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WITHIN

## Studio-Talk



“MASTER J. E. DAHLSTRÖM” BY COUNT LOUIS SPARRE

outset. Others who figured to advantage among this group of foreigners were Cassiers, with some little works noticeable for their warmth of tone, Charlet, with an excellent *remorqueur*, Mme. Montalba, Mlles. Nourse and Bartlett.

I must refer briefly to several other exhibitions held here lately. Of Frank Boggs—whose water-colours have been on view at Georges Petit’s—I should certainly have liked to say a good deal, for his works are most agreeable, and are animated by an extreme diversity of theme which often reminds one of Jongkind (as indeed does the artist’s style). At Allard’s, Gaston Prunier, to whom reference has often been made in these pages and who, let me add, is very much in favour with the Parisian public just now, showed a collection of water-colours—the fruits of a visit to London. Never has he played more skilfully with light than in his interpretations of those fine haze effects which one sees at various times of the day in the neighbourhood of the Thames. I must not fail to mention an interesting exhibition at the Salle Chauchat, organized by the eminent critic Louis Vauxcelles, who here gathered together a choice selection of our foremost contemporary artists. Of Chénard-Huché’s exhibition at the Graves

Galleries, and of Camille Bourget, the wood-engraver, who exhibited at the Cercle Volney I shall speak later on. H. F.

**H**ELSINGFORS.—Of the many exhibitions of art that have taken place in Finland during the last four or five months, that of Count Louis Sparre was, perhaps, one of the most interesting, both because of the variety and charm of the pictures he exhibited and because of the promise his work gives of future accomplishment. His pictures are, perhaps, less typically Finnish than those of any of the other Finnish artists, but the reason is not far to seek. Finland is the land of his adoption and not the land of his birth.

Count Sparre was born in Italy, not far from Milan, in the year 1863, his mother being an Italian and his father belonging to an old and



“A STREET IN HELSINGFORS” BY COUNT LOUIS SPARRE

## Studio-Task



"SENATE SQUARE, HELSINGFORS, WINTER"

BY COUNT LOUIS SPARRE

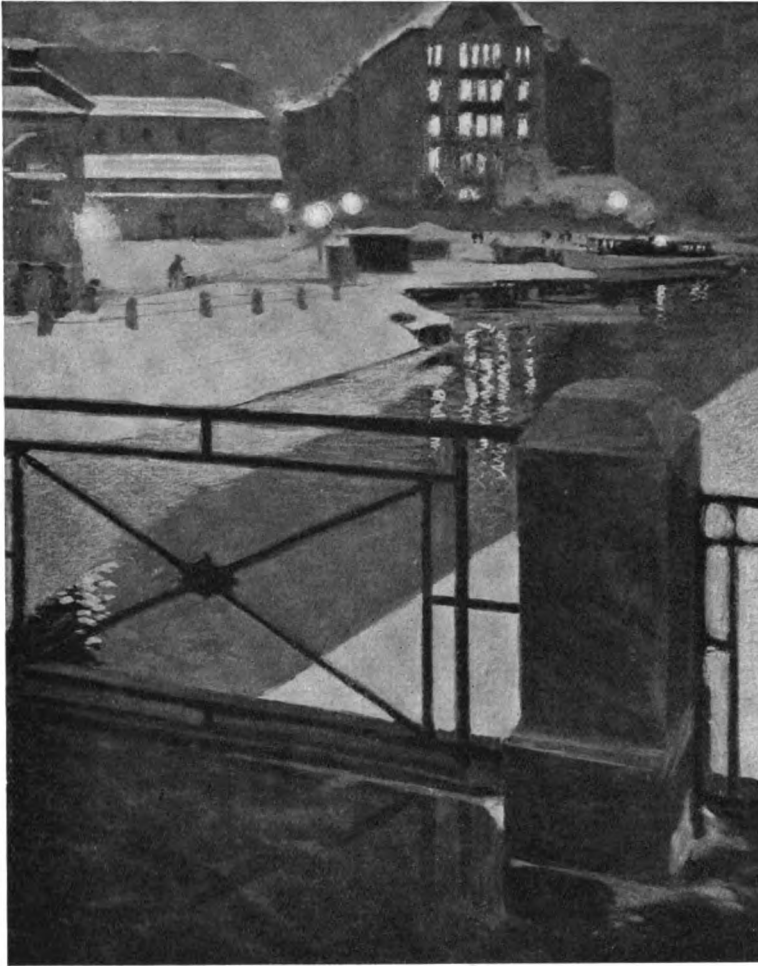
well-known Swedish family. The first twelve years of his life he spent in France and in Italy, but after his mother's death he went with his father to Sweden, and was educated in Stockholm, the Paris of the north. From his earliest years he had shown a great fondness for art, and many of his youthful sketches give proof of a nice feeling for composition and for colour harmony. In spite of the opposition of his father he decided to devote his life to art, and at twenty went once more to Paris, where he studied at the Atelier Julian. One of his comrades here was Axel Gallén, now, perhaps, the most famous of Finnish artists. Inspired by the enthusiasm and dominated by the virile and masterful personality of Gallén, Count Sparre gave up his intention of seeking fame in England or Scotland, and instead went with Gallén to Finland.

