

Reviews of Recent Publications

works of Italian artists since the great sculptor are to some extent criticised and noted, many photographic reproductions being given of the more famous and more interesting works. In the period treated by Mr. Willard, the sculpture is, generally speaking, of more value than the paintings: when one is forced directly to compare, say, the Madonna of Sartorio with that of Botticelli, one gets the same result as might be gained by placing a *Portrait of a Lady* by Mr. Shannon in juxtaposition to a Reynolds. And in this severe contrast of the past of Italian art with the classic revival of the eighteenth century may be found the main interest and value of Mr. Willard's careful and elaborate work; the period as a whole is of interest to all students of art, but no one will call it a great period. Following the neo-classic endeavour came the Pre-Raphaelitism and Romanticism which in Rome as in England formed for a while a movement and an overwhelming influence. The Romantics fell under one more reaction, and Mr. Willard, after telling us something of their later development, sketches the varying phases and fortunes of Italian artists since their day, their many struggles for the ideal, and the lights which fail, with sympathy and knowledge and in a style which lends interest to his subject even when the facts themselves are hardly of international importance.

Thames Sonnets and Semblances. By MARGARET ARMOUR and W. B. MACDOUGALL. (London: Elkin Mathews.)—This smoke-stained city with its great dome and ancient river, its historic palaces and many-storeyed overcrowded hovels, and all the teeming intermediate human life, is full of the stuff of which poetry is made—is itself a poem; and Mr. Macdougall's pen-and-ink *Semblances*, touched occasionally with a tragic intensity, are in fine accord with his wife's sonnets, which have caught something of this poetic quality, just as a gleam of cloud-broken sunset light may be caught in a clean-cut pebble wet from the river. Margaret Armour (Mrs. Macdougall) is at her best when she is most serious and passionate, as in Sonnets VIII. and IX., and the same may, perhaps, be said of the illustrations, which, when they touch their highest mark, are distinguished by a nerve and sweep of imaginative perception which goes far to atone for an occasional coarseness and raggedness that we desire to attribute to some carelessness in the reproduction rather than to any deterioration in the artist's work. For instance, in *Semblance VI.*, the blurred and slovenly effect is quite unworthy of a place beside the sombre, majestic suggestive-

ness of *Semblance I.* The view of Westminster from Waterloo Bridge is one of the most beautiful in all London, and probably Mr. Macdougall will agree with us that, unless his work could be shown with rather more delicacy of line, just that one bit of it would have been better away.

Modern Opera Houses and Theatres. By EDWIN O. SACHS. Vol. III. and Supplements. (London: B. T. Batsford.)—We have already spoken in terms of the highest admiration of the first and second volumes of this magnificent publication. As an encyclopædia of theatre construction, Mr. Sachs' work is without a rival in English, and fairly deserves the often misapplied adjective "monumental." The letterpress is entirely worthy the splendid series of drawings and diagrams which accompanies it, and now that theatres are being constructed here, there and everywhere, it should prove of immense service to those engaged in the planning and building of playhouses. Mr. Sachs has arranged his material in a thoroughly practical manner, and reference to his pages is an easy matter. The present volume contains extra supplements dealing with stage construction, theatre fires, and protective legislation. The author and publisher are entitled to our congratulations on the completion of an exhaustive and authoritative book which will doubtless remain for a long time the standard work on the subject of theatre construction.

La Caricature et l'Humour français au XIX^e Siècle. Par RAOUL DEBERDT (Paris: Librairie Larousse). 250 engravings. Price: 4 francs.—Nothing could be more amusing, nothing more instructive than this encyclopædia of caricature in France. Here are all the great French draughtsmen, from Bosio to Steinlen and Caran d'Ache—the chief masters of a branch of art full of life, but too long overlooked—Carle Vernet, Raffet, Charlet, Bellangé, Boilly, Aubry, Scheffer, Deveria, Roqueplan, Henri Monnier, the great Daumier himself, and the genial Gavarni; then from Grévin, Cham, and Marcelin to Willette, Ibels, Herman Paul, and Toulouse-Lautrec. Thus we may trace, through the various periods, with all their differing customs and fashions, the evolution of French wit, which, from being simply mirthful and good-natured at the beginning of the century, has become mordant, bitterly cruel even sometimes, and always tinged with pessimism at its close. M. Raoul Deberdt's letterpress is bright and crisp, as the subject demands it should be, and he deals most entertainingly with an abundance of material selected with equal taste and impartiality.