

THE EDITOR'S ROOM

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Pilgrim's Progress. Illustrated by 14 Etchings. By WILLIAM STRANG, R.P.E. (London: John C. Nimmo. Price 14s. net.)—It is doubtful if another artist could be found at the present day so entirely and fittingly qualified to illustrate Bunyan's grand old allegory as William Strang. The simple yet strong and noble sentiment of the author meets with a rare echo in the direct and powerful line of the illustrator. Thanks to the delightful etchings and the manner in which they have been printed by Mr. F. Goulding, this edition is likely to become the most valuable of the many that have appeared, as it is, indeed, one of the most desirable to possess.

The Yellow Book. Volume III. (London: John Lane. Price 5s. net.)—The art of *The Yellow Book* is the art of Aubrey Beardsley. *The Yellow Book* without Aubrey Beardsley would lose its chief individuality. It is evident that *The Yellow Book* pins its faith to Aubrey Beardsley, and is ready to stand or fall by him.

Mr. Beardsley's decoration is powerful, probably beyond that of any other book illustrator of the present day—powerful in the expression of its line, and in the boldness of its massing of black and white. He is a master of his own particular technique, and the possibilities of great distinction which lie before him are such as fall to the lot of but few young artists. From the time when his work was first illustrated in the pages of *THE STUDIO* we have followed with the greatest interest all that he has given to the public; but it is with something akin to pain that we have remarked the tendency of his later efforts—such, for example, as those now before us on the cover and in the pages of Vol. III. of *The Yellow Book*. That they are clever, strong, and even splendid in technique, goes without saying. We are constrained to admire, even though we are at the same time possessed of a sense of unutterable disappointment. We make no pretence of looking beneath the surface to discover hidden and unpleasant mysteries. We do not, in fact, think there are any such to find. The best and the worst qualities of Mr. Beardsley's art, as seen in these illustrations, lie on the surface. He discourses only from one text,

which may be summed up in the words Frippery and Frailty.

But the condition of his work which provokes the severest criticism is its degradation. Mr. Beardsley's figures are not men and women; they are but monkeys apeing humanity. The ideal of manly and womanly beauty is discarded by him as an old glove, and physical deformity is welcomed as the latest fashion.

But we imagine that the present vagaries are but passing fancies of the artist, and none will hail with greater delight than *THE STUDIO* his return to a more wholesome standard.

The Yellow Book is full of bright and clever things, and is marred only by the presence of the unhealthy spirit of which we complain.

Ex Libris. Zeitschrift für Bucherzeichen-Bibliothekenkunde und Gelehrten-geschichte. (Berlin: Published monthly.)—This magazine is the organ of the Ex-Libris Club of Berlin. It is well edited, and its numerous illustrations are reproduced in a manner that deserves the highest praise. All collectors of book-plates should subscribe to this work. In No. 3, for July last, is an interesting book-plate by Josef Sattler, a new designer of considerable talent, some of whose work we hope shortly to reproduce in *THE STUDIO*.

A Compendium of Painting. By JACQUES BLOCKX FILS. Translated by HOME GORDON. (London: Percy Young.)—The question of the preservation of pictures from the destructive action of the atmosphere is one that exercises the minds of most artists. To many of these, and more especially to young and inexperienced students, this little manual will be of great assistance. Treating, as it does, of the chemical qualities of pigments, their individual character and effect upon each other, the care necessary in their preparation and their relative drying properties, it is full of suggestion and practical help. The processes to which canvases and panels should be subjected before use, in order to protect them from decay, are very carefully indicated; oils, varnishes, and siccatives commented upon, and lists of permanent and reliable colours given, as the results not only of chemical analysis, but of practical experience. This little work may be described as *the Domestic Economy of Art*, and we heartily recommend it to the public.