

1900

Khnopff, Fernand, "François Maréchal, a Liège Etcher," *The Studio*, 20, 88 (July, 1900), 102-107.

François Maréchal, A Liège Etcher. By Fernand Khnopff.

In the year 1893 I saw in the album of the Brussels Society of Aquafortists a number of panoramic views of Liège, signed "F. Maréchal." I was struck at the time by their skilful composition, their somewhat rough but solid touch, and by their air of truthfulness and sincerity. Since then I had come across nothing bearing the same signature, until in the studio of M. Rassenfosse I saw it again on an extraordinarily varied series of etchings, representing "bits" and types from the outlying suburbs, and numerous night scenes on the quays, with the trembling lights reflected in the waters of the Meuse. To a sense of admiration for the works themselves was added a strong desire to see their author.

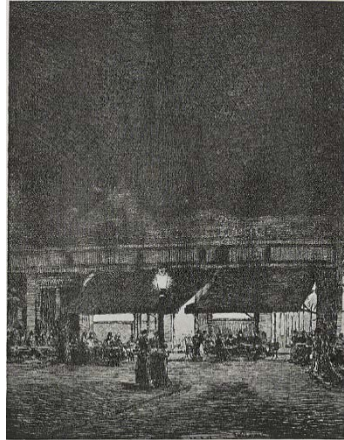


An Old Walk, Suburb of Liège. From an Etching by F. Maréchal

Shortly afterwards I was accordingly introduced to him, and found myself in the presence of a man, still young, of very interesting appearance, small, spare and wiry, with short thin features, bright and piercing glance, and the full forehead of a man of strong will and concentrative power—in a word, a native of the Ardennes. A modest room in a simple inn, commanding a view of the broad river and the town, served as his studio, which, by way of furniture, boasted nothing beyond a couple of seats, a large press, bottles and phials of every sort of shape, a fine grey cat, and notably a rich and splendid collection of butterflies, carefully pinned inside their glass-lidded boxes, and, in their superb, intact condition, glistening like so many marvellous gems. I hastened to accept the offer made to show me his portfolios, wherein, elaborately classed and numbered, were stored his drawings and engravings. These drawings—mostly from the nude—were serious, complete works, and cruel, so to speak, in their pitiless accuracy; while the engravings, rather heavy in touch at the outset, but growing more refined by

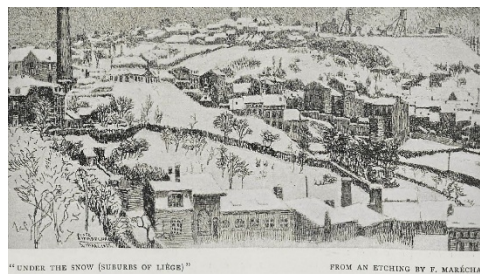
degrees, developed at length extraordinary lightness and flexibility, without any sacrifice, moreover, of the artist's truly scientific precision.

I observed that as the strokes upon the metal became more supple, those on the paper grew more and more hard, to such an extent that some of the drawings had the appearance of those sculptors' designs in which the substance, the "volume," is skilfully suggested, while the contour is rough and awkward. Thus the dominant passion of the engraver was plainly visible in his work, the obstinate striving after the faultless technique he must attain at any price.



"The Liège Boulevards, Evening" From an Etching by F. Maréchal

M. Maréchal first studied oil-painting, regularly attending the classes at the Liège Academy of Fine Arts, and not without success, for he won a prize for an historical subject; he also devoted himself to landscape. In all he did there was evidence of undoubted hard work and a desire to succeed ; but after all it was only experimental, for the "process" he had chosen was not adapted to his vision of things; there was, in fact, a want of harmony between the workmanship and the style. When things were at this stage he began to study engraving with the help and guidance of M. Rassenfosse, whose great talent is equalled only by his generous and fraternal spirit. To the young engraver the new method came as a revelation of himself. Full of enthusiasm he abandoned painting to devote himself wholly to the engraving in which he delighted. His keenness for work, always great, became quite extraordinary. He produced plates literally in heaps, and thus in a short time succeeded in acquiring remarkable sureness of touch.



"Under the Snow (Suburbs of Liège)" from an etching by F. Maréchal

The danger was that this very dexterity—which was only a means to an end—might be regarded by the artist as the ultimate aim of his labour; that he might waste his ability on mere feats of skill. Happily the crisis was of short duration. The period of manual exercise was succeeded by one of intellectual work. He read, and watched and pondered, and then, when face to face with nature, he realised that he was equipped to understand and to depict it.

The works by M. Maréchal, reproduced here, show how he loves - one may almost say adores these varied and interesting regions around Liège, with their long perspectives of tall chimneys, and their old deserted roads, lit only by some antique lamp.



An Old Pathway, Suburb of Liège. From an Etching by F. Maréchal.

A word more to conclude. Maréchal had become accustomed to engrave direct from nature, and the public at first failed to recognise the Liège scenes, naturally reversed in the printing, and refused to buy plates which to their eyes represented nothing! Connoisseurs, however, were not slow to see that, although the faithfulness of the “view” might suffer somewhat thereby, the engraving gained greatly in point of suppleness and life. François Maréchal is to-day in the plenitude of his powers, the possessor of honest original talent, and, I feel sure, will again and again afford us the opportunity of admiring his conscientiousness and his energy.

F. K.

Khnopff, Fernand, "Belgian Pen-Drawings," *The Studio*, special winter number 1900-1901, 176-183.

Belgian Pen-Drawings. By Fernand Khnopff.



CERTAINLY among living Belgian artists, Joseph Middeleer, the Brussels painter, has produced and published the largest number of pen-drawings. He it was who was commissioned by M. Boitte, the publisher, to illustrate the voluminous text of M. Jules Du Jardin's "L'Art Flamand." This work is now completed, and the artist may well be satisfied with his performance. The paintings and drawings, by masters past and present, which he had to reproduce in the course of this undertaking, have been represented by him in clever and skilful fashion, for he has realised their variety, and adapted his manner to the interpretation of the several styles.

WHEN about to start writing "L'Art Flamand," M. Du Jardin, desiring to be furnished with the most authentic "documents," asked the artists, whose life and works he was to examine, to give him "a few notes on their productions to aid him in his labours."

THE most amusing of the replies received was, says the author, "a long and delicious autobiography from Amédée Lynen, the Brussels draughtsman." Lynen is a true Flamand, or rather a true Brabancon, or, better still, a true Bruxellois of a bye-gone age. He loves the old customs of the "*bas de la ville*"—the end of the town—the winding streets, with their lofty gables, and the smoky *cabarets*, where one may meet all those essentially Brusselian types which he depicts in so personal a manner, and with such witty, laughing realism and good humour. It delights him also to illustrate at his leisure the works of his favourite authors, even to the extent of doing the text itself and its accompanying ornamentation. He has still in his possession works by Ch. Decoster, Ch. Deulin, and Emile Verhaeren; and he is continually increasing the number of these precious manuscripts.

"IN the evening—at night—I set myself to draw" (so he wrote to M. Du Jardin) "just what I saw, just what I thought, whether natural or fanciful. An exhibition of these things drew attention to me, and the Press announced with joy the advent of an illustrator in Belgium." Then comes this funny episode:—

"I WAS working on the 'Illustration Nationale,' when one day the manager sent for me. 'I want you,' said he, 'to go to Bruges at once, and do a drawing of the new École

Normale. It must be done quickly, as we have to publish it in the next number: Off I go by the first train, and, jumping into a cab on arriving at Bruges, tell the driver to take me to the new École Normale. After going right across the town the cabman stops, and, pointing to a piece of waste land, remarks: 'That's where they talk about building it.' To cut a long story short, the architect, greatly flattered, was good enough to give me a copy of his plans, which I sent to my friend Louis Titz, who, at my request, did me a perspective sketch of the future building. 'Leave me a corner,' said I, 'so that I can put in a tree!' The manager, on seeing our handiwork, exclaimed: 'At last we have a good drawing! Excellent, M. Lynen! I congratulate you! It's splendid—except the tree! . . .' From that day Titz became an illustrator."



A Study
J. Middeleer

AT the beginning of his career, M. Louis Titz did designs for ornament makers and architects, together with decorative work and scene painting; but since 1885 he has devoted his energies to water-colours and illustrations, of which he knows every process to perfection. His numerous drawings, which have been reproduced in "La Belgique Illustrée," "Bruxelles à Travers les Ages," "Anvers à Travers les Ages," and other big works, are remarkable for their skilful precision, and their sharpness of execution.

THE strong, firm pen-stroke of M. F. Gaillard, a young Brussels painter, recalls that of the early drawings done by Daniel Vierge, the prodigious Spanish draughtsman, for the "Monde Illustré" of Paris. M. Gaillard has illustrated ten volumes for M. Lebègue, the Brussels publisher, about the same number for the firm of Kistemaekers, and has done work for the following papers—"The Graphic," "The Illustrated London News," "Le Patriote Illustré," "L'Illustration Européenne," "Le National Illustré," "De Vlaming," and "Le Petit Bleu."

M. H. MEUNIER, whose posters, reproduced in THE STUDIO, have plainly shown his gift of bold design and effective composition, has drawn for "Le Petit Bleu," of Brussels, an incalculable number of powerful pen sketches, and he has acquired the knack of adapting his style exactly to meet the requirements of artistic reproduction in the daily press. To the "Daily Graphic" he has been a large contributor, and he has designed an ingenious frontispiece for a book by M. A. Vierset—"Vers les Lointains."



The Dreamer
Fernand Khnopff

AMONG other Brussels artists demanding mention are M. Romberg, who has illustrated Mr. R. Walter Harris's volume, "To Tafilet," and has executed many drawings for the "Monde Illustré," "L'Illustration," "L'Univers Illustré," of Paris, and "The Illustrated London News"; MM. Alfred Ronner, and Cesare Dell'Acqua, illustrators of tales and stories; MM. Léon Dardenne, and V. Mignot, whose rapid sketches and amusing caricatures have carried laughter far and wide; the landscapists, MM. Wytsman, Cassiers, and Hamesse; the military painter, Major A. Hubert; M. G. Lemmen, the assiduous searcher after synthetical and definite lines; M. Van Rysselberghe, who in 1895 composed and drew a most artistic calendar for the Brussels firm of Dietrich; M. Hannotiau, who on the margins of choice copies did illustrations for Flaubert's "La Tentation de St. Antoine," Richepin's "La Chanson des Gueux," and Baudelaire's "Les Fleurs du Mal;" V. Rousseau, the sculptor, author of an expressive head of Beethoven, a work of long study, and most curious in execution. Among other sculptors, MM. Van der Stappen, Dillens, and De Rudder; and, finally, the writer of these notes, who has done a design for the Berlin magazine, "Pan," two or three drawings for English journals, and a frontispiece for M. Pol de Mont's book, "Iris."

GHENT boasts two pen artists, widely divergent in style—MM. Armand Heins, and Charles Doudelet. The first named—son of an engraver and brought up in a family of artists—attended the classes at the Academy of Ghent at a very early age, and as far back as 1876, when but twenty years old, he was working on the Paris journal, "L'Illustration." His technical cleverness and his facility for work are extraordinary, as is the number of drawings he has done for Camille Lemonnier's "La Belgique," and for various series of albums representing scenes in the Ardennes, and "bits" of Flemish towns, particularly Ghent, for which he has a filial veneration.

CHARLES DOUDELET is, in the best sense of the word, what is called a "literary" painter. On the occasion of a private display of his works at Antwerp in 1896, he expressed his views in the following terms:—"At all times I have kept myself acquainted with modern literature, and from the very birth of the Young Belgian School, I have been its constant reader, often its admirer. Thus it was that in the course of my reading I came to know the works of Maurice Maeterlinck. At once he captured my whole admiration. I illustrate

his works with conviction, with delight. I experience inconceivable pleasure in getting to understand, in grasping completely, the poet's ideas, in turning them into visible form. Have I succeeded therein? Who shall say? At least one tribute has been paid to my efforts—one which surpasses all other praise, and effaces all the sarcasms with which I have been bespattered. The young writer himself has shown his appreciation of them, My line is essentially 'primitive' in style; nevertheless, it is my own creation. Every detail of these drawings is intended to suggest the idea of the *au-delà*."



Strike in Brussels
H. Meunier

THE Liège draughtsmen, MM. A. Donnay, A. Rassenfosse, and F. Berchmans, were favourably criticised in an article ("Some Liège Artists") which appeared in *THE STUDIO* in 1898, and recently there has been published an appreciation of the works of M. F. Maréchal in the same magazine. Other two artists of Liège should now be mentioned—M. A. de Witte; who has done several quite remarkable pen-drawings, representing Liège types, in a spirit of delicate virtuosity, akin to that of the Hispano-Italian School of Fortuny; and M. L. Moreels, the dainty miniaturist, whose clever drawings are published day by day in the Brussels journal "*La Réforme*."

AT Antwerp we find M. Van Neste, who, it appears, is the official poster-designer of the town, and M. E. Van Offel, an eccentric draughtsman, with an archaic, singular touch and a queer imagination, which recall the mannerisms of Bresdin, the French engraver, whose plates are so curiously described by J. K. Huysmans in "*A rebours*."

A FINAL word, to mention two Parisianised Belgian artists, M. Jan Van Beers, who has drawn several figures for a volume of poetry by G. Rodenbach; and M. Fraipont, to whom we owe a number of pretty pen-sketches.

FERNAND KHNOPFF.



"A Cavalier" By A. Van Neste
(By permission of M. Buschmann)



Workmen at Dinner
F. Gailliard

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 19, 83 (February 1900), 61-63.

Brussels.—The series of winter *Salonnets* at the Cercle Artistique began with a display of paintings by the young Brussels artists, H. Huklenbrok and the late H. Evenepoel. Both received their art training in Paris, in the studio of Gustave Moreau, where they would appear to have learnt nothing beyond the cultivation of rare tones and delicacy of execution; for their realistic interpretation of nature in no way suggests the highly formulated style of the great French realist, but rather reminds one of the manner of certain caricaturists or "characteristics" greatly in vogue in Paris at the moment. M. Evenepoel brought back from Algeria a number of studies—now charming in point of colour (as, for example, his little scene on the quay of Algiers), now full of amusing observation, such as his Arab market scenes and his negro dances. He also exhibited several remarkable portraits, and some curiously coloured etchings. In short, Mr. Evenepoel was a colourist of much power, and an expressive draughtsman, and his unexpected death is an undoubted loss to the Belgian school. M. Huklenbrok sent some studies of light effects from Holland, and a little portrait well and firmly drawn. Altogether the season at the Cercle may be said to have opened satisfactorily with this exhibition.

The Belgian Society of Water-Colourists (of Brussels) worthily celebrated its fortieth anniversary by a very appropriate exhibition at the Musée de Bruxelles. The works were limited in number on this occasion, and the hanging was consequently much more satisfactory than usual. There was a great variety of style—works by Eugène Smits, Uyterschaut, Marcette, and Stacquet mingling with those of the stylists or "intellectuels"—Meunier, X. Mellery, Fernand Khnopff, and Delaunois; and variety is charming in a display of this sort. Among the foreign exhibits must be noted the excellent examples of C. W. Bartlett, G. La Touche, Skarbina, and Clara Montalba—the *Vue de Venise* by the last named being simply exquisite.

An exhibition of about 1,400 photographs, mostly "after" Italian frescoes of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, has been arranged at the Musée du Cinquenaire by the manager, M. van Overloop. An annotated catalogue gives the visitor much interesting information concerning the exhibits.

The Brussels sculptor, J. Lambeaux, has now practically completed his gigantic marble *bas-relief*, which he calls *Les Passions Humaines ou le Calvaire de l'Humanité*. The work in its entirety cannot be criticised yet; but even now one cannot repress a feeling of admiration for the artist's immense and divers labours in this vast undertaking.

R. Janssens, the Brussels painter, has opened an exhibition of his latest productions in the quaint studio built for him by the architect Hankar. He shows us portraits of relatives and friends, church interiors, and particularly several interesting "bits" of that old Brussels which is disappearing little by little, as the transformation of the city proceeds.

Here M. Janssens is at his best, for he excels in suggesting the special characteristics of those antique and placid buildings.



“Le Vieux Logis” by René Janssens

Collectors of posters will probably be glad to learn that a “Belgian Society of Affichophiles” has been started with the object of facilitating the exchange of artistic posters among amateurs. The Director of the Society is M. L. Defize, of Liège, and the Treasurer and Secretary, M.H. Grell, of Antwerp. The official organ of the Society is styled the “Bulletin mensuel des Echangistes réunis et de l’affiche artistique.”

M. F. [sic – E.] Motte, whose large picture (portrait of a family under the protection of St. George and St. Catherine) attracted much notice last year at the Libre Esthétique exhibition and at the Paris Salon, has been appointed Director and Professor of Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts at Mons. A painter of much talent, M. Motte is also a man of considerable force of character, and his influence may be expected to prove of great benefit to those who enjoy the advantage of his instruction and advice.

F.K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 19, 84 (March 1900), 135-136.

BRUSSELS.—Ch. Samuel, the sculptor, opened recently, in the new and most ingeniously arranged studio constructed for him by the architect Van Humbeeck, an exhibition of his latest works. Of these the most important is the model of the Frère-Orban monument, which he was commissioned to execute as the result of a competition. At present all that need be said is that the monument in its general aspect is in conformity with the character of the man whose memory it is destined to preserve. M. Samuel also displayed a large number of graceful statuettes and thoughtfully composed busts, among which the most notable were those of the artist's mother and a group of children.



Group of Children by C. Samuel | Bust by C. Samuel

What Amsterdam did for Rembrandt, Dresden for Cranach, and, more recently, Antwerp for Van Dyck, will shortly be done by Brussels for the Flemish painters from Van Eyck to Bernard Van Orley. This exhibition of their works, which will be held from May to September, is due to the initiative of the young Brussels archaeologist, M. P. Wytsman, who last year published a most interesting book, wherein he drew the attention of our art critics to the existence of a great number of little known Flemish paintings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

M. H. Meunier, the Brussels draughtsman, whose work has more than once been reproduced and critically examined in *THE STUDIO*, has designed a pack of "aesthetic cards," marked by all the reserve and ingenuity characteristic of his well-known decorative compositions.

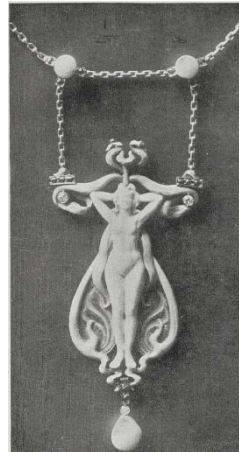
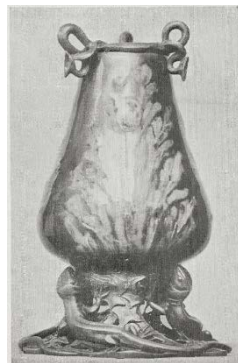
F.K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 19, 85 (April 1900), 196-198.

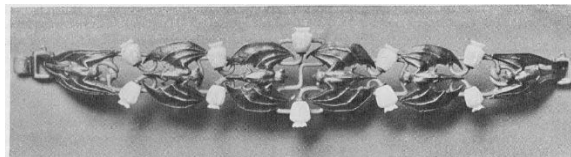
Brussels.—The original idea of a Religious Art Salon, organised by the committee of the "Durendal" literary review, seemed interesting, for we had heard for years past loud protests against the "École de S. Luc," which has long been striving tyrannically to turn religious art in the direction of a clumsy imitation of the Gothic.

Unhappily the exhibition in question showed only too clearly how modern religious art has descended to the deepest depths of hypocrisy, both in feeling and in execution. Nevertheless, this exposure should assist the renovation movement on foot, and it is to be hoped the Abbé Moeller may soon be able to renew his praiseworthy efforts.

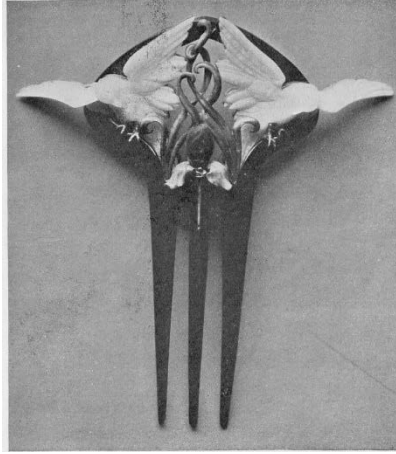
Very justly has it been said of the Salon of the "Cercle pour l'Art," that its chief characteristics are sincerity and seriousness. Here we find no mere "official" daubs, no loud *debuts*, none of the customary works of commerce, triple-varnished and gorgeously framed. Nearly every exhibitor is a true and sincere artist. Among the most notable exhibits are those of M. A. Verhaeren, M. F. Baes, M. Janssens, M. Coppens, M. Hannotaux, M. Ottevaere, M. Laermans, M. Lynen, M. Vandeneeckhondt, and M. Fabry; not forgetting the clever and delicate sculptures of M. V. Rousseau, the embroideries of Mme. de Rudder, and the dainty jewellery of M. O. Wolfers.



Vase by O. Wolfers | Pendant by O. Wolfers



Bracelet by O. Wolfers



Hair-Comb by O. Wolfers

At a meeting held at the Cercle Artistique de Bruxelles, M. Gabriel Mourey lectured recently in clear and characteristic fashion on the art of the great French artist, Puvis de Chavannes, for whom he expressed the utmost admiration.

F.K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 19, 86 (May 1900, 280-282.

BRUSSELS.—Once more the Salon of the "Libre Esthétique," installed in the galleries of the Musée de Bruxelles, has achieved its customary success. The numerous visitors found there the wherewithal to satisfy all tastes in matters artistic, for the work of selection had been carried out in the broadest spirit of eclecticism, and all "tendencies" were represented, from idealism of the most literary type to realism of the most scientific. First of all we must do homage to the last productions of Henry Evenepoel the young Brussels painter, who passed away so sadly in Paris a few months ago just when his talents were beginning to command respect. Before all else he was a painter; he understood our modern life in all its reality, and he has left behind several canvases of great merit, among them being the *Espagnol à Paris*, which has been purchased for the Ghent museum.



Espagnol à Paris by H. Evenepoel

M. J. Delvins [sic- Delvin] contributed several remarkable works which aroused much attention. His bull- fight scenes are full of vigour, bold in drawing and vivid in colour. Spain, too, is the theme chosen by M. Ignacio Zuloaga; but his vision of things is sombre, his colour harsh, and his drawing hard. One of these pictures, the *Portrait du Maire de Rio-Moro et de sa femme*, was exhibited at the last Salon at Ghent, and was purchased by the Government, but refused by the Commission des Musées. M. Zuloaga's big picture, *La Veille de la Course de Taureaux*, is a noble work, and worthily carries on the true traditions of Spanish art.

The large display of jewellery and goldsmith's work by M. Henry Van de Velde is one of the *clous* of the Exhibition. It is impossible at the present moment to analyse this remarkable collection, but later an interesting article might well be written on this artist and his work.

Another attraction is the series of twelve landscapes by M. A. J. Heymans, which are profoundly charming in their poetic sentiment and their delightfully clear colouring. The landscapes of MM. F. [sic] Claus and G. Buysse are equally attractive, by reason of their

sincerity and their freedom of expression. Worthy of special mention also are the precise and thoughtful landscapes of MM. Frédéric and W. MacAdam, and the curious works of M. F. Melchers.

The sculptors are not so well represented as usual this year, but the catalogue contains the well-known names of C. Meunier, P. Dubois, Charpentier, Bourdelle, Dejean, G. Morren, and Mlle. Cornette.

The characteristic drawings of M. Milcendeau and the etchings of Mme. Destrée-Danse and M. Kieuwenkamp are worthy of careful study.

Lastly, mention should be made of the glass-work of H. Powell, the potteries and ceramics of Mme. Schmidt-Pecht; not forgetting the displays by M. Serrurier-Bovy and the Rorstrand porcelain factory. Then we have to note the lithographs in colour by MM. Rhead and Rivière, and the posters designed for the "Libre Esthétique" exhibition by M. Combaz and Mlle. Léo Jo.

F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 20, 87 (June 1900), 59-60.

Brussels.—The arrangement of the Salon of the Société des Beaux Arts of Brussels in the galleries of the Musée is far from equaling that of last year at the Cercle Artistique, and the disposal of the works of art displayed seems to have been made somewhat hurriedly. Moreover the chief interest of the exhibition consists in the works of a few great foreign artists. One is attracted immediately by the delicate charm of Gustave Moreau's *St. Sébastien secouru par Irène*. This picture, of small dimensions, at once rich and refined in colour, and altogether done in the "grand style," is entirely worthy to stand as representative of the superb art of this curious master. Then we have the portrait of *Mrs. Ian Hamilton* by J. S. Sargent, R.A., which, by its supreme grace and cleverness of treatment, quite dominates the Salon. Mr. Sargent's works and gifts have been so recently considered in the pages of *THE STUDIO* that it would be superfluous to enlarge upon them now. The important exhibit by M. Fantin-Latour includes seven works of various sizes and styles. Among them are *La Lecture*, *Siegfried et les filles du Rhin*, *La Déposition de Croix*, and *Vénus et ses amours*, and they all reveal the characteristic manner of this essentially French painter, of whom a critic has remarked: "his Siegfried is a Siegfried such as Racine might have conceived him, a Siegfried with nothing of German about him save his name." One never tires of admiring the simplicity of his style, the ease of his drawing, the sobriety of his tones, or the earnestness of his execution.

The astonishing dexterity of "the Glasgow boys" is marred, perhaps, by an apparent lack of sincerity, and their extreme cleverness in utilizing all the most subtle combinations of paint and glazing is somewhat too evident. The members of the Glasgow school are abundantly represented here. We have, for example, portraits by J. Guthrie, J. Lavery, and Walton; landscapes by Macaulay Stevenson and G. Thomas; flowers by Stuart Park, and animals by G. Pirie.

The bronze bust of *M. W.* by J. de Lalaing is the most remarkable Belgian work in the Salon. The other sculptors have sent simply replicas or unimportant "bits;" moreover, these galleries are ill adapted for sculpture exhibits.

The Belgian paintings displayed are nearly all landscapes, among the contributors being Claus, Courtens, Frédéric, Linden, and Wytsmann. Mention must also be made of a picture by Mdlle. d'Anethan—*Les saintes femmes au tombeau*—and of the clever drawings by Mertens and Gilbert.

M. Pol de Mont, the well-known poet, of Antwerp, has just had published in Vienna a series of studies styled "Études sur quelques artistes belges d'aujourd'hui," the artists concerned being A. Lynen, A. Heins, F. Maréchal, J. Ensor and Fernand Khnopff. These studies are worthy of the reputation won by M. Pol de Mont in his capacity of art critic. They are illustrated by numerous reproductions, executed with extraordinary care by the "Gesellschaft für Vervielfältigende Kunst in Wien," to whom they do full credit.



Pottery-Ware by Schmidt-Pecht

We have pleasure in giving, on page 59, an illustration of some admirable pottery by M. Schmidt-Pecht.

F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 20, 88 (July 1900), 123, 125-126.

BRUSSELS.—Several important works, lately acquired by the Government, have been placed in the Musée Moderne. They consist of the late Alfred Verwée's celebrated painting, *L'Embouchure de l'Escaut*; a large pastel by Fernand Khnopff, entitled *Memories*, representing girls playing tennis; a little picture by Joseph Stevens, *à la Forge*, and a lovely thing by Alfred Stevens—*Fleurs d'Automne*, the gift of M. Ch. Cardon.

The Government has also purchased three judiciously-chosen pictures by the deceased landscapist, Th. Baron, from among his works recently exhibited in the two galleries of the Cercle Artistique. They worthily represent the artist's strong and earnest manner.

This remarkable exhibition was the last of a long series, displayed from week to week at the Cercle. Among the best things to be seen there were the studies by the architect, Van Ysendyck, for the restoration of the Église du Sablon, in Brussels; the decorative sketches by Professor Stallaert (of whom M. Vautier has painted a life-like portrait); the numerous and varied landscapes of MM. Blicck, Matthieu, Gilsoul, Wytzman and Kegeljean; the portraits by MM. Vanaise and Gouweloos; the sculptures by MM. Dillens and De Tombay; the drawings by J. B. Meunier, the engraver; and a new work by G. M. Stevens—*Filles de Rois*—quaint and uncommon in colouring; also several portraits and landscapes from the same hand, seen recently at M. Stevens's exhibition at the Maison d'Art.

The sudden death of the well-known Brussels landscapist, F. Binjé, has been a sad blow to his fellow artists, with whom he was very popular. After his first amateur efforts, M. Binjé soon took a prominent place among our water-colourists, side by side with his friends Stacquet and Uytterschaut. A few years since he began to paint in oils, with marked success. His work is distinguished by delicacy of sentiment and bold colouring.

On page 123 is reproduced a very beautiful picture by P.J. Clays, who died recently, at the age of 83, and whose fame as a painter of calm water and quaint boats is known to everybody who loves art.



Night Effect on the Scheldt, from a painting by P.J. Clays

A monument is to be erected in memory of the animal-painter, Alf. Verwée. It will be executed by the sculptor Ch. Vanderstappen, Director of the Brussels Academy of Fine Arts. The memorial will be composed of white stone and Scotch granite.

F.K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 20, 90 (September 1900), 276-277.

BRUSSELS.—The album published this year by the Brussels Society of Aquafortists is a better production than that of last year. Forty etchings and dry-points were sent in for acceptance and it was only after long deliberation that the judges decided to take the fifteen plates by MM. Elle, Fernand Khnopff, O. Coppens, A. Rassenfosse, A. Heins, Boulenger, H. Meunier, Werleman, Gaillard, Bernier, Cambier, Huygens, Voortman, and Gandy.

The Brussels sculptor, J. de Lalaing, has been commissioned by the Belgian Government and the town of Ostend to do an equestrian statue of King Leopold the First, to be placed at the entrance to the Park. The pedestal will be composed of columns of pink marble, with low-relief work in bronze.

A sale of the works left behind by P. J. Clays, the celebrated marine painter, who died recently at the age of eighty-three, took place a few weeks ago at the Maison d'Art. He was the first seascape painter in Belgium, and indeed in all Europe, to break away from the traditional storms and shipwrecks, whose wild lines and extraordinary colouring had so strong an attraction for his old master, Gudin; the first to set himself to paint quite simply the tranquil aspects of the waters, the life of the quays, in clear tones altogether unlike the dark, bituminous productions of other days. The big galleries of Europe and America contain important works by this artist; but the general public had no knowledge of the interesting collection of studies, freshly-painted from Nature, which covered from top to bottom the walls of his vast studio.

A new association, styled the "Société Nationale des Aquarellistes et Pastellistes de Belgique," has opened its first exhibition in the Musée de Bruxelles. There is a superabundance of work by amateurs striving to imitate the "professional" style in vogue at the moment, and also too much "professional" stuff which we have seen, and seen again, elsewhere. Among the new work—the *inédit*—should be noted that of Mlle. Art and M. Herremans.

F. K.



A Belgian Grenadier by E. Ganz [discussed in next issue – ed.]

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 21, 91 (October 1900), 67-68.

BRUSSELS.—The professional school founded in Brussels by the syndicate of working carvers and jewellers has been exhibiting in the Palais du Midi an interesting collection of the work produced under the instruction of its teachers. It is not exactly a professional school, however, for the students receive technical training in the various *ateliers* in which they are working. "It is," to quote a recent description, "a school of applied art devoted to jewellery, wherein the chief object is to teach the students to compose for themselves, and to develop their fancy and their inventiveness. Apart from the essential composition classes directed by MM. Van Strydonck and Fernand Dubois, there is an historical art class for jewellers' apprentices, under the charge of M. Titz, who strives to imbue his pupils with that general artistic sense which, unfortunately, is lacking in most of our craftsmen."

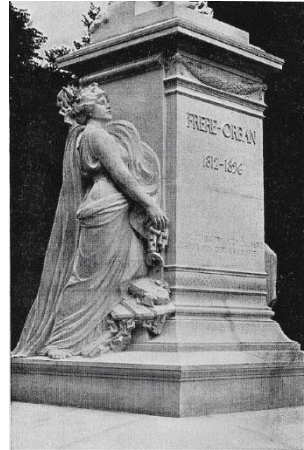
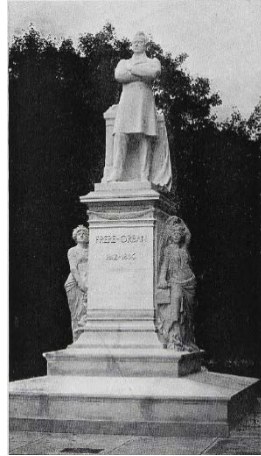
The various jewels and mouldings displayed by the students afford ample evidence of the excellent training available to those who have sufficient imagination and ability to profit thereby.

Mr. F. [sic] Ganz, a young Swiss painter living in Brussels, has just finished a large canvas on which he has been working for three years. It depicts an episode in the Belgian army maneuvers—*Prince Albert's Grenadiers advancing to the Assault of Montaigny*. The studies of the work, reproduced in the September STUDIO, show how careful Mr. Ganz has been to obtain complete accuracy in his picture.

Once more the display by the students of the Bisschoffsheim School has been eminently successful. In the Industrial Art Section, happily revealing manifest evidence of the influence of the professor, M. Crespin, visitors have had the opportunity of admiring a large collection of wall-papers, carpets, glass-work, and embroideries, all treated ingeniously in the most simple and natural fashion. Nothing attracted more attention than the delicately original productions of Mlle. Brandenburg.

M. Cassiers, not content with being one of the most popular of our Brussels water-colourists, determined to take his place as a designer of posters, and has succeeded therein without delay. His recent maritime efforts are truly remarkable—ingenious and "right" in composition, rich and strong in colour, and broadly and firmly drawn.

The Frère-Orban monument, executed by the Brussels sculptor, M. Ch. Samuel, has been erected here in the Place de la Société Civile. The work is quite simple. The characteristics of the eloquent Liberal Minister have been portrayed with the due amplification demanded in monumental work of this sort, and the figures around the pedestal; symbolising the triumph of political and economic liberty, are thoroughly in keeping with the rest, the general effect being admirable.



Monument Frère-Orban by C. Samuel | Detail of the Monument Frère-Orban by C. Samuel

The eighth of a series of International Art Exhibitions will be held at Munich in 1901, under the auspices of the Munich Artists' Club and the Plastic Art Union.

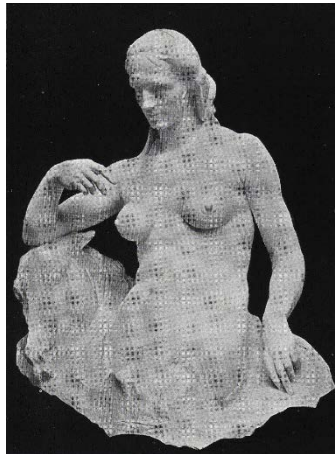
F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 22, 92 (November 1900), 140-142.

Brussels.—The Triennial Brussels Salon is being held on the premises of the "Palais du Cinquantenaire," which, during the summer, have been utilised for the purposes of the Horse Show. Every effort has been made to make the vast hall as ornamental as possible. The sculpture is very well arranged in an imitation garden, but the paintings—especially the few examples of delicate tones—suffer greatly from insufficiency of light. The foreign exhibits are few and unimportant; they include works by MM. Lavery and Clausen, F. Stuck of Munich, Ch. Moll, President of the Vienna Secession, Cottet, La Touche, and Pointelin of Paris, and Bauer, the Dutch engraver.

