

The Art Institute of Chicago

Potter Palmer and the Painting Department

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POTTER PALMER AND THE PAINTING DEPARTMENT

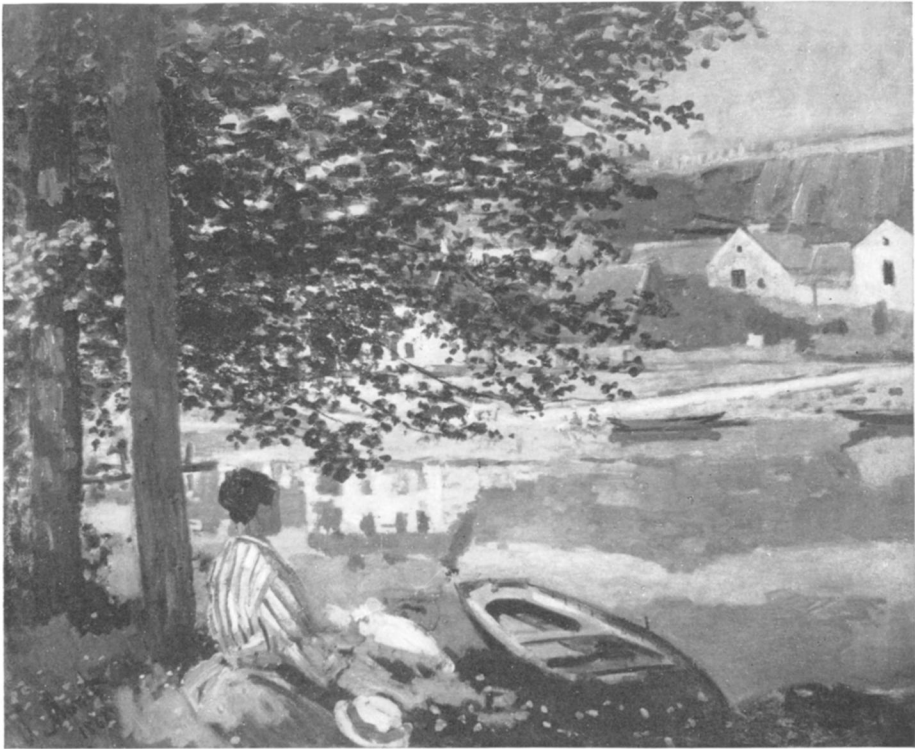
IT IS quite natural that Mr. Palmer should have had excellent taste and judgment in the field of art, for his parents were among Chicago's most notable collectors. As the first Americans to buy French Impressionist paintings, they began in the eighties to gather the Renoirs and Monets which later became the nucleus of the Art Institute's great sequence of French nineteenth century painting. Potter Palmer and his brother, Honoré Palmer, made a joint gift in 1922 of thirty-two paintings from their parents' collection. This magnificent gift included Renoir's *Two Little Circus Girls*, *Canoists' Lunch*, and *The Wave*; Pissarro's *Woman at the Well* and *Café au Lait*; Sisley's *A Street in Moret*; Degas' *On the Stage*; Manet's *Racecourse*; and seven important canvasses by Monet.

Of these the superb *Argenteuil* is reproduced. A gift of such importance as this placed the Art Institute in the lead among American museums in French Impressionist and late nineteenth century painting.

Potter Palmer's interests extended over an even wider field than had attracted his parents. On one of his numerous trips to Europe he purchased a mid-fifteenth century Italian marble tabernacle which came from the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. This he later gave the Institute.

In his attitude toward the Institute's exhibition policy he was always sound but progressive, believing that all contemporary forms of artistic expression should be shown as long as there is also emphasis on the work of the past.

FREDERICK A. SWEET



ARGENTEUIL-SUR-SEINE, PAINTING BY CLAUDE MONET, FRENCH (1840-1926). GIFT OF HONORÉ AND POTTER PALMER.