

The Art Institute of Chicago

The Potter Palmer Collection of Paintings

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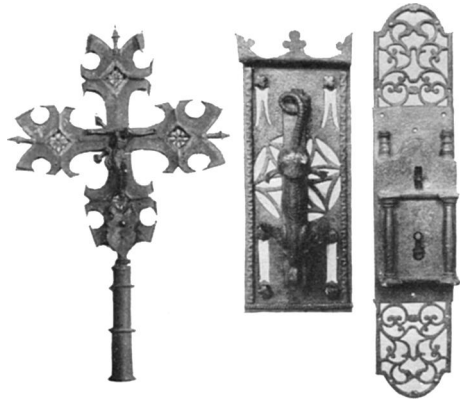
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ecclesiastical processional crosses. One large cross, illustrated above, is made of the usual superimposed thin sheets of metal, the arms and head of the cross pierced into a quatrefoil and the extremities terminating in foliated scrolls.

In the fashioning of knockers the smiths went to nature for inspiration, using birds, lizards, and various animals for the hammer. The back-plates were either simple bosses to which the hammer was fastened, or they were elaborated with pierced work of intricate patterning. The strikers as a rule were simple, but well shaped, enlarged nail heads. The locks are varied in shape and kind for chests, *rejas*, and doorways. One example, a bolt lock for a grille, has a raised lock box on a cruciform back-plate of pierced work of scroll and fleur-de-lys design, inscribed with a naive statement that Thomas dedicated this lock to the church in 1699. B. B.

ORIENTAL ART IN THE LOAN COLLECTION

The installation in Gallery 4 of the Oriental material of this loan makes possible an interesting continuation of the Chinese art shown in Gallery 5. The new loan is composed of Chinese paintings, jade, lacquer screens, Persian rugs, and a Polonaise rug. The Polonaise rug is delicate and lovely in every detail. Its silken pile and silver threaded pattern sparkle like a gem, as it lies on the floor in Gallery 4 in front of a large imperial Chinese screen. A so-called Ispahan, Herat type, is shown on the opposite side of the screen, and two Kouba rugs are shown with the European objects. The Chinese jades in the cases on the east and west walls are examples that date as early as the first Christian era and as late as the Sung Dynasty (960-1280 A. D.). Of the Chinese paintings the two notable ones are the "portraits in red," fine examples of the early Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 A. D.). M.



GOthic AND RENAISSANCE IRONWORK
IN THE ANONYMOUS LOAN COLLECTION

THE POTTER PALMER COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS

THE Potter Palmer Collection of Paintings, presented to the Art Institute by Mrs. Bertha Honore Palmer, Honore Palmer, and Potter Palmer, Jr., is now being permanently installed in Galleries 25 and 26.

The collection contains fifty-one French paintings of remarkable distinction, including Puvis de Chavannes' "Sacred Grove," (the study for his decoration for the Palais des Arts at Lyons), Renoir's "In the circus," Corot's "Orpheus saluting the light," Millet's "Rail splitter," and works by Cazin, Delacroix, Daubigny, Troyon, Besnard, Degas, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, Dagnan-Bouveret, Diaz, Raffaelli; also canvases by Whistler, Eastman Johnson, Mary Cassatt, and Zorn. The complete list is given on page 47.

The relationship between French and American art has been most intimate from the time when Inness and William Morris Hunt felt a sympathetic affinity with the Barbizon men. The evolution of art in America is unintelligible without an understanding of the artistic achievements of the older nation. For this reason as well as for its own high intrinsic worth, French art holds a place



IN THE CIRCUS—PAINTING BY RENOIR
IN POTTER PALMER COLLECTION

of great importance in the American art museum. The Art Institute of Chicago through its many gifts and loans of French paintings now affords admirable opportunities for knowing at first hand the versatility of French painting of the nineteenth century and the richness of its contribution to art. Enough time has now elapsed since the acquisition of French paintings was the fashion for opinions and valuations to become crystallized and for each painter to be recognized for his real worth. Cazin and Dagnan-Bouveret, for example, were more in favor than were Monet and the impressionists at the time the Potter Palmers were making their collection, but the tonalists were afterward neglected when the impressionists came into their own. Now, the spiritual qualities in the work of these two painters are recognized, and even though their goal was different from that of the impressionists, they have taken their place among the French immortals.

Considering the Potter Palmer Collection in the light of the other French collections at the Institute, it is particularly valuable for its impressionist group. As the Potter Palmers acquired their canvases by the impressionist painters when this group was still unpopular, they had the opportunity of securing some unusually fine works. Of particular interest are the early examples, which reveal less familiar aspects of the genius of the impressionists. Among these is Manet's "La sortie du port de Boulogne," which was painted about 1868, and Monet's "Argenteuil," dated 1868. These were done at the time that the famous group known as the Ecole des Batignolles were just beginning to paint out-of-doors and used to meet in the Café Guerbois to discuss the subject. Whistler's "Gray and silver; Battersea Beach, 1863" proves the close connection of this painter with the French school in his early period. Courbet and Manet were unmistakably his models here. Manet's race course picture parallels Degas in subject matter and technique; Monet's "Argenteuil" is like a Manet; and Renoir's marine is quite Monetesque.

Space does not permit at present of an exhaustive discussion of the collection. In addition to the impressionist group, the romanticists and the Barbizon men, who represented the high water mark of painting in the early part of the century, are to be studied here from superb examples, as well as the men at the end of the century, such as Cazin, Besnard, and Puvis de Chavannes who may be considered the precursors of twentieth century ideas.

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

ON April 15 was opened the Second International Exhibition of Water Colors. The display includes 376 paintings by artists from thirteen different nations, the works of each nation being grouped to-