Moreover, a large number of Belgian artists have abstained from exhibiting, the private displays appearing to be much more attractive than big general exhibitions of this sort. The large display by M. Emile Wauters includes the best piece of painting in the Salon—a portrait of Dr. de Cyon, broadly drawn, warm in tone, and painted with the utmost care and skill.

M. Lévêque, of Brussels, whose *Le Triomphe de la Mort* attracted attention at the last Paris Salon, has sent a varied selection of works, including symbolical triptychs, portraits, and fresco designs, unequal, doubtless, in point of merit, but always revealing a strange and interesting artist, more draughtsman than painter, with a keen decorative sense, and a wonderful eye for form. Some of his things are truly masterly.



"Demeter" by Victor Rousseau

Among the numerous portraits, the oils of MM. H. Evenepoel, Richir, Verheyden, Cluysenaar, Vanaise, and Vautier demand special attention, as do the pastels by Madame la Baronne Lambert and M. Wolles. M. E. Motte contributes a fanciful piece of archaism, very delicately and charmingly treated; M. Frédéric a symbolical peasant scene, very crudely coloured; and M. Ciamberlani a broad and powerful decorative work. M. Courtens sends some solidly painted landscapes, while those displayed by Madame Wytsman and MM. Claus and Van den Eckhoudt are delicious in their clear

colouring. Other things worth noting are M. Janssens' "interiors," M. Marcette's skies, and Mlle. A. Ronner's and M. G. M. Stevens' careful studies of flowers. Finally, one has to deplore the growing tendency of the "young men" of Brussels in the direction of bitumen and "syrups." The work which dominates the entire Salon stands in the centre of the Sculpture Garden—the *Demeter* of Victor Rousseau, a statue of great dignity, nobly conceived and executed. Let us hope it may soon be displayed in marble, to the admiration of all, in the Musée de Bruxelles.

M. Van der Stappen, director of the Brussels Academy of Fine Arts, exhibits thirteen of his productions, which show his great gifts in all their ingenious variety. Among other interesting *morceaux* are eight studies for the *Monument de l'Infinie Bonté*—a large and beautiful conception, which does honour alike to the artist and the man. M. Lambeaux figures in the catalogue with his colossal group, still unfinished; M. C. Meunier sends a new figure of *Christ* in ivory; and mention must also be made of the groups by MM. Charlier and Van Biesbroeck, the busts and medals by J. Dillens and P. Dubois, the double bust by Samuel, the little marble *bas-relief* by Rombaux, and Morren's bronzes.

In the engraving department the most noteworthy things are the productions of MM. Lenain and Danse; while the decorative effect of the lovely old tapestries lent by MM. Empain and Cardon should not be overlooked.

F. K.

1901

Khnopff, Fernand, « Discours prononcé, au nom du Cercle artistique et littéraire (à l'occasion de la mort de Paul Hankar), » *L'Emulation* (Louvain), (Février, 1901), 7.

Discours prononcé au nom du Cercle Artistique et Littéraire

Par M. Fernand Khnopff

Messieurs,

Au nom du Cercle artistique et littéraire de Bruxelles, je viens saluer la dernière présence parmi nous d'un artiste jeune qui disparaît au moment où la Renommée semblait se promettre à lui, et j'ai l'honneur de pouvoir exprimer ici mon admiration et mon respect pour cet homme d'art original et d'honneur essentiel.

D'autres, avec plus d'autorité, viendront apprécier les qualités techniques de Paul Hankar et pourront déterminer dès aujourd'hui la place qu'aura ce courageux artiste dans l'histoire de l'école belge d'architecture. Nous pouvons cependant assurer que cette place sera considérable: car les efforts qu'il avait faits pour réaliser ses chères idées de rénovation et de progrès avaient toujours été réels et dignes de remarque; ils avaient suscité, après les inévitables moqueries des ignorants de la première heure, les études discrètement attentives des intéressés de la deuxième heure. Et souvent déjà ce que l'inventeur avait jugé n'être que d'incomplètes préparations à des recherches plus approfondies avait été offert par d'effrontés copistes comme des créations définitives de leur art nouveau et de leur style moderne. Ils obtinrent ainsi de ces succès que l'on oublie; mais lui, a laissé de ces œuvres qui restent. Dans l'avenir ceux qui étudieront ces œuvres y reconnaitront dès l'abord les qualités de l'artiste original et instruit dont nous admirions le travail quotidien; et bientôt aussi ils comprendront alors l'âme de l'homme droit, honnête et dévoué dont nous avons pu voir l'existence exemplaire—et que nous regretterons toujours profondément.

Adieu, Paul Hankar, cher compagnon d'autrefois,
adieu?

[Hankar died Jan. 1901]



Paul Hankar: Ciamberliani house, rue de Faqz, Brussels, 1897. [recent photograph by ed.]

Khnopff, Fernand, « Discours prononcé, au nom du Cercle artistique et littéraire (à l'occasion de la mort de Paul Hankar), » *L'Emulation* (Louvain), (Février, 1901), 7.

Translation :

Speech given on behalf of the *Cercle artistique et littéraire*

by Mr. Fernand Khnopff

Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Cercle artistique et Littéraire in Brussels, I come to salute the last presence among us of a young artist who disappeared at the moment when fame seemed promised to him, and I have the honour to express here my admiration and my respect for this man of original art and essential honour.

Others, with greater authority, will come to appreciate the technical qualities of Paul Hankar and can determine what place this brave artist will occupy in the history of the Belgian school of architecture. We can, however, be sure that this place will be considerable: since his efforts to realise his treasured ideas for renovation and progress had always been real and worthy of note; they had raised, after the inevitable ridicule of the ignorant of the first hour, the discreetly attentive and interested studies by the second hour. And often that which the inventor had considered no more than incomplete preparations for more profound studies have been offered by of cheeky copyists as definitive creations of their art nouveau and modern style. They thus gained such success that is forgotten; but the works he has left will remain. In the future those who will study these works will recognize at the outset the qualities of the original and educated artist whom we admired in his daily work; and soon they will then understand the soul of the right, honest and dedicated man whose exemplary existence we could see—and that we will always regret deeply.

Farewell, Paul Hankar, dear companion of the past,
farewell?

Khnopff, Fernand, « Discours prononcé, au nom du Cercle artistique et littéraire (à l'occasion de la mort de Paul Hankar), » *La Ligue artistique*, 8, 3 (3 février 1901), 2.

Unlocated by me; presumably same as above.

Khnopff, Fernand, « L'eau-forte et la pointe sèche (première partie), » *L'Art moderne*, 21, 19 (12 mai 1901), 164-165.

L'Eau-forte et la Pointe-sèche (1).

(1) Conférence faite le 3 mai au Salon de la Société des Aquafortistes belges.

MESDAMES, MESSIEURS,

Les artistes exposants, que des fonctions administratives ou des obligations mondaines mettent souvent en contact avec le public des visiteurs de salons d'art, ont pu constater que depuis quelques années déjà la façon de s'exprimer ou de se conduire de ce public s'est modifiée fortement.

Il n'y avait autrefois que les grands salons officiels, les foires aux huiles, comme on les a irrévérencieusement nommés, où les œuvres se superposaient à l'infini, s'efforçant d'attirer l'attention par des formats *ultra* considérables ou des sujets *très* intéressants; le morceau simplement bien exécuté y était perdu.

En ces circonstances, une étude sérieuse n'était pas possible de la part du public, et l'on n'entendait aussi que vagues et insignifiantes formules d'appréciation: « Ça sortait du cadre, c'était bien trouvé, » pour les visiteurs bienveillants; « c'étaient des croûtes, des navets, des chromos, » pour les autres.

Mais plus tard s'organisèrent des expositions plus spéciales et plus curieuses; l'attention du public fut attirée vers des aspects d'art non encore remarqués; il voulut se rendre compte de l'exécution, y parvint plus ou moins et il veut, à présent, l'apprécier en se servant des termes convenables ou convenus.

Peut-être y a-t-il en cela un peu de snobisme, le malin plaisir de parler argot et l'innocente vanité de paraître initié. Mais peu importe! L'intention est louable, après tout et, en somme, les visiteurs des salons d'art sont actuellement et plus nombreux et plus attentifs.

Cependant, cet effort de placer le plus souvent possible le mot technique est dangereux; c'est un genre de virtuosité qui n'admet pas l'à-peu-près; il faut être exact et précis, et il est inexcusable en citant, par exemple, Hobbema, d'ajouter qu'il est probablement un artiste italien, comme son nom l'indique d'ailleurs, ou de critiquer l'uniformité de facture de certains marbres, en leur reprochant d'être tous coulés dans le même moule, ou encore de craindre l'humidité pour le travail de la gravure à la pointe sèche.

J'en passe et des meilleurs.

Je raconterai cependant ce qui advint à un sculpteur de mes amis, qui faisait à une grande dame les honneurs d'un salon où il exposait un buste en cire.

La grande dame avait autrefois vaguement entendu parler de fonte à cire perdue; elle avait retenu les mots si elle n'avait compris le fait; croyant le moment venu de faire

montre de savoir, elle dit, avec son plus aimable sourire (elle en a plusieurs): « N'est-ce donc pas là, cher maître, ce qu'on appelle de la cire perdue ? »

« Je le crains, chère Madame, » répondit modestement le cher maître, qui passe depuis lors pour un être distrait et manquant d'à-propos.

Que la possibilité d'autres aimables et légères confusions de ce genre excuse un peu la probable inutilité de cette lecture. L'étude des origines de la gravure a été le sujet d'interminables discussions et de formidables publications; se contenter de rapporter simplement les opinions émises par les savants spéciaux serait une besogne aussi longue que fastidieuse, car chacune des nations à traditions antiques a pris part à la compétition et de tous côtés les critiques les plus éminents se sont faits-les représentants actifs des ambitions locales.

« L'amour-propre national, » a écrit M. Duplessis, de Paris, « l'amour-propre national s'en est mêlé bien souvent et la discussion eût couru risque de s'envenimer si, au lieu d'être aux mains de travailleurs sérieux, elle fut descendue dans le domaine des personnalités. Nous autres, Français, nous avons d'autant plus de facilité à discuter les opinions diverses, exprimées en cette occurrence, que nous avons moins de titres à faire valoir en faveur de l'invention proprement dite. Non pas que nous n'ayons dit notre mot dans la discussion, et que nous n'ayons voulu voir dans un certain Bernard Milnet, artiste dont le nom même est plus que problématique, le plus ancien graveur.

« Mais un examen quelque peu attentif a fait justice de cette opinion, abandonnée aujourd'hui par tout le monde et même par ceux qui s'en étaient fait tout d'abord les parrains. » C'est là un genre de travaux historiques qui fait, surtout, songer à cette jolie boutade du *Journal des Goncourt*: L'antiquité a peut-être été faite pour être le pain des professeurs.

En principe, il n'existe que deux procédés de gravure, qui sont fort différents dans l'exécution, mais paraissent assez semblables par leurs résultats; ce sont: la gravure sur bois et la gravure sur métal.

Le travail de la gravure sur métal, nommé également gravure en creux ou en taille douce, consiste à dessiner en creux dans le métal tout ce qui doit être fixé sur le papier.

Le travail de la gravure sur bois, nommé également gravure en relief ou en taille d'épargne, est d'un faire tout opposé; les traits, au lieu d'être creusés, sont réservés et font saillie, tandis qu'on enlève toutes les parties qui doivent donner les surfaces claires à l'impression.

De toutes les manières de graver, la gravure sur bois est la plus ancienne; elle précéda l'imprimerie proprement dite, en ce sens que l'on grava des caractères sur des planches de bois avant que les caractères mobiles eussent été inventés.

On fait ordinairement remonter l'invention de la gravure sur métal à 1452. Dans un des recueils du « Cabinet des estampes » de Paris, l'abbé Zani, un amateur de la fin du XVIIIe siècle, retrouva une épreuve de la *Paix de Florence*, exécutée par Maso Finiguerra en 1452, d'après les registres officiels. Jusqu'alors les érudits allemands avaient considéré

Martin Schongauer comme le véritable inventeur de la gravure en taille douce et ils citaient en témoignage quelques pièces exécutées probablement vers 1460.

Cependant les recherches continuent, et les archives retournées en tous sens et dépouillées avec une prudente minutie présenteront peut-être encore quelque incontestable document devant lequel devront reculer toutes les ambitions.

« Mais il serait surprenant (a fort bien dit M. Duplessis) que de toutes ces recherches patientes il sortît autre chose que la connaissance d'un fait matériel et nous serions bien trompés si une œuvre d'art, véritablement digne de ce nom, venait à détruire notre opinion bien arrêtée que ce fut en 1452, en Italie, à Florence, que parut la première manifestation tout à fait significative de l'art de la gravure, manifestation assez éclatante pour avoir à elle seule les proportions d'un événement et d'une date historique. »

Le graveur en taille douce procède, je le répète, d'une façon tout opposée à celle du graveur sur bois. Celui-ci laisse en relief les traits qui devront s'indiquer en noir sur l'épreuve; au contraire, pour la taille douce les traits sont gravés en creux sur la planche de métal et le papier humide, soumis à une forte pression, va chercher l'encre au fond des tailles.

La gravure en creux ou en taille douce comprend, de façon générale, la gravure au burin et la gravure à l'eau-forte. La gravure au burin, assez simple dans son procédé manuel, exige cependant, de la part de l'artiste qui s'y est adonné, une habileté toute spéciale, produite pour un travail lent et pénible, par des études préliminaires fort compliquées.

Ce genre de gravure consiste à former le dessin dans la substance du métal au moyen de tailles différemment mais régulièrement entrecroisées. Le burin, qui sert à entailler profondément le cuivre, est un petit barreau d'acier trempé dont l'extrémité est coupée en biais pour pouvoir présenter une pointe allongée et aiguë; les doigts servent à diriger la pointe du burin qui reçoit l'impulsion du bras tout entier.

FERNAND KHNOPFF

(La fin prochainement)

Khnopff, Fernand, « L'eau-forte et la pointe sèche (première partie), » *L'Art moderne*, 21, 19 (12 mai 1901), 164-165.

Translation:

Etchings and Drypoints (1)

(1) Lecture given on the 3 May at the Salon of the Belgian Watercolor Society

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Exhibiting artists, who through administrative functions or mundane obligations are often placed in contact with public visitors to art shows, can attest that for some years now that the manner of how that audience speaks and behaves has changed greatly.

At one time there were only the large official salons, or fairs for oils, as they were irreverently called, where works were stacked to infinity, striving to attract attention by ultra large formats or very interesting subjects; the simply well executed piece was lost.

In these circumstances, a serious study was not possible on the part of the public, and only vague and insignificant forms of assessment were to be heard: "it came out of the frame, it was well done," from your benevolent visitors; "it was daubs, rubbish, chromos," from others.

But later more special and more unusual exhibitions were organized; the attention of the public was attracted to hitherto unnoticed aspects of art; the public wanted to evaluate the execution, and it more or less succeeded; and now it wants to appreciate it using suitable or agreed terminology.

Perhaps there was a little bit of snobbery, the perverse pleasure of using slang and the innocent vanity of wanting to appear an insider. But no matter! The intention is laudable, after all, and in short, visitors to the art salons are currently the most numerous and most attentive.

However, this effort to use the technical word as often as possible is dangerous; it is a kind of virtuosity that does not admit guesswork; one must be accurate and precise, and it is inexcusable in citing, for example, Hobbema, to add that he is probably an Italian artist, as his name implies, or to criticize the consistency of surface in some marbles, reproaching them all as being cast in the same mold, or to fear moisture in making a drypoint engraving.

I could add even better examples.

However, I will tell what happened to a sculptor friend of mine, who gave a great lady a tour of a salon where he was exhibiting a bust in wax.

The great lady had once vaguely heard of the lost wax process; she had retained the words even if she did not understand the meaning; believing that the moment had come to demonstrate her knowledge, she said, with her kindest smile (she has several): "Is this not, dear master, that which is called lost wax?"

"I am afraid so, dear Madam," replied the dear master modestly, who since then has seemed a mad man lacking any sense of appropriateness.

The possibility of other amiable and minor confusions of this kind excuse somewhat the probable futility of this essay. The study of the origins of engraving has been the subject of endless discussions and great publications; just to simply report the opinions issued by specialists would be a task as long as it is tedious, because each nation with ancient traditions took part in the competition and from all sides eminent critics became the active representatives of local ambitions.

"National self-esteem," wrote Mr. Duplessis of Paris, "national self-esteem is often muddled and the discussion had run the risk of becoming inflamed if, instead of being in the hands of serious workers, it was left to the domain of personalities." We, the other French, find it easier to discuss the various views expressed in this case, since we have less title to argue in favor of a claim to invention. Not that we have not had our say in the discussion, and we have wanted to see in a certain Bernard Milnet, an artist even whose name is more than problematic, as the oldest engraver.

"But a somewhat careful examination has done justice to this opinion, today abandoned by everyone and even by those who had been its first sponsors." This is the kind of historical research which makes one, above all, think of this amusing quip of the *Journal des Goncourt*: Antiquity was perhaps made to be the bread of teachers.

In principle there are only two methods of printmaking, which are very different in execution, but appear fairly similar by their results; these are: carving on wood and engraving on metal.

The work of metal engraving, also called hollow engraving or intaglio printing, consists of carving into the metal everything that must appear on the paper.

Working in woodcut, also called relief printing or raised printing, is just the opposite; lines, instead of being dug out, are left raised and protrude, while all the areas which must result in blank surfaces in the print are removed.

Of all the ways to make a print, the woodcut is the oldest; It preceded actual printing in the sense that one carved characters on wooden blocks before movable type had been invented.

Usually the invention of engraving on metal is traced to 1452. In one of the collections of the “Cabinet des estampes” in Paris, that of the Abbé Zani, an amateur from the end of the 18th century, is found a print of the *Peace of Florence*, executed by Maso Finiguerra in 1452, according to official records. Until then German scholars had seen Martin Schongauer as the true inventor of intaglio printing and they cited as evidence a few pieces probably executed around 1460.

However, research continues, and the archives will be turned upside down and searched with a careful attention to detail which will perhaps yield still some incontrovertible document which should settle all the claims.

“But it would be surprising (Mr. Duplessis emphasized) that if from all this patient research anything emerged other than knowledge of a material fact and we would be much deceived if a work of art, truly worthy of the name, came to destroy our well established opinion that it was in 1452 in Florence, Italy that the first significant demonstration of the art of engraving appeared, a manifesto brilliant enough to have it assume the proportions of an historic event and date.”

The intaglio engraver proceeds, I repeat, in a manner exactly opposite to that of the printmaker on wood. The woodblock is left with raised marks that will show in black on the proof; instead, the intaglio lines are carved into the metal plate and wet paper is subjected to strong pressure and will seek out the ink at the bottom of the grooves.

Making an intaglio print or engraving includes, generally speaking, engraving with a burin or etching with acid. Engraving with a burin, although rather simple in its manual process, requires a special skill on the part of the devoted artist, and is produced by slow and painful labor, with highly complicated preliminary studies.

This type of engraving consists of forming the drawing in the substance of the metal through grooves of different sizes but regularly intersecting. The burin, which serves to cut deeply into the copper, is a small bar of hardened steel in which the end is cut at an angle in order to make a sharp elongated point; the fingers are used to direct the tip of the burin which receives the force of the entire arm.

FERNAND KHNOPFF

(to be continued)

Khnopff, Fernand, « L'eau-forte et la pointe sèche (deuxième partie), » *L'Art moderne*, 21, 21 (26 mai 1901), 180-182.

L'Eau-forte et la Pointe-sèche (1).

(1) Suite et fin. V. notre avant-dernier numéro.

Les bons auteurs en la matière écrivent que « la gravure au burin, qui oblige à une sage lenteur dans l'exécution et réclame un fini absolu, convient principalement aux compositions de style élevé, aux sujets d'un ordre supérieur ».

Quant à l'eau-forte, elle est propre aux sujets intimes et familiers. Mais ces auteurs s'empressent d'ajouter qu'« il ne faudrait pourtant pas en conclure qu'entre les mains d'artistes de génie elle ne saurait s'appliquer aux inventions de haut style et grandioses ».

Le nom de Rembrandt s'impose aussitôt et en même temps le souvenir revient à l'esprit de ces pages de critique exquise et subtile qu'écrivit Fromentin dans les *Maîtres d'autrefois*. Sa pénétrante étude du grand maître hollandais paraît, pour ainsi dire, définitive et j'ai cru pouvoir en transcrire ici la conclusion qui, de plus, concerne très spécialement notre sujet.

« En procédant comme Rembrandt procédait lui-même, en extrayant de cet œuvre si vaste et de ce multiple génie ce qui le représente en son principe, en le réduisant à ses éléments natifs, en éliminant sa palette, ses pinceaux, ses huiles colorantes, ses glacis, ses empâtements, tout le mécanisme du peintre, on en arriverait enfin à saisir l'essence première de l'artiste dans le graveur.

« Rembrandt est tout entier dans ses eaux fortes: Esprit, tendances, imaginations, rêveries, bon sens, chimères, difficultés de rendre l'impossible, réalités dans le rien.

« Vingt eaux-fortes de lui le révèlent, font pressentir le peintre et mieux encore l'expliquent. A les bien confronter je ne vois nulle différence entre le *Tobie* du Louvre et telle planche gravée. Il n'est personne qui ne mette le graveur au-dessus de tous les graveurs. Sans aller aussi loin quand il s'agit de sa peinture, il serait bon de penser plus souvent à la célèbre planche *La Pièce aux cent flo[r]ins* lorsqu'on hésite à le comprendre en ses tableaux. On verrait que toutes les scories de cet art, un des plus difficiles à épurer qu'il y ait au monde, n'altèrent en rien la flamme incomparablement belle qui brûle au dedans. A le prendre ainsi, tout Rembrandt s'explique: sa vie, son œuvre, ses penchants, ses conceptions, sa méthode, ses procédés et jusqu'à la patine de sa peinture qui n'est qu'une spiritualisation audacieuse et cherchée des éléments matériels de son métier. »

D'autre part, en la préface d'un traité de gravure à l'eau-forte pour les peintres, Théophile Gauthier [sic] avait écrit que « nul moyen n'est plus simple, plus direct, plus personnel que l'eau-forte. Une planche de cuivre, enfumée d'un vernis, un poinçon quelconque, une bouteille d'acide, voilà tout l'outillage. L'acide ronge les parties de métal mises à nu et creuse des tailles qui reproduisent exactement chaque trait dessiné

par l'artiste. La morsure réussie, la planche est faite; on peut la tirer et l'on a l'idée même du maître, toute pétillante de vie et de spontanéité, sans l'intermédiaire d'aucune traduction. Chaque eau-forte est un dessin original et cette rapide et facile gravure a immortalisé des croquis dont le papier ne garderait pas trace.

« Avec ses ressources en apparence si bornées, elle a su fournir à Rembrandt les lumières tremblotantes, les pénombres mystérieuses et les noirs profonds dont il avait besoin pour ses philosophes et ses alchimistes, pour ses synagogues d'architecture salomonique, ses Christ ressuscitant des morts, ses paysages traversés d'ombres et de rayons et toutes les fantasmagories de son imagination songeuse, puissante et bizarre. Sa palette, si riche pourtant, ne lui a pas donné une gamme d'effets plus étendue. »

On ne peut, dirait-on dans la métropole des arts, rêver pour l'eau-forte de plus belles réclames.

Mais il advint cependant que, s'appuyant lui aussi sur l'exemple de Rembrandt, un artiste anglais, M. Mortimer Mompès, en un fort intéressant article publié dans le *Magazine of Art*, s'efforça d'établir la supériorité de la gravure à la pointe sèche sur la gravure à l'eau-forte.

« Ce renseignement seul, » écrivait-il, « devrait suffire à décider le choix: c'est que Rembrandt, le roi des graveurs, après avoir travaillé à l'eau-forte seule d'abord, se mit à combiner ensuite le travail de l'eau-forte et de la pointe sèche et enfin ne se servit que de la pointe sèche.

Cette progression montre bien que la définitive croyance du superbe artiste était en la supériorité du travail à la pointe sèche.

Le procédé de la gravure à la pointe sèche est certainement le plus simple en son genre. L'artiste dessine directement, sans préparation, sur le cuivre nu au moyen d'une pointe fort aiguë. Il obtient ainsi ce que, en terme technique, on nomme des barbes, effet de travail très délicat produit par le trait même de la pointe. Chaque trait à la pointe sèche n'enlève pas le métal, mais le repousse. De chaque côté du trait s'élèvent de petites saillies de cuivre irrégulières que l'on a joliment comparées à des mottes minuscules soulevées par le soc d'une charrue liliputienne. Ce sont ces saillies, ou barbes, qui au moment de l'impression produisent, en arrêtant l'encre, ces beaux noirs veloutés qui sont une des plus grandes qualités des planches gravées à la pointe sèche. Après une première épreuve on peut, si certaines parties sont venues trop noires, les alléger au moyen d'un brunissoir ou grattoir, qui enlève les barbes; et ensuite le trait ne se traduit plus à l'impression que par un gris.

Le graveur à la pointe sèche peut aussi mieux suivre son travail que le graveur à l'eau-forte; on pourrait, en se servant du jargon de la photographie, dire de la gravure à la pointe sèche qu'elle est un procédé positif. La plaque de cuivre est comme la feuille de papier, la pointe comme le crayon et les traits offrent l'apparence ordinaire de noir sur blanc; tandis que d'autre part, dans le travail de la gravure à l'eau forte, le cuivre mis à découvert par la pointe éblouit, brillant dans le vernis noir et il présente ainsi cet effet inverse et inaccoutumé du négatif photographique: blanc sur noir.

La gravure à l'eau-forte consiste à creuser le métal par l'action de l'acide nitrique.

La plaque de cuivre, placée sur un réchaud, est recouverte (au moyen d'un tampon de soie) d'un vernis qui, amolli par la chaleur, s'étend facilement à sa surface. Ce vernis est ensuite coloré au noir de fumée.

Sur ce vernis le graveur trace son dessin au moyen d'une pointe. Le vernis est donc entamé par la pointe partout où l'artiste veut que l'épreuve donne des traits apparents. Le métal reste au contraire protégé par le vernis dans les parties destinées à être présentées en blanc à l'impression.

Ce travail de la pointe sur le cuivre verni doit être ensuite complété par la morsure de l'eau-forte. A cet effet la plaque est entourée d'un rebord de cire et dans le petit bassin ainsi formé on verse l'acide nitrique étendu d'eau afin d'éviter qu'il attaque trop le métal. Lorsque l'acide a fait son effet, lorsqu'on croit percevoir que les traits sont assez profondément mordus, on déverse l'acide.

Puis, pour débarrasser la planche de son vernis, on la nettoie au moyen d'un chiffon imbibé d'essence de térébenthine, et le dessin, qu'au début on voyait seulement sur le vernis, apparaît à présent gravé en creux sur le métal. La planche est remise alors à l'imprimeur qui en tire une épreuve, sur laquelle l'artiste se rend compte de son travail.

On peut réparer, sans trop de difficultés, les défauts d'une première morsure au moyen de revernissages partiels et de remorsures graduées.

Tant de facilités d'exécution devraient séduire les peintres, et si quelques-uns se contentèrent de l'élégante réserve du blanc et noir, d'autres voulurent obtenir les chatoiements et les violences mêmes des couleurs. Les curieux articles de M. G. Mourey, publiés dans le *Studio*, concernant « les estampes françaises en couleurs », ont été assez remarqués pour qu'ils ne soient que cités ici.

M. Mourey y critiquait fort judicieusement les œuvres et expliquait fort clairement les procédés d'exécution.

Ils sont deux, également intéressants et expressifs.

L'un (le coloriage à la poupée) consiste en la mise en couleurs d'une seule planche au moyen des doigts et d'un petit paquet de chiffon, la poupée.

L'autre (le coloriage par superposition) comprend la superposition de plusieurs plaques, minutieusement repérées, et pouvant porter chacune jusque trois couleurs, pourvu que les surfaces des couleurs soient nettement délimitées.

Il y a, incontestablement, plus d'harmonieuse délicatesse, plus de souplesse de coloris dans le coloriage à la poupée; mais l'autre procédé exige de la part de l'artiste une connaissance plus profonde du *métier* de graveur et il a l'avantage d'être plus sûr à l'impression. L'imprimeur peut obtenir les effets voulus avec une parfaite certitude.

L'impression des gravures, quel que soit leur genre, exige de nombreuses précautions. Pour la gravure en taille douce, tout ce qui doit apparaître à l'épreuve étant gravé en creux, il faut que le papier, préalablement humecté, reçoive une pression telle qu'elle

puisse aller chercher l'encre dans les tailles les plus profondes. Pour l'encrage, après avoir légèrement chauffé le cuivre, l'imprimeur charge d'encre toutes les parties de la planche, n'en épargnant aucune. Puis, il essuyé la planche soigneusement, au moyen d'un tampon de mousseline, pour mieux enlever l'encre partout où elle n'est pas utile.

C'est alors que l'imprimeur, opérant sous les yeux de l'artiste, peut lui être quelquefois d'un grand secours en faisant rendre aux planches, par d'habiles tours de mains et retroussis de chiffons, des effets particuliers et inattendus.

On abuse même un peu de ces effets inattendus, car les nombreuses ressources du retroussage peuvent donner, superficiellement, quelque aspect agréable à des planches, dont, à part cela, le seul mérite est d'être lourdement surchargées de traits inutiles et maladroits.

Comme l'exprimait parfaitement M. Mompès, dans son article du *Magazine of Art*: « On ne peut trop répéter aux jeunes artistes que cette tendance presque générale à surcharger la plaque de travaux inexpressifs est une des causes les plus fréquentes d'insuccès en cet art charmant. La moindre griffe qui n'a pas sa raison d'être est une faute et l'on ne comprend pas assez que la surface de métal laissée intacte dans l'œuvre d'un artiste délicat et subtil donne mieux la sensation profonde de la nature, que la mêlée de traits confus et inutiles dont l'amateur, consciencieux mais ignorant, défigure sa plaque de cuivre.

« Se souvenir de cela et ne tracer sur le métal que les lignes significatives des objets dont la composition forme l'œuvre, c'est tout l'art de la gravure. »

S'il est dangereux, pour qui n'est pas du métier, de vouloir en termes techniques préciser les appréciations d'œuvres d'art, il l'est presque autant pour les gens du métier, de vouloir trop préciser les conseils techniques dans les questions d'art pur. Cela peut conduire tout aussi rapidement à paraître ridicule ainsi que le montre d'ailleurs cette leçon de paysage racontée par Henri Murger dans un de ses romans de la vie d'artiste.

La scène, comme on dit, se passe à Marlotte, dans la forêt de Fontainebleau. C'était au milieu du jour; un groupe de jeunes gens arrivait sur le plateau. Un âne, guidé par un paysan, était chargé de chevalets, de boîtes de couleurs et de havresacs.

Au milieu de ce groupe marchait un personnage qui paraissait plus âgé que ses compagnons et à qui ceux-ci semblaient témoigner une respectueuse attention.

Mais le maître, imposant, s'arrête; d'une main il tenait sa montre, de l'autre main il indiquait autour de lui, le paysage rendu incandescent par l'ardeur du soleil, et alors, avec un ton de souveraine autorité: « Messieurs, dit-il, il est midi; c'est l'heure où le jaune de chrome règne dans la nature. »

MESDAMES, MESSIEURS,

Vous avez bien voulu nous honorer de votre attention pour entendre quelques renseignements techniques concernant l'art de la gravure à l'eau-forte et à la pointe sèche.

Nous n'avons pas, pour donner ensuite quelques conseils d'art à ce sujet, l'autorité qui s'impose.

Cependant, ce genre spécial de la gravure permet de conclure ici par un conseil qui, exceptionnellement, n'est pas compromettant pour celui qui l'offre, mais qui est aussi définitif que pratique pour ceux qui voudront bien l'accepter:

C'est que, plus encore qu'aucun autre artiste, un graveur à la pointe sèche ou à l'eau-forte doit chercher avant tout à faire une bonne impression.

FERNAND KHNOPFF

Khnopff, Fernand, « L'eau-forte et la pointe sèche (deuxième partie), » *L'Art moderne*, 21, 21 (26 mai 1901), 180-182.

Translation:

Etchings and Drypoints

(1) Conclusion; see our issue previous to the last.

The best authors in the field write that “engraving with the burin, which requires a careful slowness in execution and seeks absolute finish, is mainly appropriate for compositions of elevated style and subjects of a higher order.”

As for etching, it is suitable for intimate and familiar topics. But these authors are quick to add that “should however not conclude that the hands of artists of genius it cannot apply to inventions of high and grandiose style.”

The name of Rembrandt arises immediately and at the same time memory returns to the spirit of the exquisite and subtle pages of criticism written by Fromentin in his *Masters of the Past*. One could say that his penetrating study of the great Dutch master appears definitive and I thought I might transcribe here his conclusion that especially concerns our topic.

“Proceeding in the manner of Rembrandt himself, by extracting its principle from this work so vast and which represents such multiple genius, reducing it to its native elements, by eliminating his palette, brushes, his oil colors, his glazes, his impasto, the entire mechanism of the painter, one would finally grasp the primary essence of the artist in the printmaker.”

“Rembrandt is complete in his etchings: Spirit, tendencies, imagination, daydreams, common sense, chimeras, difficulties of making the impossible, realities from nothing.”

“Twenty of his etchings reveal him, and anticipate the painter and explain him even better. Comparing the two, I see no difference between the *Tobias* of the Louvre and such an etched print. There is no one who does not put the printmaker above all others. Without going so far when it comes to his painting, it would be good to think most often of his famous *Hundred Guilder Print* when we hesitate to understand his paintings. We would see that all the dross of art, one of the most difficult to purify that there is in the world, do not affect the incomparably beautiful flame that burns inside. Taken this way, all of Rembrandt is explained: his life, his work, his inclinations, his conceptions, his processes and even the patina of his painting which is a nothing but a bold spiritualization and research into the materials of his craft.”

On the other hand, in the preface of a treatise on etching for painters, Théophile Gauthier [sic] has written that “no manner is simpler, more direct, more personal than etching. A plate of copper, smoked with varnish, some sort of needle, a bottle of acid, this is all that is required. Acid corrodes the parts of metal which have been scratched bare and hollows out the grooves which exactly reproduce each line drawn by the artist.

With a successful bite [of the acid bath], the plate is finished; one can print it and one has the idea of the master, all sparkling life and spontaneity, without the intermediary of any translation. Each etching is an original drawing and this fast and easy printing immortalized the sketches which the paper alone would not preserve.

“With such seemingly minimal resources, the medium was able to provide Rembrandt the flickering lights, mysterious penumbras and the deep blacks he needed for his philosophers and his alchemists, for his synagogues of Solomonic architecture, his Christ raising the dead, his landscapes traversed with shadows and sunlight and all the phantasmagoria of his dreaming, powerful and bizarre imagination. His palette, despite its richness, could not give him a wider range of effects.”

One cannot, as one would say in the metropolis of the arts, imagine a more beautiful advertisement for etching.

However it happens that, also using the example of Rembrandt, an English artist, Mr. Mortimer Mompes, has endeavored to establish the superiority of drypoint engraving over etching in an interesting article published in the *Magazine of Art*.

“This information alone,” he wrote, “should be sufficient to decide the matter: it is that Rembrandt, the king of engravers, after having worked at first only in etching, then began to combine the process of etching and drypoint and finally used only drypoint.”

This progression clearly shows that the final belief of the great artist was in the superiority of drypoint work.

