



T R E M A L O R

WERNER SUHR:

ITALIAN TRAVEL POSTERS

The Italian poster for travel propaganda seems relatively conservative; but under Fascism even tourist traffic propaganda has been thoroughly reorganised.

We do not need any particular substantiation for the statement that Italian poster art cannot complain of lack of charming subjects for travel propaganda. And yet for the commercial artist who puts himself in the service of propaganda for the beauties of his native land, particular difficulties are created by the very fact

that so many pictorial representations already exist of the beauties and attractions of Italy. Even the painter creating purely from the point of view of art is faced by the difficulty of finding really new charms, in view of the vast quantity of good work already existent. What landscape has so often appeared on cheaply pretty postcards as that of Capri, or been painted so many thousands of times in all possible variations, until it would seem almost unbearable to undertake it again? Where are subjects more dangerous to the conventional, imitative artist, more tormenting to the serious and searchingly creative soul than on the Adriatic coast or the Riviera?

Regarding their achievements as a whole, one may well say that in all their traffic posters, the Italians have come creditably out of an affair which has gradually become so ticklish without their being by any means exclusively to blame for it. If they wished to move entirely in tune with the times, artistically speaking, they were hampered by the necessity of appealing propagandistically to the widest circles and taking account of international taste. It is a singular but well-established fact that precisely with respect to Italy, this international taste is never willing to forego certain particularly favourite banalities and eternal repetitions.