



FIG. 2.—WARMING BUILDINGS BY MEANS OF HOT-WATER.

BUILDING CRAFTSMEN AND THEIR WORK.

Amongst the inevitable results of international exhibitions of skilled labour, such as that which closed on Wednesday in the French capital, is the comparison which it invites between the productive skill and workmanship of the countries represented. Before the Great Exhibition of 1851 it was the wont of British manufacturers and art workmen to assume a high rank among the nations; but the result of the great World's Fair was to prove that, in many points, we were inferior in certain qualities of manufacture and skill. In matters of taste or art we were far behind. The English workman has made rapid strides since both in workmanship and design, and in many points or criteria he holds his own against the foreign workman. To be just to him, however, it is necessary to point out in what directions the French artisan and foreigner generally have the advantage—the points of weakness in

English training and workmanship. These data, for comparison, have been afforded in the reports drawn up by Metropolitan workmen on the exhibits and results of the Paris Exhibition, of which we gave a *resumé* last week. For many good reasons, we do not think the native artisan the right person to judge of the qualities of work executed abroad—first, because he has natural and national prejudices to overcome; second, because his education and modes of working are very different; third, because a feeling of *esprit de corps* would restrain him from acknowledging a superiority on the part of the foreigner. The outsider or professional artist has no such scruples; his predilections and sympathies are wider. He has no trade secrets to preserve, but is rather inclined—by perhaps self-assertion—to point out errors, and to show how much “better these things are done abroad.” We cannot help noticing how this manifestation of trade instinct makes itself felt in reading the descriptions of foreign work; while