechanics, whereas the decadent European gazes inward at everything too awful to mention, including pure liquor. But when you stop to consider, you begin to realize that even Mr. Edison and Mr. Ford have done about everything they can to provide us with new-to-the-minute creature comforts: and yet along comes a man like Dr. Eliot of Harvard who died quite recently, and whose death was overshadowed by the demise of Rudolph Valentino, who would undoubtedly have agreed that in these rather agnostic, these synthetic days of ours, we do not even have a nodding acquaintance with our spiritual selves. Well, that is rather natural.

If you look back a little, you realize that up to a few years ago everybody was exercising their imagination on the material affairs about them. There may have been a wealthy class, but there was no leisure class. Even our capitalists worked. They worked from the time they fell out of bed in the morning until they crawled in between the sheets again at night. A trotting horse, a buggy ride of Sundays and some highly concentrated liquor at odd moments consumed about all the surplus energy they could spare for pleasure. They exercised their imagination on material things, and it takes just as much imagination to build a bridge as to do a fine piece of sculpture.

But along have come machines and excess wealth, and what has been the result? We have become practical folk. The only thing I see about me is the worship of sterilized efficiency, electric ranges, collapsible beds, male membership in the Rotary Club and female attendance at the Friday conversational club. When we finish our day's work we come home to a sublimated manger where each of us can get our own little indigestion by eating a balanced diet of calories and vitamines. Then for the sixteen remaining hours of the twenty-four we are naked-minded.

First, so as not to miss anything, we turn on the radio while we read the four-column headlines about what "Peaches Browning" is doing, and neglect the half stick of type on the fourth column of the third page, if any, of the local papers, concerning our relations with France. Next some obscure instinct insensibly lures us to go suck up the moron-tinted anaesthesia of seeing Norma Talmadge being seduced for the three hundred and sixty-fifth time, by Eugene O'Brien. Then, when we return home, we get a bottle of beer that is "near" out of the Frigidaire. We do not try to let our imagination play a little in the evening because next morning when we go down to the office it affects our efficiency when we write: "Yours of the tenth inst. to hand and contents noted. The five thousand feet of two-inch lead pipe will be shipped on the second inst., f.o.b. Jersey City."

The deepest sentiment we seem to entertain these days is that somehow or other our children will get enough hypodermic doses of technical education into them to get into the Westinghouse plant and write the specifications for Heaven. Yet, for all these shams and fictions, this efficiency engine of ours is beginning to knock a little when we start crowding it up the hill of life.

I want to read you what the Queen of Roumania said when she left. I gather she was here too. She remarked that: "Through your over-efficiency you have put on chains which are unknown to us in our older civilization—You have so multiplied, organized, catalogued, labelled, and classified everything that you do, that no breathing space is left, no time to sit down with your own thoughts."

Now, she is not the first European that has hinted to us that we live in an atmosphere of frenzied energy of business and ambiguous monotony of leisure. The successful American loves his work. I don't think money, as he progresses, means very much to him. He starts to give away a great deal of it while he is still comparatively young. But though he is not wealth-bound, he is work-bound. He has startlingly few things outside his office.

As for the man of modest means, his case is even more stringent. The laborer's hours are far shorter than they used to be. But in all our big cities these days, while he is working, the laborer is shorn, for the most part, of even his modest share of imaginative progress in any variety of work. He has become just a cog in a machine which repeats a specific action hour after hour.

That is sufficient for the time being. But consider what will happen if it is kept up. If we never give the worker anything to think about, he becomes like a portion of that machine, and his mind begins to drift, to wander. He will drop from the status of a skilled laborer to that of an automaton. In other words, both for executives and for laborers we cannot be constantly taking the cream from their work unless we put them into a position where they can make the cream for us. Other people think of it if we do not.

It is a little strange that we have not all considered this before, because we have begun to devote so much time to our physical well-being. Tennis courts on the back lots; golf links on every suburban corner, and Walter Camp's daily dozen of a morning—to this we have come from the age of "buggy riding" and whiskey straight.

