

Prof.

LUDWIG HOHLWEIN

60 JAHRE

The sixtieth birthday of Ludwig Hohlwein is only an outward excuse for publishing this survey. It is an attempt to continue reviewing the production of this most fruitful of German poster artists, taking up his work at the point where I left off ten years ago in the book entitled "Ludwig Hohlwein and his work".

Hohlwein imparts his individual style in form and colour to every one of his posters and surrounds it with his own especial atmosphere as scarcely any other artist is able to do. If small weaknesses occasionally occur in the mass of his extraordinarily rich production, they are nothing more than the little weaknesses attendant upon mighty powers. Wherever the nature of the task—or rather the taskmaster—put no direct obstacle in his path, his ripened feeling for style and the versatility of his imagination invariably lead him to victory.

There is a straightforwardness about this artist which everyone must feel and sincerely admire. His youthful ardour and devoted energy cause him again and again to create things which astonish us, although style and technique are familiar.

Since the renaissance of the German poster at the beginning of this century, in which Hohlwein himself took a very prominent part, he has been reckoned among the strongest representatives of the realistic poster. I do not consider this classification exhaustive, for realism attempts to give an illustration, as true to nature as possible, of indifferent outward realities and truths. Hohlwein, on contrary, gives a new form to these outward things, emphasizes what is vital, reduces all forms and lines to the simplest essentials.

He loves the simplest processes and he represents them with apparent simplicity. But some unexpected splash of colour, some unusual angle of view and the peculiarly cultivated atmosphere of the whole effect betray the hand of the master. Precisely this plus over the merely "good" is inimitable his own and never attained or attainable by the great army of Hohlwein imitators.

Hohlwein's technique makes the greatest possible



Erste Periode der Nachkriegszeit  
First period of post-war days