

Reviews of Recent Publications

Exhibition. While the Dutch School is growing more monotonous and dull every day, the French section exhausting itself in over-large canvases of indifferent execution, and the Belgian exhibits for the most part are disfigured by great vulgarity of style, the English artists show their distinction and reticence in a series of rational productions. The few pictures on too large a scale to be seen in the British section bear evident traces of a foreign influence. What could one wish for better in their several styles—to name but a few of these works—than Burne-Jones's *Wheel of Fortune*, superb in treatment and of truly rare and noble colouring; or Alma-Tadema's delightful *Shrine of Venus*; or Albert Moore's most charming *Sopha*, exquisite in arrangement and absolutely silky in colouring? And there are many more. Ford Madox Brown's *Chaucer*, for example, a remarkable work, which can never be sufficiently praised. England may indeed be proud of artists such as these.

Edouard Duyck the painter, who has recently died in Brussels, was, with his friend Crespin, one of the first artists in Belgium to devote himself steadily to decorative art in its widest sense. He designed a great number of posters, theatrical costumes, &c., in which he gave free play to his fancy, full of unstudied grace and charm. He was an untiring worker, who disdained no sort of labour; now turning out a set of simple programmes in his facile way, now undertaking the great scheme illustrative of African customs, which adorns the large hall in the Congo section of the Brussels Exhibition. He was appointed a teacher at one of the professional schools here, and in a very short space of time produced results surpassing all expectations.

F. K.

REVIEWS OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

Fors Clavigera. By JOHN RUSKIN, D.C.L., LL.D. Vol. IV. (London: G. Allen.) This fourth volume completes the admirable new edition of this work. Do younger artists read Ruskin now? One doubts if they read him as an earlier generation did. Yet possibly a certain glamour of old-time fancy and prejudice that has gathered round his pages, makes them even more valuable. There was a danger once lest an over-zealous disciple should take the waywardness of Mr. Ruskin's moods too literally. Now, when much he has

pleaded for has come to pass, it is well to recall the arguments he set forth and to recognise his powerful guidance. No edition could be more handy or better produced than this; and few books so discursive in their matter would be more helpful indirectly to the making of an artist than these same *Fors* which rarely discuss painting or sculpture, and are more concerned with that right state of life which is fertile to the production of fine work in the arts.

French Wood Carvings, from the National Museum. Edited by ELEANOR ROWE. Second Series. (London: Batsford; 12s. net.)—This excellent work is if anything still better in its second series. The collotypes are as good as possible, the examples are well chosen, the letterpress interesting, and of great practical value. The first series, it will be remembered, dealt chiefly with late fifteenth century Gothic. This, the second, is devoted entirely to sixteenth century work from the time of Francis I. to the death of Charles IX. The style prevalent then has much in common with our own Jacobean carving, especially in its use of strap-work, and the frequent introduction of cartouches. The eighteen plates are sold separately at sixpence each; so that those who want them for working designs need not run the risk of soiling one of a set, but can obtain a duplicate for actual use.

Suggestions in Architectural Design, prefaced with Thoughts on Architectural Progress. By JOHN COTTON. (London: Batsford.)—The preface is ably written and logically argued, so that you agree with the writer's protest against the undue influence which precedent has imposed on modern architectural design. But when you turn to the plates which embody the result of this theory, they are—to put it mildly, very mildly—disappointing. For Mr. Cotton seems to consider detail, and especially detail of ornament, the life and essence of architecture. But surely it is in the treatment of the mass—the greater proportions—and the due balance between plain surface and decoration which reveal the art of the architect.

It is hard to condemn outright an effort so praiseworthy, but the most hackneyed obedience to dead precedent were better than the nightmares he depicts here—designs where every line strikes a discord with its neighbour, compositions where the lavish ornament is employed not to adorn the construction but to justify it. "More or less suggestively novel in treatment" they may be, but from such novelty may we be preserved.

Neue Folge von Allegorien. (Vienna: Gerlach and Schenk.) This publication consists of a series

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