

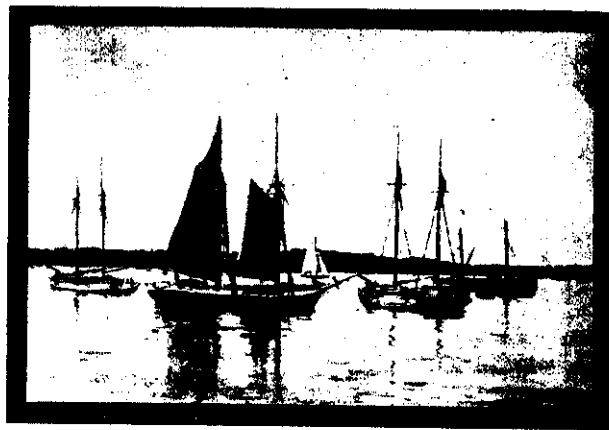
The Progressive Art Movement

An Appreciation of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition

(Contributed by "Palette.")

THE part played by art in the intellectual development of the civilised race of the world is so generally recognised that it is almost unnecessary to refer to its importance; yet in considering a movement which has for its object the raising of the artistic standard and the dissemination of the truths of art, we must give grave thought to the larger issues. Through all the ages the intellectual has been the scale by which the great nations have been measured. The people that is without art is a people without

a national soul. In order that the national soul may be kept living and healthy, it is necessary to stimulate it, to keep it in activity, restless, unsatisfied, with strong vivid-coloured appeals to the imagination, sharp commands to the hand, vigorous, electrical, and like a cold shower, reason, calm, four-square and logical, to the brain. Thus does patriotism become a living fire, loyalty a religion, industry a progression of delight, home-life and love and charity a daily rejuvenance, thought a great world-making power,



SKETCH IN AUCKLAND HARBOUR (WATER COLOUR), BY A. W. WALSH.

working ever to sublime ends.

The virility of a movement or the enthusiasm of its supporters is not always a guarantee of its right direction.

Too often ability is misapplied and energy wasted. Too often the worker in a cause are unaware of the public effect of their labours. To them, wrapped in their devotion, the unnecessary appears necessary, and it is with weariness and bitterness of heart that they wake at last to the futility of their efforts. Considering, therefore, the Arts and Crafts movement from the most critical viewpoint, it is with gratifying pleasure that we can give it our hearty approbation, and welcome it as one of the most urgently needed public awakenings among the many wants of our community to-day.

Probably never before in the history of the civilised world has there been a greater necessity for a strong safeguarding of the true principles of art. The modern wide dissemination of general knowledge, the easy access of letters, the many inventions of contrivances for cheap production, have brought within reach of the masses, not only the possible acquisition of decoration and ornament, but also the desire for it. That which, half a century ago, was the privilege of a few, has now become the right of the many. What, therefore, half a century ago, could be done privately to keep the taste of art patrons on a high level, must now be done publicly, broadly, and with a sure abandonment of conservatism. In order that the public taste may be saved from vulgarity, and that the refinement and right sense shall become a national characteristic of our people, it will be necessary to cast off the shackles of the past, and to some extent revolutionise our art educational systems from the primary classes upwards. Truth and beauty must be introduced into the common articles of everyday life, and we may rest assured that if we succeed in getting art into the homes of the people, a generation will find it firmly established in their hearts also.

In all efforts for the public welfare organisation is necessary. Auckland is therefore to be congratulated on the institution of another virile and well ordered movement in the Auckland Arts and Crafts Club, the activities of which have already claimed some public attention, and are now demonstrated in the Club's first annual (public) exhibition, which constitutes a comprehensive and generally excellent art exhibition.

The Club claims to represent the progressive art movement in Auckland, and it must be encouraging to the members to know that the new organisation has made such rapid progress that in less than a year its active membership has reached over 100, and it has placed before the public such a fine collection of work.

Immediately on entering the gallery the visitor is impressed with the innovation in the scheme of hanging. The unsightly, green-painted, vertical-lined walls are completely disguised with scrim, relieved with green bows and streamers of a light material. The effect is decidedly artistic, pleasing and restful. The principle of wedding out, which has evidently been strictly applied, though probably causing some distress to those whose work is rejected, must ultimately tend to good for all concerned, and the club is to be congratulated on the firm stand it has taken in this matter.



OTIRA GORGE, BY VAN DER VELDEN.