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Description: G.W. Hinckley letter on art donation

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A Philanthropic and Educational Work For Needy Boys And Girls

October 11th., 1918

Miss Mildred G. Burrage, Kennebunkport, Maine.

My dear Miss Burrage:-

I wrote you at some length yesterday, because your beautiful contribution to our art collection had arrived and I had received no letter. Mail matter travels so much faster than express in these days, that I imagined that you had sent this picture and did not intend to write until you had heard from me. I thank you most heartily for this gift. Since it arrived it has been in the west end of the staff room, where I can see it from where I sit at my desk in my private office, and it half bewitches me. I find myself spending a good deal of time with my eyes now on the "Roundel," and now on "The Maine Coast."

Your suggestion that the poor pictures be kept in the museum and the best ones distributed on the walls of the cottages shows me in an instant that you and I hold different theories in such a matter. It is true that the little dungeon in the basement of the Library building is not a very good place for pictures, or to study them and enjoy them. But the whole situation is an appeal, and I am confident that there is something better ahead for us.

Is it possible for us to place the choicest and best things in such relation that they become commonplace for us and lose what ought to be their chief value?

When the Charles E. Moody Building, in which our first paintings were located, was dedicated, Capt. John R. Kelley, the Executor, was present. He expressed himself as pleased-- more than pleased-- with what had been done with the money given for the building, and the dedicatory exercises, with a single exception. He then called attention to the fact that I had placed the life size portrait of Charles E. Moody, painted by Darius Cobb, of Boston in a room with two or three other paintings, instead of in the school room where it would be constantly before the scholars. He thought it ought to be where it could be seen all the while, and by everybody in the building. I took the ground that I wanted it to be of more value and have a larger in-Letters pertaining to the work should be sent to G. W. Hinckley, Supervisor, Hinckley, Maine. Checks and money orders should be made to G. W. Hinckley, Supervisor.

Miss M. G. B. # 2.

fluence than it would if it were so placed; that it was quite possible for such an object to come to be regarded simply as a part of the room of the building, and mean little more than a black-board or a clock by the young people who would come to associate it with the school room and indispensable from it.

He was very emphatic in his expressions of disapproval. About three months later however, he wrote me that he had chenged his attitude entirely, and felt that I was entirely right in placing the portrait where it would be occasionally seen and thereforestudied.

I have the same feeling about the best things in art at good Will. I think that we should have good pictures on the walls, and that each home should be made as attractive and beautiful as possible. We have two or three fairly good oil paintings in the Redington-Gilman; we have some very fine steel engravings of some of Landseer's best work in the Guilford Cottage etc.

But is it true that we are enjoying the present gorgeous aspects of nature more because we do not see them every day of the twelve months in the year? Would we appreciate the daylight as much if it were not a part of the time shut off from our vision by the night? Would moonlit evenings and gorgeous sunsets be worth as much to us if they were inseparable from every day in the year? Would we enjoy our food as much if we nibbled a little all through the day as we do when we sit down to a well spread table and partake of the best that is put before us and then turn away from it until another convenient hour?

I have not visited the Childrens' Art Museum in Boston which you mention, but I read about it's beginning with great interest, because, as I understand it, it is along the very limes for which I have cherished plans for twenty-five years; and it is my purpose to visit it when the first opportunity offers.

It may interest you to know, that sonce you were here, we have received a picture from William Ritschel, whom I believe is regarded as one of the most powerful merine painters. I have also been notified that Konti, the sculptor, whose work attracted so much attention in the Dewey Arch in New York City and at the Buffalo exposition and in various art exhibitions has ordered his bronze group entitled "Solace" which has been on exhibition some time in Cleveland, Ohio, shipped to Good Will Farm. I was notified of this about two weeks ago, and am expecting this additional work of art to arrive at any time.

We have no Influenza here yet and are taking every precaution to defend ourselves.

With greetings to the family, I remain,

Miss M. G. B. #2.

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With greetings to the family, I remain, Sincerely Yours, G. W. Hinckley