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**Washington Has  
Exhibition Of  
Portraits**

By Frederic J. Haskin.

Washington, Dec. 18.—There is now at the Corcoran Gallery of Art an exhibition of portraits by the distinguished artist, Philip A. de Laszlo, who perhaps is one of the most colorful of the modern school.

The present exhibition includes portraits of such important personages as H. M. the Queen of the Belgians, H. M. the Queen of Greece, Myron T. Herrick, American Ambassador to France, Frank B. Kellogg, secretary of state, and H. R. H. the Crown Princess of Roumania. There are also portraits of the handsome and distinguished British couple who proved so popular on their visit to the United States—Lord and Lady Mountbatten. Lady Mountbatten is shown in her bridal dress and her husband in full dress uniform with all the embellishments.

Although entitled to the impressive cognomen of Count Philip Alexius Laszlo de Lombos this painter uses only Philip A. de Laszlo. He is also said to prefer the democratic "Mr." to "Sir," and is always thus spoken of and addressed when in this country.

The story of de Laszlo is almost like a Cinderella tale—that is, insofar as like Cinderella he rose from the deepest obscurity to the dizzy heights of fame. Unlike this childhood's favorite, however, no fairy godmother waved a magic wand and changed him overnight. He attained success solely by his own efforts.

Mr. de Laszlo was born in Hungary of humble parentage in 1869. From earliest childhood he felt the call of art, but he was not encouraged in this by his family. So when he was only a small boy of 10 he left school and started in to earn his own living in order that he might study art. He was willing to do anything—and practically did. At first he worked in a scene painters studio where he ground colors. He also did drawings for newspapers and he colored photographs.

Whenever he was able he attended the Industrial Art School at Budapest. Later he won a scholarship from the National Drawing School which made it possible for him to go to Munich and to Paris to study. He says that the training he received in Munich gave him technique, while in Paris he learned style and spirit.

All during his studies he was specializing in portraiture, and when he was only 24 he was receiving commissions for portraits of notable persons. His first commission at a royal court was to paint the late King Ferdinand of Bulgaria. Since that time it would seem that whenever a member of the nobility or a person of wealth or prominence has wished a portrait of himself he has sent for de Laszlo.

**Knows All the Notables.**

He probably knows personally more of the world's outstanding figures than any other one man in the world. Of course a successful portrait painter must be able to see beneath the surface of his subject—the physical is not enough; he must recognize the spirit

him. I had an appointment with him at 6 o'clock last night and finally saw him at 9:30 this morning. The only thing I could suggest would be that you camp on his hotel doorstep."

Success and popularity seem not to have spoiled Mr. de Laszlo, though, according to his friends. He has remained friendly and democratic toward all, not reserving his kindness and geniality for those in high places desiring their portraits made.



and the soul. Anyone with drawing ability and training is presumed to be able to depict the physical.

Mr. de Laszlo has been called "a just but merciful judge of humanity," and this no doubt is one of the main factors in his popularity. He does not sacrifice reality to mere prettiness, but he does seek the best in his sitter and emphasizes this. Who of us would not acclaim one who does this in preference to the harsh advocate of realism who takes the attitude that in order to attain this realism it is necessary to tear away our small virtues and show the world the flaws which we have striven to hide?

He is not only a merciful judge, but he brings to each new canvas a fresh enthusiasm. His interest in his work has not become jaded. He always hopes and feels that perhaps this time he will do something better than he has ever done before. He has not become self-satisfied. Also by his kind and pleasing personality he very quickly puts his sitter at ease and is thus able to become acquainted with him. There are many times that the only opportunity he has of becoming acquainted with the person whose portrait he has been commissioned to paint is during the sittings. It is, therefore, important that he be a quick and accurate judge of personality and character.

#### A Naturalized Englishman.

Although born in Budapest, and ennobled in 1912 by the emperor of Austria-Hungary, Mr. de Laszlo is now a naturalized citizen of England, and lives in London. He is often referred to as the British artist of Hungarian birth. The story of his naturalization in itself is of interest. It seems that just before the outbreak of the World War he applied for his first papers. Although he had already received these when war was declared he was put into an enemy alien internment camp and forced to remain there all during the war. But, as one admirer puts it, "he was a sport and when the war was over he went ahead and became a citizen."

During the conference on limitation of armament held in Washington some years ago, Mr. de Laszlo had an exhibition at the Corcoran. He made this timely by displaying portraits of such persons as General Pershing, Charles E. Hughes, who was then secretary of state, and the Right Honorable Lord Lee of Fareham, first lord of admiralty.

Although Mr. de Laszlo has naturally won much wealth through his portraits he is not paid for all he does. For instance when he was making a portrait of the late President Harding, a casual reference was made one day to the fact that it was the wedding anniversary of Mr and Mrs. Harding. Mr. de Laszlo immediately said he would like very much to make a sketch of Mrs. Harding and present it as a remembrance of the occasion.

Also, what has been called one of his most charming portraits is a small one which he made of the secretary to the director of the Corcoran Gallery of Art as a token of his friendship and respect for her.

Personally Mr. de Laszlo is as popular as his portraits. While he was in Washington someone who wished to interview him asked at the Corcoran as to what might be the best time. The Director laughed and said, "Might as well try to catch a flea." He is being so entertained that it is practically impossible to get in touch with