

ART NOTES.

—The new mosaic decorations which have been carried on in the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, under the superintendence of the late George Richmond, R. A., have recently been thrown open to public inspection. Many difficulties presented themselves to the architect in the construction of his design for the mosaics. Mr. Richmond used the most ancient of the several methods of using mosaic—that named "stick mosaic," in which the glass is made into a series of sticks, which are broken into small pieces, and then stuck into cement. This early style of mosaic has never been used in a building similar to St. Paul's before, and the whole surface of the choir has been so cut up with architectural panels, cornices, &c., that it has been a hard task to apply the kind of decoration appropriate to mosaic. Again, the interior of the choir was already too dark, and no substance could therefore be employed by Mr. Richmond which would add to the gloom. Glass mosaic being the only material that would reflect rather than absorb the light, this method of decoration was decided upon. The general scheme consists of a "Majesty" over the centre compartment of the apse, with attendant spirits. The three domes over the choir represent the Creation. The clerestory is occupied with the history of the Holy Temple and the Tabernacle, with representations of Solomon, David, and others who were instrumental in rebuilding the temple in the time of Ezra. There are also representations of Abraham and the "three men," and of Sarah looking through the door of the tent, (Genesis xviii.,) and of Job and his friends. At the east end, over the apse, is the Divine Majesty, seated upon a rainbow in the attitude of benediction. All these subjects are inscribed with appropriate passages, taken either from the Scriptures or ancient Latin hymns. The domes are adorned with representations of the fish and monsters of the deep, birds, floral compositions, &c. The whole work presents a rich and harmonious effect, and in view of the great difficulties encountered in carrying out the scheme, it is generally admitted that the late Mr. Richmond's efforts resulted in a great success.

—There is about to be completed in Philadelphia a piece of mural decoration of a unique character. It will be executed directly upon plaster, and it will be out of doors—two conditions seldom met with in modern wall paintings—and the building which it will adorn is the new Horticultural Hall, on South Broad Street. Joseph Linden Smith, who is doing the work, is a young artist who has made a considerable study of mural decorations, and who has already finished some paintings in the Venetian alcove of the Boston Public Library. Mr. Smith's decorations in Horticultural Hall are to assume the character of a frieze, which is to extend around three sides of the building immediately under the eaves. They will be, in a measure, protected from the wear of the elements by a wide, overhanging roof. Although Mr. Smith has been working upon his design for nearly a year, he is not yet wholly decided upon the composition and the placing of his pictures. At present his idea is to have his panels made up of allegorical and mythological characters—the months, or the seasons, and the signs of the zodiac—all having some bearing, either direct or indirect, upon the building and its use. Ceres, of course, will play an important part in the decorative scheme, and Bacchus, while the nature of the function of the building admits of an almost endless use of garlands, wreaths, conventionalized fruit forms, &c. At each of the four corners are narrow, rectangular panels, in which Mr. Smith contemplates representing the seasons, while between the small windows are squares, which will probably be filled by children carrying baskets of fruit and flowers. The artist's work includes, also, the painting of the neighboring cornices and moldings so as to form a fitting setting for his pictures. Since the plaster will not be ready for Mr. Smith's brush before Fall, he is going to make a special trip to Italy during the Summer to renew his acquaintance with the works of the early Italian fresco painters.

—At this year's Champs de Mars Salon M. Puvis de Chavannes will, says the Paris Temps, exhibit a large number of drawings and pastels. The collection will occupy the whole of the Salon Bleu, on the first floor. There will be 800 studies and sketches, and among them may be seen the work of the artist from the time he composed the decorations for the Musée d'Amiens up to the period when he conceived those for the Boston Library. Following his own expression, almost the whole of his life is this year to be exhibited in the Salon Bleu of the Palais des Beaux-Arts. The collection is particularly interesting to students of art, showing, as it does, the methods of work of the artist. M. Puvis de Chavannes does not paint directly on to the canvas from the living model. Minute preliminary studies are first made, and after having been enlarged are then given their position in the composition conceived by the artist.

—The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts has purchased from the Fosdick Burnt Wood Collection, now on exhibition there, a large panel containing a decorative portrait of Louis XIV. The picture is an excellent example of purely decorative portraiture, and shows, probably more than any other of Mr. Fosdick's productions, the highest development of technique in fire etching. The portrait is an adaptation from existing portraits in the gallery at Versailles.