It is becoming unaccountably noticeable that, despite their perfectly natural coveting of our national affluence, few of our European neighbors ever really struggle to climb aboard our Detroit-made go-cart unless they lack not only butter at home, but even bread. Why?

Recently I was looking in the October National Geographic Magazine at some illustrations of the interior of French peasant houses, when a one hundred per cent. American made named Ivanovitch—or maybe it was Mon-

ticelli—concentrated my wandering fancy by peering odiously over my shoulder and saying, "How on earth do you think they can live in all that discomfort?" It made me think of a certain summer day when a few of us came upon an old French peasant woman tethering a cow in a restful spot behind the unshelled portion of her dilapidated farmhouse back of Belleau Woods. We had suggested that it was time to move, and her reply was devastating. Obviously there was no place she enjoyed more than home. Consequently, why should she let a little thing like war intrude on her Arcadian pursuits. She stayed, and she is there yet. And I think it was the cow, or the cow's granddaughter I saw when I passed there last Spring. She is a notable old lady, with a notable cow. Eminent authors have written short stories of blood and death around her. I have read some of them.

I do not wish to use her now, however, to illustrate patriotic heroism in unfragrant surroundings. But if we went back to that old lady, or her sons and daughters, who are still clinging to their bleak and crumbling homes about that pathetic ruined church at Lucy-la-Bocage, and said, "We will give you a few city houses, and here is a beautiful illustrated book (the National Geographic Magazine) showing the scientific advantages obtainable only in the United States," they would surely accept. Equally surely, after I had left they would turn all of their voluble contempt on the idea of persons from Henry Ford's land of usurers forcing their barbarian notions upon France. So you see, the Gaul understands, and we don't understand, that happiness, whether it be in Kearney–on–the–North–Platts or in Fismes–on–the–Vesle, depends upon something else than safety razors and gold teeth.

Now, I am not for a moment decrying efficiency, but what are we going to do with it and how are we going to make it produce something we can enjoy later on? The odd idea I represent to you here today will help. It is just one little bud on the branch of manhood that we are allowing to die on the tree of existence. It is some trifle to make our hearts beat a little faster, to make us live perhaps not a little longer, but a little more richly,—that is, richly in

spirit, if a little bit leanly in pocket—then the index of that art flower is one hundred.

What do I mean by art? I don't mean a chance to afford a lot of complacent, pessimistic snobs an opportunity to split each others' hairs with the pride of self-awarded connoisseurship when they turn X-rays onto old Masters, with names so nice to pronounce if you don't have to look at them too long.

For the man in the street—and that is what I hope I am—my idea of just nothing at all is to have a professor sit at a desk in some can of condensed learning before a group of introspective drones in order to exude ten-dollar exhortations concerning whether one statue is by Phidias, or a second is of the goddess Athene — spelled A–T–H–E–N–E, which is another name for Minerva, spelled M–I–N–E–R–V–A; or try to tag beauty with a date, or put salt on the tail of a humming bird.

Not very long ago I took through the Metropolitan Museum in New York three fine men and important artists who had come across the seas to help award the prizes in our International Picture Show out in Pittsburgh. As we wandered from one gallery to another, we went through a room of fine old Waterford glass, and my artist friends, who should have been so very, very highbrow, loitered there. They loitered there, in fact, longer than in front of all the old Masters put together.

And they said to me, "We think it is a shame that in your land a thing like a common or garden tumbler is just a receptacle to sip ice-water out of; that we cannot any longer sit back a few moments and taste a glass of port after dinner, and as the fragrance of that wine permeates our being, watch the glitter of the candle light on the facets of a beautiful little object that we hold in our hand, and have the aroma of a visual delight enter our souls and enrich our lives even as the taste of that more sensual pleasure is stealing around our tongue."

What I am pleading for is the sensuous thing. By art I mean the sensuous enjoyment of all the visual things about us.