At that time there was throughout the country

a strong movement toward the people, and together with several other young artists they went to the far north to seek their inspiration from primitive peasant life. With characteristic energy and the warm enthusiasm of his Southern temperament, Count Sparre devoted himself to interpreting these new and, to him, unfamiliar phases of life. We have from this time a number of interesting studies of peasant interiors, the most notable of which is *The First Snow*, which shows a peasant family seated at a table in a dimly lighted hut; and from this time also dates the *Spring Brook*, an April landscape full of charm and poetic feeling.

Though spring and summer are full of beauty, winter in the far north is long and dreary, and often, for weeks at a time, heavy clouds obscure the low rising sun, and the light is so dim that

## Studio-Talk



"NOVEMBER TWILIGHT"

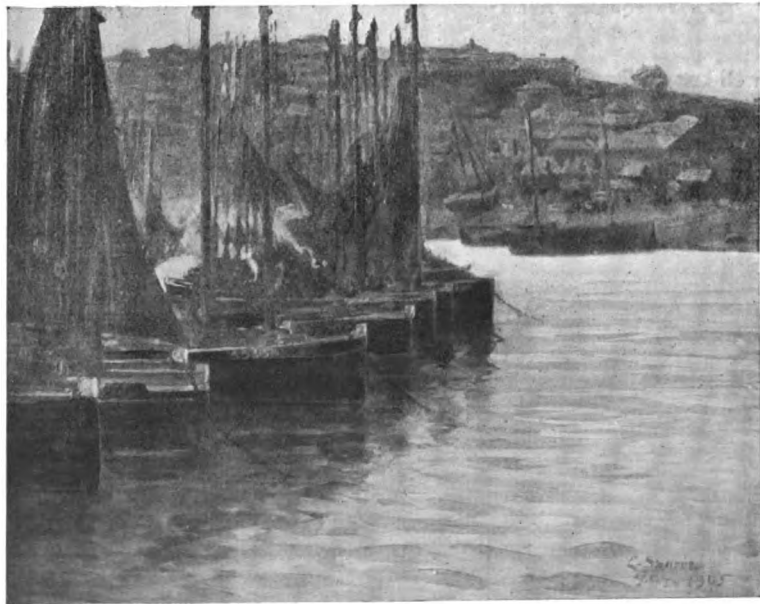
BY COUNT LOUIS SPARRE

and workshops opened in Borgå for the manufacture of furniture in accordance with the new ideals of artistic design and workmanship, Count Sparre was at once selected as managing director. The undertaking met with great success, and a complete revolution was brought about in the artistic ideals of the buying public. Pseudo Empire furniture was no longer imported from Germany, but was replaced by furniture built on simple and graceful lines and covered with materials in soft, harmonious tones. Such work left little time free for painting, and we find in the exhibition comparatively few pictures dating from this period, though one in particular, called *An Old Courtyard*, is a delightful picture, painted with much feeling.