The drypoint engraving process is certainly the simplest of its kind. The artist draws directly without preparation on the bare copper with a very sharp point. He thus obtains, in technical terms, so-called burrs, the effect of the very delicate work produced by the stroke of the tip. Each stroke of the drypoint tool does not remove metal, but pushes it to the side. On each side of the line are raised small irregular projections of copper that have been nicely compared to the tiny clumps raised by a Liliputian plough. By stopping the ink, these projections, or burrs, produce at the time of printing the velvety beautiful blacks which are one of the greatest qualities of drypoint prints. After an initial proof, if some areas have become too black, one can alleviate this with a burnisher or scraper, which removes the burrs; and then the stroke results in no more than a gray impression.

The drypoint printmaker can also follow his work better than the etcher; one could, using the jargon of photography, say that drypoint engraving is a positive process. The copper plate is like the sheet of paper, the tip like the pencil and the lines offer the regular appearance of black and white; while on the other hand, in etching with acid, the copper uncovered by the tip dazzles, brilliant against the black varnish and it presents this reverse and unusual photographic negative effect: white on black.

Printmaking by etching consists of removing the metal through the action of nitric acid.

The copper plate, heated on a stove, is covered (by the means of a silk pad) with a varnish which, softened by the heat, spreads easily on its surface. This varnish is then colored with black smoke.

On this polished surface the engraver traces his design by means of a needle. The varnish is therefore cut into by the needle wherever the artist wants the print to show visible marks. The varnish remains to protect the metal for those areas intended to be left white in the print.

This work of the needle on the varnished copper must be then completed by the bite of the etching process. Therefore the plate is surrounded by a rim of wax and nitric acid is poured into the basin thus formed, diluted with water to avoid attacking the metal too strongly. When the acid has had its effect, and when one believes that the lines are sufficiently deeply etched, one pours the acid out.

Then to remove the varnish from the plate, one cleans it using a cloth moistened with turpentine, and the drawing, which at first we saw only on the varnish, now appears engraved into the metal. The plate is then given to the printer who pulls a proof print, from which the artist can evaluate his work.

One may correct, without too much difficulty, a first bite through partial re-varnishing and gradual re-etching.

Such ease of execution must seduce the painters, and though some were satisfied with the elegant reserve of white and black, others wanted to get the same shimmering and violence of colors. The unusual articles by Mr. G. Mourey in *THE STUDIO*, on “French Prints in Colors,” were widely noticed so they are only cited here.

Mr. Mourey has quite judiciously critiqued works of art and explained very clearly the processes of execution.

They are two, equally interesting and expressive.

One (coloring with the doll) consists of applying colors to a single plate using fingers and a small packet of cloth, the doll.

The other (coloring by superposition) includes layering of several plates, carefully labeled, and each bearing up to three colors, provided that surfaces of the colors are clearly demarcated.

There is undoubtedly more harmonious delicacy and more flexibility of color in the coloring with the doll [poupée]; but the alternative procedure requires a deeper knowledge of the *practice* of engraving on the part of the artist and it has the advantage of being more secure in the printing. The printer can achieve the desired effects with perfect certainty.

Printmaking, regardless of the kind, requires many precautions. For intaglio prints, everything that will appear in the proof is engraved into the plate, and previously moistened paper must receive such pressure that it can pick up the ink in the deepest grooves. For inking, after slightly heating the copper, the printer loads ink all over the

plate, sparing no area. Then he wipes the plate carefully, using a chiffon pad, to remove ink wherever it is not useful.

Then the printer, operating under the eye of the artist, can sometimes be of great help by giving special and unexpected effects to the plate, by some clever tricks and folded cloths.

It is easy to abuse these unexpected effects, because the many resources of *retroussage* [or bringing up] can superficially provide a pleasing appearance to plates, where apart from that, the only merit is to be heavily overloaded with unnecessary and clumsy features.

M. Mempes, expressed it perfectly in his article in the *Magazine of Art*: “you can’t repeat too often to young artists that this almost general tendency to overload the plate with inexpressive work is one of the most common causes of failure in this charming art. Any mark that doesn’t have its *raison d’être* is a fault and it is not sufficiently understood that the surface of metal left intact in a delicate and subtle artistic work better gives the deep feeling of nature, while the *mêlée* of confusing and unnecessary marks of the amateur, conscientious but ignorant, disfigures his copper plate.

“Remember this and only draw on the metal the significant lines of objects whose composition forms the artwork, that is the whole art of engraving.”

If it is dangerous for those not skilled in the art to want to use technical terms to specify their appraisals of works of art, it is almost as much for the professionals to want to be too precise with their technical advice in matters of pure art. This can also quickly become ridiculous as shown elsewhere in the landscape lesson recounted by Henri Murger in one of his novels of the artist’s life.

The scene, it is said, is happening in Marlotte, in the forest of Fontainebleau. It was in the middle of the day; a group of young people arrived on the plateau. A donkey, guided by a peasant, was loaded with easels and boxes of colors and knapsacks.

Into the middle of this group walked a character who seemed older than his companions and to whom they appeared to display a respectful attention.

But the imposing master stops; with one hand he held his watch, on the other hand he pointed around him, the landscape made incandescent by the heat of the sun, and then, with a tone of sovereign authority: “Gentlemen, he said, it is noon; this is the time when chrome yellow reigns in nature.”

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

You have kindly honored us with your attention to hear some technical information about the art of etching and drypoint engraving.

We have not the authority that is necessary to follow up with any artistic advice in this regard.

However, this special genre of printmaking permits me to conclude here with a suggestion which, unusually, is not compromising for the one which offers it, but which is also as definitive as it is practical for those who wish to accept it:

It is that, more than for any other artist, the printmaker of drypoints or etchings must seek above all to make a good impression.

FERNAND KHNOPFF

Khnopff, Fernand, "Josef Hoffmann. Architect and Decorator," *The Studio*, 22, 98 (March 1901), 261-267.

Josef Hoffmann—Architect And Decorator. By Fernand Khnopff.

THE advantages and the disadvantages of the great Universal Exhibitions have often been considered; indeed, the subject might be discussed to eternity. In any case, these big international gatherings afford occasion for many notable displays such as would otherwise be impossible. Thus, at the Paris Exhibition, the remarkable show made by Austria brought right to the front a group of Viennese artists—Secessionists—whose curious works had only too often aroused at home both animosity and ridicule. Nevertheless, their success was complete on this occasion, and from all quarters came evidence of frank admiration.

In the November issue of *THE STUDIO* M. Gabriel Mourey praised, as it deserved, the intelligent arrangement of the Austrian section, the frank modernity of its various sections, notably that of the Beaux Arts, in the Grand Palais des Champs Elysées, which he described as a model of its kind. And in a special number of the "*Figaro Illustré*" M. Arsène Alexandre was impelled to write in these terms:—"The Secession sought to give the whole world a lesson in elegance, in the respect due to works of art, and in their proper disposition. In this it was entirely successful, and the atmosphere of this section was so delicate, so harmonious, that from first to last these two delightful galleries never failed to call forth unanimous exclamations of pleasure."



Fittings of the Secessionists' Exhibition Hall, Vienna. Designed by Josef Hoffmann | "Ver Sacrum Zimmer" at the first exhibition of the Vienna Secessionists. Designed by Joseph Hoffmann

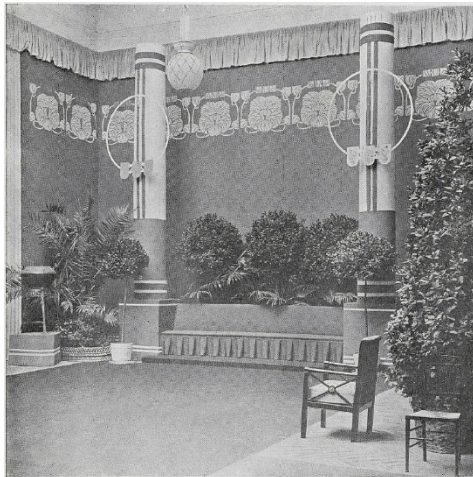
The arrangement of the two galleries was the work of the architect, Mr. Josef Hoffmann, now vice-president of the Vienna Secession, his plans being executed by the Viennese firm of J. W. Müller and Carl Giani, jun.

On the walls was stretched a sort of *toile-à-voile* of light greenish grey, ornamented with yellow and white *applications*. The wood-work was in plain oak, stained dark brown-

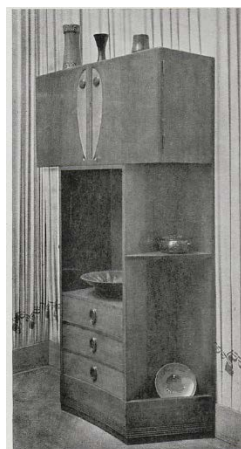
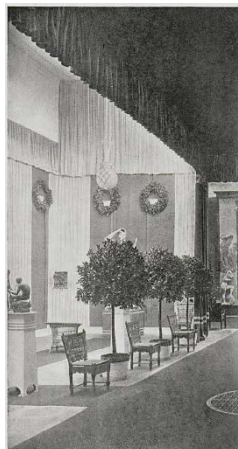
purple; while the yellow-gold silk tapestries used for the *portières* and the sofas was made in Vienna by the firm of J. Backhausen and Son, from a design by M. K. Moser, an active Secessionist and a very charming and skilful decorator. The walls of the little room devoted to water-colours and drawings were hung with bluish-green draperies, and the wood-work and the furniture was of white polished maple. The same exquisite finish was seen, even in the frames—old gold for the paintings, and varnished white for the water-colours and drawings.



Dining Room Designed by Josef Hoffmann



Decorations for the Secessionists' Exhibition Hall. By J. Hoffmann



Portion of Sculpture Gallery Designed by Josef Hoffmann | Cabinet Designed by Josef Hoffmann

All this produced a charming general effect, and testified unmistakably to the refined taste and skilful ingenuity of Josef Hoffmann, who revealed himself both decorator and architect. It recalled in the pleasantest manner the superb arrangements seen at the exhibitions of the Secession in Vienna, so well and fully described in the Secessionist organ "Ver Sacrum." In this magazine those who seek may find in the May-June issue of 1898 an admirable description of the "Ver Sacrum Zimmer," the secretary's sanctum at the first Secession Exhibition; in the July and September numbers of the same year models of frames and flower-holders of most ingenious form, together with architectural studies and plans, and designs for initial letters and other typographical ornamentations ; and other numbers, even taken at random, will be found equally full of artistic matter as interesting as it is varied. But good as are all these "documents," they can, after all, give but a faint idea of the special charm of modern Viennese decoration, which was certainly seen at its best in the recent Paris Exhibition, and attracted the immediate and close attention of the judicious visitor.

What is called "the new art," or "the modern style," is no longer on its trial. From all quarters have come praise and blame—both frequently excessive; but it is certain that this interesting experiment has produced many things which are quite inadmissible. Some writers have bluntly declared that nothing has come of the new style: what was beautiful was not new, and what was new was not beautiful ! "The modern style," it has been said, "is essentially a submarine style, because the only forms which appear really novel belong, as the submarine animals do, to the invertebrate class."



Middle Hall of the Seventh Exhibition of the Vienna Secession. By J. Hoffmann



Fire-Place by Josef Hoffmann | Cabinet by Josef Hoffmann



Sale-Room at a Candle Factory. Designed by Josef Hoffmann

Hoffmann's works cannot be criticised in this fashion. He is essentially rational and reasonable in all he does. His compositions are never extravagant, never intentionally loud, as are those of some of his more western *confrères*. He confines himself to studying proportion and decoration, and thus is enabled to add to the beauty of the original lines of construction without addition and without alteration. One's first impression on arriving in London is a realisation of the still-prevailing Roman influence, which extends far beyond the Metropolis itself—the sense of dominion and conquest, of power, in a word. Vienna, on the other hand, immediately suggests Byzantium—an open-air Byzantium. The word that exactly describes it is *fesch*, of which the nearest rendering perhaps is *chic*—for everything in Vienna produces a sensation of sensuousness, soft and delicate and sumptuous. Undoubtedly the art of the Secessionist decorators is “*ganz fesch*.” Take for instance the *appartement* of M.P.—in the Sühnhaus, which has been decorated by three Secessionists, MM. Olbrich, Auchentaller and Josef Hoffmann. It is absolutely a delight to the eyes—the very essence of elegance and luxury.

To conclude: In his article (already quoted) published in the “Figaro Illustre,” M. Arsène Alexandre wrote as follows:” Nowhere have the new ideas of decoration been so

favourably received as in Austria; and it must be admitted that her artists have made the most of them by adapting these novel *formulae* to suit the spirit of the race, which we, for our part, have not succeeded in doing as yet."

FERNAND KHNOPFF.

Khnopff, Fernand, "Modern Belgian Jewellery and Fans," *The Studio*, special number (Modern Design Jewellery and Fans) Winter 1901-1902, 1-4.

Modern Belgian Jewellery And Fans. By F. Khnopff.



Recent *Salons* in Belgium have been notoriously unsuccessful, and it cannot be disputed that the public is becoming less and less interested in the large exhibitions of Fine Arts. Notable artists have been conspicuously absent; new works have been as scarce as old ones have been abundant; and, lastly, the general arrangements have been altogether lacking in attractiveness. Despite the violent opposition of interested persons, official and otherwise, the type of display started some time ago in Brussels by the "XX" club, and continued by the "Libre Esthétique" and "Pour L'Art" societies, has succeeded in attracting the attention of *connoisseurs* and art lovers generally, with, apparently, every prospect of retaining it.

The combination of works of painting and sculpture with the most exquisite productions of ceramic art, glass-ware, and all that is most delicate in jewellery and goldsmith's work, adds special attraction to these exhibitions, which are always looked for with the utmost interest. It is, indeed, the jewellers, who, among all our Belgian art workers, have succeeded in making themselves and their productions the best known and most widely appreciated the more so as in their case one was able to compare their Works closely and determine their relative merits. It may truly be said that their most notable characteristic is diversity—a diversity which is shown, not only by the amateurs, so to speak, but also among the professionals.

No remarks on Belgian sculpture—particularly in its decorative sense—are complete without mention being made of Charles Van der Stappen. True, he has executed but small number of detached ornaments, but in the arrangement of the hair in his exquisitely fanciful busts he has lavished wealth of fine modelling, the influence of which is still widely felt.

In the Works of M. Paul Dubois we discover the sculptor modelling the details of his buckles and clasps as he would so many powerful muscles. M. Fernand Dubois seems to

be *chercheur* of a more subtle kind but this very excess of ingenuity sometimes mars the plastic effect of his jewels.

From Victor Rousseau we have had so far nothing more than a gold bracelet. The subject is quite simple—two hands holding pearl; but the work is in every way worthy of the young Brussels artist, whom regard as one of the most remarkable personalities in the domain of contemporary Belgian sculpture.

The decorator Van de Velde, who has left Brussels, and is now settled in Berlin, exhibited at some of the “Libre Esthétique” salons a series of jewels remarkable for their firm and consistent construction.

The jewels displayed recently by M. Feys are distinguished by grace and felicitous appropriateness but even more striking is the perfection of their execution, which is really extraordinary in its suggestion of suppleness.

Other jewels displayed recently at the Libre Esthétique by M. Morten and Mlle. de Bronckère also deserve notice.

In the course of a very interesting study on M. Ph. Wolfers, M. Sander Pièrron, the sagacious Brussels critic, thus described the work of this remarkable specialist in the “Revue des Arts Décoratifs”:—

“M. Wolfers seeks his inspiration in the study of the nature and the forms of his marvellous domain, and his vision of things is specially defined in his jewels. The detail therein contributes largely to the spirit of the entire work, which borrows its character from the decoration itself or from the subject of that decoration. He never allows himself to stray into the regions of fancy; at most, he permits his imagination to approach the confines of ornamental abstraction. Nevertheless, he interprets Nature, but is never dominated by it. He has too true, too exact a sense of the decorative principle to conform to the absolute reality of the things he admires and reproduces. His art, by virtue of this rule, is thus modified translation of real forms. He has too much taste to introduce into the composition of one and the same jewel flowers or animals which have no parallel symbol or, at least, some family likeness or significance. He will associate swans with water-lilies—the flowers which frame, as it were, the life of those grand poetic birds; or he will put the owl or the bat with the poppy—that triple evocation of Night and Mystery; or the heron with the eel symbols of distant, melancholy streams. He rightly judges that in art one must endeavour to reconcile everything, both the idea and the materials whereby one tries to make that idea live and speak. Inspired, doubtless, by the fact that the ancients chose black stones for the carving of the infernal or fatal deities, M. Wolfers uses dark amethyst for his owls, which gives them special significance. The Grecians used the aqua-marina exclusively for the engraving of their marine gods, by reason of its similarity to the colour of the sea, just as

they never carved the features of Bacchus in anything but amethyst—that stone whose essence suggests the purple flow of wine.”

M. Van Strydonck expresses himself to me in the following terms on the subject of his art:—

“I am of opinion that the jewel can be produced without the aid of stones, enamels, etc. I do not exclude them entirely, but they should not be used unless it be to give the finishing touch, or occasionally to relieve an *ensemble* lacking in vigour of colour. My preference is for oxydations, for in general effect they are more harmonious to the eye, and by careful seeking one can find all the tones required. I think you will share my opinion that it is much easier to use enamels, by means of which one’s object is instantly attained. Yet it is seldom one produces a beautiful symphony of colour. Enamel can only be employed in small quantities. Why? Because, in the first place, he who uses it must have profound knowledge of colours and special colourist’s eye; he must remember, moreover, that he is appealing to *clientèle* composed principally of ladies, who in most cases regard the jewel simply as means to complete such and such toilette.

“It seems to me, indeed,” continues M. van Strydonck, “that translucent enamel is the most suitable because it simply serves as an auxiliary—a basis necessary to the completion of the *ensemble*—and adds value to workmanship and design; and there is nothing to prevent its alliance with the beautiful oxydations which come almost naturally from gold.”

Note how, little by little, enamel is being abandoned in favour of stones, such as onyx, agate, and malachite, materials of no special value, which can be cut in different ways, and whose colour gives fine effects infinitely preferable to those of inferior enamels.

Of course, I do not despise the fine stone, which, by its bold colour, often relieves the work, but this is not altogether the object of the jewel, unless profit be the sole object of the maker; and I ought to add that the revival of the jewel in recent years has not been favourably regarded by certain firms, who saw therein distinct diminution of gain, the fact being that their large stock of fine stones—beautiful in themselves, but out of place in works such as have mentioned—threatens to remain on their hands.

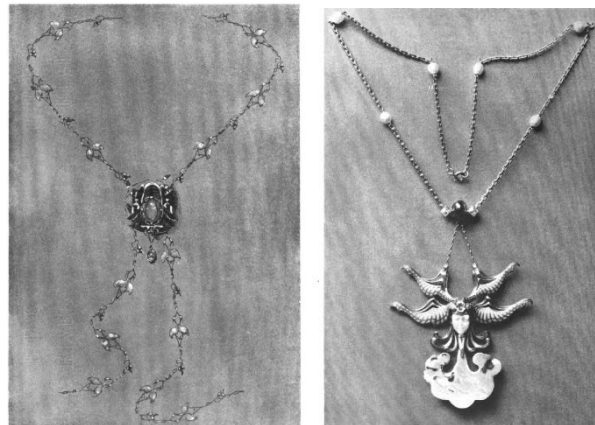
One cannot truly say that Belgian *eventaillistes* exist, for it is only very occasionally that such water-colour painters as MM. Cassiers, Stacquet, and Uytterschaut carry out their delightful landscapes and seascapes in the shape required for a fan.

Something has been done in lace-work in connection with the fan, and on this point I should mention in terms of praise M. Van Cutsem, a Brussels designer, who has made numerous models for M. Bart and M. Sacré, amongst which may be noted several happy experiments in the direction of the “modern style.”

To conclude, let me refer to the lace by Mlle. Bienaimé, admirably mounted by M. Goosens, of Brussels.



A Fan Painted on Silk by H. Cassiers
Plate 1



Design for a Necklet in Silver and Enamel, L. Van Stydonck Plate 2 | Pendant with Chain. The mask is an Iris with red Enamel for the hair. The Orchid's petals are in translucent Enamel of opalescent tones, Ph. Wolfers Plate 3



Pendant and Chain set with Brilliants and Pearls. The Figure in Gold, the Serpent in black and brown Enamel, Ph. Wolfers Plate 4 | Necklet, with Ornaments of transparent Enamel, Ph. Wolfers Plate 5



Parure de Corsage, set with Emeralds, Brilliants and transparent Pearls, Ph. Wolfers
Plate 6



A. Waistband Buckle. The Serpent in green Bronze, the Crab in Silver-gilt
B. Pendant. The Pheasants in green and yellow-brown Enamel, the centre Stone a pale-green Ceylon Sapphire, Ph. Wolfers
Plate 7



Coiffure, set with Brilliants; the petals in Opal, the Serpent in Gold touched with a slight patina,
Ph. Wolfers
Plate 8



FIG. A



FIG. C



FIG. B



FIG. D

A, B, and D Silver Belt-Clasps. C. Silver Buckles
Paul Dubois. Plate 9

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 22, 95 (February 1901), 54-56.

Brussels.—Although the Exhibition of the "Sillon" Club was less sombre in appearance than usual this year, one nevertheless felt that there was still too much imitation of old pictures—imitation achieved by means of skilfully-mixed varnishes.

M. A. Bastien, while always faithful to the memory of the warm colourings affected by the "romantic" painters of 1830, has notably brightened his palette. M. Smeers, who seems to have taken his inspiration from the *Espagnol à Paris* of the late H. Evenepoel, has painted a large full-length portrait which in its way is a remarkable effort. And M. Wagemans is as clever in his work as M. Smeers.

Others there are, however, who show more sincerity—M. G. M. Stevens, who exhibited a very interesting set of views of the Chateau de Freyr; M. Verdussen, whose *Vieux Logis* are full of quaint observation and well painted to boot; M. Bernier, with several finely-executed little studies of dogs and horses; and M. Deglume, whose *Brume sur l'Escaut* is a work of very delicate tone.

M. Coulon sent some drawings eccentrically designed and executed, and M. V. Mignot an album of Parisian types (published under the direction of M. Octave Uzanne). Several boldly-painted landscapes by the late J. de Greef were also included in the Exhibition. M. Nocquet, the sculptor, sent a large and notable series of works; and, it should be added in conclusion, M. Smeers was responsible for the poster of the Exhibition.



Poster by F. Smeers

The "Exposition Centennale" of the Brussels Academy of Fine Arts was arranged in the best possible manner under the superintendence of its director, Mr. C. Van der Stappen, the sculptor. In this very interesting exhibition, which comprised about 300 pictures and 200 drawings and works of sculpture, one recognised again the fact, as revealed by the diversity and the independence of style of these productions, that academic teaching cannot stop the true expression of genuine artistic personality. Perhaps the chief attraction of an exceptional Salon was the exact and appreciable evidence it gave of the

successive transformations of Belgian art—its evolution from the classic formula to those of modern times. Among the exhibits was Fernand Khnopff's pastel *Solitude*, now reproduced.



"Solitude" from the pastel by Fernand Khnopff

C. Meunier's group, *Le Cheval à l'Abreuvoir*, was recently placed on the pedestal prepared to receive it in the Square Ambiorix. The fine and expressive outline of this group, which was the subject of comment in THE STUDIO more than a year since, produces a highly decorative effect.

The small winter displays of the Cercle Artistique de Bruxelles continue to attract many visitors. They succeed one another every ten days, and are often interesting. M. Hermanus lately showed a series of Dutch views very prettily handled.

MM. G. and L. van Strydonck had a joint exhibition, composed of paintings by the first and jewellery by the last-named. The paintings—portraits, landscapes, and seapieces—show a keen sense of clearness and exactitude; but one's attention was chiefly drawn to a pastel portrait, simply and feelingly interpreted. The jewels, consisting of brooches, buckles, combs, pins, chains, etc., are most skilfully worked and display real appreciation of the possibilities of the goldsmith's work. The delicate colours in the *patines* are especially worthy of remark, by reason of their ingenious appropriateness.

F.K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 22, 96 (March 1901), 133-134.

Brussels.—The third annual Salon of the art club known as "Le Labeur," in the galleries of the Musée de Bruxelles, contained several works of interest, notably a fine drawing by M. Vanderstraeten (*La Cathédrale, le soir*); a study of a peasant, and a large collection of drawings by M. Werlemann; curiously-executed paintings by M. Oleffe; some landscapes from M. Cambier's rather too facile brush: *La Barge*, by M. Madiol, fils; and M. Collin's *Le Village*.

Among the sculpture we specially remarked that of MM. Baudrenghien and Grandmoulin, who seem haunted by the remembrance of certain artists very much in fashion at the present moment; also the vast group, *L'Inspiration*, by M. Herbays, one of those numerous disciples of M. Lambeaux who appear to be unaware of the fact that their master, years ago, at the outset of his career, produced works of pure sculpture, carefully and precisely modelled—as, for example, the group called *Le Baiser*, one of the loveliest things in the Antwerp Museum. Finally, I should mention the poster of the Salon, ingeniously designed by M. Cosyns.

At the re-opening of the Brussels Free University a *bas-relief* in memory of the late Professor of Law, M. Rivier, was uncovered. The memorial is the work of M. C. Samuel, the sculptor, and M. Horta, the architect. It has a very decorative appearance, and is cleverly designed.



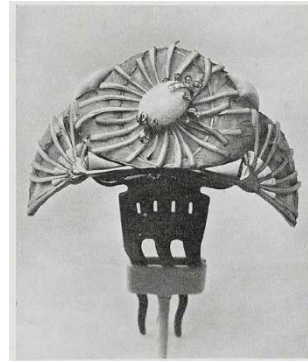
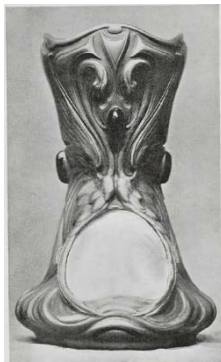
Seascape by H. Stacquet

We have pleasure in giving an illustration of an admirable seascape by M. H. Stacquet.

F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 22, 98 (May 1901), 284-288.

Brussels.—The club known as "Le Cercle pour l'Art" recently gave a most interesting display in the galleries of the Musée de Bruxelles. Specially remarkable was the exhibit of V. Rousseau, the sculptor, which included a charming group of two sisters, a life-like bust, a statuette of a youth, and an expressive fragment, called *Le Drame Humain*. M. Braecke contributed a group of fisherwomen; M. de Rudder a series of earthenware masks and a skillfully-designed commemorative *plaque*. M. Ph. Wolfers had several show-cases, containing waist-belt buckles, hair ornaments, combs, neck-pendants, necklaces, etc., together with a vase and an electric lamp, in the form of an ivory statuette, enriched with gold and enamels.



Vase by Ph. Wolfers | Waist-Belt Buckle by Ph. Wolfers | Hair Ornament by Ph. Wolfers

The painters, R. Janssens, A. Hannotiau, and O. Coppens showed their well-known studies of Flemish houses, silent and well-ordered; MM. F. Baes and Vanden Eeckhoudt contributed portraits; MM. Vierin, Viandier, and Hamesse, landscapes; M. A. Lynen, typic illustrations; and M. Ottevaere a delicate water-colour. A tapestry design by M. Fabry showed great skill in design, while a panel, *brodé au passé*, by Madame de Rudder, had much merit in its brilliant colouring.

The weekly exhibitions of the "Cercle Artistique de Bruxelles" continue to attract numerous visitors. Prominent among the works displayed have been the bright *morceaux* by M. D. Oyens, the landscapes by M. Jeffreys, the brilliant flower-pieces by Mlle. Rouner [sic], the sea-pieces and sky-studies by M. Marcette, the animals and portraits by M. and Mme. Bernier, the clever and sparkling watercolours by MM. Stacquet and Uytterschaut, and the paintings—gay or grave—of MM. Charpentier and Speekaert.

Great was the success of the annual exhibition of the Brussels Society of Water-Colourists in the galleries of the Musée. The critics were unanimous in their opinion that never before had they seen so remarkable a display. Among the works shown were many of great merit, notably those of MM. C. W. Bartlett and G. La Touche. Perhaps the best painting in the exhibition was *L'Enterrement*, by the first-named, a work which has been bought by the Belgian Government for the Brussels Gallery. *La Tasse de The* and

the *Portrait d'Octave Usanne*, [sic] by La Touche, displayed the sumptuous sense of colour which characterises his work.

Among the other foreign artists who habitually exhibit at these salons were Mme. Clara Montalba, with several of her delicate Venetian scenes, M. Van der Waay, and M. H. Von Bartels, whose water-colours have all the effect of oils.

Several effective members of the Society were also seen to advantage, notably M. Henry Stacquet with his *Marine à Scheveningue*, reproduced in the March number; M. Constantin Meunier, M. Fernand Khnopff, abstruse as usual; M. M. H. Cassiers, M. A. Delaunoy, M. Hegemans, MM. Uytterschaut and Titz, together with MM. Claus Marcette, Lynen, van Leenputten, Pecquerant, Smits, J. and the late A. Devriendt—the last-named being the lamented Director of the Society, exhibiting for the last time.

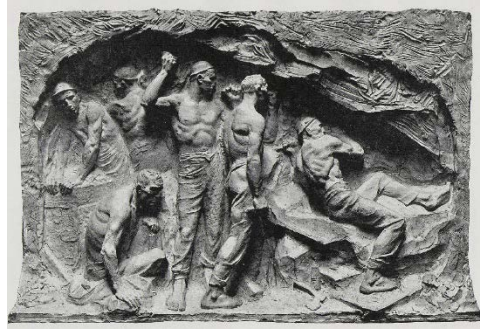
Two new effective members of the Society, MM. Baertsoen and F. Charlet, made a sensational first appearance. The first-named showed some Dutch scenes, rich and striking in colouring, while the other was represented by several Flemish studies treated in impressively sombre manner.

At the last Salon of the “Libre Esthétique” the space reserved for works of applied art was considerably diminished; nevertheless, small as it was, the display contained much that was interesting, notably the ceramics of Bing and Grondhal, and those from the “Art Nouveau” and the “Amstelhoek”; the enamels on copper by Rapoport; the glass-work by Kolo Moser, the Viennese Secessionist; the bindings by Miss Agnes Ashbee; and the well-known medallions by A. Charpentier. These were the foreign representatives, while from Belgium came the incised and coloured leathers, very rich and striking in effect, by M.H. Gérard and Mme. C. Voortman; the somewhat labored jewellery of MM. Feys and Strydonck, and the tin and bronze work of Mlle. J. Lorrain, whose display was quite remarkable for a newcomer.

The Director of the Exhibition, M. Maus, had got from Paris a large number of excellent works, including three Monets (among them his superb painting, *L'Inondation*), four Vuillards (finely-toned and agreeably treated interiors), several C. Pissaros (works of extreme sincerity); and there were examples of M. Denis, Cézanne, d'Espagnat, and Lebourg. From Paris also came a noteworthy collection from the studio of the Belgian artist, Th. Van Rysselberghe—paintings done in bright and joyous colours, but at times rather too systematic in execution, and a number of careful engravings and drawings.

M. E. Claus contributed numerous landscapes, luminous and clear as ever, including the large canvas *Le Passage des Vaches*, of which a reproduction appeared recently in THE STUDIO. M. Baertsoen exhibited several broadly painted scenes from provincial towns, while M. Delaunoy displayed a dramatically handled *Intérieur d'Eglise*.

The drawings were many and varied, and included specimens by G. Lemmen, Donnay, Mertens, Mlle. Dause, and Herman-Paul. One also noticed some decorative designs by M. Combaz, and several curious little fired ceramics by Mlle. Boch.



Bust in Ivory and Silver by P. Dubois | "La Mine," by C. Meunier

That admirable sculptor, V. Rousseau, showed his pure and delicate style in an exquisitely beautiful bronze statuette, and in other works; and M.P. Dubois was represented by a fanciful bust in ivory and silver (now reproduced) and a powerful portrait bust in marble. But the most remarkable thing in the way of sculpture was C. Meunier's high-relief, *La Mine*, a portion of his *Monument au travail*, of which an illustration is also given. The great artist has been exclusively engaged on this work for some years past. When finished it will form the fitting crown of a laborious life.

F.K.

[unsigned], "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 23, 100 (July 1901), 138-139.

BRUSSELS.—We have pleasure in giving an illustration of a fine bust by M. C. Samuel, which was on view at the Société des Beaux-Arts, in Brussels.



Marble Bust by C. Samuel

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 23, 101 (August 1901), 220.

Brussels.—The organisers of the last Salon of the Society of Fine Arts here have been somewhat roughly handled by critics and artists alike. And, indeed, there never was a more incoherent assemblage of works of art, and never were hanging and arrangement so clumsy and so unsatisfactory. Interesting works by young painters were simply sacrificed to considerations of precedent or expediency—both absolutely foreign to art. For instance, the honest and luminous landscapes of M. and Madame Wytsman, the placid interiors of M. Janssens, and the portraits of MM. G. M. Stevens and Gouwellos were carelessly "shoved" into obscure corners, while M. J. Delvin's vigorous *Combat d'Étalons flamands* was completely hidden behind an enormous massive bronze group by M. J. Lambeaux. Moreover, it was doubtful wisdom to give a retrospective exhibition of the work of Ch. Degroux, who died in 1870; doubtful, too, was the choice of the works of Chintreuil (dead in 1873), of Jongkind (dead in 1891), and of several more or less "exotic" portrait-painters, who are in great favour at the moment in "high society."

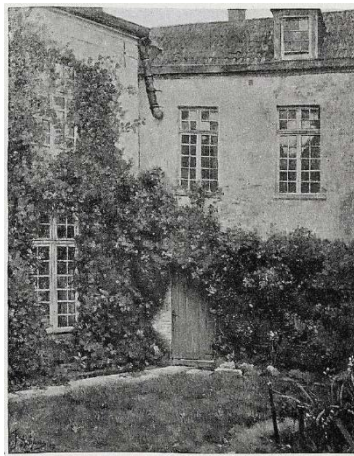
Happily, the exhibition included three admirable bits of painting by the great Belgian, A. Stevens—*Avant le Spectacle*, *Tous les Bonheurs* (formerly in the famous Van Praet Collection), and *Souvenirs et Regrets*, this last a marvel of supple handling and delicacy of *nuances*, while the Brussels painters, MM. Courtens, Verhaeren and X. Mellery sent large selections of their work.

Remarkable among the new sculpture was an excellent bust of M. Mesdach de ter Kiele, by Ch. Samuel; the patiently-composed bust of the Archbishop of Malines, by J. Lagae; and the fanciful decorative busts by MM. J. de Lalaing and J. Dillens. The clever architect, M. Hobé, displayed plans and views of seaside villas.

F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 24, 103 (October 1901), 71-74.

BRUSSELS.—Several displays—of interest by reason of their honest and serious intent—have been held recently at the Cercle Artistique. Mdlle. Art showed a fresh series of pastels of bold design and charming colour. M. R. Janssens was well represented by a large collection of his *Coins de vieilles villes et vieux logis*. The numerous display of portraits and landscapes by M. Verheyden gave emphatic proof of simplicity of vision and well-controlled technique, while extreme delicacy was the prevailing quality in the work of the late M. Binjé. M. Otteraere [sic] exhibited several poetically-conceived scenes—parks and cathedrals; and M. V. Rousseau, who is certainly the most interesting personality in the young Belgian school of sculpture, delighted everyone by his exquisitely beautiful little bronze groups.

