

ART NOTES.

A letter dated Berlin, end of February 1872, and signed Phil. Silvanus, appears in the present number of the *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*. It gives interesting particulars as to the relations now existing between the government and those art institutions which are under governmental control. Both the Academy of Arts and the Royal Museums have suffered severely under the Mühler régime, and are hoping anxiously for a more liberal policy from his successor, Dr. Falk. Many posts have been allowed to remain vacant from motives of economy; the question now is by whom are they to be filled, and what is to be the programme of the future. Of old, there was a General-Director, to whom the directors of the separate galleries and cabinets were subordinate; the chief was always considered to fill a court office, and it was necessary that he should be *hof-fähig*. Since the voluntary resignation of Herr von Olfers, who obtained this appointment through the favour of the Queen Dowager, this post has remained unoccupied. It is now nominally held by the Crown Prince, Herr von Usedom being appointed at least for six months as his Adlatus. According to all report, Herr von Usedom is the right man for the place. But, it is asked, is the existence of such a place desirable? The General-Director has the supervision of a number of collections and galleries, which represent the most various departments of the arts. No man alive can possess in each special knowledge which would warrant him in trusting to his own judgment. He must therefore often (whoever he may be) rely on his subordinates if he wish to avoid making serious mistakes. On the other hand, it is urged with much show of reason that in the interests of the institutions themselves it is highly desirable that they should have a zealous and active representative who can make their wants known to government, and enforce the attentive consideration of their pecuniary and other needs.

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