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W. W. Watts

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that, according to his letters, time after time his personal sentiment was thrown on the scale against scholarship when a work of art was in question. Unfortunately one often notices that this is not a case peculiar to exceptional instances, but rather a common failing among those who are responsible for public galleries. Without claiming for ourselves the attribute of divine impartiality, nevertheless we cannot help wondering whether there are any means (including if necessary medical examination or limitation of age for curators and trustees) by which it would be possible both to safeguard national art treasures against the unworthy acquisitions and to assure the right development of art-appreciation.

In the Heitz series of contributions to the history of art of foreign countries the hundred and twenty-fifth volume is of an outstanding interest to all the students of art history in general, but particularly to those who make a speciality of Italian art, and especially so to the admirers of Giovanni Bellini. Really it would be "carrying coals to Newcastle" to praise Dr. Georg Gronau, who deals in this volume (illustrated with twenty-five well reproduced plates) with the late works by Giovanni Bellini. Among the most excellent selection of late works by this artist are also included two of his paintings from the National Gallery, namely, the *Madonna* and *The Circumcision*, while *The Adoration of the Magi*, ascribed in the National Gallery catalogue (1921 edition) to Gentile Bellini, Dr. Gronau reproduces here as a late work by Gentile's younger brother. As to the text of the volume, the name of Dr. Gronau is of itself a sufficient recommendation and guarantee of its reliability and conciseness.

S. P.

**English Monumental Sculpture of the Renaissance.** By KATHERINE A. ESDAILE. 179 pp. + 34 pl. (S.P.C.K.) 10s. 6d.

Mrs. Esdaile's predecessors in this series of handbooks published by the S.P.C.K. in writing about stained glass, English cathedrals or parish church architecture have had relatively simple tasks compared with that which confronted her when she undertook this account of monumental sculpture since the Renaissance. For though it is true that it requires a master to write shortly and well of any great subject, how much the more when the subject is not only bewilderingly extensive but has hardly been treated before. This was Mrs. Esdaile's task, and she has risen to it triumphantly. To drive home this point and show that it is more than idle compliment, it should be explained that in such a book as this it was necessary not only to discuss the formal part of the monuments, the changes in style and the changing tastes which governed them, but the whole question of religious symbolism in relation to sepulchral monuments had to be treated, and questions arose as to the changing attitude towards death at the various periods. To have these difficult and evasive problems to deal with besides those ordinarily elusive and troublesome enough which are the fate of every art historian, in the space of a book of this size, called for very great gifts in the accomplishment and very great courage in the undertaking.

Mrs. Esdaile's knowledge of her subject can only be described as encyclopædic. Without being in any sense a descriptive catalogue either of works or sculptors, she has illustrated her generalized chapters on, say, The Growth of Realism, Religious Symbolism, or Neo Hellenism, and the Gothic Revival, with such a wealth of examples derived from every part of the country, that the interested reader wherever he lives can surely find some of those she mentions within easy visiting reach, and so the book, though not conceived in that way, fulfils to a remarkable degree the functions of the best sort of guide book.

It is difficult to choose out parts for praise from such a book as this, but the present reviewer was especially impressed with the earlier chapter called *Some Representative Sculptors*, in which the seventeenth-century masters are treated in a series of short biographies, and where an extraordinary amount of learning is compressed into a short space and remains readable. It is in this chapter that Mrs. Esdaile makes an unfortunate slip; in speaking of Grinling Gibbons she mentions work of his at Chatsworth on the same page as a reference to Mr. Tipping's book on Gibbons, in which the attribution of the Chatsworth work to Gibbons was shown to be, to say the least, most improbable, and the names of the actual carvers recorded. This is unfortunate, though not a very important matter. Rather more serious is the confident attribution to Nicholas Stone of the kneeling children on the Duke of Buckingham's tomb in Henry VII's chapel. Stone is a specially well-documented sculptor, and one would like to have had the authority for this. But these are minor matters. A more erudite reviewer might find other and more serious points for disagreement than these, and yet be compelled to acknowledge the extraordinary learning that has gone to the making of this book. It is a testimony to Mrs. Esdaile's scholarship that she has been able to write a book that not only fulfils its purpose as a guide to those generally interested, but also has such authority to those whose interest is more specialized that such a point as this last is worthy of mention.

G. W.

**The New Pewter Marks and Old Pewter Ware.** By MAJOR C. A. MARKHAM, F.S.A. (Reeves and Turner.) 35s.

Old Pewter continues to retain a real fascination for a large number of people, partly because of its inherent attractiveness and largely, no doubt, because it recalls old-world associations and surroundings. This second edition of Major Markham's well-known work—for the word *new* in the title merely signifies a further edition—will appeal to a large and increasing number of readers, from the Society of Pewter Collectors down to the humble possessor of one or two pieces. The author has certainly achieved the object of the work which is "to identify the makers of pewter." A short history of the craft is followed by a transcript of some of the early charters of the Company. The section on the "touches" or marks on pewter explains and accounts for such well-known marks as the "Rose and Crown," the "X," "London," and so forth. A list is given of the Freemen of the Pewterers' Company, from 1451 until almost

the present day, after which appears a complete list of the "touches" nearly 1,200 in number, which are to be found on the five plates in the Company's possession. The order of this list is not very obvious, and unfortunately it is not entirely free from errors; but it is rendered easily accessible by the alphabetical index which follows—a very great boon which obviates the troublesome necessity of wading through the marks. So far we have nothing but praise for the book, as a work of reference the writer's intention may be considered as completely accomplished; collectors and others will welcome and appreciate his work, and gratefully acknowledge its value and usefulness.