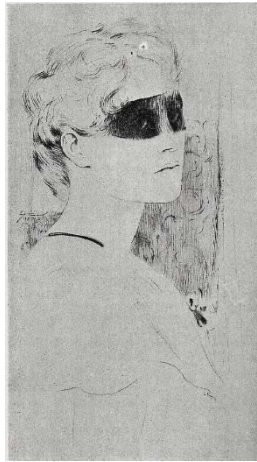


"An Old Garden" by René Janssens

The exhibition of the Société des Aquafortistes Belges was also held at the Cercle Artistique, and proved a complete success. The public, already interested by the articles in *THE STUDIO* devoted to the experiments in colour engraving made recently in France, had an opportunity of seeing for themselves the works so ably and so acutely criticised by M. G. Mourey. Germany, represented by MM. Klinger and Koepping, sent works of extraordinary cleverness; while Holland, in the persons of MM. Zilcken, Bauer, Bosch, Nieuwenkamp, Storm Van Gravesande, and others, was seen to great advantage. M. M. E. Orlik, an Austrian, sent several vivid and life-like sketches; and the English exhibitors included Messrs. Herkomer, Cameron, Alfred East, and Laing. Spain had for its representative M. Egusquiza, and Portugal M. Quintella de Sampayo.

The exhibits from Belgium were many and various. Prominent among them was that of H.R.H. the Countess of Flanders; and mention should also be made of the boldly-treated etchings by MM. Baertsoen, Wytsman, Van Rysselberghe H. Meunier, and Hens, not forgetting the *fantaisies*—coarse though they be sometimes—of MM. Ensor, Delaunois, and, Laermans; or the delicate sketches of MM. Romberg, Heins, and Van Bastelaer; the dry-points of Fernand Khnopff; the "interpretations" of celebrated works by MM. Dause and Bernier and Mdlls. Dause and Wesmael; the interesting colour-printings of MM.

Titz, Schlobach, Coppens, and Evenpoel; and lastly, the remarkable display by the Liège artists, MM. Rassenfosse, Donnay, and Maréchal.



“Un Masque” from a dry-point by Fernand Khnopff

The exhibition of recent work given by the painter, J. Middeleer, at the Rubens Club, was keenly appreciated by public and artists alike.

F. K.

1902

Khnopff, Fernand, "Opinions belges rue le campanile de Venise," *La Meuse* 1, (August 8, 1902), 3. Letter.

[the campanile in St. Mark's Square in Venice collapsed on July 14, 1902. It was rebuilt in 1912. Khnopff had taken part in the Venice Bienale in 1901.]

Opinions belges rue le campanile de Venise

M. Fernand Khnopff: « Je suis franchement oppose à la reconstruction :

1° Parce que le campanile est mort irrémisiblement. Après une fin « aussi cinquième acte, » il ne faut l'exposer à une nouvelle existence.

2° Parce que la nouvelle architecture ne s'harmoniserait pas avec les monuments précieux et délicats qui l'entourent. Ni le style, ni les matériaux ne seraient faits pour voisiner ensemble. Il a perdu son unique raison d'être... en n'étant plus. »

Translation:

Belgian Opinions on the campanile of Venice

Mr. Fernand Khnopff "I am frankly opposed to the reconstruction:

1st Because the campanile is irrevocably dead. After such a finish "as the fifth act," we must not expose it to a new existence.

2nd Because the new architecture will not harmonize with the precious and delicate monuments that surround it. Neither the style nor the materials would be made for being side by side together. It has lost its unique reason for being... and is no longer."

Khnopff, Fernand, "Modern Etching and Engraving in Belgium," *The Studio*, special summer number, *Modern Etching and Engraving*, 1902, 1-4, with 8 pages of illustrations.

Modern Etching & Engraving In Belgium.

By Fernand Khnopff.



Belgian etchers held an Exhibition in 1901 in the Galleries of the Cercle Artistique at Brussels, at which were received examples of the work of all artists interested in etching whether with the dry-point or what the French call *eau forte*.

In holding this remarkable Exhibition the primary aim of the Belgian Society of Etchers was to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of its foundation, and to prove the success of its efforts to recover the position it formerly held under the management of Félicien Rops.

To found in Belgium an International Society of Etchers was the great ambition of Rops but his success had been long delayed by material difficulties. He did, however, at last manage to constitute the Society, and it was decided to issue an album with a portfolio of etchings, the first number of which appeared in 1875.

Her Royal Highness the Countess of Flanders had accepted the position of Honorary President of the International Society of Etchers, and the two plates she successively published in the album deservedly rank among the best of the many fine etchings which appeared in that publication.

The greater number of those who exhibited at the Salon of the Society of Etchers were painters as well as etchers, and it was very interesting to note the great variety of their styles. Some few had insisted on going through what might almost be called classic training, mastering to begin with every traditional process of the craft. Others had endeavoured to adapt the processes of etching to their own particular mode of painting; yet others had set to work to discover new methods, using their etching tools in a haphazard way and trying experiments in biting in on grounds never before used; whilst others contented themselves with merely transferring some study to copper.

The etchings of M. Baertsoen take rank amongst the most remarkable of the works exhibited. They are characterised by broad masses of light and shade, and their execution is thoroughly suited to the effect of chiaroscuro which it was evidently the aim of the artist to produce. It cannot be denied that there is now and then something almost coarse and harsh about the execution, but this very peculiarity results in the

better distribution of the ink when the impressions are being struck off, and enables M. Baertsoen to secure effects by the *retroussage* on which he sets such store and turns to such good account, without going to the extremes indulged in by so many of his fellow etchers.

Messieurs Wytsman and Van Rysselberghe, on the other hand, appear to scorn to avail themselves of the too skilful aid of the printer, and when their well-prepared and carefully-executed drawings have been reproduced, they have all the value of conscientious work. In his etchings M. Wytsman gives proof of his thorough study of the landscape scenery of Brabant, and delights in representing the noble and dignified lines of the grand masses of forest trees characteristic of the undulating country districts. M. Van Rysselberghe, too, in his portraits and sea-pieces avoids all superficial expedients, and endeavours in every case to faithfully interpret his subject.

It is qualities similar to these which give value to the works of Messrs. Coppens and Bartholomé. M. Ensor has already won considerable reputation as an engraver, and his etchings of sea-pieces and landscapes, inspired by the scenery of Ostende and its neighbourhood, are remarkable for delicacy of touch, which does full justice to the subtle effects of silvery light so characteristic of the Belgian sea-board.

The works of Messrs. Laermans and Delaunois are remarkable for their very crude appearance. The etchings of M. Laermans, indeed, give the impression of having been engraved with the aid of a very old nail, while those of M. Delaunois do not appear to have been bitten in, but to have been vitriolised. For all that, however, the engravings of both these celebrated artists have, so far as art essentials are concerned, the same fine qualities as their paintings. It is the same with the Antwerp master, M. Hens, whose sea-pieces, in spite of their somewhat rough execution, are full of luminous brightness, and attracted special attention at the Exhibition of the Society of Etchers.

Messrs. Heins, Gailliard, Mignot, Romberg, Titz, and H. Meunier have all brought to bear upon their work with the etching needle that same facility of execution which they have gained by practice in making drawings for book illustration or in designing posters.

Lastly, there is only one Belgian painter-etcher who cultivates exclusively the process known as dry-point, and that one is the writer of these notes, who has engraved in that medium several drawings or studies in outline or shade.

In his "History of the Fine Arts in Belgium" Camille Lemonnier defines very accurately that which specially distinguishes Messrs. Belgian G. Biot and A. Danse, who may be said to be at the present time the two engravers by profession who dominate the Society of Etchers:

"From the very first time he exhibited, Biot manifested those qualities of distinction and grace which have since gradually developed into completed individual style of great distinction. Delicacy, balance, and simplicity of effect, grace of sentiment, with something of timidity and reserve in the general scheme, these are the salient features of an art which is at the same time pleasing and severe, modifying classic stiffness by its contact with grace altogether modern."

“The art of Danse, on the contrary, is comparatively coarse, passionate, feverish. The hasty dashiness of the sketch is retained even in his completed work; he loves tones which clash with one another, unrelieved black, sharp effects of light, rugged execution. Of the school of J. B. Meunier, on whose style he formed his own, he has retained nothing but the decision of stroke of the burin, with certain grasp of the processes employed and some skill of handling. With him the etching needle is almost always pressed into the service as supplementary to the graver or burin it is it which gives to his plates their sharpness of line and richness of tone even to his most severely correct engravings it lends certain capriciousness which would be repudiated by those who use the burin pure and simple.”

M. Danse, however, is not content with producing vast number of engravings, he also aspires to forming engravers; and whilst he was Professor of Drawing at the Royal Academy of Mons in 1871 he founded school of engraving in that town at his own expense. From this school issued, amongst others, Messrs. Lenain, Bernier, L. Greuze, and Lucq, with Melles. Weiler, Wesmael, L. Danse, and Mme. Destrée-Danse, the two last named the daughters of the master.

M. Lenain may justly be said to take first rank amongst contemporary line-engravers. He handles the rigid graving tool with ease and subtlety, resulting sometimes in the production of effects more varied than those to be obtained in etching. A long study of the masterpieces of French engraving has done much to aid him in the development of his peculiar excellence delicacy of execution. Moreover, certain indefinable natural instinct, the result of his nationality, has led him to interpret well the grand production of the painters of the Flemish Renaissance, and he has begun series of fine engravings after the works of Rubens.

The works of the engraver, F. Maréchal, of Liège, have already been criticised in THE STUDIO in an article published two years ago, and in another article which came out in the same magazine Belgian in 1898, under the heading, “Some Artists of Liège,” the remarkable art-talent of M. A. Rassenfosse, the faithful friend and devoted disciple of the extraordinary genius Félicien Rops, was commented upon with considerable appreciation, and attention was drawn to his profound knowledge of all the processes of the engraver's craft.

Two other artists of Liège, Messrs. Donnay and De Witte, have attracted attention by some etchings full of originality and character.

Amongst the engravers who have turned their attention to taking impressions in colour must be named, as especially successful, M. Q. De Sampayo, an artist of Portuguese extraction, who may be fitly included in this article on living Belgian engravers on account of his having studied under M. Rassenfosse and produced most of his work in Brussels. M. De Sampayo has himself carefully superintended the translation into colour of his etchings, and with the aid of M. Van Campenhout, the skilful printer to the Society of Etchers, he has coloured several delicate plates *à la poupée*.

It was also by means of this process that the plates of Messrs. Romberg, Coppens, Gaudy, and those of the author of these notes were coloured, whereas those of Messrs. Titz and Schlobach were printed and coloured by what is known as the super-position process, that is to say, by the use of succession of several plates, each marked with the most minute care and capable of bearing as many as three colours, provided those colours are very strictly delimited. No doubt this process is decidedly easier for the printer, but, on the other hand, it is certain that greater delicacy and subtlety of colouring can be obtained by the process *à la poupée*.

Fernand Khnopff.



"A Dutch Windmill" from the etching by H. Cassiers, Plate 1 |



"A Roman Outcast," from the engraving by A. Danse, after the painting by E. Wauters, Plate 2

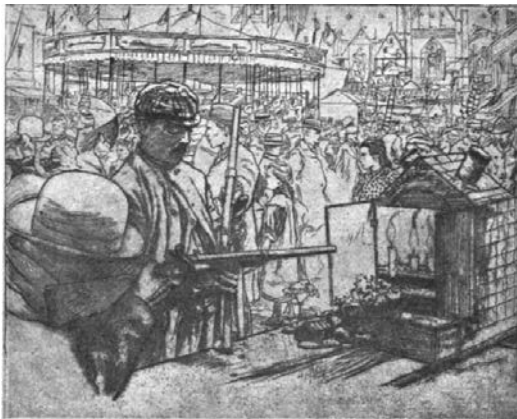


Plate 3—"Three Shots for a Penny," from the etching by F. Gailliard |



Plate 4—"Fantasia," from the dry-point by M. Romberg



Plate 5—"A Bleak Landscape" from the etching by H. Meunier | Plate 6—"A Stormy Evening, Brabant" from the etching by R. Wytsman



"The Little Port of Ter Neuzen" from the etching by A. Baertson, Plate 7

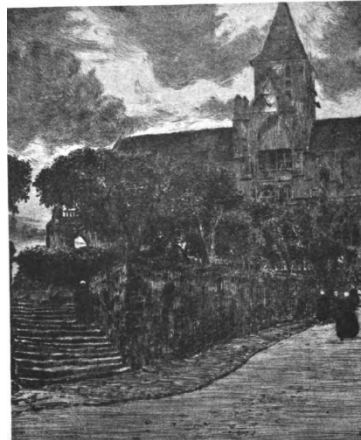


Plate 8—"A Study" from the aquatint by L. Titze |
Plate 9—"L'heure du Salut" from the etching by O. Coppens



Plate 10—"A Bridge Over the Meuse" from the etching by F. Marechal

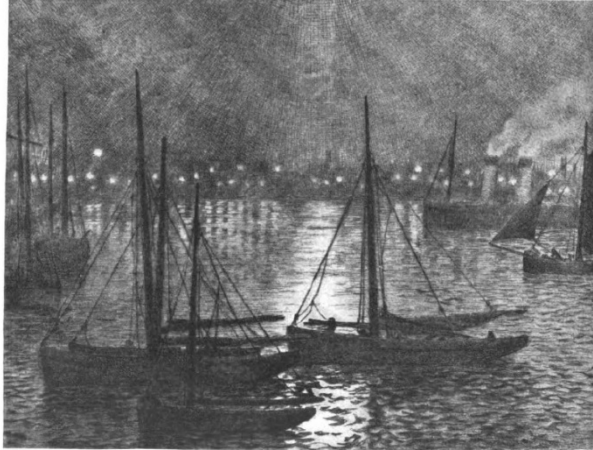


Plate 11—"Nocturne" from the engraving by T. Van Rysselberghe |
 Plate 12—"Village Politicians" from the etching by E. Laermans



Plate 13 "Un geste de respecte" from the dry-point of Fernand Khnopff

Khnopff, Fernand, "A Belgian Painter: Henri Cassiers," *The Studio*, 18, 65 (July 1902), 2-13.

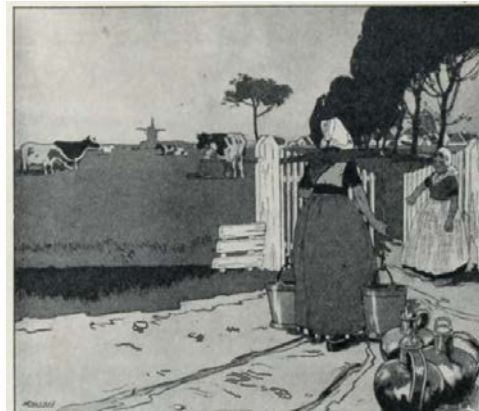
A Belgian Painter: Henri Cassiers

It is curious that an artist who loves painting as Henri Cassiers loves it, a brilliant colourist such as the designer of the beautiful fan reproduced in the special Winter Number of *THE STUDIO*, should hitherto have been content with water-colour as the habitual medium in which to express his artistic conceptions.



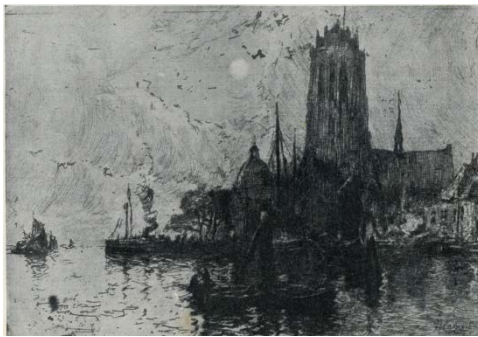
"In the Snow," from the water-colour by H. Cassiers

This is, however, really, after all, a mere accident of his education. Henri Cassiers was born at Antwerp in 1858, but he only remained there till he was six months old, when he was taken to Brussels, where his boyhood and early youth were spent. When he left school he was placed by his parents, who wished to secure a career for him, with a popular architect, in whose office he worked for seven years, turning out the usual regulation black-and-white or tinted architectural drawings in his working hours, but giving up every spare moment to making sketches from Nature in watercolour. This will sufficiently explain the extraordinary fidelity with which he has stuck to that medium throughout his art career.



"A Street in Veere" from a chalk drawing by H. Cassiers | "Dutch Milkmaids" by H. Cassiers
(Published by MM. Dietrich et Cie., Brussels)

Every day in the summer, directly his compulsory work as a pupil in an architect's office was done, he used to rush to the station, where he met his friend, the artist Stacquet (who is now Director of the Belgian Society of Painters in Water-Colour), and went with him to some suburban locality, where the two would deftly wash in a few skilful notes of the delicate but evanescent effects of colour observed by them. In the winter, on the other hand, young Cassiers would go every evening to draw at the Free Academy, known as that of the *Patte de Dindon*, or the "Turkey's Foot," so called after the sign of the old inn in which the classes were held, still to be seen, with its sumptuously decorated front loaded with ornamental sculptures and gilding, on the Grande Place of Brussels. The building belonged to the Communal authorities, who not only authorized the meeting in it of the Free Academy, but also supplied that institution with firing and lighting for the three winter months. The club fees of the members of the Free Academy sufficed to pay for the necessary models. Here used to meet on equal terms profession and amateur artists, all friends together, who, whilst really working seriously, enjoyed each other's company and smoked their pipes and drank their glass of national beer.



"Dordrecht" by H. Cassiers | "Windmills on the River Schie," from the water-colour by H. Cassiers

Under these conditions Henri Cassiers made rapid progress, and his comrades were astonished at the ease of his execution and the wonderful facility with which he assimilated ideas. When he at last decided to exhibit, his work at once attracted notice, every fresh show marking an advance on the last, and he quickly became celebrated for his skill of execution, his delicacy of colouring and cleverness of composition, which placed him in the first rank amongst exponents of black-and-white and water-colour art. Being now able to devote himself entirely to painting, he resolved to live as much as possible in the country, and spent several winters at Knocke, a little sea-side village of Belgium where a group of artists had taken up their residence, attracted by the charm of the wide-spreading dunes, with their fine atmospheric effects, subdued colouring, and delicate chiaroscuro. He also travelled in Brittany, and made trips to Holland, Italy, and as far north as Scotland; but it was to Holland he returned most frequently, enamoured as he was with the constant humidity of the atmosphere, resulting in ever-varying effects of mist; the massive clouds, always shifting, always changing; the wide horizons, the quivering, vibrating undulations of colour; the picturesque houses and cottages in

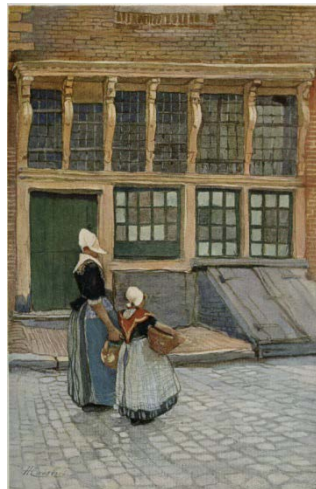
town and village, with their quaintly decorated fronts, their fascinating interiors, full of old-world furniture; and the peasants in their costumes of a time gone by.

M. Cassiers' style would now seem to be definitively and finally formed. He is everywhere recognised as a clever artist whose work is full of spirituality, and he has, so to speak, got into a habit of pleasing us all. He is unrivalled for fascination, distinction, and skill in catching effect; his Brabant landscapes, his sketches of Flemish or Dutch villages, have all alike a unique, an indefinable charm; they have been characterised as "a caress and a delight to the eyes."



"Au Bord de la Meuse" from an etching by H. Cassiers | "Katwyk" from an etching by H. Cassiers

It was during a sojourn in Holland that he met the English artist, C. W. Bartlett, with whom he became intimate, and who exercised a considerable influence on his work. The example of the talented English painter acted as a stimulant upon the Belgian master, and led to the evolution, or, rather, the recognition, of new qualities in the latter, for henceforth the work of Cassiers displayed a solidity of tone, an independence of execution, a profundity of sentiment, and what may perhaps be called an obstinate conscientiousness hitherto foreign to it.

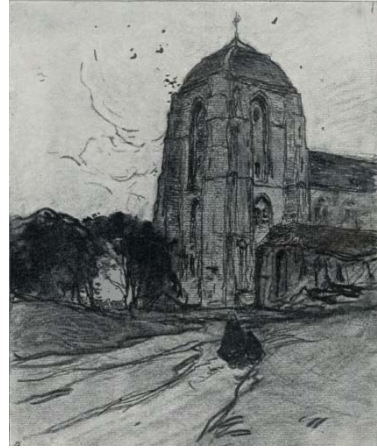


"Returning from Market." From the water colour by H. Cassiers.

The exhibition of the work of the Belgian artist in the *Salle du Cercle Artistique* at Brussels, which took place after this fortunate meeting with Mr. Bartlett, was a revelation alike to the public and the critics, and voice was given to the surprise felt by all who saw the new pictures—in an able article which appeared in the well-known Belgian journal *Le Petit Bleu*: “A well-known painter in watercolour, who has already taken high rank in the art world, and seemed to have reached the full development of his own particular style, is holding an exhibition at the Cercle Artistique. The visitor who expects to meet with a new and original sensation is, as a rule, singularly disappointed; but if he will be content with a brief but very delightful impression of really beautiful art, of a really fresh impression of Nature, he will have no cause of complaint. As usual, M. Cassiers will be found to have proved himself a skilful and appreciative painter in water-colour, whose skilful and sensitive interpretations of the fresh landscapes of Holland and Flanders are full of distinction and charm. He excels in rendering the soft and misty effects, the tender and delicate colouring of those low-lying districts, in catching the fleeting impressions of the evening and the morning, and, with his wonderfully true eye for colour, he now and then gives a transcript of some natural scene full of the tenderest sentiment, which simply vibrates with sentient charm. This artist, who had already, as the French say, 'arrived'—and had, indeed, almost received the stamp of official recognition—has in this case taken a completely new departure. This pleasing artist has shown himself all of a sudden to be a master—an excellent master—in painting. He has acquired a force, a certainty of touch and a solidity of tone which generally appears to be incompatible with the medium of water-colour. He has, moreover, at the same time become more profound, more susceptible to transient feeling—we may even say more religious—in his work.”



“A Bridge at Rotterdam” by H. Cassiers | “Winter in Holland” by H. Cassiers



"Zomerdag" by H. Cassiers (*Published by MM. Dietrich et Cie., Brussels*) |
 "The Church at Veere" from a drawing by H. Cassiers



"On the Quay." From the water colour by H. Cassiers. | "Dutch Milkmaids" by H. Cassiers
 (*Published by MM. Dietrich et Cie., Brussels*)



Poster by H. Cassiers

When pictorial post-cards became the fashion in Belgium, Mr. Dietrich, the publisher, of Brussels, was not slow to suggest to Cassiers that he should execute a series of them,

and very soon appeared, amongst others, the *Dutch Landscapes*, *Dutch Costumes*, the two series of *Delft Cards* in blue, which were quickly succeeded by the facsimiles of the water-colours known as the *Big Mill*, *Evening Effect*, *View of Dordrecht*, *The Four Windmills*, and the engravings, full of artistic feeling, of the *Dutch Milkmaids*, two large plates printed in colour. The great success of all these charming compositions is well-known, as is also that of the few posters by this versatile artist, which are admirable in the humour of their design and the force and brightness of their colouring.

Fernand Khnopff.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 25, 110 (May 1902), 290-295.

Brussels.—In an article published in *THE STUDIO* for May, 1900, M.O. Maus described the rare collection of antique stuffs formed by Madame Isabelle Errera, of Brussels. This collection—several specimens of which attracted great attention at the recent Exposition Internationale des Arts du Tissue at Rouen—is soon to be presented to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Brussels. The public and, to still a greater extent, artists themselves will find interesting teaching therein, and serious subject for study. In order to make the work complete, and before parting with her collection, the generous donor decided to issue a detailed catalogue of it; and this important task has been accomplished with infinite care and trouble. No research has been spared, and innumerable comparisons are made; while, to crown all, Madame Errera has enriched the catalogue with 420 photogravures illustrating the collection. The charming cover is a most faithful presentation of a Sicilian fabric of the twelfth century—one of the rarest pieces of work in her possession. In fact, this catalogue, the full title of which is "Catalogue d'étoffes anciennes réunies et décrites par Mme. Isabelle Errera," constitutes a real "document."

The Cercle Artistique of Brussels, wishing to render a last tribute to the lamented sculptor, P. Devigne, untimely removed from the sphere he so greatly honoured, lately arranged an exhibition of some forty of his works and studies. This display impressed one strongly, yet subtly, for the deceased artist had a *métier* which was incomparably certain.

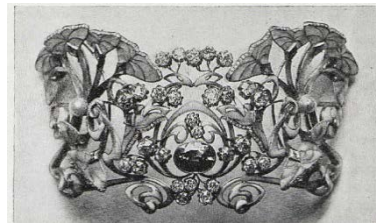
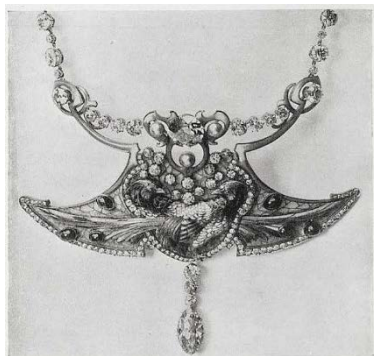
Paul Devigne produced many important works, notably the Breydel and Deconinck monument in Bruges; the group on the *façade* of the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels; and the funereal monument of the Metdepenningen family in Ghent. At the same time it is certain that he expressed himself best in his less-known, his more *intime*, work. At the exhibition in question, one saw a graceful figure, *L'Immortalité* (the marble is in the Musée de Bruxelles); the charming bust *Psyche* (of which the replica in ivory was reproduced some years since in *THE STUDIO*); several studies—young Romans of proud and graceful demeanour, old Flemish men with hard, coarse faces—and finally (the most remarkable thing in a most interesting exhibition), the bust of the Brussels painter, Eugene Smits, which is simply a masterpiece.

The annual exhibition of the Belgian Society of Water-Colours was held in the galleries of the Musée de Bruxelles, and attracted a large number of visitors. As a whole, it was a remarkable display, and it included several works of a high order. French art was represented by two ardent colourists, MM. G. La Touche and Luigini; German art by two enterprising personalities, MM. Dettmann and Skarbina; and English art by Mr. C. W. Bartlett, faithful to all that is Dutch. M. Nico Jungmann exhibited his *Procession de Pèlerins de Kevelar*, which was reproduced some time since in *THE STUDIO*. Notable

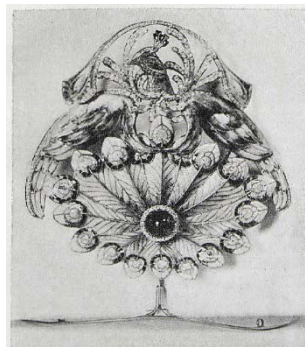
among the works of foreign exhibitors were the interesting landscapes by M. F. de Myrbach and M. P. Rink's fishermen.

But the chief merit of the exhibition lay in the Belgian display, particularly in the works sent in by MM. Stacquet, Fernand Khnopff, A. Marcette, Th. Hannon, and Titz, which have been purchased by the Government for the Musée de Bruxelles.

MM. Cassiers, Hagemans, Uytterschaut, and Van Leemputten sent interesting landscapes of Holland and Belgium; M. Delaunois contributed some of his churches, impressive by their deep gloom; M. F. Charlet, his coloured interiors; M. Jacob Smits, portraits and religious scenes; M. C. Meunier, a picture of a miner; and finally, MM. D. Oyens and Eugène Smits sent several delicate and *intime* things.

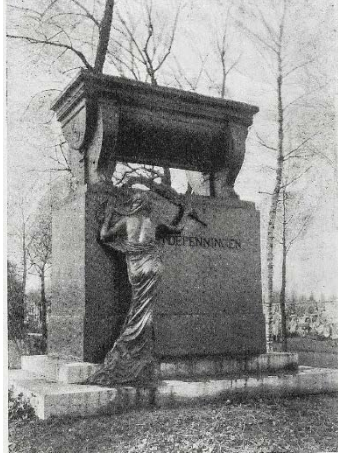


Bijou de Corsage by Philippe Wolfers | Neck Ornament by Philippe Wolfers



Diadem for the Hair by Philippe Wolfers | Pendant by Philippe Wolfers

The "Cercle pour l'Art" celebrated its tenth anniversary by a very interesting exhibition, the members keeping their newest and best work for the occasion. Dominating all else was the exhibit by V. Rousseau, the sculptor, who sent a monumental group of three figures, *Les Sœurs de l'Illusion* (intended for the adornment of a fountain), an equestrian statuette and the bust of a young woman. The group is quite masterly, skillfully and clearly composed, calm and grand in its sentiment, but as far removed from the academic as it is from the coarseness of conception and treatment which marks so much of our modern Belgian sculpture.



Monument at Ghent by P. De Vigne

M. Laermans showed his firm qualities as a colourist in two canvases which attracted much attention. The exhibits of MM. Fabry (decorative panels), Baes, Coppens (landscapes and Flemish “interiors”), and Ottevaere (a triptych) showed the good results due to honest work. The usual excellence was seen in the paintings sent in by Verhaeren, Janssens, Vandeneeckhoudt, and Vierin; and prominent among the sculptors were Braecke, De Rudder, and Boncquet. M. Ph. Wolfers displayed a large number of things all remarkable for their delicate colouring; while M. A. Lynen—a draughtsman essentially of the true Brussels type, and deserving of more detailed notice in these pages some day—sent a drawing full of charm and retrospective sentiment, *Yperdamme*, and a set of illustrations for a story by himself, entitled “Le Jacquemart de la Tour du Pré-Rouge.”

F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 27, 115 (October 1902), 65-67.

BRUSSELS.—In the galleries of the Musée de Bruxelles exhibitions "se suivent et ne se ressemblent pas." While the director of the Libre-Esthétique strives, on the one hand, to "give a show" to the new tendencies and the new artists, the management of the Société des Beaux-Arts, on the other hand, seems devoted to retrospective methods and to those artists who have "arrived."

A collection of twenty-six paintings at the Libre-Esthétique revealed the fact that Willy Schlobach, one of the founders of the "Cercle des XX," who for ten years past has been quietly working unobserved, has extraordinary gifts as a colourist. M. F. J. Delvin exhibited a powerfully-drawn pastel, representing a bull-fight scene. Mr. G. Stevens showed distinct advance in a curiously original work, styled *Tristan and Isolde*.

M. Heymans expresses a deep feeling of Nature in his *Nuit d'Orage*. The Flemish landscapes by M. Buysse and Mdlle. Boch's *Côtes de Bretagne* impressed one by their sincerity; the paintings of MM. Laermans and Coppieters by their solid colouring, and the drawings of M. Fernand Khnopff by their refined composition.

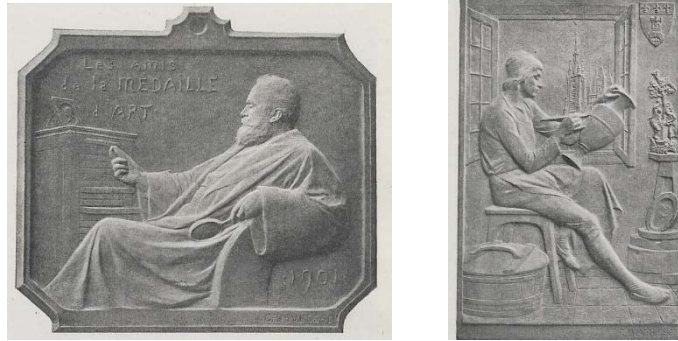
The bust of *M. L.*, exhibited by M. Lagae, may fairly be styled a masterpiece. The large collection sent by M. P. Dubois included busts of various sorts, and jewellery, examples of which were reproduced in the last Winter Number of THE STUDIO. MM. C. Meunier and Ch. Vanderstappen exhibited some important pieces of monumental sculpture.

The paintings by M. Anglada impressed one by their exquisite colouring; those of M. Nils Kreuger by their essentially Northern sentiment of melancholy; those of M.R. Pichot, on the other hand, by their thoroughly Southern exuberance; the portraits of M. Roussel by their carefully-studied composition; M.P. Dupont's engravings by their style; those of Mdlle. K. Kollwitz by their keen sentiment; and the little sculptures of M. Voulot by their graceful attitudes.

Finally, let me mention MM. Rodin, Thaulow, Lerolle, Le Sidaner, Moreau-Nelaton, B. Priestman, A. Charpentier, Toorop, A. Robinson, Conder, Boutet de Monvel, and Feuillatré, all of whom were well represented.

The *clou* of the exhibition of the Société des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles was a collection of the works of the great Brussels landscapist, H. Boulenger, who died in 1874—works admirable in the delicacy of their colouring and in suppleness of line.

M. A. Struys sent a curious view of the *Béguinage de Malines*; M. X. Mellery, a considerable collection, including portraits and dark interiors; M. Mertens, a large study, entitled *Une Famille Zélandaise*; MM. Rossuls, Verheyden, Gilsoul, and Hermanns, landscapes of various kinds; MM. Samuel [,] Dillens, De Lalaing, and Vinçotte, official or "society" busts and decorative fragments.



Plaquette” by G. Devreese | “The Potter—Bas Relief” by G. Devreese

The Brussels sculptor, M. G. Devreese, has executed, to the order of the communal administration of Tournai, a token which will be presented to the members of the communal council as a souvenir of their magistracy. In the medal for the provincial council of Brabant the artist represented a Brussels lace-maker—*La Dentellière Bruxelloise*—which has been reproduced in these columns. M. Devreese's new work depicts a Tournaisian ceramist of the fifteenth century working in an atelier, whence one may see the famous “chong clotiers”—or five bells-of the Walloon city.



Monument of “The Battle of the Golden Spurs” by G. Devreese

M. Devreese has also done a medal, inscribed: “A M. Buls, la ville de Bruxelles reconnaissante”; and a little *plaquette* for “Les amis de la Médaille d'Art.” The remarkable scheme designed by him for the *Monument of the Battle of the Golden Spurs* has been definitely accepted after long discussion, and the artist will start on the work soon.

F.K.

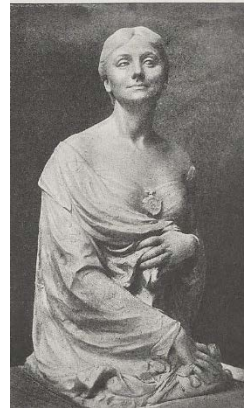
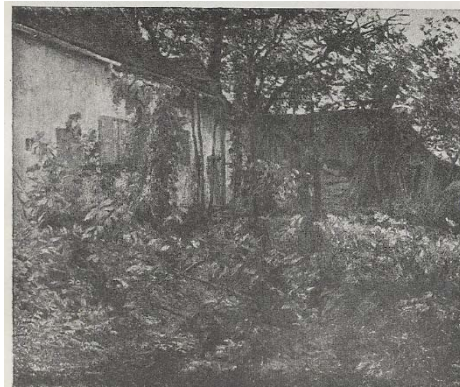
Khnopff, Fernand, "Studio-Talk. Ghent," *The Studio*, 27, 116 (November 1902), 138-141.

GHENT.—The committees of the Ghent Salons have always been distinguished among their fellows of the "official" salons of Belgium for their "modern" and international tendencies, and for the efforts they have made to give a worthy display of works selected by a severely critical jury.

This year's Salon has been installed in the recently completed buildings of the New Museum, the rational arrangement and simple construction of which are worthy of all praise. The works by British painters are many and notable—the Glasgow School is represented by most of its best artists—and lend a very special air of grace to the display.

