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have been goldsmiths, painters, illuminators, or practitioners of some similar branch of art, which would afford quiet sedentary work. The monk who was a sculptor on a large scale, or a skilled carpenter, builder or architect, is a rarity If an artist turns up, well and good; he may exercise his craft provided that he behaves with proper humility. But the person who is expected to do, as a general thing, whatever building, carving or painting may be required is the ordinary, hired lay craftsman Not very frequently do we find monks taking part in building operations, even when only simple tasks, calling for no special skill, are required. In a new and poor community, or in one fired by unusual enthusiasm in some wave of reformatory zeal, we do sometimes find monks acting as builders, either alone, or, more frequently as the unskilled voluntary helpers of professional masons. . . . When a community is financially prosperous, and when the reformatory zeal has died away, we hear no more of these amateur builders.' Financial prosperity, however, is no index to the spiritual standard of a community and some may regret the passing of such reformatory zeal. But no one can mourn the passing of the amateur builders—at least no one who pretends to admire medieval architecture. That great achievement was principally the work of laymen and it is as well that its praise should be directed to the right source.

A.M.

ROMANESQUE ARCHITECTURE. By F. Eygun. (Sands & Co.; 3/6.)

This volume forms part of Messrs. Sands' series of translations of works by French Catholic writers. M. Eygun's wide knowledge of his subject renders this introduction to Romanesque architecture more comprehensive than its price suggests. His treatment is commendably sane and thorough and the translation excellent.

J.P.-H.

Recent Art Exhibitions.

MR. Leon Underwood, in an introduction to the catalogue of the exhibition, arranged during November by Mr. Sydney Burney at his St. James's Place premises, of sculp-

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ture 'removed from time and place' (shown, that is to say, without reference to chronology), attempts to analyse the factors contributing to what he terms the '*sculptural consciousness* that links up great work of all periods down to that of to-day.' These factors he considers to be three, the rythm of material, the rythm of the sculptor's motive and finally an indeterminate 'quality of the sculptor's personal vision,' which represents the fusion of both. Mr. Underwood in other words is telling us what we know already, that from the modern point of view the sculptor's object is to produce with—or even from—due observance to the nature and structure of his material an aesthetically significant design.

As proof of the validity of such a doctrine this exhibition was profoundly interesting. It would have been more so, however, had it included even by way of contrast a larger proportion of works influenced or inspired by the classical representational ideal, demoded though that may be. Three only were shown, a plaster cast of a fifth-century Greek athlete and two sixteenth-century Italian bronzes, with which because of its insistence on semi-naturalistic muscular representation one is tempted to class the Rodin *Group* (No. 49)—an opposition comparable to that of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

The modern works included in this exhibition emphasised, of course, long realised connections, the derivation, for example, of the two Modigliani heads from African masks (Nos. 7 and 18) and the Chinese origin of Mr. John Skeaping's *Rabbit* (No. 96LL), but the apparent originality of conception and treatment of the more remarkable of them, Gaudier-Brzeka's *Mother and Child* (No. 24) and the brilliant Mestrovic *Descent from the Cross* (No. 42) were shown to have little relation to or derivation from other and earlier exhibits, except in as much as both are studies in pure form. In contrast to these, in the lesser contemporary works, Miss Hepworth's *Crouching Woman* (No. 2), Mr. Maurice Lambert's *Reclining Figure* (No. 6) and Mr. Skeaping's *Seated Woman* (No. 26), the design is dictated by a regard for material which produces in its various degrees an art as limited and crude as that of the Central American pebble carving (No. 15).

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The much-discussed exhibition of Miss Barbara Hepworth's sculpture at Messrs. Tooth's Galleries provided further illustration of the same point. 'The organisation of masses in expressive relation and the revelation of the potentialities of the sculptured material,' which Professor Herbert Read finds in her work, result, owing to the pre-dominance of the second virtue over the first, in the constant repetition of identical motives. Repetition of conception is possibly exaggerated by the fact that, unlike Mr. Henry Moore, Miss Hepworth is far less sensitive to the nature than to the structure of her material; her treatment of wood differs in no essential from her treatment of marble or alabaster, so that with the possible exception of the *Woman* in African blackwood (No. 2) and the tentative *Two Heads* (No. 5), the works here shown suffer from excessive adherence to formula. It was, incidentally, instructive to compare Nos. 1, 3, 6, 8, and 11 in Miss Hepworth's exhibition with Mr. Henry Moore's *Woman* (No. 43 in the exhibition discussed above) and her *Abstraction* (No. 7) with Mr. Moore's distinguished *Composition* (No. 8). These exhibitions emphasised the relations of modern sculptors both to the past and to one another.