The Scotch have had it with the bagpipes. Of course,

that is the last combination you would think of as art. Did you ever listen to a Scotch bagpiper? Well, I have often thought when the prehistoric avatar of that race came floating through the North Sea brine onto that misty shore, buoyed upon the distended stomach of a pig, that perhaps the very first thing he did in commemoration of his safe landing was to make a bagpipe out of that distended stomach, and seat himself upon some kelp strewn boulder and blow himself a tune—and that was art.

And so it is when you come over to this land, when the first noble red man had snared his latest diplodocus and had taken an afternoon off to pick up some shells on the beach, or as a twilight recreation had tattooed the shoulders of his fair and squirming bride, or had made little dotted designs on his war club before he brained his rival, that was art, just the sort of art I would have you believe in.

Think of the Alaskan Indians, with their primitive sculpture, their decorative lintels, and their crude pottery.

And it comes along down to the time when you get to this land. If you go to the Metropolitan Museum, to the American Wing, you will see outside that old facade of that fine old Assay Office of New York; and inside there are a series of furnished rooms, some of them modest and some formal, all the way from the kitchen of the Capen House in Topsfield, Massachusetts, down to the large and lofty chamber in which Washington attended his last birthday ball. In these rooms are mirrors, panels, furniture, bedspreads, knives and forks, cooking utensils, and all the objects we associate with matter-of-fact, humdrum lives. That is art. That is the kind of art I am pleading for today.

Then we come down to 1927, for history repeats itself as surely as God made little apples. You pick up a newspaper and this is what you read: "Products have reached mechanical excellence, car makers are now turning to vivid finishes in the effort to win patronage. Remarkable changes wrought in many cars' personalities." There you are. That is art.

Art is in all things around us. It is in women's hats. You realize it is for more than to cover the bobbed hair, it is to palpitate the heart of the proximate male, and that is

the kind of thing art is. It is inherited; it is basic in our lives. Just as, for example, hats have to be paid for, by the same token, this art thing has always been based on industry.

It does not come from mausoleums. Egypt, when King Tut wondered what he was going to put in his tomb, was an industrial valley. Athens was a market place and a seaport when Phidias worked on that frieze which some lady from Kansas City regretted he had not yet finished. Rome was a military and commercial centre when Trajan dropped a hint to his press agent to get an arch erected. Venice was the New York of the world when the Doges felt they needed a palace in which to entertain visiting royalty. In other words, this art thing has always come from humdrum places.

What was true of the Art of Europe in the past is true of the Art of Europe today. Living Art is no longer in splendid mausoleums of dead beauty in Egypt or Athens or Rome or Venice, but in the thriving industrial centres of Paris and Milan and London and Glasgow. It was the very combination of business acumen and imagination which art expresses that made these centres important.

Not very long ago in Fort Worth, Texas, they told me a joke they thought was on Fort Worth. It seems that the leading light of Fort Worth had been in New York and had purchased six pictures. When she got back she told her friends about it, and they said: "Six pictures! Gracious, that's a lot, with the frames and all! Who painted them?" Whereat the leading light looked bewildered and was forced to admit that "the literature was coming later." There you have it. The pathetic thing is that the story was not on Fort Worth but for Fort Worth. This woman just looked and took what pleased her eye, and that is the main idea and the whole idea in the art thing from first to last.

What, then, is this ghastly inhibition that keeps the laymen from indulging in art, which is the next step we want to take? They have been hawking a story around England these days which illustrates just what I am driving at. They blame some of it on Shakespeare.

"Once upon a time when Polonius Public was sitting out

on his front porch of an evening, whittling a wooden head for the baby—that he certainly didn't call art—and seeking a little soul-resting moment of happiness by dreaming over a golden tinted cloud on the horizon that he thought resembled art, a querulous, self-important, bilious person known as Hamlet Critic came up to him and said: 'What are you looking at?'

"The clouds, the sunset. It's beautiful off there, isn't it? Sometimes I wonder how it happens. No, I don't either, but I'd just like to float away in it," replied the cheerful owner of the porch.