The most prominent French and foreign painters of the day at the Champ de Mars have sent either their latest successes or old and favourite works, as, for instance, Fantin-Latour's youthful portrait of himself.

The clear landscapes by MM. Claus and Heymans are the most admired among the paintings by Belgian artists, and one may hope the effect of these works will prove powerful in opposition to the brownish colourings of those landscapists who bow before "official" tradition, if one may so express it.



"An Old Farm in Brabant" by Madame J. Wytsman | Portrait by Charles Samuel

Other Belgians who have contributed good work are the painters J. Delvin and G. Buysse of Ghent, A. Struys and C. Mertens of Antwerp, C. Hermans, A. Verhaeren, A. Marcette, W. Schlobach, Fernand Khnopff, R. Janssens, G. M. Stevens, Bastien, Blieck, and R. and Madame J. Wytsman of Brussels; and the sculptors C. Meunier, C. Van der Stappen, V. Rousseau, C. Samuel and J. Lagae.

F.K.

1903

Khnopff, Fernand, (Lettre adressée à Camille David et Fernand Larcier), in *L'Idée Libre*, V, (Bruxelles, janvier-juillet 1903), 68-69.

de L'Art et la Pornographie

Fernand KHNOPFF, artiste-peintre :

1° Il n'est pas possible, on l'état actuel de ces mots, de « délimiter l'art vis-à-vis de la pornographie ».

2° Il y a là des questions très délicates de conscience, d'une part, et d'appréciation, de l'autre.

3° La loi Woeste¹ peut avoir des défauts ; mais, en ce temps de pornographie éhontée, elle a le mérite d'avoir enfin attiré vivement l'attention de tous sur ce pénible sujet.

FERNAND KHNOPFF

¹ Charles Woeste (1837-1922) was a conservative Catholic politician, named Minister of State in Belgium in 1891.

Khnopff, Fernand, (Lettre adressée à Camille David et Fernand Larcier), in *L'Idée Libre*, V, (Bruxelles, janvier-juillet 1903), 68-69.

Translation:

On Art and Pornography

Fernand KHNOPFF, painter:

1 ° it is not possible, on the current state of these words, to “delineate the relationship of art in relation to pornography.”

2 ° there are very delicate issues of conscience, on the one hand, and appreciation on the other.

3 ° the Woeste² Act may have flaws; but, in this time of shameless pornography, it has the merit of finally having drawn the strong attention of all to this painful subject.

FERNAND KHNOPFF

² Charles Woeste (1837-1922) was a conservative Catholic politician, named Minister of State in Belgium in 1891.

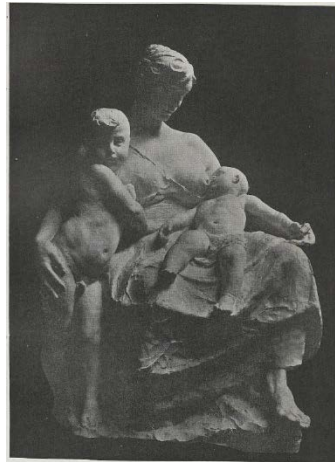
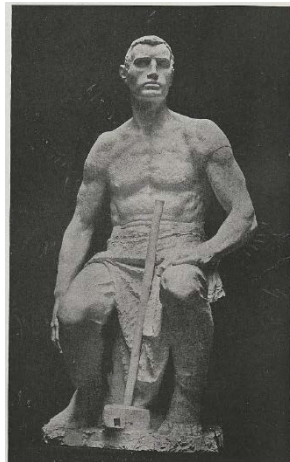
F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 28, 119 (February 1903), 58-60.

BRUSSELS.—The Artists' Club of Brussels began its series of winter exhibitions by a really magnificent display of the principal works of C. Meunier, collected in the great room, where they produced an impression of a life of toil and struggle crowned by triumphant and solid success.

The greater number of the works exhibited at the Club were well known, but by bringing them together their great qualities were enhanced and their real importance confirmed. It was seen, too, that after many years of hard work this great artist has shown in his latest productions no loss of power or enthusiasm.

His last work, the large seated figure of *The Blacksmith*, which is to occupy one of the angles of the *Monument to Labour*, is, perhaps, his most finished effort. It is fine, simple, dignified, and at the same time noble and full of life.

The *Monument to Labour* consists of four bas-reliefs, which are already famous: the toilers of the *Soil*, the *Mine*, the *Seaport*, and the *Foundry*; in addition to four figures at the corners, including *The Blacksmith* and *Motherhood*, and at the top the colossal statue of the *Sower*.



"The Blacksmith" by C. Meunier | "Motherhood," by C. Meunier

This important work is, in fact, the complete expression of the artistic dream of a modern mind, a man of the time; and the exhibition at the Artists' Club of the model of the monument as a whole roused the public to extraordinary enthusiasm. The Government hesitated to commission the artist to execute it, and when it became known that a great Danish patron of the arts, Mr. Jacobsen, intended presenting it to the City of Copenhagen, some members of the Artists' Club opened a subscription list, and names were rapidly added. It may, indeed, be said that never before in Belgium has such unanimous admiration been shown for any work of art.

At the Exhibition of the Brussels Club, calling itself "Le Labeur," which was held in the rooms of the Modern Museum, M. Cambier's contributions were worthy of note; so also were those of M. Othmann, whose colour schemes are bright and refreshing.

Finally, we have had the exhibition of the "Sillon" Club. Here M. Wagemans was this year conspicuous. He uses a very heavy impasto, with, perhaps, too evident cleverness. M. Smeers and M. Swyncop also try to paint powerfully, while the landscapes by M. Deglume please by their sincerity.

The *Man or Sorrows*, a sketch for a tomb by, M. Kemmerich, is broadly conceived and vigorously executed.

F. K.

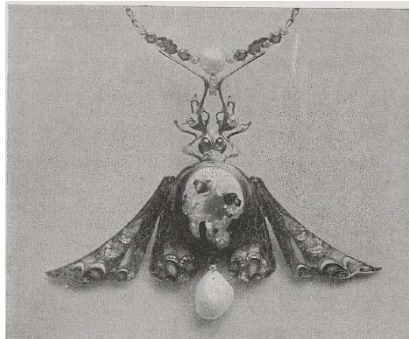
F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 29, 123 (June 1903), 70-71.

BRUSSELS.—The eleventh annual exhibition of the Brussels club *Pour l'Art* was noteworthy for a distinctly loftier vein of feeling and more careful execution than of yore, as seen especially in the examples sent by the painter A. Ciamberlani and the sculptor V. Rousseau.

M. Ciamberlani exhibited a series of good studies as well as the large painting called *Life Serene*, a very poetical and essentially decorative work, broadly and at the same time carefully painted. Among the various pieces sent by M. Rousseau what appears to have most captivated the public is a dainty statuette, *The Woman with a Hat*, wonderfully free and delicate in the modeling.

Of the monumental figures exhibited by M. Braecke and M. Derudder, that by M. Braecke was remarkable for its architectural simplicity of line, that by M. Derudder for dramatic emphasis. Among the painters, M. A. Verhaeren's studies of still life, very sumptuous in colour, attracted much attention; M. R. Janssens exhibited a fine *Interior of a Church*; M. O. Coppens some faithful studies of Flemish landscape; MM. Baes and Van den Eeckhoudt various pastel and charcoal studies; M. A. Lynen some extraordinary drawings, full of bold and happy fancy; M. Fabry, decoration.

The screen representing *Penelope*, embroidered by Madame Derudder, and the jewellery, of every variety, executed by M. Ph. Wolfers, once more showed with what skill these artists handle precious and decorative materials.



Pendant by P. Wolfers | Pendant by P. Wolfers

Some interesting exhibitions have recently been held in the rooms of the Cercle Artistique at Brussels: a collection of landscapes by M. A. J. Heymans, the finest of the Belgian landscape painters now living; and one of the works and studies of G. M. Stevens, including genre, portraits, landscapes and flowers, drawings and engravings. A series of landscapes, too, by M. Rul and M. Sohie; and *Scenes of Genre* by M. Jacobi.

M. J. Delvin, a painter of Ghent, whose work has often been praised in *THE STUDIO*, has been appointed Director of the Academy of Fine Arts at Ghent. It has been said with truth that "no better choice could have been made. To his merits as an artist M. Delvin

adds qualifications as a professor, which give great hopes as to the prospects of the school under his guidance.”

F.K.

1904

Fernand Khnopff, „Mein Haus,“ *Die Zeit*, 37-38, 483 (2 Jan. 1904), 9.

Mein Haus

Von Fernand Khnopff (Brüssel)

Als ich neulich die freundliche Aufforderung erhielt, der Wochenschrift „Die Zeit“ eine Schilderung meines Hauses zu geben, da zögerte ich, wie ich gestehen will, ein wenig, darauf einzugehen, denn es ist immer eine missliche Sache von sich selbst zu sprechen, und nun gar zu schreiben. Aber ich rief mir ein Wort Walter Cranes in Erinnerung: „Die Idee, dass ein bildender Künstler es unternimmt, eine Erläuterung zu seinem eigen Werk zu schreiben, wird seltsam erscheinen; indessen kann man es zugeben, wenn diese Arbeit sich auf das beschränkt, was man die Naturgeschichte dieses Werkes nennen kann, also auf die Quellen, die Einflüsse, das Ziel und das Ideal.“

Schliesslich muss ich auch noch hinzufügen, dass ich unklug genug gewesen war, dem Herrn, der mich aufforderte, oft von den reizenden Erinnerungen zu erzählen, die mir von meinem Besuchen in Wien verblieben sind, und er hat in ganz hinterlistiger Weise diese meine Vorliebe benützt, um mich zu bestimmen.

Ich werde mich damit begnügen, zwei Notizen des Brüsseler „Petit Bleu“ und des „Echo de Paris“ anzuführen und sie zu ergänzen, zu erläutern und zu berichtigen.³

Vor einigen Monaten brachte der „Petit Bleu“ ein Feuilleton: „Die Sezessionskirche.“ Dort hiess es: „Am Rande des Bois, an der Ecke der Avenue Jeanne und der Avenue des Courses erhebt sich ganz weiss, umgeben von grünem Laubwerk das Haus von Fernand Khnopff. Es ist rätselhaft und kalt, mit den sein Monogramm tragenden, goldig vergitterten runden Luken, seinen schwarzen Türen, seinen stummen Fenstern und seiner in goldenen Buchstaben schimmernden Zuschrift: „Vergangenheit—Zukunft:; das sonderbare Motto eines Idealisten, der Ohne Zweifel am liebsten die Gegenwart nicht kennen möchte. Die finsternen Mauern gebieten in starrer Vollendung Stille und Sammlung, und nur die schönen Rosen des Gartens bringen ein wenig Phantasie in dieses bewusste hinzielen auf eine hieratische Schönheit. An einem Tempel fühlt man sich erinnert, an das Grab und sogar und das Gefängnis, an das Gefängnis eines Traumes

³ Anonymous [Louis Dumont-Wilden], « L'Église de l'Esthétique », *Le Petit Bleu du matin* (vendredi 14 aout 1903), Sparklet [Flament, Albert], « Le Trottoir roulant. Mardi 1er décembre » , *L'Écho de Paris* (6 décembre 1903), 1. These articles were identified by Clément Dessy, „La maison d'artiste en portrait, manifeste et sanctuaire. L'exemple de Fernand Khnopff,“ in *The Aesthetics of Matter: Modernism, the Avante-Garde and Material Exchange*, ed. By Sarah Posman, Anne Reverseau, David Ayers, Sascha Bru, Benedikt Hjartarson (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2013. 235-248.

nämlich. Die spitzfindige Schönheit von Khnopffs Gemälden hat nicht aufgehört, in den Ausstellungen das Publikum in Erstaunen zu setzen, und man begreift deshalb, dass die Vorübergehenden sich in ähnlicher Weise über die Schönheit dieses Wohngebäudes verwundern, das wirklich wie ein „Khnopff in Stein“ aussieht. Was ist das? Fragen die Passanten. Eine Kirche? Der Tempel irgendeiner seltenen und feinen Religion? Das Museum eines Dilettanten? Ein Strassenjunge fand neulich die richtige Definition. Als eine Gruppen von Spaziergängern, sich verwundernd, stehen blieb, rief er aus: ‚Ich weiss, was das ist, das ist die Sezessionskirche!‘“

So sieht es von aussen aus. Und nun das Innere, in das man schwer hereinkommt, wie ich versichern kann. Auf eine amüsante Weise wurde es in dem „rollenden Trottoir“ des „Echo de Paris“ beschrieben. Aber diese Schilderung war eine indirekte. „Die Mehrzahl der Freunde Erneste Chaussons war nach Brüssel gereist, um der ersten Aufführung des „König Arthur“ beizuwohnen. Unter ihnen befanden sich Besnard und seine Frau, der Maler Lerolle, Maurice Denis, Odilon Redon und andere Maler. Noch immer gilt das Wort Théophile Gautiers: ‚Nur sie lieben die Musik.‘ Ein Maler sich lasse hier eine gar zu schmeichelhafte Bezeichnungen weg. Der Verfasser – Fernand Khnopff hat die Kostüme zu „König Arthur“ gezeichnet. O, das Interieur von Khnopff, seine Vorhalle mit den weissen Fliesen und weissen Mauern, sein weisser Speisesaal mit dem Tisch für zwei Personen und dem Ruhesessel mit einem Sitz! Khnopffs Atelier, noch staunenerweckender also alles übrige in seiner Mondenblässe, das Atelier, dessen Diele durch einem grossen goldenen Kreis veredelt wird, in den der Künstler das Bild hineinstellt, dem er Ehre erweisen will!“

Die Beschreibung des Äusseren war von jemand gemacht, der oft bei mir vorüberkommt, die des Innern stammt aus den unvollständigen Eindrücken eines kurzen Besuches.

Ich will hier nichts von den Einzelheiten des Baues und der Ausschmückung erzählen, ich weiss, dass eine deutsche Kunstzeitschrift die Absicht hat eine reiche illustrierte Beschreibung zu bringen, und wen es interessiert, den verweise ich darauf.⁴ Ich will hier nur sozusagen von dem moralischen Gefügen meiner Wohnung sprechen.

Nun also, von vornherein, diese Wohnung ist so wenig einladen wie möglich, und schon vom Vorzimmer aus und in hochmütiger Haltung ein indischer Pfau steht, kann man in dem funkelnden Stuck die aus Kupfernageln bestehende Zinschrift „Soi“ lesen. Sie befindet sich ganz allein auf einer Wand, und man wird sie noch mehreremale an anderen Stellen sehen.

Die Halle aus weissem Marmor und weissem Stuck ist durch mattblauseidene Portieren dreigeteilt. In einer Nische des ersten Teils befindet sich der wundervolle, vornübergeneigte Kopf der antiken Psyche. In dem zweiten sieht man einige weiss und hellgolden gerahmte Zeichnungen, in einer etwas tieferen Nische ein blaues Kelchglas

⁴ Wolfram Waldschmidt, "Das Heim eines Symbolisten," *Dekorative Kunst* (Jan. 1906), 158-166. Translated as: Wolfram Waldschmidt, "The House of a Symbolist," *House and Garden*, 10, 2 (August 1906), 87-90.

aus venetianischem Kristall auf einem blauen Säulchen vor einem blaugoldenen japanischen Gewebe. Endlich in dem dritten Abteil befindet sich ganz allein in einem schwarzen Rahmen, den die goldene österreichische Kaiserkrone ziert, eine Wiederholung meine Bildes der Kaiserin Elizabeth, die Originalzeichnung ist in der Wiener Hofburg.

Der Speisesaal ist aus weissem Marmor. Im Hintergrund, vor einem blau-und goldgegossenen Glasfenster habe ich eine weisse Statuette der Hoffnung mit goldenem Strahlenglanz aufgestellt.

Eine Treppe aus weissem Marmor führt ins Atelier hinauf längs eines ebenfalls aus weissem Marmor gefertigten Bassins, das in einem auch weissem Marmor zusammengesetzten Mosaik steht. Dieses schmücken drei grosse goldene Kreise.

Gegenüber dem Eingang erblickt man eine Art Altar und auf ihm eine von mir entworfene Umgestaltung des antiken „Kopfes mit einem Flügel“ – Hypnos – aus dem Britischen Museum. Die Augen sind aus Schmelzglas, und eine innen befindliche Nachtlampe lässt sie in der Dunkelheit leuchten. An den drei Stockwerken dieses Altars sind die Buchstaben angebracht, aus denen sich die Inschrift: „ON NE A QUE SOI“ zusammensetzt. Nur dieses letzte Wort ist vergoldet auf einem Plättchen aus blauem Lasierglas.

Ich unterlasse es, den Anblick der verschiedenen Atelierecken zu schildern oder all die Gegenstände und die Namen meiner Werke aufzuführen, die dort ihren endgültigen Platz gefunden haben. Nur eine sehr schöne Base aus altem Glas will ich erwähnen, die ich einmal bei Bakalowitz gekauft habe, und meine Studien zu dem Bild: „Liebkosungen“, das ich eines Abends zu meiner grossen Freuden in einem prachtvollsten Paläste der Alleegasse wiederfand.

In den ersten Stock steigt man auf einer bogenförmigen Treppen aus weissem Stuck, und durch eine vergoldete Metalltür tritt man in ein Ruhezimmer, auch dieses Blau und Gold. Durch eine breite Glassöffnung, die durchsichtige gestickte Vorhänge verschleiern, kann man von hier aus ins Atelier blicken.

Lang herunterhängende Vorhänge verhüllen übrigens alle Fenster in diesem „Gefängnis eine Traumes“, wie man so treffend diese Wohnung des Schweigens und der Einsamkeit genannt hat. So oft wie möglich hoffe ich, mich hier mit dem Eindruck zu erfüllen, anderswo zu sein, diesem so süssen, aber auch so entsetzlichen schwindelweckenden Gefühl des „anywhere out of the world.“⁵

⁵ Charles Baudelaire, „Anywhere Out of the World,“ *Petits Poèmes en prose*, 1869. [titled in English]

Translation:

Fernand Khnopff, "Mein Haus," *Die Zeit*, 37-38, 483 (2 Jan. 1904), 9.

My House

By Fernand Khnopff (Brussels)

When I recently received a friendly invitation from the weekly journal "Die Zeit" to give a description of my house, I will confess that I hesitated a little to accept, because it is always an awkward thing to talk of one's self, and even more to write about one's self. But I recalled in my memory a saying of Walter Crane: "The idea that a visual artist takes it upon himself to write an explanation of his own work will seem strange; however, one can accept it if this work is confined to what may be called the natural history of these artworks, that is the sources, the influences, the goal and the ideal."

Finally, I must also add that I had often been unwise enough to tell the gentleman who invited me of the lovely memories that have stayed with me from my visit in Vienna, and he has completely used my affection in this sneaky way to convince me.

I will content myself to begin with two notes from the Brussels "Petit Bleu" and the "Echo de Paris" and to expand on these, to explain and clarify.⁶

A few months ago the "Petit Bleu" published a feature: "The Secession Church." There it was said: "On the edge of the Bois, at the corner of the Avenue Jeanne and the Avenue des Courses rises the house of Fernand Khnopff, entirely white, surrounded by green foliage. It is puzzling and cold, bearing his golden monogram in the bars of the round window, with its black doors, its silent windows and the message: "Past—Future" shimmering in golden letters, the strange motto of an idealist who undoubtedly prefers not to know the present. The dark walls command silence and composure in their rigid perfection, and only the beautiful roses of the garden bring a little fantasy to this conscious striving for a hieratic beauty. One is reminded of a temple, a grave, and even a prison, the prison of a dream. The subtle beauty of Khnopff's paintings has not stopped the amazement of the audience at the exhibitions, and one understands why passersby similarly wonder about the beauty of this residential building that really looks like a "Khnopff in stone." What is that? Asks the passersby. A church? The temple of some exotic and fine religion? The museum of a dilettante? A street urchin recently

⁶ Anonymous [Louis Dumont-Wilden], « L'Église de l'Esthétique », *Le Petit Bleu du matin* (vendredi 14 août 1903), Sparklet [Flament, Albert], « Le Trottoir roulant. Mardi 1er décembre » , *L'Écho de Paris* (6 décembre 1903), 1. These articles were identified by Clément Dessy, "La maison d'artiste en portrait, manifeste et sanctuaire. L'exemple de Fernand Khnopff," in *The Aesthetics of Matter: Modernism, the Avante-Garde and Material Exchange*, ed. By Sarah Posman, Anne Reverseau, David Ayers, Sascha Bru, Benedikt Hjartarson (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2013. 235-248.

found the right definition. As a group of walkers, stood marveling, he cried out, 'I know what this is, this is the Secession Church!'"

So it looks from the outside. And now for the interior, which I make sure that one enters with difficulty. It was described in an amusing manner in the "Le Trottoir roulant" column of the "Echo de Paris." But this description was indirect. "The majority of the friends of Ernest Chausson had traveled to Brussels to attend the first performance of "King Arthur." Among them were Besnard and his wife, the painter Lerolle, Maurice Denis, Odilon Redon and other painters also. Still the phrase of Théophile Gautier applies: 'Only they love the music.' A painter would come away with a too flattering description. The creator—Fernand Khnopff has drawn the costumes for "King Arthur." O, the interiors of Khnopff, the entrance hall with its white tiles and white walls, the white dining room with the table for two and the easy chair with an ottoman! Khnopff's studio, still inspiring amazement with everything else in its lunar pallor, the studio whose floor is enhanced by a large golden circle in which the artist displays the picture that he wants to honor!"

The description of the exterior was made by someone who often comes to visit me, and that of the interior comes from the incomplete impressions of a short visit.

I will not recount the details of construction and the decoration here, as I know that a German art magazine intends to bring out a richly illustrated description, and I would refer those interested to it.⁷ I wish to speak here only of the moral structures of my dwelling.

So now, from the outset this residence is as little inviting as possible, and already in the antechamber an Indian peacock stands with arrogant attitude, and one can read in the sparkling stucco a message "Soi" [self] composed of copper nails. It is all alone on a wall, and you will see it several times in other places.

The hall is made of white marble and white stucco and is divided into three parts by matte blue silk curtains. In a niche of the first part is the wonderful, prone head of the ancient Psyche. In the second, one sees several white and pale golden framed drawings and in a slightly deeper niche, a blue goblet of Venetian crystal on a blue pillar in front of a blue and gold Japanese weaving. Finally in the third compartment, quite alone in a black frame, adorned with the golden Austrian Imperial Crown, is a copy of my portrait of the Empress Elizabeth, the original drawing being in the Hofburg in Vienna.

The dining room is made of white marble. In the background, in front of blue and gold stained glass windows, I have set up a white statuette of Hope with a golden radiance.

⁷ Wolfram Waldschmidt, "Das Heim eines Symbolisten," *Dekorative Kunst* (Jan. 1906), 158-166. Appeared in translation as: Wolfram Waldschmidt, "The House of a Symbolist," *House and Garden*, 10, 2 (August 1906), 87-90.

A staircase of white marble leads up to the studio, along a basin also made of white marble, which contains a white marble inlaid mosaic. This is decorated with three large golden circles.

Opposite the entrance one sees a kind of altar, and on it is my transformed design of the ancient "head with a wing"—Hypnos—from the British Museum. The eyes are made of fired glass, and with an internal night light they can glow in the dark. On the three levels of this altar, letters are attached which compose the inscription: "ON NE A QUE SOI" [One has only one's self]. This last word alone is on a small plate of blue etched glass.

I will refrain from describing the sight of various corners of the studio or to name all of the objects and the titles of my works which have found their final place there. I only want to mention a very nice base from old glass that I once bought from Bakalowitz, and my studies for the picture: "The Caresses," which to my great joy I rediscovered in a most magnificent palace of the Alleegasse [a street in Vienna].

To get to the first floor [second floor in the US] you climb a curved staircase made of white stucco, and one enters through a gilded metal door into a sitting room, which is also blue and gold. Through a wide glass opening, concealed by the transparent embroidered curtains, one can look down into the studio.

Long hanging curtains conceal all the windows in this "prison of a dream," as this dwelling of silence and solitude has been so aptly called. As often as possible I hope to experience here the impression of being somewhere else, this very sweet, but also so terrible, vertigo awakening feeling of being "anywhere out of the world."⁸

⁸ Charles Baudelaire, "Anywhere Out of the World," *Petits Poèmes en prose*, 1869. [titled in English]

Khnopff, Fernand, « Enquête sur l'impressionnisme » (Letter addressed to Octave Maus), *L'Art Moderne*, 24, 13 (27 mars 1904), 100.

Enquête sur l'Impressionnisme

M. Fernand Knopff

Cher Ami,

C'y les réponses à ton questionnaire:

1. L'impressionnisme est une de ces inévitables modifications de tendance qui se produisent périodiquement dans la représentation artistique de l'insaisissable Nature « aux multiples aspects ». L'impressionnisme s'est opposé aux excès de l'Académisme ; toujours, la balance entre l'observation directe et la stylisation traditionnelle.

2. Son « influence » a été « bonne » comme celle de tout effort sincère vers la Vérité.

3. La renommée de l'École belge doit à l'impressionnisme les œuvres les plus exquises de Heymans, le développement d'artistes tels que R. et J. Wytsman et sa révélation, peut-on dire, à Émile Claus. J'ajoute que l'organisation de ce Salon a été parfaite ; et il est incroyable, vraiment, qu'elle ait été aussi mal comprise.

Il était impossible, en somme, de procéder par un classement qui ne pouvait être qu'approximatif et arbitraire. Il n'y avait, absolument, qu'à montrer le groupe d'origine tel qu'il existe actuellement à Paris.

Mais tu connais la formule: Bien faire et laisser dire.

Fernand Knopff

Khnopff, Fernand, « Enquête sur l'impressionnisme » (Letter addressed to Octave Maus), *L'Art Moderne*, 24, 13 (27 mars 1904), 100.

Translation:

Inquiry on Impressionnism

Mr. Fernand Khnopff

Dear Friend,

Here are responses to your questionnaire:

1. Impressionism is one of these inevitable stylistic changes that occur periodically in the artistic representation of the elusive Nature "in multiple aspects." Impressionism is opposed to the excesses of Academism; always, the balance between direct observation and traditional stylization.

2. Its "influence" has been as "good" as that of any sincere effort toward the truth.

3. The reputation of the Belgian school owes to Impressionism the most exquisite works of Heymans, the development of artists such as R. and J. Wytman and the revelation, one may say, of Émile Claus. I would add that the organisation of this exhibition was perfect; and it is truly amazing that it was so poorly understood.

It was impossible, in sum, to proceed by a classification which could only be approximate and arbitrary. It was absolutely not intended to show the original group as they currently exist in Paris.

But you know the formula: do well and let others speak.

Fernand Khnopff

Fernand Khnopff, (Lettre à Frederic de Smet, directeur de *La Tribune Artistique*), in *La Tribune Artistique* (Gand), 1, 8 (20 juillet 1904), 106.

(Reponse to a questionnaire published in *La Tribune Artistique*, 20 juin 1904, 77-84, concerning an effort to reform the juries for the triennial Salons)

Lettre

Voici maintenant une idée émise par M. Fernand Knopff [sic], et qui mérite de fixer l'attention:

« J'ai lu votre travail avec d'autant plus d'intérêt que déjà pendant l'installation du dernier salon de Bruxelles, j'avais songé à des remaniements possibles de l'organisation des expositions « nationales ». Il est très difficile autant pour les « collectionneurs » belges que pour les étrangers de juger l'école belge dans son ensemble, les salons triennaux n'ayant plus l'importance d'autrefois et le manque de locaux faisant que dans la capitale les salons de cercles ne peuvent avoir lieu simultanément. On pourrait, me semble t-il, conserver les salons triennaux pour Gand Anvers et Liège, en accentuant leur caractère local, et avoir à Bruxelles un grand salon annuel ouvert en même temps que de les salons Paris et de Londres, ce qui permettrait la visite des étrangers « magnifiques » qu'attirent ces « foires aux huiles ».

« Pour la disposition des salles, le meilleur système me paraît être celui des grandes expositions internationales « quaternales » de Munich où sont réunis des groupes « indépendants » et pour ainsi dire « responsables ». C'est avec un très grand plaisir que j'ai retrouvé ces vagues projets actuellement précisés et soigneusement appropriés par vous, Monsieur, dans de multiples détails. Je termine en vous adressant mes vives félicitations en vous souhaitant prompte réalisation de vos intéressantes propositions. »

Fernand Khnopff, (Lettre à Frederic de Smet, directeur de *La Tribune Artistique*), in *La Tribune Artistique* (Gand), 1, 8 (20 juillet 1904), 106.

(Reponse to a questionnaire published in *La Tribune Artistique*, 20 juin 1904, 77-84, concerning an effort to reform the juries for the triennial Salons)

Translation:

Letter

Here now a suggestion by Mr. Fernand Knopff [sic] which deserves attention:

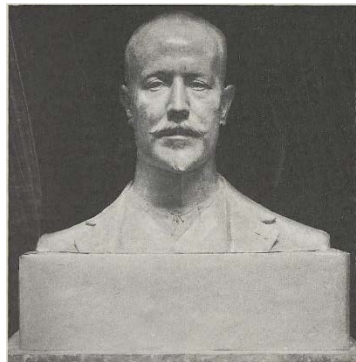
"I read your work with more interest than ever during the installation of the last exhibition in Brussels, when I thought of possible restructuring of the organization of the 'national' exhibitions. It is very difficult, both for Belgian 'collectors' and for foreigners, to judge the Belgian school in its whole, as the triennial exhibitions no longer have the importance they had in earlier times and the lack of premises makes it impossible for salons of the art clubs to take place simultaneously in the capital. One could, it seems to me, keep the triennial exhibitions at Ghent, Antwerp and Liège, highlighting their local character, and having a great annual show open in Brussels at the same time as the salons of Paris and London, which would allow the visit of 'magnificent' foreigners who are attracted to these 'fairs for oils'."

"For the layout of the rooms, the best system seems be that of the great international 'quaternales' exhibitions in Munich which bring together groups of 'independents' and so to speak 'responsibles.' It is with great pleasure that I found these vague current projects to be clarified and made suitable by you, sir, in multiple details. I finish by sending my warmest congratulations wishing you the speedy realization of your interesting proposals."

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 31, 134 (May 1904), 357-358.

BRUSSELS.—To sum up as briefly as possible the most noteworthy features of the successive exhibitions held in the Musée, it is enough to state that the ever-interesting Salon Pour l'Art showed, with other works of great originality, a number of fine sculptures by Victor Rousseau, and that the chief feature of the Salon de la Société des Beaux Arts was the exhibition for the first time in Brussels of three pictures by Sir W. B. Richmond, two of which were portraits.

According to the general opinion of critics, the exhibition of the Salon de Bruxelles was the very worst ever yet seen. I noted, however, an interesting new work by Jean Delville and a brilliant first exhibit by a young artist named Thomas. It was in the section of applied art, organised under the superintendence of M. Fierens-Gevaert, that the best things were shown; amongst which, in addition to the usual triumphs of skill sent by such experts as Horta, Wolfers, and Madame de Rudder, were some fine examples of the work of the decorative painter Fabry and the jeweller Feys.



"Bust of Fernand Khnopff" by Ch. Samuel | "Interior at Antwerp" by R. Janssens

At the Cercle Artistique exhibition after exhibition, all totally unlike, succeed each other. That which seemed to interest the public most was the show of the paintings of R. Janssens, the sculptures of Ch. Samuel, and the drawings of Fernand Khnopff. The exhibition of the works of O. Coppens and F. Baes also attracted a great many visitors.

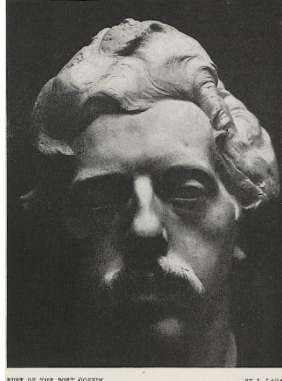
F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 32, 138 (September 1904), 358-360.

BRUSSELS.—The success of the exhibition of the Libre-Esthétique Society has been more remarkable this year than ever. The director, M. O. Maus, had organised a show of impressionist work; but as the exact meaning of that term is not even yet defined, he made no attempt to class the pictures included, for he could only have done so in an approximate and, to some extent, arbitrary manner. He therefore contented himself with selecting examples of the leaders in the movement as accepted in Paris. The following is the list of artists who were represented: Camille Pissaro, Edouard Manet, Alfred Sisley, Berthe Morisot, Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh, Georges Seurat, H. de Toulouse-Lautrec, Edgar Degas, Paul Cézanne, Claude Monet, Armand Guillaumin, Auguste Renoir, Mary Cassatt, Henry E. Cross, Maximilien Luce, Theo. Van Rysselberghe, Paul Signac, Pierre Bonnard, K. X. Roussel, Léon Voltat, Edouard Vuillard, Albert André, Maurice Denis, Georges D'Espagnat, and Charles Guérin.

The arrangement of the exhibition—indeed, its very *raison d'être*—was, however, greatly misunderstood by certain notable persons, who seem to have been attacked with an acute form of nationalism, for they called attention to the fact that only one Belgian artist, and that one a resident in Paris, was represented at a show taking place in galleries belonging to the State, with the result that endless discussions have been held on the subject, and the matter has even been the theme of an interpellation in Parliament.

The exhibition of the Société des Beaux-Arts was far less interesting than that of the Libre-Esthétique. It really seemed as if chance alone had governed the choice of the works collected. Some, it is true, were excellent, others quite second-rate, and others even less satisfactory. Those who admired the first were naturally disposed to ask why they should have to look at the others, and what can have been the aim of the committee of management in getting together such a heterogeneous set of examples of modern work! The very best picture was, without doubt, the portrait of the pianist L. De la Fosse by J. S. Sargent, R.A., which was reproduced in *THE STUDIO* in 1900; and the finest piece of sculpture was the bust of the poet Goffin by J. Lagae. We are specially glad to be able to reproduce it (see page 357), as it was placed in as bad a position as possible at the exhibition.



Bust of the Poet Goffin by J. Lagae

We must also mention *Le Mineur* by C. Meunier, *L'Automne* by E. Claus, *Les Derniers Rayons* by F. Courtens, *A Portrait* by Blanche, the charming coloured group by Desvallières, the busts by J. de Laing [sic] and J. Dillens, and, lastly, the numerous exhibits of Vinçotte and Gilsoul.

There were also very interesting exhibitions at the Cercle Artistique, including some portraits by Richier, some decorative work by Montald, and some landscapes by Verdye, which attracted many admiring visitors.

F.K.

[unsigned], "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 33, 140 (November 1904), 179-180.

BRUSSELS.—The "Société Royale des Aquarellistes" (the last exhibition of which took place in December) has sometimes been accused of being too exclusive, but the "Société Nationale des Aquarellistes et Pastellistes" (whose exhibition was opened last June) might with equal justice be reproached for acceding too readily to the many requests for admission to its ranks. The number of incompetent amateurs on the roll of the society is really far too great, and their valueless contributions militate very much against the general effect of the Salon. In spite of this, however, there are some few remarkable exhibits. To name but two, the works of MM. F. Gailliard and W. Delsaux are very fine. THE STUDIO has already reproduced several drawings of market scenes by the former, and the latter has exhibited some Zealand landscapes of varying merit, but all interesting and full of character.



