

*Another Word on the Poster*

**A**NOTHER WORD ON THE POSTER. BY ARTHUR FISH.

MUCH has been written and said of late about the poster, but the final word has by no means been pronounced upon the subject, and will not be for some time to come. English artists have been taunted with their lack of ingenuity in the designing of hoarding papers, and have been scornfully told to go to France to learn the alphabet of the work. The taunt has been accepted as a challenge by some of our younger men, and latterly our hoardings have "blossomed like the rose" with patches of colour in lines of more or less grace.

Perhaps the newest word on the poster has been uttered by two young artists who chose to exhibit their designs—for, strange to say, but little of their work has got beyond that stage—at the recent exhibition at the Aquarium, under the pseudonym of "J. and W. Beggarstaff." The critics were almost unanimous in praising the designs, for they found in them a certain novelty of conception together with considerable dexterity and skill in execution; simplicity of line and colour, and remarkable suggestiveness. The primary duty of a poster is of course to arrest the attention of passers-by, and the harder it strikes "the man in the street" the more successful it is. The Beggarstaff posters certainly do not fail in this direction.

Mr. J. Pryde and Mr. W. N. P. Nicholson, the two artists in question, are still quite young, and until recently have been engaged upon entirely different work. The former has done excellently as a portraitist, pastel being his favourite medium. Mr. Nicholson, on the other hand, delights in painting landscapes, and is a pure impressionist. Last year they held an exhibition of their works at Earl's Court, which, though announced as a "private" show, attracted a fair amount of attention. Both studied in Paris at Julien's famous

studio: one being principally under Bouguereau, and the other under Benjamin-Constant. But neither has followed any particular master, having original ideas as to their work and acting up to them.

Poster-designing is for them but a recent development, they having turned their attention to it to "afford themselves the luxury of painting pictures." Their designs barely exceed a dozen in number, but each exhibits careful consideration for its requirements, bearing its peculiar mission in



DESIGN FOR A POSTER

BY J. AND W. BEGGARSTAFF

bold characters. There are no fussy details to detract the eye, each design being carried out in a broad, bold manner, that shows the care and deliberation bestowed upon it by the designers. There is not an unnecessary line upon any one of them, and the colouring is simple but effective.

One of the first designs they executed, was one of *Hamlet* for Mr. Hardy's touring company, and its quiet grace and dignity struck all who saw it at the Aquarium. It may be mentioned that Parisian collectors of *affiches* have bought up all the available copies of this work. Its sober tones seem to have highly delighted them—perhaps they