

## Holiday Publications

### "Representative Etchings by Artists of To-Day."

'REPRESENTATIVE ETCHINGS by Artists of To-day in America' (Frederick A. Stokes & Bro.) consists of ten large plates by Frederick S. Church, Robert F. Blum, James S. King, Stephen J. Parrish, Herman N. Hyneman, Frederick W. Freer, Frank M. Gregory, Stephen Jerome Ferris, James J. Calahan, and C. F. W. Mielatz. The introduction, by Ripley Hitchcock, treats of the present and future of etching. Mr. Hitchcock makes some judicious remarks on certain vicious tendencies in American etching resulting from 'commercialism.' He also quotes various contemporary authorities to show that the arts of etching and engraving are threatened with gradual extinction, in the commercial sense, by the increase in the number and perfection of mechanical processes employed in book-illustration. Part of the value of this collection consists in the opportunity it affords for comparing different schools of American etching. We have the pure painter-etching of Parrish, Blum and Church—all good examples of the best school; while reproductive etching is represented by Calahan and King, and the drypoint method by the plates of Hyneman and Freer; the mixed method, which regards everything that produces the desired effect as allowable, being illustrated by Mr. Ferris's composition. Mr. Church's 'The Wanderer's Return,' printed in red, is one of this etcher's best plates, not only in the technical execution of the lines, but as regards their symmetry and harmony. The subject is a young girl welcoming a returning dove. The river and the sedges on the bank are treated in the simplest but most suggestive manner. Mr. Blum's 'Macaroni of the Eighteenth Century,' from a pen-and-ink drawing, is soft and charming in its effect, the sense of line being lost in delicate toning of the masses. It has a great deal of the tone of painting, wherein it presents a sharp contrast with Mr. Church's plate, which is essentially draughtsman-like in spirit.

Mr. Parrish's 'A Winter's Day, Windsor, N. S.' is a characteristic example of the free, direct and vigorous methods of this leader among American etchers. He has neither the subtlety of Mr. Blum nor the simplicity of Mr. Church, but he has enough of both qualities to modify his exuberant strength. Mr. King's head of a woman in a cavalier's hat is delicate and decorative in treatment, but not particularly strong. Although an original etching, it has the complexity of line which generally belongs to reproductive work. It is handled in an elaborate, somewhat overwrought, way. Mr. Hyneman's 'Desdemona,' etched from his own picture, is the first plate executed by the artist for a public collection. He has treated all of the figure, except the hair, in drypoint, which is well enough in itself, but gives an impression of being out of value with the rest of the plate, which is heavily bitten. Mr. Freer's 'Honeysuckle' is a large female head in a bonnet and veil, seen against a generalized mass of honeysuckle. There is so little pure etching in it, that it may be classed as a drypoint, with the bur effect very

prominent. The plate shows knowledge but is not particularly attractive. 'Madison Square, New York City,' etched after his own drawing, by Mr. Gregory, the illustrator, is an attempt at rendering certain aspects of New York street-life in the way that Jean Béraud has given those of Paris. It is fairly successful, and certainly faithful enough as to architecture; but it would have been more artistic if it had not been treated quite so literally. A freer touch would have been better. Mr. Ferris's etching after his own 'A Good Story' shows a girl, in rococo costume, seated and reading, while a man looks over her shoulder. The foundation is pure etching, but drypoint, the roulette and *retroussage* have been used in moderation. It is doubtful whether an etching gains artistically by the use of mixed methods. Except for a certain softness of tone, this plate might just as well have been engraved. There is good linework in Mr. Calahan's etching of Gérôme's 'Souvenir de Cairo'—an Eastern girl sitting on a stone bench in the street. It is handled in a delicate, precise way. Mr. Mielatz completes the collection with a conscientious, legitimate piece of work, 'Old Mill near Newport, R. I.,' after a drawing by himself.