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city galleries. In addition to this, the American Federation of Arts has secured typewritten, authoritative lectures on Fine Arts subjects, profusely illustrated by stereopticon slides, which it has been able to lend to small towns where lecturers could not be obtained. It has, furthermore, served as a general bureau of information directing inquiries to the right source for response and bringing into closer relationship kindred organizations, besides establishing this magazine for the purpose of diffusing valuable information. The work of the American Federation of Arts is scarcely begun—the gateway to its opportunities is but just open. It occupies a field heretofore vacant. Through traveling exhibitions, a lecture bureau, its publications, and its standing committees, it can perform service of incalculable value to the people of the nation, and to the nation as a whole. We are a commercial people and we are living in a commercial age, and our hope of salvation lies in the cultivation of the higher senses. It is no exaggeration to say that the appreciation of beauty is a safeguard to citizenship. The man who has within himself the power of enjoyment which this gives is enviably rich. It is this power alone which prevents discontent and its attendant evils. To reach the people a national organization is essential and one composed not alone of professional artists but artists and laymen. This requirement the American Federation of Arts fulfills.

### THE NATIONAL GALLERY

It is strange how difficult it is for many persons to grasp the national idea—to look beyond the narrow confines of localism. Sometimes one is prone to wonder whether the English phrase "The States" is not nearer the popular conception than the more correct appellation. But it is, perhaps, the city wall that is most confining. This is to a great extent the stumbling block in the way of the rapid development of the National Gallery. It belongs not to

Washington, but to all the cities and all the States, therefore it has but lukewarm support. It can wait for appropriations from Congress while those who clamor are satisfied. Who clamors for the National Gallery? None save, perhaps, those who feel the weight of personal or official responsibility. A good beginning has been made; it will grow—"all things come to those who wait"—but meantime what a waste of opportunity! Since the National Gallery collection was put on view in the New National Museum in March it has been visited on an average by more than five hundreds persons a day, the majority of whom are tourists. These people come to Washington from all parts of the country and carry back with them definite impressions. A collection of art such as might be assembled by the Nation would be bound to exert a beneficial effect in the formation of taste, the establishment of small, worthy, provincial galleries. All credit is due those in authority who have made the utmost of the facilities afforded and opened to the people the collections donated by public-spirited citizens, setting them forth to the best advantage. But one cannot build without support. The National Gallery cannot indefinitely remain a matter of private beneficence. We are no longer an infant nation. Among the progressive nations of the world we stand foremost and yet as centuries pass we are in danger of being forgotten. "There are but two things that are permanent," said Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler once, "and these are art and ideas." We are spending lavishly—we are buying in regal fashion—but we are passing with utter disregard that thing which is priceless and which is lasting when secured. This is not the fault of the legislators, but of the people at large.

### THE COST OF ART

There was something horrifying in the enormous prices paid for paintings at the Yerkes sale a few weeks ago in New York. If money is a test of art appreciation one should perhaps witness this

ascendance of value with great complaisance, but is it? When many thousand dollars are paid for a single canvas is it because it is a great work of art, or because it is property? Are the values which now obtain true values or false? Are men beginning to speculate in art as in other marketable material? And, if so, with what result? That fabulous sums will be tied up in such possessions and that Museums will not be able to compete with the private speculator. All will admit that genius cannot be overpaid, and that rarity is ample excuse for costliness, but when pictures can be so cleverly and successfully "faked" that experts cannot establish the deception, is the claim sustained? Furthermore, it is not often genius that profits. The painters of the pictures that bring the highest prices are long since dead and those to whom the profits accrue have merely acted as merchants. It is not a question, as some one has said, of trying to explain to the farmer why his cow is worth only forty dollars and a cow painted by Troyon is worth forty thousand but rather of establishing a standard of true value. If art is to flourish in our day and generation its patrons must be art lovers as well as art buyers. Perchance they are.

## NOTES

**CITY PLANNING CONFERENCE** The Second National Conference on City Planning and the Problems of Congestion was held in Rochester, May 2d-4th. There was an attendance of about eighty out-of-town delegates, representing by their membership every national society engaged in promoting any phase of city planning work. It was notable, too, that every man present commanded interest for work that he had himself done, or was doing. The newspapers referred to the gathering as a congress of "experts," and it was that to rather an unusual degree. To exceptional degree, it was, also, a Conference and not a convention. The relatively small number of delegates and their personnel made discussion easy and infor-

mal. Practically every paper read was followed by a few minutes of terse and enlightening general discussion—which proved, as is always the case, the most valuable part of the Conference. The papers had been prepared with much care, but no ambiguous statement, no exaggeration of facts, no half truth, passed unchallenged. There was an hour's good-natured discussion of the meaning of the one word "congestion," and at the end admission that no definition had been framed which was entirely satisfactory. Among those present were architects, such as Grosvenor Atterbury and John M. Carrère; landscape architects, such as Frederick Law Olmsted and John Nolen; Mayors, such as those of Hartford and of Omaha; engineers, such as George S. Webster, chief of the Bureau of Surveys in Philadelphia; Nelson P. Lewis, of the Board of Estimate, New York; and Major Shirley, chief engineer of the Topographical Survey in Baltimore; secretaries of organizations, such as E. T. Hartman, of the Massachusetts Civic League; Richard B. Watrous, of the American Civic Association, George E. Hooker, of the City Club, Chicago; social workers, such as Benjamin C. Marsh, Lawrence Veiller, and John M. Glenn; park enthusiasts, such as Andrew W. Crawford, of Philadelphia, and Henry A. Barker, of Providence; men who have made for themselves individual rôles, such as Hon. Frederick C. Howe, of Cleveland, J. Horace McFarland, of Harrisburg; Professor Leslie W. Miller, of Philadelphia. All of these men were heard from, either by formal paper or in the discussion. The program was long, full, and interesting, though confined to three main topics, or aspects, of the subject.

As the Conference opened with an evening session, the hours of the first day, during which the delegates were arriving, were given up to entertainment. An automobile ride about town in the morning was followed by a luncheon given by the Rochester hosts, and in the afternoon a local member of the executive committee of the Conference received the guests in his home. The fea-