"Le Violoniste" from the etching by F. Gailliard | "Forains" from the etching by F. Gailliard

The controversy aroused by the last exhibition of the "Libre-Esthetique" Society, resulted in the formation of a new group of artists who call themselves the *Peintres independants*. They will hold an exhibition every year at Brussels, and every three years at Antwerp, Ghent, and Liège. Amongst the names of the members are those of MM. Heymans Clans [sic—, Claus], Morren, Ensor Buysse, and Lemmen, with that of Mdlle. Boch.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 33, 141 (December 1904), 263-265.

BRUSSELS.—The name of the Brussels sculptor Godefroid Devreese has often been mentioned in these pages, and some of his works have been reproduced here: among others some characteristic busts and the design for the great monument to commemorate the battle of Courtrai. On the present occasion it is as a medallist that we have to consider him.

Godefroid Devreese was born at Courtrai in 1861. From the age of fifteen he practised sculpture in the studio of his father, Constant Devreese, who executed the statues of the Counts of Flanders which adorn the façade of the Hotel de Ville at Courtrai. In 1881 the young artist came to Brussels to attend the Académie des Beaux- Arts, and he worked diligently there for several years under the direction of the admirable Brussels sculptor, Charles Vander Stappen, whose remarkable qualities as an executant are equalled by his gifts as a teacher.



Medal by G. Devreese | Medal by G. Devreese

The great success achieved by his *Lace-maker* in 1898 has led Godefroid Devreese able sculptor though he is, to devote a considerable portion of his time to the execution of medals and plaques. He has had the honour of being the first Belgian medallist represented at the Musée du Luxembourg, whose eminent curator, M. Léonce Bénédict, obtained some specimens of his work in 1899.

The catalogue of his works published in 1903 by the French "Gazette Numismatique" already comprised nearly thirty examples.

His first plaque was modelled in 1895; the three that followed did not appear till 1898, among them being the *Lace-maker*, the badge of the members of the Provincial Council of Brabant. The artist thus personified the province of Brabant by means of its best known artistic industry, Brussels lace.

Two other plaques were executed in 1899, and in 1900 the *Young Polish Girl*. In 1901 he completed six medals, ornaments, and plaques, of which one was the medallion of M. Charles Buls, burgomaster of Brussels from December 1881 to December 1899, the

Communal Council having unanimously decided to present him with a portrait-medallion. This was a remarkably successful piece of work.

In 1902 he produced a larger number still: 12 medals and plaques, comprising among them one for the Belgian Photographic Association; the medal presented by the Belgian exhibitors to the art critic, M. Fierens-Gevaert, Commissioner-General for Belgium at the Turin Exhibition in 1902; the medallion (this one is cast, the others were struck), of M. Alphonse de Witte, Secretary of the Royal Numismatical Society of Belgium, and President of the Dutch and Belgian Société des Amis de la Médaille d'Art; and the medal made to celebrate the golden wedding of Baron de Vos van Steenwyk. All these showed an advance in the medallist's powers.



Medal by G. Devreese | Medal by G. Devreese



Medal by G. Devreese | Medal by G. Devreese

Further, in 1904 we have the extremely clever medal presented to M. G. van den Broeck, late Treasurer of the Royal Numismatical Society of Belgium.

The work of Devreese the medallist is remarkable for various qualities: the characteristic construction of the faces; the clean cutting of the profiles; ingenuity of invention in composition; and sureness in the placing of the subject. It is to be hoped that the numerous proofs he has given of these qualities will induce the official authorities to entrust him with the execution of their numismatic work.

F K.

1905

Khnopff, Fernand, "A Great Belgian Sculptor: Constantin Meunier," *The Studio*, 35, 147 (June 1905), 3-11.

A Great Belgian Sculptor: Constantin Meunier. By Fernand Khnopff.

In the early morning of Tuesday, April 4, Constantin Meunier died at Brussels, in his house in the Rue de l'Abbaye, where he had freely lived his noble life of work illuminated by fame. He had suffered for several months from cardiac trouble, and painful seizures had many times surprised him in the midst of his family, themselves harassed by ills from which he suffered in mind as much as he did from his own illness; but his great fortitude, his invincible determination to live and to work, had always got the upper hand. He had passed the whole of Monday in his studio, and had received a visit from the pianist Raoul Pugno, whose bust he had expressed the intention of modelling. Next day, towards six o'clock, he was suddenly attacked by suffocation, and passed peacefully away in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

"The art of our country has lost its crown," said M. Verlant, the director of the Fine Arts, in the fine discourse which he pronounced over the mortal remains of the great artist. It is not, however, merely one of the greatest artists of Belgium who has disappeared, but one of the greatest artists of all lands and of all time. Meunier's glory is not of a nation, but of mankind.

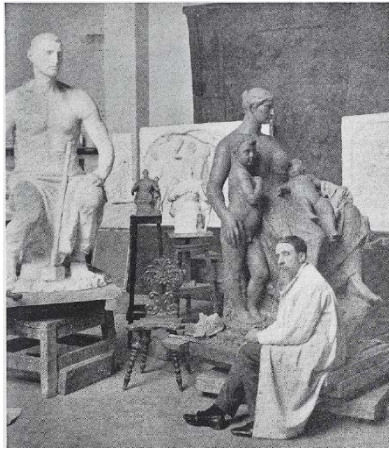
"A light of universal art has been extinguished," wrote M. O. Maus, in *L'Art Moderne*; "the nobility of his aesthetic philosophy, the grave beauty of the figures he has modelled, the pity which is breathed from his work, had borne his name to the ends of the world. No one, perhaps, before him had, after days of such gloomy experience, attained a more widespread renown. He worked hard, he suffered in his tenderest affections, his weak health obliged him more than once to take rest which was very irksome to his impatient activity. But nothing, from the day when the sunshine of fame first irradiated his life, arrested his slow and sure progress towards the conquest of hearts. When he died he had completely attained a recognition which he owed as much to the loyalty and simplicity of his life as to the magnificence of his art."

Camille Lemonnier writes in his fine work dedicated to Meunier:—"The mark of that true greatness which history will assign to him, is that he has noted the eternal amongst that which is transitory, and the type amid human generalities."

Constantin Meunier is *par excellence*, the painter, and above all the sculptor of the working-man. Without being guided by any systematic considerations of literature or of politics, but led by an instinct as potent as it was simple, he was the first to perceive new elements of beauty in the deeper strata of popular life, and he saw that it was his business to make this known.

The art of Meunier is a sincere expression of beautiful pity or of compassionate beauty.

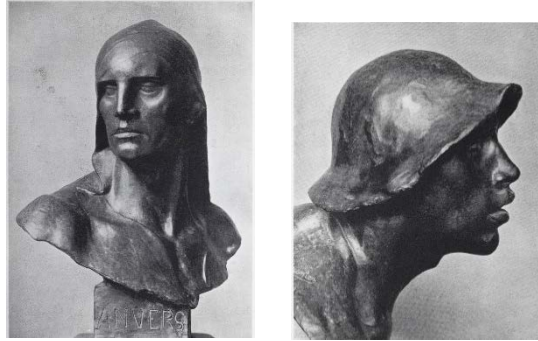
As M. Dumont-Wilden (one of our finest art critics) has justly written:—"This is an exact picture of labouring humanity, the splendid presentment of the eternal struggle of man against natural fatalities—that great dolorous drama which is of all time, but that our times, with their huge industries and congested, overheated centres of work, see, perhaps, under a grander and more terrible aspect than did bygone ages. To find an element of beauty in the factory; to discover the harmonious rhythm of a body beneath the miner's working-jacket; to conjure up the artistic emotion which lurks beneath the rough exterior of a *coron*, or in the dismal oppressiveness of an industrial town: what a singular and gigantic task is this, when one comes to think of it! What marvellous intuition in an artist whom destiny seems to have formed expressly for this task! And, indeed, the life of Constantin Meunier, harmonious, sad and simple, like one of his works, was but a slow preparation for the splendid fruition of his later years."



Constantin Meunier in his Studio from a photograph by M. Duyk |
"Les Mineurs" by Constantin Meunier (Photograph by P. Becker)

Constantin Emile Meunier was born on April 12th, 1831, at Etterbeck, a suburb of Brussels. "His father, Louis," writes M. J. Du Jardin in his important work, "L'Art Flamand," "was a tax collector, and his mother, *née* Charlotte Filemont, had borne her husband six children, three boys and three girls. Shortly after the birth of the future artist his father died. The resources of Mme. Meunier were reduced to her widow's pension, quite inadequate for the bringing up of her children. She owned a house in the Place du petit Sablon, and she left Etterbeck to settle in the town. She there opened a *magasin de modes*, let apartments, and was thus able to think of the future without apprehension. Her young daughters (one of whom married later the engraver Auguste Danse), were soon able to help her in the business; her eldest son, Jean-Baptiste, obtained work at a printer's as a typographer, the second was employed in a government office, whilst the youngest, Constantin, was still occupied with his elementary schooling. By what concatenation of circumstances, however, did the artistic vocation reveal itself in Jean-Baptiste and in his brother? Théodore Fourniois (the great Brussels landscapist) had come to live at Mme. Meunier's. He it was, perhaps, who gave them a taste for art. However that may be, Jean-Baptiste shortly afterwards became a

pupil of Calamatta (who directed the school of engraving at Brussels), with the intention of learning to wield the burin; then he in turn developed the germ of art in his younger brother, and it must have been interesting to see the journeyman-printer, burdened with a double labour, that of the workshop as well as that of engraving (for he continued to practise his trade), correcting the first attempts of the great painter-sculptor whose work is now before us.



“Anvers” by Constantin Meunier | “Le Pudeur” by Constantin Meunier (Photographs by P. Becker)

The young man set himself to work enthusiastically at drawing; and when, shortly after, he presented himself at the studio of the sculptor Fraikin, the latter received him with the words:- “Thank goodness, *you* can draw!” “But with Fraikin,” as Meunier used to relate, “my time was passed in moulding or preparing the plastic clay which the master needed for his work. Occasionally I received a casual lesson in modelling; and nevertheless I looked upon my professor as a god! To please him, to get into his good graces, I made no objection to anything; for I did all the odd jobs, and even lighted the stove with infinite care.”

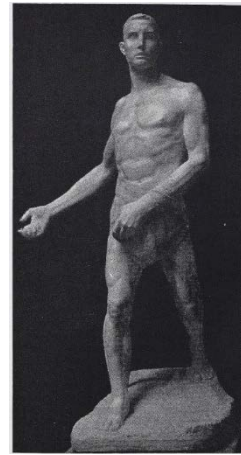


“Le Pêcheur” by Constantin Meunier | “Une Hiercheuse” by Constantin Meunier (Photographs by P. Becker)

In 1851, at the age of twenty, Meunier exhibited a plaster sketch, *La Guirlande*, at the Brussels Salon. This was but an attempt, which could not satisfy him; he aspired to a more direct study of Nature, to the observation of a model who does not pose. He entered the Atelier St. Luc, one of those private studios where a few young artists club

together to pay for a model and for lighting. He there met friends, enthusiastic, independent comrades, and the painters attracted him towards painting. Led by Ch. Degroux, "the painter of realistic sorrows," he decided to abandon the chisel for the brush. A certain amount of success encouraged him at the outset; but this success did not make much noise, and, above all, was not very lucrative. Constantin Meunier had married young; his family was numerous, and the anxieties of material existence often tormented his working hours. He had to bring himself to accept many distasteful tasks, and was even reduced to "drawing saints for printed handkerchiefs."

At last, after long years of struggle, his appointment as director of the Académie des Beaux-Arts at Louvain allowed him some rest.

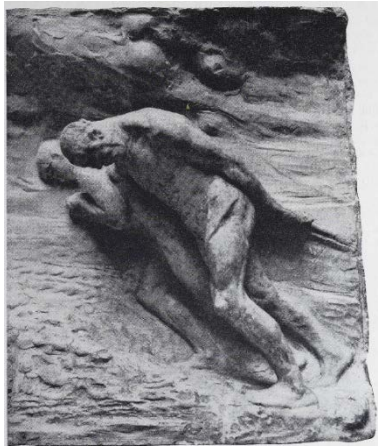


"L'Industrie" by Constantin Meunier | "Le Travailleur des Champs" by Constantin Meunier | "Le Semeur" (Photographs by P. Becker)

It then came about that Camille Lemonnier, who was commissioned to describe Belgium for the French review "Le Tour du Monde," asked Constantin Meunier to illustrate the pages devoted to the workers in factories and mines. This was like a revelation to him; he had, so to speak, a sudden intuition of the new aesthetic vision which he was to bestow on his country and on his age; the aesthetics of the people, "the aesthetics of work" "From this moment," wrote M. Dumont-Wilden, in the "Petit Bleu," "it was a new Meunier who was evolved. It seemed as though his whole previous life had been but a long preparation, an unconscious apprenticeship. From this moment forward his work developed with surprising and methodical rapidity. The grief caused by the death of his two sons, far from breaking the artist's strength, threw him entirely upon his work, and made his art deeper, sadder, more human than ever. After various pictures, water colours and drawings, he returned to sculpture; and then—first in his studio at Louvain, and afterwards (when he had quitted that official post, which soon became a burden) in his studio in the Rue Albert de Latour, there was feverish and yet regular work, work which occupied every moment, and was in a few years to result in an immense achievement.

It is unnecessary to recall to my readers' memory the greater number of these noteworthy productions; they may almost be called popular. But we cannot do better than conclude this brief notice by quoting the end of the funeral oration pronounced by M. Verlant:—

“Constantin Meunier, passing on one occasion beyond the bounds of his realistic art, determined to consecrate its expression in a mystic symbol. And he sculptured the Man of Sorrows, the Christ of the humiliated and despised: the poor emaciated body, as the old Gothic masters depicted it; the head, heavy with all its vicarious agony, bowed down in an overwhelming depression as though he were never to hear in heaven the promise of redemption.” In this supreme achievement we find once more asserted the sombre character of Constantin Meunier's work, considered as a whole, as it may in the future, or even already, be studied in its integral development at the Brussels Museum.” The grave, which his serious cast of thought made him bear ever in mind, will to-day receive his mortal remains. But we confidently believe that the man who was so dear to us, so good and so great, has not worked, has not striven, has not suffered in vain. Though dead he is not lost to us; he has but become a glorious source of light.”



“La Glèbe” by Constantin Meunier (Photograph by P. Becker)

1906

Khnopff, Fernand, "The Art of the Late Alfred Stevens, Belgian Painter," *The Studio*, 39, 165 (December 1906), 211-224.

The Art Of The Late Alfred Stevens, Belgian Painter. By Fernand Khnopff.

When in February, 1900, a group of French painters in Paris, under the presidency of the Comtesse Greffulhe, the *grande dame* of Art, obtained for the Belgian painter, Alfred Stevens, the honour (hitherto without precedent for a living artist) of an exhibition at the École des Beaux-Arts, that subtle poet, the Comte Robert de Montesquiou, wrote a preface for the catalogue in which he formulated his delicate appreciation of the master in so definite a fashion that I cannot do better than simply transcribe it here in great part:

"Alfred Stevens; the last—and perhaps the first—of those lesser Flemish masters who were great masters, since he surpasses Terburg and yields in no point to Vermeer.

"Stevens, whom I would willingly call the *sonnettiste* of painting, for the art with which, in his exquisite panels, he combines so harmoniously all the sheen of mirrors and satins, of lacquers and enamels, of eyes and of gems.



The Late Alfred Stevens from a photograph by Dornac, Paris

"Stevens, concerning whom the present sovereign of Flanders might have repeated, on sending him to France (a gift precious above all others!), the Duke of Burgundy's words about Van Eyck: 'I send you my best workman!'

"Among the many claims of this subtle monographist of the eternal feminine to our admiration I would signalise the art with which, in his skilful and refined pictures, he varies the *motif* of Woman and Love under the form of that *billet-doux*, so often torn and scattered to the winds like the petals of a white rose; till Stevens might almost be called the '*peintre aux billets*,' as an old Swiss master was once the '*peintre aux œillets*.'

"I claim another merit for him—for that future of his which already exists in the present—in his contribution to the history of costume. In the retrospective view of Alfred Stevens's canvases we find the curious fashions of the Second Empire, and

especially those Indian cashmere shawls of which Stevens will ever remain the unique painter, as was his master, Van der Meer [Vermeer] of Delft, of those vast unrolled maps which hang azure oceans and many-coloured continents on the peaceful walls of Dutch interiors.”

Alfred-Émile-Léopold-Joseph-Victor-Ghislain Stevens was born at Brussels on May 11, 1823; His father, Jean-François-Léopold, had been an orderly officer of William I., King of the Netherlands. His mother was Cathérine-Victoire Dufoy. Three sons, Joseph, Alfred and Arthur, with a daughter who died young, were born of the marriage. “The eldest was that other great painter who (as Camille Lemonnier has said in his fine monograph on Alfred Stevens) deserves a place by the side of Decamps and Troyon as a marvellous animal-painter; to his contemporaries the youngest was the ambassador of Rousseau, çand Corot, then still subjects of discussion and almost obscure.”

The father of the future master loved pictures passionately, buying and selling them from predilection; it is therefore no matter for surprise that while still quite a child, attending the courses at the Athenée in Brussels, Alfred Stevens worked on Thursday afternoons (his holiday) in the studio of François-Joseph Navez, devoting himself solely to drawing, because the master categorically forbade his pupils to paint until they had thoroughly acquired the science of form. “One day,” writes the painter of the *Dame en Rose* to M. Jules Du Jardin (the learned author of “L’Art Flamand,” a valuable work which yields us much information), “one day we were told that M. Navez would not come to correct the studies of his pupils. I begged a little money from my grandmother, Mme. Dufoy, and I painted a large head from nature. As it chanced M. Navez came after all, towards evening. ‘Who painted this head?’ he demanded, on seeing my work, hastily thrust into a corner. ‘Little Stevens,’ someone replied. ‘Put on your cap, I shall take you to your grandfather,’ said the classical painter, and he took me by the hand. I confess that I was trembling all over when we arrived at the house of M. Dufoy, a worthy and honest man of commerce. But my fright turned to stupefaction when I heard Navez inform Dufoy: ‘I have come to tell you that your grandson is going to be a great painter some day.’ And I still possess that study of a head, my first success in painting. I don’t know why, but it suggests Géricault; for many French artists, and not unimportant ones either, have said to me: ‘What a fine thing of Géricault’s you have there!’”

The artistic vocation which revealed itself thus suddenly in the child corresponded fully with the secret desires of his parents, who were little inclined to oppose it. Alfred was entered for the evening drawing courses at the Brussels Académie, and his rapid progress was remarked. In 1844 he went to Paris, where he continued his studies under the painter Camille Roqueplan, a friend of his father. Roqueplan soon fell ill, however, and had to go to the south of France. The young man thereupon gained admission to the École des Beaux-Arts, entering sixteenth among a large number of candidates. He thus enjoyed the teaching of many celebrities of the French school, notably that of Ingres, concerning whom he liked to relate that the old master, recognising how thoroughly versed he was in osteology, advised him one day, when correcting one of his

drawings from nature, to look upon what, for example, was really a kneecap, as a mere stone, for fear of conventionality.



“Le Sphinx Parisien,” from the painting in the Musée d’Anvers by Alfred Stevens (Photo by P. Becker) | “La Visite Matinale” by Alfred Stevens. (In A. Sarens’ collection. Photo, P. Becker, Brussels)

A family bereavement—the death of Mme. Dufoy—recalled the student to Brussels, and it was in Belgium, after this event, that he painted his first picture, *Un Soldat Malheureux*. It was purchased from him by M. Godecharle, a picture-dealer and a son of the celebrated sculptor. Towards the end of 1849 Alfred Stevens returned to Paris, but being unable to afford the rent of a studio for himself alone, he established himself in that of his compatriot, Florent Willems, and prepared for his *début* as an artist. This he achieved in a brilliant manner, and his first works attracted much attention. In the “Revue de l’Exposition Générale de Bruxelles de 1851” was to be read as follows: “Although the latest comer, M. Alfred Stevens is among those who have *arrived* the first. We place him at the head of genre painters for his three charming little pictures, *Soldat Huguenot*, *Regrets de la Patrie*, and *L’Amour de l’Or*. They are three exquisite pearls, the value of which has been speedily recognised by connoisseurs.”



“Désespéré” by Alfred Stevens (Musée d’Anvers. Photo by P. Becker) | “Une Conversation à la Campagne” from the painting in the Marlier Collection by Alfred Stevens. (Photo by P. Becker)

But before proceeding further our readers must be assured that it is useless to attempt to describe the works achieved by Alfred Stevens during the best years of his life (towards the end of his long career embarrassed circumstances sometimes forced hasty and superabundant production upon him). These beautiful paintings do not lend themselves to “literary transposition;” for their essential technical beauty surpasses all comparison; they must be seen and admired in their actuality. We shall therefore content ourselves with collecting various fragments of criticism which help to show how and by whom these memorable achievements were appreciated. Alfred Stevens’s career had opened brilliantly, and his subsequent success never failed. In 1853, he exhibited the *Matin du Mercredi des Cendres* in Paris. This canvas was bought by the French Government, and presented to the Musée of Marseilles. In the same Salon he had also *Le Découragement de l’Artiste*, and a scene studied from nature—the spectacle of a man found assassinated at Montmartre, painted in the historical style, according to advice given the young master by Troyon. This painting won him the first medal. In 1855 he obtained another medal at the Exposition Universelle for the picture named *Chez Soi*; and in the same year, at the Antwerp Exhibition, he was given the cross of the Order of Leopold—thanks to the influence of Henry Leys. Two years later *La Consolation* won such admiration in the Paris Salon that Gustave Planche, the famous critic of “La Presse,” would not deign to bestow a word on anyone save Alfred Stevens and Gustave Courbet.

At the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867 Alfred Stevens triumphed afresh; he exhibited eighteen works—marvels that in his “Salons” Thoré Burger qualified in these terms: “The *Dame en Rose* . . . shines amid the elegant company like the finest flower in the centre of a fresh bouquet. This painting, and some others by M. Alfred Stevens, exhale a sort of perfume. There is certainly much analogy between colours and odours. The *Dame en Rose* smells a little of the camellia. The young woman in pale lemon-colour smells of amber. . . . In *Tous les Bonheurs* a beautiful woman in garnet-coloured velvet is suckling her child. After the pink lady and the lemon-yellow lady, one of the most fascinating is the pearl coloured lady. She stands in profile beside a table, upon which is a vase of *Fleurs d’Automne*: she has flaxen hair, and a black mantilla over her dress, flat grey in tone. All in a minor key, as we should say in music; all ‘broken,’ as we may say in painting. The great colourist Velazquez played on such gamuts of harmony. Another young girl admires *L’Inde à Paris*—a little elephant of precious materials. Another hangs a branch of box over a portrait. Another reads a letter which brings her *Une douloureuse Certitude*. Another looks out of the window to see whether *Le Temps incertain* will prevent her from going out. . . . Another . . . but you see very well that what they are doing is a matter of indifference. They are living the lives of ‘women of quality.’ The insignificance of the ‘subject’ in these pictures by Alfred Stevens possesses therefore its own significance, perfectly expressing the ways of aristocratic society—even of middle-class society. . . . Ever it is the rule that the subject scarcely matters, provided that the artist has rendered well what he has chosen to depict. M. Alfred Stevens chooses women of elegance for his subjects; and no one paints better the new and rich stuffs,

the embroidered cashmeres, the carpets and the small details of luxurious dwellings. He draws and models correctly figures, heads, arms and hands, a rare achievement among painters of miniature figures. His execution has that breadth which we demand in pictures of large dimensions.”

In 1869 the master travelled in Spain and afterwards in Holland. It never occurred to him to visit either Germany or Italy.

During the war of 1870 Alfred Stevens would not leave Paris, and on September 4, 1871, he wrote to General Trochu for permission to enter a regiment of French cavalry; to which (writes M. J. Du Jardin) the general replied that two reasons militated against the realisation of his desire—the first, his being an alien; the second, his talent as an artist. But fight he must, nevertheless! He wrote next to his acquaintance, Étienne Arago, mayor of Paris (who tells the story in his “Histoire du Siège de Paris,” holding up this Belgian as an example to those Frenchmen who had left their country in the hour of danger), and having obtained permission to bear arms and to join the Garde Nationale, he sent his wife and children to Brussels, and himself remained in Paris alone with his mother. He remained in France after the peace, and his renown and his genius were still growing.

At the historic exhibition of Belgian art at Brussels in 1880 Stevens had a triumph.



“La Dame en Rose” by Alfred Stevens (*Musée de Bruxelles. Photo P. Becker*) | “La Dernier Jour du Veuvage” by Alfred Stevens (*In the Warocque Collection. Photo P. Becker*)

Again at the exhibition of portraits of the century, at Brussels, his great past portraits of women made a sensation; as did also his sketches for the panorama of the history of the century, painted on the occasion of the Exposition Universelle at Paris in 1889 (with the collaboration of H. Gervex, and the assistance of some meritorious young artists, among whom we may mention Stevens’s son, Léopold, P. Sinibaldi, Gilbert, Picard, and the architect Cugnet).

“In December, 1895,” says M. J. Du Jardin, “there was a feast for the eyes in the Maison d’Art, Avenue de la Toison d’Or, Brussels: here were to be found collected together the greater number of the works of the celebrated artist. He has obtained—let us put it on

record—all the highest distinctions and official honours, to which he attaches great importance, while honestly doubting whether he has deserved them.”

And this was indeed an entire feminine world, which justified the following noteworthy remarks by Camille Lemonnier:—“I recognise two great painters of womanhood in the present century-Alfred Stevens and François Millet. Poles asunder as they are in their points of view, they have in their two methods of understanding her summed up the modern woman from one extreme to the other. Millet’s woman does not live; she gives life to others. Stevens’s lives herself, and gives death to others. The atmosphere breathed by the former is eternally refreshed by the winds, and is bounded only by the great open firmament. The latter, on the contrary, breathing an atmosphere of poison, stifles in mystery; pain, and perfumes....Alfred Stevens and François Millet open out in their women great vistas into the unknown. They each present the problem of woman, and pose her in the attitude of the ancient Sphinx. The world of woman touches the world of man, moreover, at so many points that to paint woman is to paint us all, from the cradle to the grave. It will be the characteristic mark of the art of this century that it has approached contemporary life through woman. Woman really forms the transition between the painting of the past and the painting of the future.”



“L’Atelier.” By Alfred Stevens. (*Musée de Bruxelles. Photo P. Becker*) | “La Visite.” by Alfred Stevens (*In Ve. Cardon’s Collection. Photo P. Becker*)

If the work of Alfred Stevens has inspired pages in this grand style from the pen of such a powerful writer, it has also produced from the painter himself certain remarks, ranging in tone from gay to grave, and generally of profound interest to his brother-artists. It is for their benefit that we have selected a few of these “Impressions”:



“Tous les Bonheurs” by Alfred Stevens (*Musée de Bruxelles. Photo P. Becker*)

“I. We must be of our own time: we must submit to the influence of the sun, of the country in which we dwell, of our early education.—II. A man does not understand his art well under a certain age.—IV. One should learn to draw with the brush as soon as possible.—XIII. Nobody is a great painter save on condition of being a master workman.—XIV. Execution is style in painting.—XX. An even mediocre painter who paints his own period will be more interesting to futurity than one who, with more talent, has only painted times which he has never seen.—XXXVII. A picture cannot be judged justly until ten years after its execution.—XLII. Painters who depict their own time become historians.—XLVII. Woe to the painter who receives approbation only from women!—L. We can judge an artist’s sensibility from a flower that he has painted.—LXIII. In the art of painting one must first of all be a painter; the thinker comes afterwards.—LXXIII. A picture should not, as is commonly said, stand out from its frame; the very opposite should be said.—XC. Time beautifies sound painting and destroys bad.—XCI. Bad painting cracks in stars; good painting becomes like fine crackle china.—CXV. To paint modern costume does not constitute a modernist. The artist attracted by modernity must above all be impregnated with a modern feeling.—CXXIV. There should be quinquennial exhibitions in which each artist should only be permitted to exhibit one single figure that said nothing.—CXXVII. By looking at the palette of a painter, we may know with whom we have to reckon.—CXLVI. A fine picture of which one admires the effect at a distance should equally support closer scrutiny.—CCIV. The execution of a fine painting is agreeable to the touch.—CCV. A true painter is always a thinker.—CCVIII. Certain Dutch masters seem to have painted with precious stones ground into powder.—CCXLVII. To have a master’s picture retouched is a crime that ought to be severely punished by law.—CCLII. Nothing is pardoned in a single figure picture; many things are excused in a picture with several figures.—CCLVI. Painting is not done for exhibitions: refined work is smothered at the Salon; “shouters” come off better.—CCLXVII. The sincere approbation of his brother-artists is the most flattering reward a painter can have.—CCLXVIII. Nothing can equal the happiness felt by a painter when, after a day’s labour, he is satisfied with the work accomplished; but in the contrary case what despair is his!—CCXCIV. The Flemings and the Dutch are the first painters in the world.—CCXCV. An arm by Rembrandt, though perhaps too short, is yet alive; an arm by

the proficient in theory, though exact in proportion, remains inert.—CCXCVI. Rubens has often been of harm to the Flemish School; while Van Eyck has never been anything but its benefactor.”

FERNAND KHNOPFF.

1907

Khnopff, Fernand, "A Belgian Painter: Léon Frederic," *The Studio*, 40, 169 (April 1907), 170-181.

A Belgian Painter: Léon Frederic.

By Fernand Khnopff.



"En Pays Flamand." By Léon Frederic.

"The work of Léon Frederic asserts itself with force; it is at once homogeneous and varied; it springs from a supreme conscientiousness. The sacred rhythms of labour endow it with the religious significance of a sort of perpetual pantheist festival, magnifying the two forces—God and his creatures—in relation to Earth. Thence his work takes the fulness and the unity of those productions wherein one recognises the hand of a great artist. And although he may not have created a concrete type of art, after the manner of a Millet or a Meunier, his lucid spirit of observation has enabled him to realise in their general truth and their essential physiognomical particularities the Walloon and the soil he inhabits."

Thus it is that M. Camille Lemonnier, in his fine literary and critical work, "The Belgian School of Painting: 1830-1895," sums up his appreciation of the works of the Brussels painter. Léon Frederic was born in Brussels on the 26th of August, 1856. His father, a jeweller by trade, lived in the Rue de la Madeleine, in the centre of the town, his house being so small that it would not comfortably hold his numerous family, consisting of five children, four of them boys. His business had improved rapidly; consequently it was necessary, little by little, to devote almost the whole place to the purposes of the workshop which was, in fact, what the whole house eventually became. The household was thus called upon to sacrifice its comforts and its pleasure, and the children had to be sent away—some to boarding-school, and others to stay with relatives in the country.

Little Léon, when less than six years old, was first sent to Uccle, a village in the neighbourhood of Brussels, and then to Melle, near Ghent, where he was taught at the Institut des Joséphites, remaining a pupil at that institution till he had reached the age of fifteen.



“La Pensée qui s’éveille” by Léon Frederic | “La Cerisier Fleurie” by Léon Frederic

The visits of his parents were necessarily few and brief. The child soon began to suffer keenly from his loneliness, and his character became strongly concentrated. He grew timorous and silent, and remained indifferent to the attractions of the life of his fellows. Meanwhile, recalling his early years spent in the country, he felt growing within him a profound admiration of Nature, as revealed to him on all sides.

“At last” (writes M. Du Jardin, in his important work on Flemish Art) “the lad reached his fifteenth year. The father, like all business men a positive type of person, then began to think of a career for his son. The boy has already shown some inclination towards art. Good. Nothing could be better! He should become a painter-decorator. At once he made him a pupil-apprentice of Charles Albert, a Brussels decorator, well known at the time. But his apprenticeship was not destined to be of long duration. Alexandre Robert, the 'romantic' painter, was a friend of the Frederic family, and said he to the father: 'Make your boy a decorator if you like, but for goodness sake let him learn the elements of decoration, that is to say, drawing; and I know of no better school to teach him the art of drawing, which is of the first importance, than the Académie.' Thus it came about that for a couple of years Léon Frederic attended the Academy classes. At that period Jean Portaels had under his charge a second set of pupils, who attended his *atelier libre*. And it was under the discipline of Portaels that Frederic learned to paint, until the time when the class was disbanded. Then he was free to continue his artistic education with Ernest Slingeneyer.”

Frederic then went up for the Prix de Rome, but was “ploughed” in the preliminary. Nevertheless, his father, being of opinion that a stay in Italy was the complement of all artistic education, gave him permission to visit the classic home of painting, and his visit had a considerable influence over the young artist. As Octave Maus in “L'Art Moderne” very justly remarks: “If I had to fix the spiritual ancestry of Léon Frederic I should be inclined to seek it, on the one hand, among the Italian masters of the sixteenth century—Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, or some other such painter equally frank and thoughtful; on the other, among the old Flemish painters who were passionately fond of the direct study of Nature, and who, from sheer joy of painting, discovered in the intimate life around them sources of inspiration which were constantly being renewed.

The Italians would seem to have bequeathed to him, together with a regard for harmony of setting, an inclination in the direction of the mystic charm of womanly and childish beauty. From the others he derives that love of the beings and the things around him, which he reproduces unceasingly with the most scrupulous exactitude, being convinced that in point of beauty Nature is unsurpassable, and that the greatest work of art cannot attain to the splendour of an open flower, a field of corn waving in the breeze, a bird of variegated plumage, a hurrying of the clouds, a stream flowing between grassy banks. Eugène Fromentin, in 'Les Maîtres d'Autrefois,' has observed that Italian art is 'at home' throughout Europe, save in Belgium, whose spirit it has distinctly influenced but never conquered, and in Holland, which formerly made a semblance of consulting it, and finally passed it by. This is true in so far as it relates to Mabuse, the first Flemish painter to visit Italy, to Van Orley, to Floris, to Coxie, and it was the same with regard to Frederic. The double, and apparently contradictory, influence he underwent invests his art with a very special character. At once idealistic, and yet strongly impregnated with reality, it expresses eternal symbols in the most ordinary language of life. The types by which he is inspired are taken at random and placed on the canvas in all their simple truth of attitude and gesture and feature, with a savour of rusticity at times somewhat acrid, in strong contrast with the nobility of the parts assigned to them. As a poet, Léon Frederic mentally transposes the visions which Nature offers, and, doubtless, when a young mother appears before him in the fields, some inconscient phenomenon reveals to him the ingenuous silhouette of the Madonna."

One may see in the first works of Frederic exhibited since 1878 traces of the manner of Emile Wauters, whose famous picture, *La folie d'Hugo van der Goes*, had created a profound impression shortly before in the art-world of Brussels. His painting was remarkable at that time for the somewhat theatrical character of its composition, for its fulness of tone, and particularly for its full and simple drawing and touch. But after 1881 his manner changed, under another influence; his drawing became more minute, more precise, his shades of colour more delicate, his executive work less apparent. It was then that appeared the first triptych of the *Legend of St. Francis*.