By 1905, however, the desire to devote his time

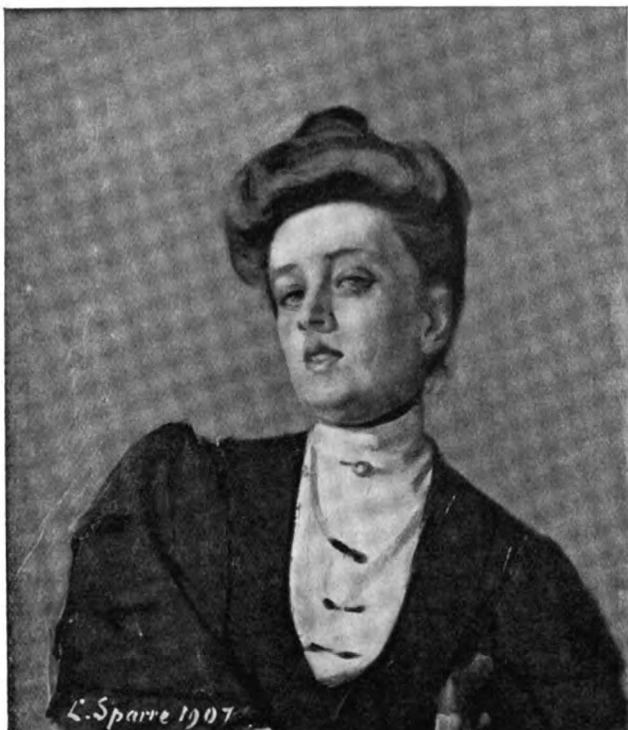
painting is quite impossible. Such long periods of enforced inaction grow intolerable to an ardent young painter, full of life and energy, and Count Sparre soon moved to Helsingfors, making only occasional visits to the far north.

At about this time the wave of interest in interior decoration that had been spreading over Europe and had blossomed into flower in England, under the fostering care of William Morris and his school, found its way also to Finland, and when a company was formed



"THE HARBOUR, ST. IVES"

BY COUNT LOUIS SPARRE



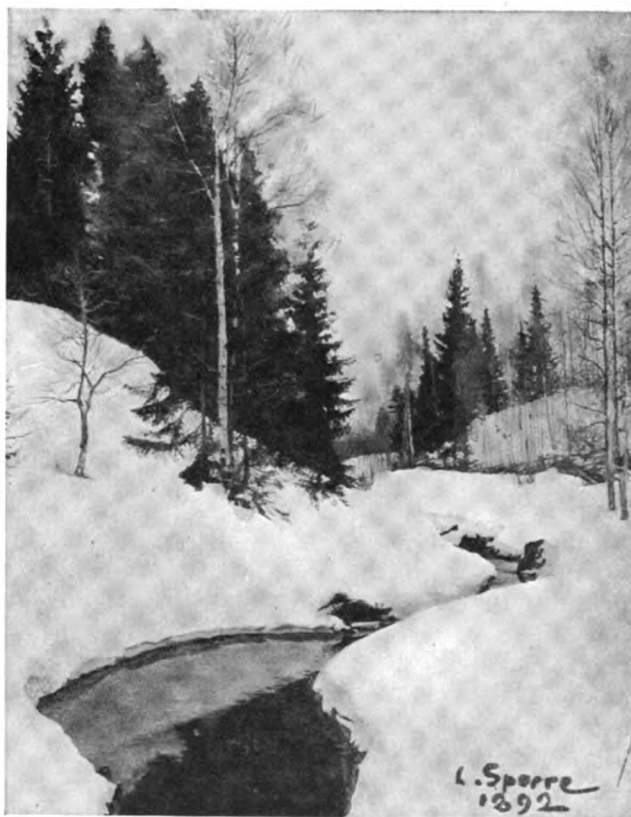
PORTRAIT OF MISS J. STRÖM

BY COUNT LOUIS SPARRE

We have few examples of the artist's work done in the summer-time or in bright daylight, perhaps because on clear sunny days the Finnish colours are peculiarly hard and cold. The trees, the moss-covered rocks, even the patches of meadow land are uncompromisingly vivid and clearly defined, the outlines are sharp and the transitions abrupt, and the minutest details seem to stand out clearly before you. Even the blades of grass seem to challenge your attention and demand a recognition of their independence.

