



F. R O M O L I

Italian Travel Posters

Since the general idea of Italy is so preponderantly picturesque, it is exceedingly difficult to depart from the ingrained pattern of a familiar scene, in its most striking aspect of propagandistic effectiveness.

For hundreds of years the pillars of antiquity have proved their powers of attraction upon the civilised world; they are to be found upon the earliest and the latest announcements. At the same time an obvious endeavour is being made to inspire these posters with an aura of that inimitable atmosphere which is truly possessed by no other country in such intensity and effectiveness. On posters Italy's blue skies are put into

competition with other lands which in reality can lay claim to nothing of the kind. In spite of the modernisation which is striven after at every turn, Fascistic Italy is naturally proud of the country's traditions: it is taking extraordinary trouble to keep awake and popular the witnesses of past culture. Thus the often somewhat sombre and melancholy documents of this ancient past are just as often represented on the posters as the unique and bewitching sweetness of Italian landscapes. The traveller to Italy does not wish to forego either of these factors, either the mysterious magic of romance or the bewitching charm of the sweet South. It is not merely a question of creating a poster which will satisfy stern and highly artistic art critics, but in the main of making one which will successfully invite the stranger to pay the country a visit. The effect can only be limited if, taking all its artistic merits into account, the poster might as well serve for a watering-place on the Swedish coast as for one in Italy. The typical Italian poster is unmistakable and usually limited to a very objective representation of sights worth seeing, decoratively accentuated and tinged with as much emotion as possible. We would call particular attention to the names of the Italian poster artists Guerrini and Retrosi.

Trans. by E. T. Scheffauer.