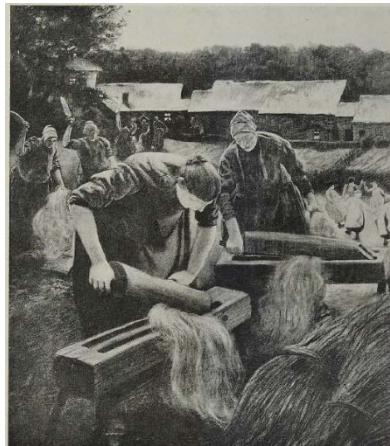


"Les Marchands de Craie" by Léon Frederic (Brussels Gallery)

The model he used most frequently at that time was a wretched wayfarer, struggling from morn till eve to earn a living for himself and his children by selling chalk in the outskirts. The story of this miserable life inspired the artist to create his great triptych,

Les Marchands de Craie, which is now in the Brussels Gallery. It is generally regarded as his masterpiece. On the left panel the painter shows the start in the misty morning; in the centre the family meal by the roadside; on the right the return in the dusk of night. Thenceforward Frederic's intimate knowledge of the life of the poor impelled him to compose a series of pictures, most tender and touching in expression. Then came an event—a very simple event in a man's life, a mere excursion—which had the effect of suggesting to him new subjects of study. A relative, affianced to a teacher at Nafraiture, a little village in Belgian Luxembourg, invited Frederic to go with her and her “intended” on an excursion to that spot. Thus he had the opportunity of visiting the gently mountainous Ardenne, and of studying the simple manners of the inhabitants. Forthwith he produced, among many remarkable works, the *Repas des Funérailles* (1886) and *Les Ages du Paysan* (1887), which are to be seen in the Brussels Gallery.

“Ah, ces Ages!” exclaimed one writer. “Five big pictures, rough and idyllic in their reality, showing peasants—heavy, clumsy, and ugly, if you like—in all the beauty of their true honest naturalness. Here we have the whole people of the fields, from the decrepit, shrivelled-up old folk to the mature and healthy fathers and mothers; the glorious young men and maidens, strolling, affianced, hand-in-hand; the lusty, well-fleshed children and babies, regarding the world with eyes clear and penetrating—some curiously, others with mischief. They are all there simply displayed, seated on chairs, or standing hand-in-hand or couched on the flowery turf. It is infinitely simple this long succession of primitive beings, their eyes showing the graduations of the country life, and recalling the soil of which they are the natural and the august fruit, just as are the crops, the cattle, the birds, and the trees.”



“Le Lin” by Léon Frederic | “Le Lin” by Léon Frederic

The two sets of drawings, *Le Lin* and *Le Blé* (1888-1889), are, so to speak, parallel poems expressive of the simple beauty of the plants containing the principles of the clothing and the nourishment of mankind. In these two series of clever works Frederic represents the successive transformations of the two things necessary to life: linen and bread; and each of these transformations is the subject of a scene, now joyous and animated, now silent and sad.

To complete the cycle of the “Life of the Fields” Léon Frederic placed between the two sets of compositions an Allegory of the Earth and the twelve Months of the Year.



“Le Ruisseau,” by Léon Frederic

“Colossal in its vital strength”—adds the writer—“is his presentment of the Earth!—a peasant woman, heavily handsome. Her breasts hang huge—breasts which themselves are Worlds. And, grovelling at her feet, with outstretched arms, clinging in groups to her body, are men, represented as plump, red-haired children, of almost too robust health, but astonishing in their vitality.” Right and left in the background the artist has recalled the principal episodes connected with linen and corn. On the one side, the rolling, the in-gathering, the steeping of the flax; on the other the sowing of the grain, the harrowing and the harvest.



“L’Arc-en-Ciel,” by Léon Frederic

There were also painted in this little village of Ardenne a very curious open-air study, *Le Viellard qui bénit* (1889), and a work of somewhat strange appearance, entitled *La Pensée qui s'éveille* (1891). At that period certain novel ideas would seem to have developed in the artist's mind: his conception of art appears to have become enlarged, his sympathy for the sorrows of the poor to have taken a more deliberate form. His dream was that the disinherited of the earth should have their fair share of happiness; and he painted a work great in point of effort, but lacking in realisation, *Le Peuple verra un jour le lever du soleil* (1891). About the same period Frederic painted a triptych of the Holy Trinity for the village church of Nafraiture, the panels representing God the Father (the Last Judgment), the Holy Ghost (Adam and Eve turned out of the terrestrial Paradise), while on the central panel are depicted two angels bearing the Countenance,

reproduced on the veil of Véronique. The angels are crowned with thorns, and the bloodstains are abloom with roses.



Central Panel of "La Nature" by Léon Frederic

From that date forth allegorical and symbolical works alternate with what may be termed "documentary" studies. In 1892 we have *La Vanité des Grandeurs*, *La Route Zélandaise*; in 1893 *La Salutation Angelique*; in 1894, *Tout est Mort*, an unfinished polyptych, in which the artist describes symbolically the failure of Justice, Religion and Love. Then *La Nature*, a pentaptych in which each of the Seasons is allegorically represented in the guise of a child in an extraordinary mingling of flowers and fruit, birds and insects.



"La Nature: Le Printemps" by Léon Frederic | "La Nature: Le Printemps" by Léon Frederic |
"La Nature: L'Automne" by Léon Frederic | "La Nature: L'Hiver" by Léon Frederic

In 1896 appeared the *Récureuses de Chaudrons*, a charming group of young Zélandaises, painted in a luminous landscape; the *Arc-en-Ciel*; the *Peleuses de Pommes de Terre*, three young girls dressed in red. In 1897 came *Les Ages de l'Ouvrier*, a large triptych which is one of the painter's chief works, and is now in the Luxembourg Gallery in Paris. In 1900 Frederic painted the *Conscrits*, a big composition commissioned by the civic authorities of Brussels to adorn the *Salle des Milices* of the Hotel de Ville; also *Le Ruisseau*, a large triptych containing *L'Eau qui chante*, *L'Eau qui tombe*, and *L'Eau qui dort*; the uncommonly graceful *Cerisier fleuri*; the *Clair de Lune*, a polyptych exhibited at the Salon of the Libre Esthétique, where it was purchased by the State for the Brussels Gallery. Then, in 1905, came *La Mort du paysan*, which hangs in the Liège Gallery; and

lastly, in 1906, a *Scène de la Vie Villageoise en Ardenne*, displayed at the Ghent Salon, and acquired for the gallery of that town.

In a word, Léon Frederic is indeed a painter of our own time, who has employed to express himself such of the traditional methods as he has judged to be best adapted to his work.



“Les Récureuses de Chaudrons” by Léon Frederic

In the toilsome life of the peasant and the labourer he has discovered numberless subjects for profound study, because beneath the superficial exterior of his chosen models, beneath the rough skin and the coarse clothing, he has discovered and depicted the human sensations which he understands naturally. His peasants of Ardenne and his workmen of the Brussels *banlieue*, while represented with all possible exactitude, have been used by him to express the activity, the hopes and the struggles of the whole people. His tender sympathy for the poor has impelled him in turn to paint the peaceful, almost solemn, labour of the man of the fields and the lamentable misery of the town beggar. To him the country always appears gentle and smiling, the town always dreadful and desolate. This explains the two aspects of the symbolism which appears in his latest works: on the one hand a goodness, a candour almost childlike; on the other a tender, silent pity.

The art of Léon Frederic, made up as it is of idealistic expression and exact observation, represents a personality in the Belgian School demanding all respect. While some were incredulous as to his work, no one was ever indifferent, and already his influence is extending to the new generation. “All Frederic's works,” writes Octave Maus in “L'Art Moderne,” “are conceived and carried out with a conscientiousness worthy of all praise. From the first sketch to the last stroke of the brush all are handled with placid assurance, with uniform certainty. If they are lacking in fancy, in *imprévu*, in passion, the artistic probity they reveal calls for sympathy and admiration. They reflect the artist's pensive soul, his love of truth and justice, the charity of his mind. Therein one finds an echo of the feelings which, in this age of ours, inspire all manly hearts.”

F. K.

(The half-tone reproductions of M. Frederic's works accompanying this article are from photographs by Alexandre of Brussels.)

Khnopff, Fernand, "Alexandre Struys, a Belgian Painter," *The Studio*, 41, 174 (September 1907), 283-289.

Alexandre Struys, A Belgian Painter. By Fernand Khnopff.

Those who delight in classification might find some interest in determining on the one hand the different kinds of works of art that have achieved success, and on the other the different kinds of success achieved by works of art. They would soon become aware that there are what may be called national successes, due to the local influence, more or less political in character of interested persons or of narrow coteries; international successes, due to more or less diplomatic relations, and to a subservient consideration for foreign fashions in art; and lastly there is success (the rarest kind of all) due to the intrinsic merits of the work itself.

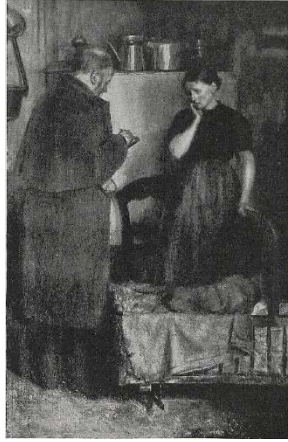
It is a success of this last description that Alexandre Struys's latest works have achieved. It is seldom nowadays, in fact, that one finds painting which so completely expresses the entire individuality of an artist. Struys's individuality only came to the surface after long and painful hesitation, after numerous and grievous misconceptions; but from that very circumstance has resulted his strong and definite sincerity, which touches the heart deeply, leaving a permanent impression.

Alexandre Théodore Honoré Struys was born at Berchem, near Antwerp, on January 24, 1852. His grandfather had been an artist; his father, a native of Gulenborg, in Holland, was a notable painter on glass, and had come to finish his artistic education at the Academy of Antwerp. When he returned to his own country he sent his son Alexandre to the communal school at Dordrecht, where his master soon noticed his astonishing talent for drawing. The parents had no desire to thwart this evident vocation; and thus it came about that at the age of six Alexandre Struys was already regularly attending the drawing classes at the Academy of Dordrecht. This course of instruction was not, however, of long duration; he subsequently entered the studio of the painter Canta, at Rotterdam, as a pupil, and also—as was still the custom—in the capacity of general help. But neither did this phase last long: the glass-painter went to live in Antwerp again, and sent his twelve-year-old son to the Academy of Fine Arts, which was then directed by N. de Keyser, and had for its principals Professors Beaufaux and Van Leries, painters of the most official type.

The academic successes of Alexandre Struys were not extraordinary; but he worked with commendable diligence under the direction of his masters from 1866 to 1871.

Just at this time Jan van Beers, the wayward painter of ultra-Parisian whimsicalities, and J. Lambeaux, the powerful sculptor of Flemish *grossièretés*, simultaneously terminated their studies at the Antwerp Academy. Jan van Beers was already attracting attention by his exuberant independence of spirit and by eccentricities that had become notorious. He made great friends with Struys, whom he persuaded to join him in a studio he had taken in the heart of Antwerp. In 1871, while still attending the higher classes at the

Academy, Struys had exhibited *A Young Girl returning from School* in the Salon at Ghent; in Jan van Beers' studio he painted a series of humorous pictures, facile and ordinary in character, which obtained no greater success with the public than did the extravagances which his friend invented in order to attract the notice of buyers.



"L'Enfante Malade" by A. Struys

Certainly "things were going badly," as the saying is.

"It was at this juncture," writes M. E. de Taeye, in "*Les Artistes Belges Contemporains*," "that Struys proposed to Van Beers to set out for London, after having completed a series of pictures which would be certain, in that great cosmopolitan city, to transmute themselves into a respectable number of pounds sterling!

"Unfortunately, 'Bohemia' proposes and reality disposes. Doubtless the two friends were noticed in London, where their big hats, *à la* Rubens, and their wide cloaks flapping in the wind made some sensation; but in spite of that the picture-dealers to whom they addressed themselves did not manage to sell their famous works. The situation of the good citizens of Antwerp became critical when their funds, slender enough at the outset, were reduced to a few silver coins. They thought of returning to their own country; but how was that plan to be brought off?

"They now set to work simultaneously, one starting from the right and the other from the left, on a colossal canvas representing a magnificent view in Switzerland. Somebody had told them that the English public liked this hackneyed style of picture, and they had gone off instantly to a photograph shop to choose their 'site'! The work progressed swimmingly, and the two friends had every reason to feel satisfied. They had hashed up a splendid Swiss landscape; no doubt somewhat flattered; exaggerated in colour, perhaps; but gorgeous to behold. Nothing was omitted: neither classic mountains, nor beautiful sky, nor limpid little lakes! Having both signed this *chef-d'œuvre* the two friends repaired to their picture-dealer, who congratulated them, and offered them £30 on the spot! Can you doubt that the offer was eagerly accepted? At last they had money! At last they could think of leaving England!

Once back in their own studio, "Sander" and "Jan" each began an important work; and while the future painter of *The Siren* was finishing his *Fiat Lux*, a big symbolical

representation of Christ, Struys for his part was giving the final touches to his *Perhaps?*—a poor violinist in his garret, for whom Van Beers himself had served as model.”



“Peut-être?” by A. Struys

This picture, exhibited in 1873, was very favourably noticed. There was, indeed, more than mere promise in the work; the figure of the poor violinist, tormented with thoughts of his future, was masterly in treatment. This was Struys’s real *début*, and henceforth he was classed among the young Antwerp painters “of whom great things were to be expected.” A quarrel finally separated Struys and Van Beers; for some time, however, this separation had been foreseen, the natures of the two men being too different for perfect sympathy to exist between them.

Struys now went to live with the painter H. Bource, whom he had known for a long time. The mournful sentimentality of this artist consorted better with Struys’s native melancholy than had the fantastic extravagance of his former companion. He next painted a picture, old-fashioned and romantic in character, entitled *The Two Victims* (now in the Dordrecht Museum), representing a deserted mother with her child fleeing from misery. His next work, *An Eater of Mussels*, a broadly-executed painting, showed considerable progress.

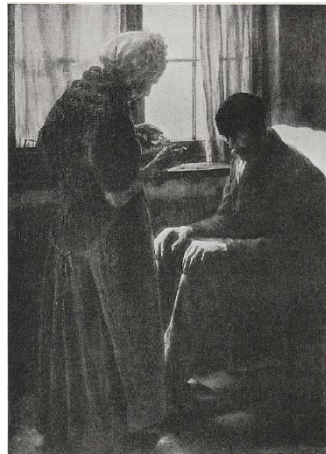
Struys’s real celebrity dates from 1876. An uncle of the painter had been persuaded by the Jesuits to make over his property to them. The artist saw the possibilities of such a subject, and painted his *Roofvogels* (Birds of Prey), two Jesuits forcing a dying man to make his will. The effect made by this picture was enhanced by the fact that political strife between Liberals and Clericals was then running very high in Belgium. The work in itself was remarkable, and was exhibited everywhere—in Germany and in England; but for political reasons it could not be admitted to the Paris Exhibition of 1878, the Belgian committee of selection refusing it even in Brussels, “because” (wrote Prince Caraman-Chimay, president of the committee, to the artist) “the subject was calculated to offend the susceptibilities of the general public.”

The picture’s success was immense, and gained for its author not only European renown, but also an unexpected piece of good fortune. The Director of the Academy at

Weimar offered the young Belgian painter of twenty-three the professorship which had been left vacant by the departure of Charles Verlat.

Struys accepted this flattering proposal, and remained at Weimar until 1883. But during these six years, spent in a too solemn and too artificial German *milieu*, the pleasures of society and successes at Court once more weakened and perverted his true individuality. The artist suspected this vaguely himself, and was convinced of the truth after some cruel disillusionments in connection with certain pictures painted at this time: *Alpha and Omega*, *The Death of Luther*, and *Christian II*.

Towards the end of 1882 Struys quitted Weimar and went to the Hague; but subsequently he decided to return to Belgium, either to Antwerp or to Brussels. In 1884 we find him at Malines, looking for some peaceful corner not too far from Brussels and Antwerp, wherein he might select a definite place of abode for the future. But at this time he was in a very dejected state, feeling himself gone astray and enfeebled, and he only perforce listened to the advice of J. Lambeaux, whom he had met again in Brussels. An attempt at *peinture claire*, made in accordance with this advice, was the occasion of some ill-natured criticism. Raging internally, Struys thereupon shut himself up at Malines, refusing to see anyone, in order that in silence and solitude he might slowly recover his damaged individuality—a noble effort which eventually gave us works that are deeply touching in their strong and genuine feeling: *Death* (1886), *The Breadwinner* (1887), *The Sick Child* (1888), *Comforting the Afflicted* (1889), *The Month of Mary* (1890), *Trust in God* (1891), *Despair* (1897), *The Lacemaker of Malines* (1900).



"Le Gagne-Pain" by A. Struys | "Le Mois de Marie" by A. Struys

"And here," writes M. J. du Jardin, in his "Art Flamand," "we have the work of Alexandre Struys. He aspires to the portrayal of suffering—the suffering of the poor, for whom he has a tender compassion: he shows them in the midst of their hard life, which haunts him continually. He points out to the priests—the comforters of the afflicted—their duties towards the poor and wretched, who are as lovable as the rich, or more so. And, besides a very precise conception of his task, he possesses a keen desire for truthfulness in the setting of his subjects, for suitable accessories and models: so much so, that he frequently takes his model to the scene he has selected; and when several persons are

to figure together on his canvas, he makes the various models pose at the same time. Such anxiety for realistic correctness, therefore, gives this master a very distinct individuality. No; his style does not bear any resemblance to that of his compeers, either in the present or in the past, who have chosen to recount the miseries of Fortune's disinherited. He has, indeed, been compared to Charles Degroux more especially, and to Constantin Meunier, painters of this type. But for anyone who notes the differences of ideal existent among artists (differences of ideal that are sometimes very slight in the main), there are many characteristic shades of distinction between their art and his. These shades of distinction may be very correctly determined thus: Degroux and Meunier leave more room for the imagination in their works than does Struys in his; and this particular fact, I repeat, justifies us in asserting that the latter is endowed with a very definite individuality, and that there is no reason to confound his canvases—crying vengeance as they do (whether he intends it so or not) upon social iniquities—with the canvases of any other artist.

F. K.



“La Visite au Malade” by A. Struys | “La Confiance en Dieu” by A. Struys



“Désespéré” by A. Struys

Khnopff, Fernand, "A Walloon Sculptor: Victor Rousseau," *The Studio*, 42, 176 (November 1907), 102-108.

A Walloon Sculptor: Victor Rousseau. By Fernand Khnopff.

In the introduction to his study on the "Renaissance of Sculpture in Belgium" ("The Portfolio," November, 1895), M. G. O. Destrée brought out the fact, little known by the public, that Belgian sculpture during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance was not exclusively Flemish; that, on the contrary, its appearance and its early development occurred in the Walloon provinces, and, further, that this Walloon school, which remained very brilliant till the end of the sixteenth century, created an individual style. The writer added that the school in question seemed likely to be revived in the persons of three young sculptors whose work he proposed to examine—MM. Achille Chainaye, Jean-Marie Gaspar, and Victor Rousseau.

Again, in 1904, in an article on Rousseau contributed to the magazine "L'Art Flamand et Hollandais," M. Paul Lambotte writes: "In Belgium a wrong comprehension of Flemish traditions, an absurd misapprehension of the temperament of the race, have led many artists astray. Marvellous but uncultivated technicians, incapable of deep thought, they know not what to do with their talent; and relieve the necessity to produce by which they are tormented in the realisation of pleasing, aimless works, such as fine animal forms (should they be sculptors), or, in the case of painters, in pictures of sumptuous colouring like a rich piece of still life. All this is nought but a sterile side of art, and our artists have proved it abundantly in the past."

The precise characteristic of the art of Victor Rousseau is that he has never been content with easy production of this sort; but has always striven to present the plastic expression of some lofty idea. He declines to give but the empty form, the simple *morceau bien venu*; each of his works must grip the attention, and charm not alone, by its beauty of execution, but also, by its well-thought-out composition provoking meditation. Nevertheless, as it has been well said, each *morceau* from the hands of Victor Rousseau displays an attempt to achieve an invariable perfection; the artist is no less a producer of fine work (what we term *bel ouvrier*), than a sculptor of inventiveness and profound thought. The fear of spoiling the *ensemble* effect, the mystery, the savour of a work by carrying his details to its extreme limits is a thing unknown to him. He possesses the capacity to remain broad and great without *fignolage*, while modelling with impeccable touch the most delicate extremities of a statuette no higher than one's fist.

Victor Rousseau was born at Feluy-Arquennes, a village in the province of Hainaut (Belgium), on December 16, 1865. His father was a stonemason.

"From my earliest years" (he writes to M. Du Jardin, author of "L'Art Flamand") "I was set to study my father's calling. It was not till I was nearly fifteen that I began to attend the night classes at the Brussels Academy, then going to the drawing school at St. Josse-ten-Noode (one of the suburbs of the capital) in order to learn ornamental sculpture, for

during the daytime I used to carve stone and marble until I had nearly reached the age of nineteen. At that time, having attracted the notice of Houtstont, the sculptor-decorator, I entered his modelling rooms, and did not leave them till 1890.



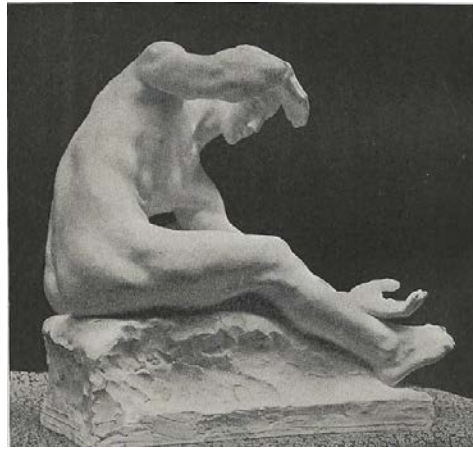
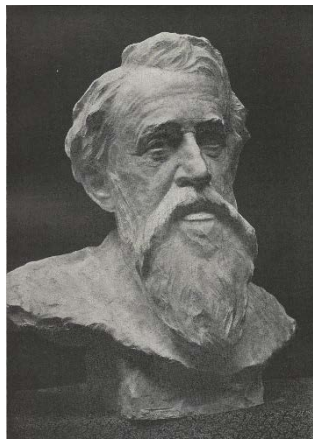
"L'Offrande" by Victor Rousseau

"In my odd moments, from the year 1887, I had devoted myself to the study of statuary; and thus it was I became the pupil of Vanderstappen at the Brussels Academy in 1888-9, and laureate of his class in my first year. This, I may say, was the first figure class I had attended. But for three consecutive years I followed the dissecting course at the University, and I drew a good deal. I won the 'Godecharles' prize (a travelling scholarship) with my *Tourmente de la Pensée* at the Brussels triennial Salon in 1890, and in that same year I married François Delceul. Then, during the years 1891, 1892 and 1893, I travelled in England, France and Italy, and exhibited successively in the Salons of the 'Pour l'Art' club the following works: *Puberté* (torso of a young girl); *L'Amour Virginal* (a low relief, which appeared also at the Brussels triennial Salon of 1893; this was the first of my works to attract the notice of artists and connoisseurs); *Cantique d'Amour*, *Orphée*, the *Liseur*, *Demeter*, and (in bronze) the *Coupe des Voluptés*, *Danse Antique*; some candelabras intended for the Botanical Gardens in Brussels, and two statues, *Le Jeu* and *Le Vent*. I devoted myself to the restoration of the 'Maison des Boulangers,' one of the gems of the Grande Place, Brussels, and I am responsible for the commemorative *plaque* in connection with the restoration of the ancient house in the Grande Place. This *plaque*, which the artists dedicated to M. Charles Buls, the burgomaster, is incrustured in the wall of one of the houses in the Rue Charles Buls, facing the Hôtel de Ville."

In 1902 appeared *Les Sœurs de l'Illusion*, the fruit of several years of labour, and, so far, the young artist's most important work. This group of three young women, of rather more than life size, symbolises the Past, the Present, and the Future. The figures are seated, and are united in a most harmonious movement.

"The eldest of the three" (writes M. Lambotte), "suffering already from the realities of life, takes refuge in the sadness of her deception. Full of bitterness, and living again in an irrecoverable past, she bends forward, motionless, with all the scorn of her useless

strength, and, nobly resigned, is the incarnation of the contemplative life. The second woman is represented in an instantaneous gesture: leaning towards her younger companion, she counsels an active life; but the maiden with eyes closed to the external world remains wrapped in her inviolate dreaming. The whole future, in all its force, lies beneath her smooth brow, her fair illusions are not yet vanished, the *brutalité* of the present, no less than the rancour of the past, has no effect upon her hopes. This work combines with beauty of imagination a perfection which is quite astonishing. The accuracy of proportions, the nobility of gesture, the aristocracy of the types, the harmony and the amplitude of the grouping, together with the technical knowledge shown in the realisation, combine to make up an *ensemble* the charm of which is undeniable."



Bust of Constantin Meunier by Victor Rousseau | "L'Été" by Victor Rousseau

No less remarkable than his imaginative works, the portraits—and they are many—already produced by Victor Rousseau, proclaim the deep and virile nature of his marvellous talent. Without exception these portraits reveal something more than a mere superficial and passing aspect; they form—it has been well said—"plastic interpretation of brains and temperaments, and they have a generalised but definite resemblance which counts for much more than mechanical observation."

One of his first successes was the truly masterly bust he did of Madame Françoise Rousseau—"the companion with the great heart and the lofty mind, who sustains and aids the artist's efforts with admirable conscience."

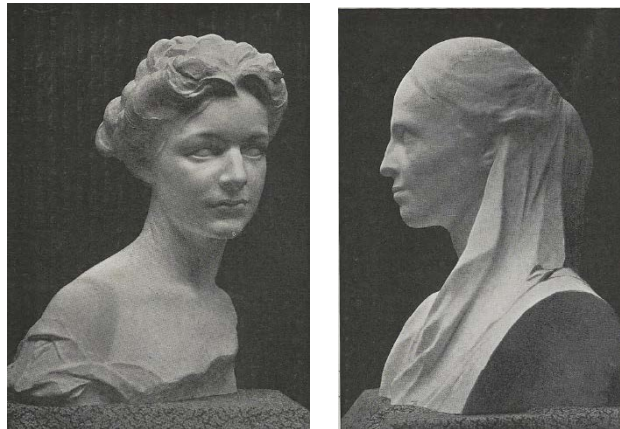
In his busts of children the subtle sculptor has taken a pleasure, one may say, in following the complex modelling of these faces, with their outlines at once so precise and so indefinite. In his busts of women he has gladly emphasised the delicacy of the features and the suppleness of their movements, always displaying proof of a most personal method of interpretation. If, for instance, the small bust of Madame de Gerlache in terracotta and onyx, in its mode of presentation, recalls the French art of the eighteenth century, it is nevertheless impossible to assert that it brings back the memory of any particular work of that period.

The same with a little bust of a young girl, intended to form part of a decorative *ensemble* in the style of the Italian Renaissance. It is so ingeniously composed in all its parts that it never brings to the mind any suggestion of copying or of imitation.



"Les Adolescents" by Victor Rousseau

In the reproduction of the bust of Mlle. S. now given (p. 108), one sees with what pleasure the artist has displayed in definite fashion the curious beauty of this young girl, the strange charm of her ingenuous features, the suppleness of the graceful curve of her neck.



Bust of Mlle. S. by Victor Rousseau | Bust by Victor Rousseau

But it is in the very fine bust of Constantin Meunier, also reproduced here, that the young sculptor has risen to the greatest height. Meunier is indeed here, and forever, the good and great artist who was beloved by all who knew him. Here is his face, infinitely "respectable," with his brow all wrinkled by the effort of thought and the weight of care, with the pale eyes so kind and so firm in their gaze, the strong lips, whence came the low, soft speech, the broad shoulders sunken with the burden of toil and of existence. Indeed, artist and model were worthy the one of the other.

At the same time—as M. Lambotte has most judiciously remarked—the works most characteristic of Victor Rousseau's talent—one might even say of his manner—are those of small dimensions, and generally executed in bronze; they are rendered infinitely precious by the refinement and the precision of their execution. These works, which

form a numerous and very varied series, seem all akin, by reason of the artist's constant care to achieve a definite composition, a consecutive form, a suppleness of line and a *facture* at once minute and broad of faces and extremities. One may discover therein also a certain predilection for two very special types—a young man of supreme grace of proportions and movements, and young girl, of ingenuous grace and charm.

The *Coupe des Voluptés* is perhaps the marvel among this series of little marvels, which includes—to name but a few—*Vers la Vie* (Brussels Gallery), *Les Curieuses*, *Sous Les Etoiles*, *La Femme au Chapeau*, and *L'Été*.

By way of concluding this short notice one cannot do better than again borrow from M. Lambotte, and employ the terms in which he himself sums up his subject: "Victor Rousseau constitutes an individuality clearly characterised. Like Rodin, and like Lambeaux, but in another way and with his own means, a form restrained and everywhere definite, with no concession to the unexpected, the incomplete, he realises masterpieces of palpitating life, of dreamy intellectuality. He in his turn ranks among the masters of our marvellous present school of sculpture: he is himself, and indeed one of us, despite his clear conciseness and his conception of a sober beauty."

F. K.

1908

Khnopff, Fernand, "A Flemish Painter: Franz Courtens," *The Studio*, 43, 179 (February 1908), 23-31.

A Flemish Painter: Franz Courtens. By Fernand Khnopff.

Two well-defined tendencies may be noted in the present progress of the Belgian Landscape School. On the one hand we find a striving towards novelty in the observation of the phenomena of light, and in the study of the processes of representation. The artists forming this group are akin to the French painters; their experiments are sometimes extravagant. Their chief is Emile Claus.

On the other hand one may observe a respect for definite pictorial traditions, and the employment of processes which have been well tried, and, in their certainty, lead at times to commercialism. The artists of this group are allied to the Dutch School, and their head is Franz Courtens. The art of Emile Claus was considered some time ago in *THE STUDIO* by M. Gabriel Mourey, who devoted a very interesting article to the subject; thus it is the more fitting that the readers of this magazine should now be made acquainted with the work of Franz Courtens, who has lately been feted with extraordinary enthusiasm in his native town.



"Dans la Forêt" by Franz Courtens

François Edouard Marie (known as Franz) Courtens was born on the 4th of February, 1854, at Termonde, a little town in Eastern Flanders, situated on the right bank of the Scheldt, at the mouth of the Dendre, nearly equidistant from Ghent and Antwerp.

The town, once so flourishing, but now without any trade of importance, is very picturesque. The country is flat, but the river, in changing its course, has formed vast "polders" extending to the east and to the west; thus the atmosphere is saturated with moisture. "Here," it has been said, "one sees a town wherein all is colour, with surroundings which are all colour too. Here is a spectacle of nature eminently calculated to develop the instincts of a colourist such as the Master in question—a brilliant painter, disposed to see the sumptuous side of everything."

The portrait of Franz Courtens has been very accurately and brilliantly limned by M. J. du Jardin in "L'Art Flamand." "The man," he writes, "is of ordinary build, and his manner

reveals a temperament cold and nervous. His pointed beard gives him a sort of sly appearance, accentuated by his glance, which is keen and sparkling, restless and inquisitive. And yet this curious physiognomy betrays at once an indomitable energy, which becomes the more characteristic from the fact that while the speech of Franz Courtens is French of a sort, it is mingled with Flemish—the accent of the soil—and with a volubility and a deliberate exaggeration of language and gesture so marked that the master's short pipe—his inseparable companion—is almost always out."

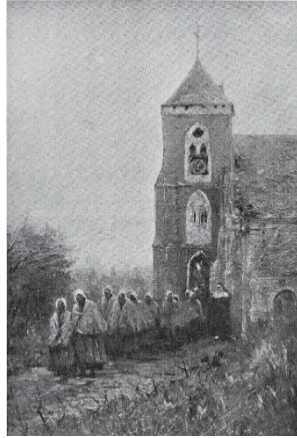


"La Retour de la Traite" from a charcoal drawing by Franz Courtens | "Matin, Novembre" from the oil painting by Franz Courtens

In what is he most keenly interested? In painting, of course. But he is not much inclined to long dissertations. Very curtly he emits his ideas by displaying his canvases one by one before his interlocutor. His works, even the most important, are hurriedly inspected; the artist and his factotum, "Jef," throw them aside in one direction or another, giving one the barest time to see them; and when they are all gone the visitor feels that there must be more somewhere—in the studio, in the hall, in the drawing-room, even in the garret. Then, as though quite worn out—as he might well be with less exercise—when peradventure his visitor chances to be agreeable, which is always the case, seeing that the master is careful to exclude the bore, will come the command: "Jef, go and fetch a bottle of champagne," and we drink the wine as rapidly as we had seen the pictures; and we talk—or, rather, Franz Courtens talks—no longer of his feverish painting, but of the miscarriage of justice of which he declares himself to be the victim; of the off-hand way in which artists are treated in Belgium; of the successes he has won abroad; of his connections with foreign Courts—especially the little German Courts; of the decorations bestowed upon him (quite unimportant things, to his mind); of the superb, astounding, colossal sales he has had in Germany, England and France.

From his childhood he was attracted by the pleasure of drawing and painting. His father was somewhat uneasy about this distraction, which the mother, on the other hand, quietly encouraged. About this period the two excellent landscape painters, Jacques Rosseels and Isidore Meyers, were acting as professors at the Academy of Fine Arts at Termonde, and young Courtens obtained permission to attend the Sunday class only. In a very short time his parents found themselves unable to repress him further, and they decided to let him go entirely in the direction of his favourite study. But there came a day when the father, on the death of one of his sons who had been his chief help in the

business, found it necessary to replace him. Thereupon he summoned young Franz, and told him it was time he devoted himself to serious things and gave up “the pleasures of the chase.” The “chase,” to the paternal mind, meant the visits of his little son to the country, whither, painter’s kit in hand, he would betake himself, and, face to face with Nature, obstinately demand from her the secrets of light and the means whereby to fix that light on his canvas. Franz made no reply, but his mind was made up on the spot. Packing his bag immediately, he borrowed twenty francs from a friend, and started for Brussels, wherein he had never set foot. Then began the hard, almost desperate, struggle for existence.

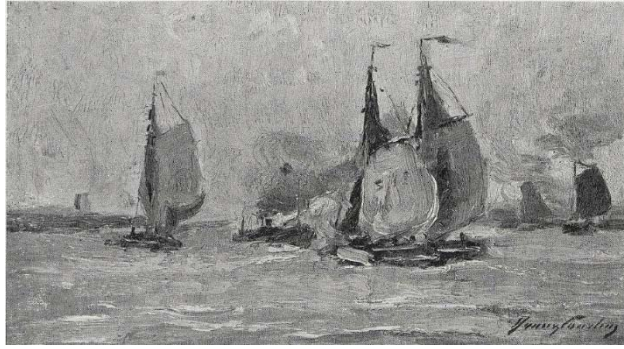


“Le Retour du Salut” by Franz Courtens | “Les Vieilles de Schiedam” by Franz Courtens

A garret in some sort of house at the end of an avenue in the outskirts was his first abode, where he cooked his own humble meals. But he set to work bravely, and, by a lucky chance, made the acquaintance of Stacquet, the water-colourist, who bought his first picture. Soon after another was sold at the Cercle Artistique for twelve hundred francs, which meant a fortune! Thereupon Courtens left his hovel, and set up in a real *atelier* in Brussels. This was a rather bold step for a young painter with no resources beyond the products of his brush, *plus* a fixed determination to strike an independent line of art for himself. But he was not long in making himself known. At the Ghent Salon of 1874 he exhibited a canvas, described in the catalogue as *Bords de Canal*, which gave him some encouragement. His fine virtuosity and his brilliant colouring were gladly recognised. Nevertheless it was not till the Brussels Salon of 1884, where he exhibited *La Sortie de l’Office* (now the property of the Brussels Gallery) and *Les Barques à moules*, that he won celebrity. A few years later, at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1889, he won his apotheosis in the shape of a *première médaille*, this honour being confirmed soon after by other similar distinctions at other important artistic tourneys, notably that of the Brussels Universal Exhibition of 1897. One of the master’s best works seen at this Exhibition has been thus described in the “Revue de l’ Art Ancien et Moderne” by M. Fierens-Gevaert:—

“In his *Neige*, a work of fairly large dimensions, representing a glade fringed by beeches and elms, Courtens has recovered all the best of his qualities. Complete grasp of the great decorative harmonies, suppleness of technique—now vigorous, as in the handling

of the tree trunks, now delicate as possible in the bluish transparency of the bare branches—perfect exactitude in the difficult matter of harmonising the relative parts in a white symphony of this sort—everything in this masterly canvas proclaims the skilled hand, the certain instinct of the born landscapist, and it is certainly a long time since we have been given the opportunity of admiring a piece of work so free and so rich in its savour.”