"Sort of like a camel."

Polonius Public nodded good-naturedly, and Hamlet Critic scratched his chin. "I don't know,—you might call it a weasel."

Polonius Public frowned. He wished the chap would go away and leave him in peace, but he was in a mood to agree to anything. "It is backed like a weasel."

Mr. Critic was warming up. "Yes, but the contour is like a whale."

"Yes, very like a whale." Mr. Public spoke quite shortly. He did not enjoy being dragged out of his reverie.

"Say, Frank," he called to his son inside, "Is that new battery hooked up? They broadcast the baseball scores at seven o'clock."

All of which, so far as it consciously concerned Mr. Public, was the end of that cloud called 'Art,' and maybe you don't blame him. But wait a minute. Probably that evening, to take his mind off his troubles, he would take his brood down to the movies or, if he was feeling flush, maybe he took them to see Irving Berlin's "Music Box Revue." Although he didn't know it, what took him there was the very same urge for art that Hamlet Critic had trampled on along about sunset.

Maybe what he saw was crude, unrefined, licentious, sentimental art. Just the same, it was art, and unless I miss my guess, art with a germ or two of refinement lurking around waiting to come out some summer when Polonius Public could afford to take his brood to Europe and return to tell his neighbors tales of what he had seen. Perhaps

it was a yarn about going through a little town in the Apennines in the chilly rain of a December afternoon—

No, this is my yarn, not his. It was a flea-bitten, frost-bitten, wind-swept town I am thinking of. We passed through it one day, my wife and I, on our way from Bologna to Florence, in a little toy car that could make more noise than any army truck. You go up into the mountains in that tiny, noisy automobile, past hedgerows blooming with Sunday laundry, through gaudy village markets packed with holiday folk examining brilliant fruit, hats, cloth, candy and calves, all spread out on the stone pavement. You go up higher and higher, up above the cloud line, up above the snow line, into a savage, barren country which is nevertheless extensively tilled. Where nothing else would grow, or go, were sheep. Picturesque farm-houses were scattered all about and on top of every peaked hill, or mountain, was a convent, or a monastery, or a church. Color, dirty children, rough looking men, square-cut girls, everywhere an enjoyment of life, a need for terrific work, a disregard for death and suffering, all mingled in an extraordinary fashion that makes you think of their food. In this village, miles from anything but clouds, we met a brass band parading down the street, headed for a long table in the square, all covered with bread and cheese and huge Chianti bottles. Slopping along in the mud they were, blowing their lungs into their brass. Every man, woman and child in the town was in that band, or around it, and the music was startlingly good.

Now, I am not going to advocate that, but I do mean that these people had the art idea, had something to play with, something to enjoy beside their means of existence. And Mr. Public, when he came home, would remember that thing, and he would tell people about it. And he would have the art stuff unconsciously, because it is not really basically intellectual. It is emotional. It doesn't depend upon what we think. It depends upon what we feel; and what has been wrong in our life is that we go out and criticize and analyze, and knock the sawdust out of the doll instead of really enjoying ourselves.

I went down to Houston, Texas, not long ago, and a

few days later I was back in New England, in my own home town, Boston, beneath the shade of the sacred codfish. Of course, they asked me where I had been and what I had been doing. When I told them, a lady spoke up and asked if people led a normal life in Houston—had trolley cars and shops and houses and things? Evidently the natal hub of the universe had settled the fact that Houston and all spots west of the Allegheny Mountains consisted of miscellaneous wigwams whence Buffalo Bill once recruited his show.

I explained that Houston was a town of 250,000 inhabitants, and not only had the biggest cotton warehouses in the world, but was already struggling with zoning ordinances and art commissions and such irritating complications of a well ordered civic life, and had spent about $800,000 on an art museum. Then the apetheosis of Eastern culture asked me if I felt such places had sufficient intellectual education to appreciate art.