The remainder of the work we find rather uneven. The sections on the manufacture, composition, cleaning and repairing of pewter are thoughtfully written and of considerable interest. But the sections on Domestic and Ecclesiastical Pewter appear to be rather casual and disconnected. In the first place it should be stated that the writer is mainly confining his attention to British pewter; this would account for the very slight reference to the great field of Continental pewter. In the chapter on domestic pewter we should have liked more sequence, either historical or from the point of view of development of form, rather than mere notes on various classes of objects known to the author. The illustrations are varied and fairly well chosen; we miss, however, some of the rarer forms, and the author might have made use of the large group at the Victoria and Albert Museum; as it is, he illustrates a somewhat insignificant coffin chalice and makes no further reference to the national collection. Incidentally, a spoon illustrated as a "Maidenhead" is a much rarer type, and two very similar candlesticks are ascribed to different centuries.

The section on ecclesiastical pewter is short and at times lacking in accuracy. The Canon of 1603 had reference to the vessel in which the wine was brought to the Communion Table and forms no argument for chalices being made of pewter; except in later times vessels for the consecrated elements were required to be of precious metal. A good deal of pewter of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is still to be found in English churches; the writer evidently intended to illustrate one complete set, that at Stanton Wyville, Leicestershire, but the illustration, to which reference is made, does not appear in the book.

It would be worth while in a future edition to make an effort to bring these two sections on Domestic and Ecclesiastical Pewter up to the level of the rest of the book; the work would then have an appeal to a wider circle of interested readers.

(W. W. WATTS)

*Rusticus, or the Future of the Countryside.* BY MARTIN S. BRIGGS. 94 pp. (To-day and To-morrow.) (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co.) 2s. 6d.

This little book is a curious "shelf-mate" of the original Daedalus. It is in effect a tract, admirably done in every way, convincing by its moderation and common sense as much as by persuasive eloquence. But it entirely lacks the fantastic visionary quality that made so much of

the charm of the initial work of the series. The mood of the book is rather that of calm reflection, seeing the problems that confront the rational idealist in these matters steadily, and almost whole. The effect is to comfort and reassure us with the feeling that if they are tackled in this spirit our difficulties cannot be insuperable. But the wings of fancy remain folded; Mr. Briggs enchants, or should I say horrifies, us with no visions of a time when the whole of England has been laid out by some future god-begotten super Le Notre of the profoundest sensibility and the vastest imagination, when our arterial roads are in the manner of Grandes Allées, and selected districts have retained a conscious agricultural character in the manner of the hameaux in the parks of Chantilly or Versailles, for necessary as opposed to ornamental agriculture will have passed away long ago. But Mr. Briggs has never let himself go; it would damage his case; it might lead to the accusation of unpractical; the prophet and the poet are proverbially near akin and the epithet poetical might do the cause no good. Mr. Briggs feels it all too deeply to treat his subject in the spirit of the trapeze artist.

If we have the right to complain a little that we have gone to a music-hall and heard a sermon, we certainly cannot complain of the quality of the sermon. Mr. Briggs writes well and marshals his material admirably. The earlier historical section is very well done, and in the later chapter, entitled the Future, where Mr. Briggs is concerned mainly with practical things that we can all do something towards accomplishing, he shows a shrewd and balanced appreciation of the human factor, the stupidity, the apathy, the prejudices and vested interests which are qualities inherent in our common humanity, and which are the greatest difficulties in the way of progress along the lines he suggests. The only omission from the book noticed by the reviewer is any reference to the problem of the right use of corrugated iron—if there is one—and any discussion of the value and uses of the new and more reasonable forms of asbestos and the abuse of brise blocks; the two latter are perhaps too particular for such a book as this, but surely the first question is abstract enough and surely a burning question. In conclusion, however, one can only say that Mr. Briggs has done fine work in writing this little book, and for a cause that every man with any sensibility must have very much at heart. It deserves to be, and it is to be devoutly hoped that it will be, very widely read indeed.

G. W.

*Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum. I—Pays Bas, Musée Scheurleer.* By C. W. LUNSINGH SCHEURLEER. 110 pp. + 50 pl.  
 II—France, Collection Mouret (Fouilles d'Ensérune). 49 pp. + 54 pl. (Humphrey Milford.) 1, 21s.; II, 17s. 6d.

Here are two comparatively small but important collections, each described by the enthusiast to whom it owes its existence.

The Scheurleer collection has, through the generosity of its owner, been open to students for many years; to visitors since 1924. All will welcome a book which makes one aspect of it, the antique vases, accessible to a still wider public. Together