“Dans l’Étable” from a charcoal drawing by Franz Courtens | “Temps Gris sur l’Escaut” by Franz Courtens

Success such as this having been won, it followed of course that pupils and imitators, both numerous and respectful, made haste to follow in the master’s steps. Some of them were quite remarkable people, the best being MM. Apol, Blieck, Gilsoul, Gorus, Merckaert, and young Herman Courtens, whose success gave great delight to his father. But how far behind Franz Courtens leaves them all! While a few among them succeeded in acquiring, under his direction, certain technical qualities and some ability in the *mise-en-page*—the presentment of their efforts—not one can be really compared with him. Not one of them in the conception of his works suggests that feeling of power and grandeur which characterises the author of the *Pluie d’Or*; not one of them contrives to master the manipulation of his material with the ease and vigour of him who painted the *Barques à moules*.

FERNAND KHNOPFF.

1910

Knopff, Fernand, "The Brussels Exhibition I: Some Furnished Interiors," *The Studio*, 50, 210 (Sept 15, 1910), 308-317.

The Brussels Exhibition: I. Some Furnished Interiors.

By Fernand Knopff.

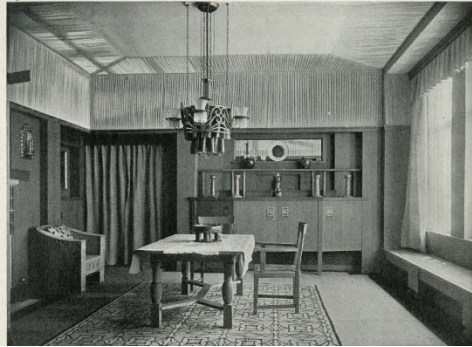
IN the organisation of universal exhibitions it is in the nature of a tradition to erect vast palaces, with huge porticoes leading into interminable colonnades, and with immense galleries capped with excessively ornate decorative devices. The whole effect of such constructions is purely external; in their totality they are merely façades, and often enough the extravagance of conception to which they bear witness is equalled only by the incoherence of the realisation.

Let me hasten to affirm that nothing of this kind could be alleged of the beautiful palace which, until that ill-fated Sunday last month when it perished with practically all its treasures in the flames, formed the principal building of the Universal Exhibition organised by the Belgian Government. This palace, the design of which emanated from the eminent Brussels architect, M. Ernest Acker, was indeed a work of most refined taste; its long façade in the Classic style running parallel with the Bois de la Cambre, and its elegant lineaments and dainty decoration harmonised perfectly with the sylvan scenery of the immediate neighbourhood. Given the style selected by the architect, the conditions imposed could not have been better fulfilled in the circumstances.

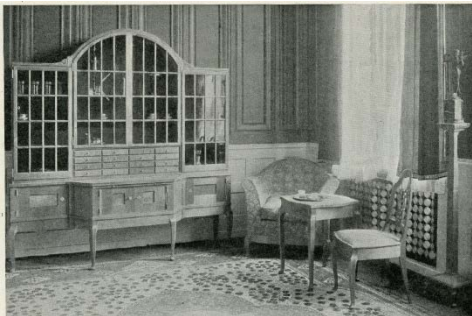
At the same time it must be acknowledged that the galleries which these façades encompassed had one principal defect: the uniformity of setting to which the various nations invited to participate had perforce to submit their products left them no scope for displaying themselves in the intimacy of a national environment. Germany alone has set an example in this respect. This country, as has been very rightly remarked, "in bringing together on 'German soil' her machines, her sumptuary arts, and her arts of design—that is to say, in giving an opportunity for forming a synoptic judgment of these as the expressions of a certain mental status, has shown particularly that every intellectual manifestation ought, if it is to have its full effect, to be presented in its proper *milieu* and maintain its relative value."



A Corner in the Ladies Room of the German Pavilion (Deutsches Haus), Brussels Exhibition.
Designed by Prof. Emanuel Von Seidl.
Executed by Ballin's Hofmöbelfabrik, Munich.



Breakfast Room Designed by Prof. Max Läger
(Executed by Billing & Zoller, Karlsruhe).



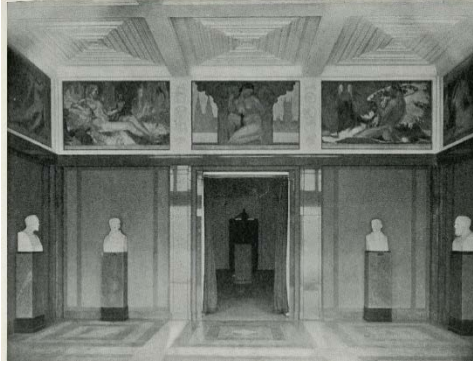
Lady's Room Designed by Prof. R. Riemerschmid
Executed by the Deutsche Werkstätten, Dresden-Hellerau.

The German section, which from its isolated position at a considerable distance from the scene of last month's conflagration was happily not involved in that disaster, is installed in buildings of its own, designed by German architects and carried out by German contractors and German workmen. Thus the German section, with its nine halls, its German pavilion (Deutsches Haus), its restaurants and gardens, constitutes; within the limits of the Universal Exhibition an entity quite distinct from all the rest, and one that is truly national in character. The Munich architect, Prof. Emanuel von Seidl, is the author of the general plan, and as an artist he has succeeded in composing a fine

architectural ensemble. He has varied the design of these buildings to suit their particular purposes, but in their general effect they are all of the same type as the "Deutsches Haus." This edifice is the most conspicuous object in the entire range of buildings forming the German section, its ascending lines producing a vertical break in the horizontal disposition of the general scheme in which it forms a central and culminating point that unites its various members into one coherent whole. The designer has further striven to establish as far as possible a harmony between the character of his designs and the features of the Parc du Solbosch in the immediate vicinity of which the buildings have been erected, and in the gardens surrounding these he has aimed to provide an appropriate setting. The exterior of the buildings has been finished in white, with black for the columns and grey tiles for the roofs, a small amount of plastic decoration being added here and there, part of which is relieved by gilding.

Within, we find the halls devoted to a wide variety of objects; several are occupied with machinery and manufactures; one, the "Kultushalle," with numerous sub-divisions, is set apart for education, and another is consecrated to art as applied to the interior equipment of houses and the manifold objects which subserve both useful and ornamental functions in daily life. It is with this division that we are here concerned, although a passing word should be spared for certain rooms in the "Kultushalle," in which the whole of the arts and crafts connected with book-production are represented under various classifications, notable among them being a room in which the work of some of the principal book-illustrators of Germany is displayed.

The chief centre of interest in the hall labelled "Raumkunst und Kunstgewerbe," is an extensive suite of rooms completely furnished with tables, chairs, cabinets, carpets, hangings, table services, metal implements and apparatus, and many of them fitted with wainscot panelling. Of this suite of rooms, eleven answer exactly to their description as the rooms of a "vornehmes Haus"—that is, a gentleman's residence—and they comprise every variety of apartment, except domestic offices, to be found in the houses of the well-to-do. There is, for instance, a study or smoking-room for the master of the house, a drawing-room or "Gesellschafts-salon," a lady's boudoir, a breakfast-room, a dining-room, a bedroom and a night nursery, a bath-room with sumptuous appointments and fittings of diverse kinds, a dressing-room communicating with a bath-room, besides ante-chambers and lobbies.



Vestibule In German Applied Art Section, Brussels Exhibition

Designed by Prof. Bruno Paul

(Executed by Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk A- G., Munich;

Decorative paintings by Prof. Adolf Münzer)



Dining Room for a Club

Designed by Prof. Albin Müller;

Executed by Th. Encke, Magdeburg

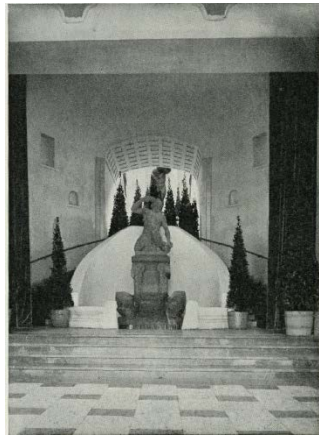
These, however, are not the only examples of interior furnishing which are offered to the visitor in this hall. There are, in addition, a small number of domestic interiors, more or less akin in general style to the others, but with a less expensive equipment, these including a couple of dining-rooms, one by Karl Bertsch, and the other by Prof. Riemerschmid, both of Munich, and a ladies' room by the latter. Further, we find a suite of four rooms for a club, including the dining room by Prof. Albin Müller, of which an illustration is given above; three rooms designed for a sanatorium—an operating room, a waiting-room, and a consultation room. And then, finally, there are various rooms intended for use as offices of sundry kinds, such as a small hall for the Rathaus at Karlsruhe, by Prof. Hoffacker, Director of the School for Applied Art in that city; a "Trauzimmer" for marriage ceremonies; a private office for the President of the German Committee at the Exhibition; a press room; a reading-room for illustrated periodicals, a series of rooms designated as those of a "Kunstfreund" or art-patron, in which is displayed a choice collection of works of art—paintings, sculpture, drawings, &c.—by some of the leading German artists of the modern school.

At first sight, if the visitor be a cultured man of the Latin race, all this manifestation of German decoration and furnishing will perhaps clash with his taste and habits; but the determined energy which the whole reveals, and the effort of realisation, are such that

the feeling of disturbance he may have experienced at first will quickly give place to one of admiration and astonishment: as one gets accustomed to a thing one understands it better, and ends by taking account of the necessity of it all, as one might say.



Lobby in German Applied Art Section, Brussels Exhibition
Designed by Prof. Bruno Paul
Sculpture by Prof. Paul Peterich



Vestibule of German Pavilion (Deutsches Haus), Brussels Exhibition
Designed by Prof. Emanuel Von Seidl
Fountain by Prof. A. Von Hildebrand

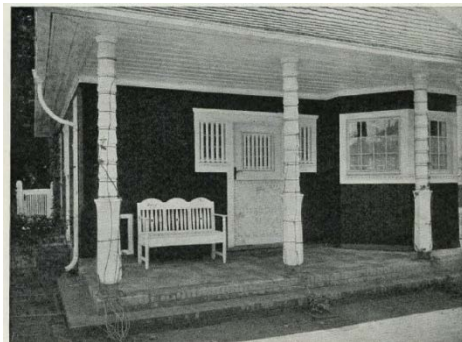


Two Artisans' Cottages at The Brussels Exhibition.

Designed by G. Metzendorf.

Constructed by A. Siebel, Düsseldorf.

An eminent French critic has remarked—it seems to me with a good deal of truth—that we have here a *mélange* of forms in which the classicism of the middle ages and German times massive, and some of the colours are hard, but the end that is always kept in view is to administer to a rational and practical state of comfort. Gothicism are combined with elements derived from the Far East in varying proportions. But this modern style of furniture, which, with diverse modifications, has been in vogue in all countries during the past twenty years, Germany is striving to reinforce from new sources, and she is setting herself the task of imparting to it health and strength. The venture is at once interesting and bold, and is being pursued with that thought and tenacity so characteristic of the German people. The forms are at times massive, and some of the colours are hard, but the end that is always kept in view is to administer to a rational and practical state of comfort.



Portico of Artisan's Cottage at Brussels Exhibition

Designed by G. Metzendorf

In the details one frequently finds introduced ingenious and dainty refinements; the materials—wood, metal, glass, clay—are utilised to advantage and so as to secure the full measure of their decorative effect; and as to the workmanship, that is carried to the point of minute care, everything savouring of trashiness or triviality being scrupulously avoided. Art can be brought to bear even on the very smallest things.

While acknowledging that this German display of furniture and decoration strikes one as a little sombre, we must bear in mind that we have to do here with a northern race, and that if Germany is intent on creating for her "Heim" a style adapted to the habits of her

people and the climate of the country, far from being a reproach to her, it is, on the contrary, a movement calling for the highest praise.

It is hardly possible to mention here the names of all those who have collaborated so happily in this enterprise. Most of them, like Emanuel von Seidl and Bruno Paul (who have taken the principal share in it), Max Läger, Peter Behrens, Richard Riemerschmid, Albin Müller, Schultze-Naumburg, Hermann Billing, Wilhelm Kreis, Karl Bertsch, Max Heidrich, and others, need no introduction to readers of this magazine. In the various rooms arranged by these architects are to be found examples of decorative painting and of sculpture in stone or wood by prominent artists, such as Adolf Münzer, Paul Peterich, W. Schmarje, Josef Wackerle, Fritz Erler, C. A. Bermann. Of the numerous designers who are represented in the galleries where the multitudinous objects of pottery and porcelain, metal work, &c., are displayed, I must speak on another occasion when dealing with these classes of work.



Kitchen in Artisan's Cottage
Designed by G. Metzendorf, architect
Furniture executed by Gebr. Schürmann, Essen.
Stove by Drüner & Hattenburg

Before quitting the subject of domestic interiors, I should like to draw attention to the two fully furnished specimens of artisans' houses which have been set up in close proximity to the principal buildings of the German section. The architect of these is Herr George Metzendorf, who, like numerous other talented architects in Germany, has devoted much time and thought to the planning, construction, and equipment of dwellings of this character. The two cottages, which are constructed of wood in sections to admit of transportation, have been designed by him as architect of the Margarethe Krupp Stiftung or Trust, and are intended for the workers of the Rhenish-Westphalian manufacturing region. Both are admirably planned, and though small, are far from being "poky." That is largely due to the excellent design of the furniture, which has been specially adapted by the architect for the rooms in which it is placed. This furniture is very substantially made, yet inexpensive, and has been carefully designed, not only with a view to durability, but also with an eye to comfort and economy of labour. Especially is this the case with the appointments in the rooms or offices where the operations of cooking and washing are carried on. Here everything looks neat and wholesome; the appliances are so ingeniously contrived as to excite our admiration for the thought and care bestowed on their forms and functions.

A few words must suffice for the interiors exhibited in the other national sections. Here there is nothing approaching in magnitude to the German display. In the French section there are shown a few modern interiors, notably a dining room by Dufrène, and another by Lambert, in both of which there is in evidence more gaiety in the general design than one observes in the German interiors, but as, contrasted with the florid decoration which characterizes so much of the French work these show considerable restraint. I must also name a delightful boudoir by M. Follot, and a very pleasant smoking room by M. Selmersheim. In the British section, which suffered so disastrously from the fire of August 14, there was no modern furniture of particular significance; the complete interiors shown belonged to the “antique” class—Elizabethan, Georgian, Chinese, Chippendale, and so on—and these perished in the flames. In the Dutch section the modern interiors reveal the same qualities and defects as those in the neighbouring German section; and in the Belgian section—practically all reduced to ashes last month—the special pavilions of MM. Serrurier and Van de Voorde contained all that was of special interest to us. Great, however, as was the destruction wrought by the fire, I hope to fulfil my intention to speak in a subsequent article of the principal works of applied art in the various sections.

F.K.



Sitting Room Furniture for Artisan's Cottage
Designed By G. Metzendorf, architect
Executed By Gebr. Schürmann, Essen



Sitiing Room Bay and Childrens Bedroom in Artisans Cottage
Designed by G. Metzendorf
Furniture executed by Gebr. Schürmann, Essen

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 48, 202 (January 1910), 330-331.

BRUSSELS.—It appears that the rooms at the Art Gallery are no longer sufficient to contain all the numerous productions of the painters and sculptors of Brussels, and already several exhibitions have been organised successfully in the Salle Boute; but so far I have seen no show there which could compare in interest with the recent one, in which we had an opportunity of seeing the work of the figure painters, A. Cluysenaar, G. Lemmen, and G. M. Stevens; of the landscapists, W. Finch, Hazledine, and W. Schlobach; and of the sculptors, P. Dubois and Gaspar. Mons. Cluysenaar's pictures were of considerable importance, and comprised female portraits, portraits of children, studies, and a few landscapes. One hears it said frequently of his painting that it is *solide et savoureuse*, but it should also be added that there are inherent in it qualities of bold draughtsmanship, strong colouring and a refined sentiment such as is a characteristic of the art of the contemporary Scottish school of painting. The talent of G. M. Stevens was once again evinced in delightful pictures of graceful femininity, among which *Le départ pour le tennis* was particularly worthy of notice. G. Lemmen, who exhibited a large and very varied selection—studies from the nude, landscapes, and flower-pieces—must be classed in the foremost rank of painters of rare talent and unexpected and charming colouring. The rugged Finnish landscapes of W. Finch; the English landscapes of Hazledine; the cool orchards of W. Schlobach, with some fine statuettes; a beautiful group by P. Dubois, and patient studies of animals by Gaspar, completed an exhibition of exceptional charm.



Portrait by A. Cluysenaar | "Étude" by M. Van Andringa

In the "Cercle Artistique de Bruxelles," a Dutch artist, M. van Andringa, showed recently a collection of pictures and drawings which attracted a large number of lovers of good painting to these galleries. This artist, who is above all a colourist, seeks always for decorative effect. His large panel, *Des Coquelicots*, is consummately composed and of very sumptuous colouring.

F. K.

F. K., "Studio-Talk. Brussels," *The Studio*, 49, no. 204, March 1910, 145-146.

BRUSSELS.—The sculptor, Ch. Samuel, of Brussels, some of whose works in ivory have already appeared in *THE STUDIO* (Nov. 1902 and May, 1904), exhibited recently a statuette, *Une danseuse antique* (reproduced on p. 146), which undoubtedly deserves to rank as his most important achievement in this *genre*. The general line of the composition is graceful and harmonious, and the details of the work—of the hands especially—have been executed with consummate finish. The modelling, also, of a memorial plaque to the Baron F. A. Gevaert has been entrusted to M. Samuel. M. Fonson, the publisher, has undertaken, very courageously and without official support, to have medals struck in memory of illustrious Belgians, and the occasion of the death of the eminent Director of the Brussels Conservatoire seemed to him a fitting one to inaugurate the series. The very characteristic profile of the "master," with his ironical smile, has been reproduced by the sculptor with remarkable fidelity. In his design for the reverse of the medal, an illustration of which is given on this page, M. Samuel has introduced the bas-relief with which the much-regretted sculptor, Paul de Vigne, ornamented the tomb of Madame Gevaert, adding to it an appropriate verse from the Psalms, *In salicibus suspendimus organa nostra*.

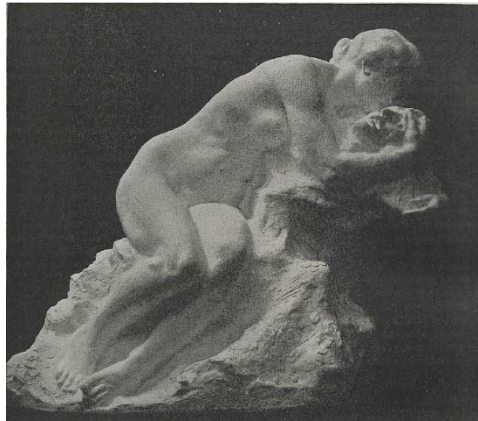


Reverse of Memorial Plaque to Baron F.A. Gevaert by Ch. Samuel |
Ivory Statuette "Une Danseuse Antique" by Ch. Samuel

F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 49, 206 (May 1910), 325-326.

BRUSSELS.—The Société Royale Belge des Aquarellistes has held its fiftieth exhibition. That implies a long career for a society of artists who devote themselves to the practice of only one branch of art. While recently celebrating the jubilee of its foundation the Society organised a retrospective exhibition, showing the historic evolution of water-colour drawing during the second half of the nineteenth century. The development of the art as shown in this exhibition has been extremely interesting—one feels in the work of practically all the artists who employ this medium a striving to escape from the restrictions and limitations which the *genre* would seem to impose; and to the freshness and fluidity of the early wash-drawings the artists of to-day are seeking, and with success, to add something of the richness and solidity of oil painting. The Society has endeavoured furthermore to commemorate this anniversary by offering an excellent and complete exhibition of its own active members—which is in every way an entire success.



"Le Dernier Baiser" (Légende d'Orphée) by Paul Dubois

The Belgian sculptor Paul Dubois, who has been showing at the Bonte galleries some of his most recent works, worthy successors of his earlier achievements, by reason of their sound knowledge of form and supple modeling, has added to his success as a master of the plastic art success also as a teacher, for it is a pupil of his, M. Rau, who has been unanimously selected for the Prix de Rome. This is the first time M. Rau has entered for a competition, and he was the youngest of the competitors.

F.K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 50, 207 (June 1910), 70-71.

Brussels.—The art circle *L'Estampe* recently opened its fourth annual Salon, and already its exhibitions have taken a premier place among shows of the kind. The organiser of these Salons, M.R. Sand, has realised that in such a case "protection" would be out of place, and notwithstanding that the principal etchers and engravers belong to the *cercle*, and more or less hold the success of its exhibitions in their hands, has never hesitated to give each year a great part of the space to retrospective collections and foreign works. About a score of admirably selected works represented the *œuvre* of Jan Luyken, the Dutch engraver of the seventeenth century, celebrated by J. K. Huysmans in his famous book "*À Rebours*." Among the foreign artists' works one noticed several wonderful pen drawings by the Italian, Alberto Martini, illustrations to the stories of Edgar Allen Poe; also superb lithographs by M. Belleruche; sombre etchings by M. Cottet; and some curious coloured wood-engravings by M. Arthur Jacquin. Among the Belgians, after the ensemble of drawings and engravings by Charles De Groux, the friend of the poor and afflicted, one noticed a masterpiece by that excellent engraver A. Danse, after Watteau's *Embarquement pour Cythère*; some landscapes of deep and powerful rusticity by Marc-Henri Meunier; lithographs by Claus, as luminous as his paintings; drawings by Fernand Khnopff, including one commissioned from him to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Université libre de Bruxelles; works by H. De Groux, Ensor, Hazledine, Durian and Thysbaert; etchings in colours by MM. Charlet, Van der Loo, V. Mignot; and women artists achieved triumph in the successful exhibits of Mmes. L. Danse, Wesmael and Franchomme.

F. K.

[unsigned], "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 50, 209 (August 1910), 244-247.

BRUSSELS.—The great event of the present year in Brussels is of course the International and Universal Exhibition, located on a large site close to the picturesque Bois de la Cambre. Applied or decorative art is in one or other shape and in varying degrees a feature of the different national sections, but in the British section the chief interest centres in the ceramic exhibits, which collectively demonstrate the high position held by British products of this class. The cases containing the articles sent over by the Pilkington Company, Wedgwoods, the Ruskin Pottery Works, Doulton, and other potteries have attracted much attention, and, to judge by the number of tickets bearing the word "Vendu," purchasers also. In other branches of applied art, however, the British section is disappointing in its meagreness, and, taken as a whole, it cannot be said that the contemporary arts and crafts of Great Britain are at all worthily represented. No blame for this attaches to those to whom the organisation of the section was entrusted, for the grant made by the Treasury for this and the Italian exhibition to be held next year necessarily entailed limitations.

The German Government, however, has been more generous, and the result is that a far more comprehensive representation of modern German decorative and applied art is to be found in their section, which has the advantage of an independent suite of buildings specially designed for the occasion by the eminent architect, Prof. Emanuel von Seidl. These buildings, with their rough-cast walls and dark tiled roofs, are characteristically German, and form a marked contrast to the other buildings of the exhibition. Nor has there been any stint in the application of distinguished talent to the fitting out of the interiors. For most of these Prof. Bruno Paul, the leading exponent of "Raumkunst" in Berlin, is responsible, others who have been entrusted with the interior arrangements being Architect Otto Walter, of Berlin, Prof. Peter Behrens, Prof. M. Dülfer and Architect Oskar Menzel, of Dresden, Prof. Seeck, of Steglitz. Here again the designs are significant of the aims which the leading modern architects of Germany are seeking to realise, and about which something was said in the last volume of *THE STUDIO YEAR BOOK OF DECORATIVE ART*. For the artist-craftsman, however, the feature of principal interest in the German section is the extensive suite of furnished rooms designed by leading architects, and the rooms in which are displayed the products of German porcelain factories and potteries, metal-work, and other branches of "Kunstgewerbe." These testify to the great forward strides which are being made in these directions by German workers. When reviewing the various manifestations of artistic activity at this exhibition, as we propose to later, we shall refer more fully to this display; here we will only say that it is one which all who are interested in the future of British applied art should see for themselves. It is generally recognised by German writers on applied art, as it is in the official catalogue of their section, that it was from England that the ideas which underlie the modern development of arts and crafts in Germany came to them; but the question is whether the lead taken by Britain has not been lost, or, at all events, will not soon be lost.

Except for a small display of pictures, sculpture, etchings, and so forth in the German section, fine art is not represented at the Exposition Universelle, but in the fine galleries of the Palais du Cinquantaire, in another quarter of the town, there is an extensive collection of paintings and sculpture by modern artists of various nationalities. Prominence is naturally given to the Belgian group, which affords ample proof of the vigour and independence of the artists of this country. The French rooms, too, are very interesting, and the works, representing the most diverse elements in French art at the present day, are admirably displayed. Much good work is also to be found in the Dutch rooms, but with some of the national contributions we were not impressed very greatly, though here and there one comes across an example of more than usual interest. The British group is one of the smallest of all and far from representative. A novelty in this exhibition is a special Salon devoted to medals and plaquettes by artists of all nationalities. Of this unique little Salon, which the organisers have striven to make fully representative, we hope to say more later.

An adjacent wing of the Palais du Cinquantaire is consecrated to a remarkable display of paintings, drawings, sculpture, and applied art belonging to the 17th century. The paintings of the old masters, numbering more than 600, include over a hundred by Rubens, nearly as many by Van Dyck, and numerous examples by Adrian Brouwer, Jordaens, Pourbus the younger, F. Snyders, Teniers the younger, and others, contributed from many sources, public and private, including many important foreign collections. The exhibits of decorative art include, along with many other items of interest, the fine series of Brussels tapestries designed by Rubens to illustrate the history of Constantine.

[H.F and] F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 51, 211 (October 1910), 66-69.

BRUSSELS.—This year is the first occasion upon which a special section in an International Exhibition has been devoted to the art of the medal, and much praise is due to M. de Witte and to the Vicomte de Jonghe for having organised the section at the Palais du Cinquantaire dealing with this subject, and which has all through the summer enjoyed such lively success. It is not my province here to speak of the very interesting display of medals from Germany, Belgium, Denmark or Spain; I may only say a few words concerning the collection got together by France. The organisation of this exhibit was entrusted to M. Mazerolle, the keeper of the records at the Mint, who is one of the best authorities upon the evolution of the medal in France. Thanks to this gentleman's influence and his efforts, all, or almost all, of the French *médailleurs* responded to this appeal by the French Government, and now the most notable productions of recent years may be seen grouped together in a charming hall decorated with a frieze by Dufrène.

Roty, who is the acknowledged master of the art of engraving medals, shows three cases forming a very representative exhibit of his work. Among the deceased artists there is represented Ponscarne, the great innovator, Chaplain, Alexandre Charpentier, and Daniel-Dupuy. Besides this work there are excellent examples by Vernon, Degeorge, Yencesse, Mme. Mérignac, Theunissen, Patey, Legastelois, Loiseau-Bailly, Doctor Paul Richer, Vernier, Dautel, Mlle. Granger, and that fine artist, J. M. Cazin.
H. F.

At the International Art Exhibition organised in connection with the Universal Exhibition, to which reference has already been made, the lack of any central scheme of organisation diminishes to a great extent the interest which the comparison of the different contemporary schools would have afforded. Besides the Belgian school, those of France, Italy, Holland and Spain are represented in a fairly complete manner. On the other hand, it is not possible to judge of the artistic tendencies of Great Britain, of Russia, or of the countries of Scandinavia from the collections of works—many of which are certainly very remarkable—which the artists of those lands have contributed. The Belgian Salon of 1910 ought to have shown us a synthesis of our artists' different manners and styles, comprehending and explaining their beauty. Instead of this it is nothing more than an ordinary salon, rather badly organised, extremely badly housed, and, what is even worse, encumbered with a quantity of second-rate work. All the same it does not the less vividly reveal the worth of the school of painting in our country, and if, in the imagination, one makes some necessary eliminations and judiciously replaces them by certain choice works, one gets from the *ensemble* an excellent idea of Belgian art.

The most attractive picture in this Belgian collection is the large winter landscape by A. J. Heymans, whose dignified talent dominates the Belgian school of landscape painting. Camille Lemonnier has called him "l'évocat solennel et attendri des matins du monde." There are also important landscapes by E. Claus, A. Baertsoen, R. and J. Wytman, by F. Courtens, V. Gilsoul and Matthieu. The work of MM. Oleffe and Jefferys, two young artists, has achieved considerable success. Among the portraits one must mention the work of E. Wauters, Devriend, Frederic Wollès, Cluysenaar, De la Hoesse, Van Holder and Artot; and among the figure painters Gouweloos, Michel, Thomas, Middeleer (whose curious painting, *La Procession des Aveugles à Bruges*, is very badly hung), and G. M. Stevens, whose picture was recently acquired for the Musée de Bruxelles. Among the painters of still life I must mention A. Verhaeren, Mdlle. A. Ronner, Ensor, Van Zevenberghe, and Morren.

In a special room are placed all the large paintings, all those destined for mural decoration, and here one finds work by Ciamberlani, Delville, Montald, Langaskens, Motte and Mertens. I must also mention the contributions from the principal members of the Société royale des Aquarellistes and of the Cercle de l'Estampe, H. Cassiers, Fernand Khnopff, A. Danse, H. Meunier, Marcette, Delaunois, Baseleer, Hagemans, Rassenfosse, Lenain.



Portrait bust of Mme. Willens by P. Dubois | "L'Automne" by V. Rousseau



"La Procession des Aveugles" by J. Middeleer

Among the sculpture should be noticed a marble bust, *L'Automne*, by V. Rousseau, full of exquisite sentiment, as indeed is all the delicate work that this master produces. A work of great importance, which attracts attention by its ingenious composition and the ease of its execution, is the monument by J. Lagae, which is to be erected at Buenos Ayres; Ch. Samuel exhibits a monumental group; J. de Lalaing an elegantly designed fountain; T. Vinçotte a torso full of life and energy; H. Wolfers a strikingly attractive group; P. Dubois a charming bust in marble of Madame Willens, which has been acquired for the Musée de Bruxelles, and which must certainly be regarded as one of the finest achievements of this able artist; and lastly, I must not omit to mention a young man, M. d'Haveloose, who exhibits a delightful group full of grace and youth, entitled *La Toilette*. The exhibition remains open till the end of next month.

F. K.

F.K., "Studio-Talk Brussels," *The Studio*, 51, 213 (December 15, 1910), 246-49.

The Belgian Committee of the Congrès International de Numismatique et d'art de la médaille having been inspired by a wish to see included in the exhibition of Fine Arts at the Palais du Cinquantenaire an international Salon devoted to the art of the medal, laid their proposal before the Commission de Patronage, by whom their suggestion was favourably received, and the idea unanimously adopted. The Government Department of Fine Arts therefore made of the art of engraving medals a special "class." "This step"—(I translate the words of M. Tournier in his preface to the Catalogue)—"of which it is impossible at once to appreciate the significance, is one of exceeding importance, for it implies the official recognition of the contemporary art of the medal as a special branch of plastic art."

The contribution of the French artists to the Salon has been already dealt with in the October number of *THE STUDIO*. It only remains to add that this exhibition proved once again the great superiority of French work in this branch. "La France," writes M. Buisson, the President of the Société hollando-belge des Amis de la Médaille d'Art, "a montré depuis trois-quarts de siècle une efflorescence de cet art de la médaille qui n'a été surpassée à aucune époque." And before passing on to more detailed consideration of the exhibits of the Belgian artists I must draw attention to the very interesting effort of the German school towards the creation of a characteristic style, and also to the qualities of careful observation exemplified in the Austrian work.

The sculptor, G. Devreese, of Brussels, stands in the forefront of the group of Belgian medallers, and our readers will remember that *THE STUDIO* has on many occasions given reproductions of his work. In the three frames and the revolving glass case which contained his numerous exhibits one had the pleasure of seeing again among the older works *La Dentellière*, *Le Photographe*, *Le Potier*, so very characteristic, the delicate profile of the *Polonaise*, the portraits of *MM. de Witte*, *Buisson*, *Van den Broeck*, to mention only a few; while among his recent productions was the plaquette reproduced last year in *THE STUDIO* (Sept., 1909, page 316) representing *MM. Kufferath and Guidé*, the artist-directors of the Théâtre de la Monnaie; the charming features of the delightful dancer, J. Cerny as *Salomé*; the seal of the Université libre de Bruxelles; also a medal showing a mounted herald announcing the Exhibition of 1910; the badge of the Councillors of the Province of Hainault, showing on the reverse an apprentice being instructed in his work by his Master, a most appropriate design for a Province which contains so many technical schools. Since the opening of the Salon M. Devreese has been able to complete yet another piece of work, the medal for the Beaux-Arts. This represents the struggle of mankind towards the ideal in art, despite the difficulties of existence.

Two cases contained the work of the sculptor, Ch. Samuel; he has executed several remarkable plaquettes, among others one commissioned by the Société Royale d'Architecture de Belgique, and numerous portrait medals and plaquettes, among which we have chosen for reproduction that of *M. Vergote*, a former Governor of Brabant, of *Count Goblet d'Alviella*, and of *Baron Gevaert*. We had occasion lately, apropos of this

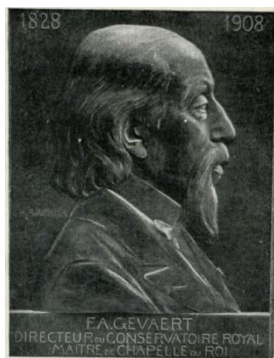
last plaquette, to refer to the courageous enterprise of the publisher Fonson, of Brussels, who wishes to perpetuate, in a series of medals, the names of distinguished Belgians. The last work published in this way is a portrait of the poet Max Waller, the founder of the Jeune-Belgique. M. Devreese has caught the likeness and engraved admirably the noble and sympathetic features of the young writer.



Plaquette: "L'Enseignement." By P. Wissaert | Medal by A. De Smeth | Medal: The Artist's Parents by P. Wissaerts



Councillor's Badge of Office. By G. Devreese



Plaquette: Baron Gevaert by Ch. Samuel | Medal: Count Goblet d'Alviella by Ch. Samuel



Plaquette by Ch. Samuel | Plaquette: M. Vergote by Ch. Samuel

Those prolific sculptors of Brussels, P. Dubois and P. Braecke, M. Devillez, who does such delicate work, the medallers, F. Dubois and L. Dupuis, all contributed largely to the success of the Belgian section of the Salon, and in concluding our survey of it we would draw attention to the work of two young men—namely, M. de Smeth, a pupil of Devreese, who showed a *Jeune Nantaise*, and M. P. Wissaert, a pupil of Van der Stappen, who exhibited his charming plaquette *l'Enseignement*, of most remarkable cleverness of composition, elegance of design, and showing special knowledge of the art of modelling in bas relief, also the plaquette destined to commemorate the voyage of the then Prince Albert to the Congo, and a large medal of the artist's parents.

F. K.