Now, please! Art is something very much more than intellectual education. I know lots of fine art settled around Plymouth Rock after it had been turned into a proper lodestone by rubbing it with the industrial gold of shoe and cotton factories. But what great art has ever come out of it?

No, you cannot learn art intellectually any more than you can learn matrimony. Does anyone ever study how to appreciate a wife? Or how to propose? When you get married you just rush up and do it, and that's that. So if anybody asks what is the finest picture in the world, or who is the finest artist, ask them who is the prettiest woman. Now, I mean that. Art depends on the thing I am pleading for today, and on something we call charm.

Like me, I am sure others of you here today are enthusiasts of that wonderful play, "What every woman knows," written by a Scotchman, and that you will remember Maggie, the heroine, and how one of her brothers, the stupid brother, Alick, said to her: "What is charm exactly, Maggie?" and how she replied, "Oh, it's—it's a sort of bloom on a woman. If you have it, you don't need to have anything else; and if you don't have it, it doesn't much

matter what else you have. Some women, the few, have charm for all; and most have charm for one. But some have charm for none."

When you can intellectually analyze Barrie's charm, then you can intellectually analyze art. It is the same thing. So let us stop kneeling in front of art like the way the little girl felt when she was kneeling in front of the Bishop. Said the Bishop, "Do you know the Lord's Prayer?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Do you know the Ten Commandments?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know the Creed?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know the Catechism?"

"Damn it all," the little girl replied, "I'm only seven!"

So there you are. Let us just say, "Damn it all," and be artistically only seven. Don't you see? We are forgetting that there is a great deal in life that we cannot get out of a book, but we have got to get it out of ourselves and the art idea is one of those things. Now, it is coming to us again if we will only hold our hands out. The artist himself begins to know about it. Howard Pyle, who illustrated "The Wonder Clock" and "Robin Hood," was one of the first to tell them.

I remember it was at a dinner some years ago of the Society of American Architects in Washington, and these architects began to tell how they were going to uplift the public—uplift him to a rarefied zone where his crass ignorance would begin to glimmer with a light appreciation of the wonderful edifices they were about to put him in, like the frog in the nursery rhyme, "whether his mother were willing or no." But when they got through stoking one of our stock mutual admiration furnaces, Howard Pyle stood on his feet and said: "You are all wrong. You cannot go to work uplifting the public by reaching over and grabbing them by the hair of the head and hoisting. It hurts, and they will not stand for it. Nothing like that has ever happened, even in the days of great art. Go back to the days of the Renaissance and think a little. During that time there was a period when everyone took art to mean paint-

ing angels in gold halos, in tempora. Then the public got sick of that, and they decided they wanted Madonnas painted in oils. So they hunted up a young chap by the name of Raphael and told him what they were looking for, and he took what they demanded and painted it, and painted it so finely that it has become the greatest art that the world has ever known. By the same token, in the art of architecture, if the people you want to lift up by grabbing by the scalp will not levitate at the thought of cathedrals, but will rise easily when you say railroad stations, then it is up to you architects to build railroad stations that are really fine art. One or two of you, like Charles F. McKim and Daniel Burnham, have already done it for the Pennsylvania Railroad in New York and Washington, and the quicker the rest of you fall into line the better."

Well, now, Pyle put his finger on it, and he did not put his finger on anything new. He was simply following in the most conservative of footsteps in asking those about him to be up-to-date.

The night before last we were talking about the Shrine of St. Ursula, and I remember about two years ago I was at St. John's Hospital at Bruges, Belgium, gazing at those wonderful Memlings. As I was looking at them, the guardian told me all about how they happened to be made. I hate to be talked to when I visited pictures, so probably I didn't get this quite right, but the gist of the fellow's story, as I remember it, is this:

"A certain merchant in Bruges decided he wanted to make a gift to the hospital of this Shrine of St. Ursula, who was also his patron saint. So he wandered around until he found the finest craftsman of pigments in Bruges by the name of Memling, and said to him, 'I want you to make me so many panels for this shrine. I want so many figures in them. I want one of them to be a portrait of me, the donor. I want the panels to be so long and so broad, and together with the paint, I want them tested for durability. I want it finished in such and such a time. I am willing to pay so much. Will you take the job?' "

That was exactly as it should be. The artist took the finest individual conception of his friend, the manufacturer,

and adding thereto his own individual imagination, expressed the combined result through his clear seeing eyes and skilled fingers. It is just this intimacy that we must establish these days if we want to profit by these things. It is coming if you will help.

