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house at Loughborough Junction called the William Tell!

The *New Age* (20th May) publishes the following appreciation of—

**Ferdinand Hodler (1853—1918).**

who will interest a good many of our readers:—

The International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers deserves the thanks of all art students for including paintings by Hodler in its recent exhibition at Burlington House.

Although every year a large number of people go to Switzerland from this country, Swiss art is practically unknown here. It repays study, however, and the giant among its modern exponents is Hodler. His teacher was Barthelemy Menn (1815—1893), the simple poetry of whose own landscapes is pleasant, though they have little more Swiss feeling than those of Diday or Calame. The early paintings of Menn's pupil show how good a grounding the latter received, and his individual strength appears in "The Student" (1874), and develops, through such paintings as the full-length of a Bernese girl (1880), "The New Rütli" (1887), and, of the same year, "Weary of Living" and "Old Man," which foreshadow the groups of old men, "Life Weary" (1892), and "Eurythmic" (1895), towards the composition "The Night" (1890), now in the Kunst-Museum, Berne. Adding to the last, "The Day" (1900) and the two paintings entitled "Love" (1908), we have four works together representing an outstanding achievement of modern art. The relation of the figures in "The Night" and "Love" (two couples) has an originality of balance which sets these pictures apart from "The Day," a design of five figures in a semi-circle, the stylisation of gesture of which is less satisfactory than the naturalism of form in the others. "The Night" I consider Hodler's masterpiece, for in it deep emotional comprehension is expressed in a forceful and simple way, chiefly by means of emphatic design. If these paintings stood alone they would give Hodler a proud position; but they are supported by a variety of landscape, portrait and other figure subjects, which strengthen it.

The landscapes, which gained in expressiveness as the artist grew older, are notable for combination of structure and atmosphere, and it is interesting to compare them with the landscapes of Cézanne, which often give the impression of an experiment just fallen short of success. Hodler had more confidence. His portraiture of men shows this, too. How few modern portraits does one remember! But those of "G. Navazza" (1916), "The Author Martin" (1916), and some of the artist himself, gave themselves on the memory.

It remains to mention such historical compositions as "The Retreat of Marignano" (Zurich) and "The Departure of the Volunteers" (Jena University), which, though containing less emotional appeal, mark a stage in the development of mural decoration.

The serenity of the Swiss spirit, born of the land, the people, and their history, which informs the productions of Bieler (whose wall-paintings of harvest scenes in the Musée Jenisch at Vevey are too little known), Bille, Buri, Dallèves, Segantini, Vallet (an excellent example of whose work was shown at Burlington House), and, to a somewhat less extent the work of the gifted Cuno Amlet, is experienced differently in the art of Hodler. The latter frankly reveals the roughness of the way to the summit. He explores the depths of the spirit, weary but never deflected from the pursuit of truth. Triumphant he uses as his symbol the human form, and, from the infinite variety of its attitudes, its movements and its expressions, he produces a harmony which is an echo of healthy life itself. His accent is masculine but not brutal, bitter at times but not cynical. His chief faults seem to me to be an inclination towards stridency of colour and, in drawing the figure, towards starkness of accent. Also one is irritated at times by a stressing of local peculiarities of woman's coiffure in his allegorical groups.

Hodler not only stands out in modern Swiss art, but he is a European artist who may be named with the Southern Slav, Mestrovic, and the Finn, Gallén. Deeply inspired as each has been by his native land, it is the universal appeal of his deeply-felt art that, in each case, compels attention and sweeps all narrow boundaries aside. Such a sculptured group as "Two Mourning Widows" by Mestrovic and such paintings as "Lemminkäinen äiti" (mother and dead son) by Gallén and "The Night" by Hodler are not, to anyone with the smallest amount of imaginative sympathy, esoteric things. Through them human beings speak to one another.

No less interesting, although from quite a different point of view, is the following from *Nature* (15th May) on—

**The Swiss National Park.**

Prof. Carl Schroeter of Zurich delivered the fourth Hooker lecture at the Linnean Society on April 15th on "The Swiss National Park." The movement for Nature protection is very

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strong in Switzerland, and civil law permits even expropriation in the interest of natural and historical monuments. The formation of the League for the Protection of Nature (Naturschutzbund) has made the matter a national one: it has about 30,000 members, who pay an annual subscription of 2 francs, or 50 francs for life membership. The League has been instrumental in many ways, but the most effective measure is the creation of the Swiss National Park, which occupies about 54 square miles in the Lower Engadine. Here shooting, fishing, manuring, grazing, mowing and wood-cutting are entirely prohibited. No flower or twig may be gathered, no animal killed, no stone removed, and even fallen trees must remain undisturbed. There are no hotels, only simple Alpine shelter huts, and camping and the lighting of fires is not allowed. The aim is to exclude the effect of human interference so far as possible: scenery, plants and animals are absolutely protected.

The Park is controlled by five trustees nominated by the Government, which pays the rent (up to 30,000 francs per annum). The League pays the incidental expenses (e.g., there are four resident keepers) and for scientific research which is organised by the Swiss Society for the Advancement of Science.

The size of the Park and its physiography allow of Nature equilibrium. The mean elevation is high; the snow-line consequently reaches so much as 3,000 metres; the tree-limit 2,200 metres. It is well wooded with extensive forests of the erect mountain pine (*Pinus montana* var. *arborea*) and *Pinus Cembra*; mixed woods of spruce and larch, an endemic variety of Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris* var. *engadinensis*), and extensive areas of creeping mountain pine (*Pinus montana* var. *prostrata*). The herbaceous flora is rich and varied, the different geological strata allowing of both calcicole and calcifuge plants; the division between the floras of the western and the eastern Alps passes through the Park, many of the Swiss eastern species occurring only here. Animal life is abundant—chamois, marmots, deer, roes, foxes, mountain- and heath-cocks, golden eagle, etc.

After ten years of reservation the favourable effect is clearly visible: the flora of the now abandoned pastures has developed abundantly. The number of animals has much increased. From 1918 to 1925 deer has increased from 12 to 90; roe from 60 to 190; chamois from 1000 to 1250; mountain cock from 10 to 60; heath-cock from 40 to 190; ptarmigan from 120 to 310; and golden eagle from 15 to 40. The preservation of certain beasts of prey is requisite as a hygienic measure, as they kill sick animals first.

The last bear was killed in the Park in 1904. The ibex disappeared from Switzerland in 1809, but an effort is being made to reintroduce it from colonies at St. Gallen and Interlaken, which have arisen from young animals smuggled from the valley of Aosti.

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