When Nature in her gayer moods leaves so little to the imagination, an artist whose feeling is rather for the subtle charm of suggestion than for the stern reality of definite fact, and who yet has a love of warm and beautiful colours, can perhaps only find vent for his genius by turning to portraiture. It is not surprising, therefore, that Count

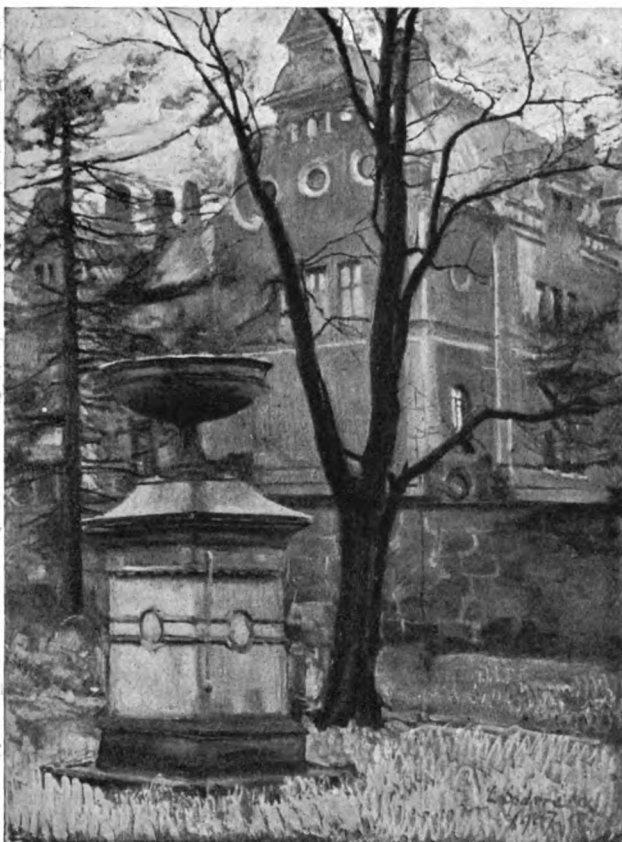
once more to painting grew so strong that Count Sparre gave up his work in Borgå, and moved to Helsingfors to seek the inspiration of a new environment and the more varied interests of a larger town. In the spring of that year he spent several months in England, where he devoted himself with great assiduity and enthusiasm to his art. The pictures he painted about this time are, perhaps, too studied, and the detail in them is worked out with too great conscientiousness, but the sketches and etchings of fisher boats made in the late afternoon or on misty days are full of the subtle intangible charm of the sea, and show the sure hand and quick eye of the trained artist. One of the best examples of the artist's ability to seize just the right moment to perpetuate what he sees is exemplified in his *November Twilight*, when a view quite unlovely in broad daylight becomes in a misty twilight full of poetic suggestion. The colour scheme of the picture is delightfully soft and harmonious.



"THE SPRING BROOK"

BY COUNT LOUIS SPARRE

## Studio-Talk



"THE OLD PUMP"

BY COUNT LOUIS SPARRE

Sparre became constantly more and more absorbed in this branch of art, which offered him the fullest scope for the expression of his personality. In all of his portraits, which are pretty numerous, one feels a delightful sense of harmony—both harmony of colour and a more subtle psychological harmony, showing a sure intuitive grasp of the relation between the character of his subject and the outer expression of it in the pose that he chooses to perpetuate. In the portrait of his father, painted as early as 1895 (see *THE STUDIO*, January 1906), you feel the intense nervous energy of the man, not only in the lines of his face and his slender

nervous hands, but in the very way that he has thrown himself down into his chair as though he could stay for only a moment. A. v. R. K.

**V**IENNA.—A short time ago a small exhibition, at Heller's Fine Art Rooms, of etchings by Marino M. Lusy, introduced this artist's work for the first time to the Viennese. He is a native of Trieste and has studied at Paris, where, as at Munich, his work has long been known and appreciated by reason of exhibitions he has held there. Signor Lusy's restless, impatient temperament leads him to seek in out-of-the-way places for his subjects. Pre-eminently a man of "Stimmung," he does not merely represent what he sees, but infuses into his work that personal element which is essential to all true art.

Lusy's preference is for Gothic architecture, which he finds best embodies his ideals. Scattered about the Continent are many old abbeys which have an attraction to few besides the real artist, who sees and feels their inward beauties, while the ordinary traveller will pass them by without so much as casting a glance at them. The old abbey at Trieste is an



"WINTER"

BY MARINO M. LUSY