Thank goodness, at last the artist, architect, sculptor or painter has played hooky from the stultifying, aesthetic Sunday School that Ruskin ran, and has sneaked down to the old swimming hole with the rest of us. They are living and tasting our lives with the same zest as the Italian or French masters of their day sampled the life of their communes or towns.

The modern artist is trying to reach out a little and to distill what he sees and bring it back to us so that we can become more intimately in touch with our dreams.

What about the other side of the shield? I am forced to admit that these days the layman is inclined to skulk, to enjoy hurt feelings about being an intruder in the domain of art. This is rubbish. There is no reason for any beautiful thing in the world except to delight you and me and the other fellow, and the only way is to throw overboard a few bushels of agony and deep breathing and self-consciousness. We cannot imagine Babbitt doing it in just that way, but that is scarcely the point. We must keep in mind that art can be food and wine and music and little colored candle lights in the street, come nightfall, even if it is raining at the time and nearly freezing to boot. If we are to get anywhere we must come to regard the need of delighting our eyes to be important and responsible enough to associate with gasoline towers and Coco Cola booths.

I agree with you, today such objects do represent a miscellaneous aggregation of horribly bad taste. But, crude as they are, they also set forth some kind of expression, incoherent but actual, on the part of our people, and if we will only get this brilliant art candle that we have always kept secretly lighted, out from under that bushel—whatever the bushel was in the Bible—we can walk right in between a soft drink booth and a gasoline filling station and say, loud and clear, "I know you both want to attract attention and to draw trade, but why not do it without looking like a nightmare in the Bloomingdale Insane Asylum?"

So long as trash does not bother us in the streets, so long as we think we are childish if we get excited over anything but the sporting page, which takes up half our newspaper, or the physical pulchitrude of "Miss America," then this art thing will be just about as fruitful as the wind in the willows. Nor will lectures or exhibitions ever get us anywhere in art until we can get ourselves out and let ourselves go; until our race learns on occasion to run a temperature over a few soul-satisfying, if somewhat-too-naughty-for-Chautauqua enthusiasms that bewildered spiritual advisers of New England Old Maids cannot eradicate with the fifty-seventh or the one hundred and fifty-seventh amendment. It all boils down to simple enthusiasm.

How did great art come to other countries—Italy, for example. The Italian renaissance was built on renaissance. What do you find in Florence? Art in those days might be found in a set of three bronze doors by Ghiberti, a decorated well-curb by Donatello, a bit of jewelry by Cellini to hang around a beauty's neck; or, in Venice, in a monument by Verrocchio to a dictator whose immorality could be as forceful as his character, a man in armor astride a tremendous horse, erected in a public square. The crowd cheered when that stunning thing of Colleoni was set up; and then went off to bet on horse races or put cyanide in some inconvenient uncle's liquor.

Now, I am not just advocating that, but the spirit which permeated it which is what we need in this land here. It is coming. Up to now we have been in our hours of ease like Stephen Leacock's cowboy who rushed from his cabin, leapt on his horse, and rode rapidly off in all directions.

Briefly, we are beginning to think a little about this thing, and back home in Pittsburgh I meet with a group of steel men, or bankers, or brokers, who, of an evening, as they struggle from their offices back to their solace of losing certain dollars at bridge, now that it is too cold for golf, drop in to loaf around for half an hour in the art museum. And when I meet them later in the day at what our nation enthusiastically misnames a "tea party," I see our catalogues sticking out of their jacket pockets. They are coming to realize that oil out of a pipe, or steel, is not the

end of life, but the beginning; that material things to be of any consequence at all have to be transmuted by that vague mist some German poet called the joy of living; the essence of which lies in not peeking through the blinds at other folks' enthusiasms, but in going on an enthusiastic rampage of their own.