Alongside Miss Hepworth's carvings were exhibited thirty paintings by Mr. Ben Nicholson, an artist who employs all the paraphernalia of Picasso, his fishes and guitars and violins, with none of Picasso's intellectual mastery of composition. In its place he substitutes a pre-occupation with light and half-tones which gives the majority of his pictures a certain mellow charm. The weakness of design in much of his work, however, is disturbing; the *Auberge Dieppoise* (No. 3) and *Happisburgh* (No. 15) are examples of this indeterminacy, while in other cases the composition is of an inadequately obvious type, the balance, for instance, of the dark masses of violin and curtain by an irrelevant black rectangle in *Violin and Balalaika* (No. 10) or the opposed whites of *Avignon* (No. 12.) Where there is real cohesion between design and colour, as in *September 23* (No. 19) or the *Fiddle* (No. 23), Mr. Nicholson produces delightful work.

Much the same may be said of Mr. Paul Nash's water-colours, forty of which were exhibited during November

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at the Leicester Galleries. They divide themselves into two distinct classes, paintings in water-colour and water-colour drawings, those, that is, in which the colour is a mere accessory in the definition of a form and not an integral and essential element in the actual statement of the form itself. Such are the five Atlantic sketches (Nos. 9—12 and 20), *Skeleton* (No. 38), *Order of Five* (No. 39), *Piano* (No. 17) and *Mansions of the Dead* (No. 40), which tend to show that Mr. Nash is less satisfactory when dealing with mere static line than with colour.

The pleasureable, and distinctive, feature of this exhibition was its variety, the differentiation of mood between the simple, static *River* (No. 3) and the spontaneous complexity of movement of *Ickniel Way* (No. 13), or between the glamour of *March Woods* (No. 25) and the cold, formal tones of the *Path* (No. 35). Can such variety and spontaneity, perhaps, only be achieved by some contact with perceived reality? That is what a total impression of these exhibitions suggests.

At all events, Mr. Nash's versatility was in strange contrast both to the limitations imposed on Mr. Nicholson's work by reiterative treatment, and to the narrowness of range evidenced in the December exhibition at the Leicester Galleries of Mr. Ethelbert White's landscapes in oil and water-colour and due in this case to reiterative subjects. The unpleasant predilection for mauve shadows in the water-colours (repeatedly provocative of 'I know a place just like that on the West Coast') and the raucous dexterity of the Majorcan oil-paintings were, however, compensated by the few examples of Mr. White's quieter and less mannered English landscapes, of which *Dedham Reach* (No. 73) achieved distinction.

Two good landscapes by Mr. White were further shown at the exhibition of the New English Art Club at the New Burlington Galleries, which, apart from the superlatively competent craftsmanship of Mr. Alan Gwynne-Jones and the artistry of Sir Charles Holmes' excellent *Long Preston* (No. 166) contained as little of unacademic interest as the winter exhibition at Barbizon House. Both were off-season reaffirmations of the perennial Academy lesson that good technique is not good painting, even when, as in Mr.

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James Gunn's *Plaster Cast* (No. 19), the three dimensional illusion is so complete that a figure appears perilously poised on the edge of its frame, or, as in Mr. L. M. Glas-son's extravagantly praised *Breakfast*, an admirably painted egg reposes in fussy folds of tablecloth. A foil to these were the unity of conception and the distinctively painterly qualities of Miss Emily Paterson's *Dordrecht* (No. 26) and Mr. Sickert's superbly self-assured *'Frisco* (No. 20), evidencing as fine and as characteristic a sense of medium as Mr. Steer's two water-colours, *Whitstable* (No. 43) and *A Calm Day on the Thames* (No. 50), in which one welcomed the purely pictorial interest, as opposed to the picturesque interests typified by Mr. Henry Rushbury's *Richmond Castle* (No. 44) or, at the New Burlington Galleries, by Mr. Vernon Wethered's *Stratford-on-Avon* (No. 20). That deliberate portrayal of the picturesque never produces a significant painting is possibly to be explained on the one hand by the excessive subject interest which the choice of Richmond Castle suggests, on the other by the difficulty in universalising something local. Contact with reality is necessary, certainly, but not contact with a particular reality. The good painting is always abstract, abstract not as Mr. Ben Nicholson uses the term, but abstract in the wholly laudatory sense in which it can be applied to these two water-colours of Mr. Steer's and to the greater number of works in Mr. Paul Nash's exhibition.

JOHN POPE-HENNESSY.

Music.

DURING the past month or so much has been made of the fact that there has never before been such a wealth of orchestral concerts as that provided by the present London season. From this it might appear that the London devotee of orchestral concerts was suffering from an embarrassment of riches.

This, however, is not exactly the situation. That there is an embarrassment, numerically speaking, must be admitted, but that this embarrassment is one of riches is not so certain. A careful study of the advertised programmes of these concerts soon reveals the fact that a large number of items receive two, three, and even four per-