Now, you have a very splendid centre here in your art gallery for all that I am pleading for. How can you use it? I hope you are going to make it a melting pot for art and for your workaday affairs.

You know the story about Barrett playing the ghost who tries to make Hamlet swear to avenge his father in the first act, and also being Booth's business manager. And while his partner and fellow Thespian was ranting around on the stage above, Barrett was standing on the cellar below talking to the treasurer of the theatre in a conversation that went something like this:*

"Yes, if we raise the first ten rows in the orchestra from $1.25 to

SWEAR

$1.75, I think

SWEAR

that we could cut down the

SWEAR

gallery seats to 25 cents, and so

SWEAR

increase the capacity of the house to

SWEAR."

There is the combination we need, the state of mind necessary between our business men and our art. You have a fine museum there, and you are not going to do anything until you relate it to the community about you. You cannot set it aside as a place for a number of enthusiastic specialists. You cannot feel that an art museum is an exclusive place that is going to be kept for a whole lot of people trying to answer that amorphous question. "When is a Rembrandt not a Rembrandt?" The edifying and modish reply being, "Nine times out of ten."

*Cf. Hamlet, Act I. Sc.v.

Such laborers as these perform but a humble means toward a thrilling end. They are as necessary a part of the unit we call a museum as the latest form of bricks in the wall. But when they become the ultimate reason for a museum's existence they inevitably produce a result as inspiring as a cold storage plant where art may be kept for ever until as devoid of taste as frozen fish.

Art is not a thing apart, a superimposed form of highbrow entertainment taken "skin, bones and hymnbook too" from groups of artists, or bands of -ism hunters, who live between rows of gilt framed pictures in marble halls, intimately connected with erudition and a backache, and the impressive but depressing atmosphere of a hotel lobby at three in the morning. Let us cease to regard a museum as a mausoleum run by a Director in the shape of a tepid hot water bottle, where only latter day art Pharisees may contemplate their exclusive dead, dwelling in mournful self-satisfaction on the theory of dynamic symmetry in composition, in an atmosphere as exhilarating as an experimental hothouse.

Let us first think of a museum as a place for the public not to study art, but to enjoy art; just as to the layman a garden is the place not to study flowers, but to enjoy flowers. For an art gallery is like a garden in that it is the fragrant elusiveness of what it contains that makes it intriguing, and not in one case the fact that a certain flower belongs to some order of botanical cuss-word, or, in the other, a certain primitive to the school of Ghirlandaio.

Now, with that spirit, you can reach out here and give your people a little lead, and you will find they will follow you with all the enthusiasm in the world. The Metropolitan Museum in New York has undertaken it. The crowds come in there thick and absorb the things and then, if we want to, they can go on and become specialists. All we have to do is to enjoy it and be natural, even if we are ridiculous.

In a word, you have got a splendid foundation here in Toronto. But the growth of your gallery will be of the slowest and its value practically *nil* without the enthusiasm of such important persons as you here today, who may be instrumental in seeing to it that your art gallery is more

than an old-fashioned tomb of riches of the past, that it offers a guide to the beauty of the world, and offers it with cordiality and hospitality.

In a word, I am pleading for an enthusiastic soul that will see to it that this land which is so full of character and raw beauty, is enjoyed visually to its entire extent, and if it will just open our souls up to perhaps 102 per cent., we wont mind. There is a great future ahead that is in the hands of you men and the artists, just as all through the ages, and neither of you are going to get much pleasure by yourself. But if you two will unite, easily and gradually, when the vast alembic has fused all its ideals and aspirations into one glowing whole, then we will be in a position to accomplish something far beyond the dreams of the past.