

TALKS ABOUT BOOKS.

"Varia" is the name of a 16mo. book of 232 pages, bound in red cloth, with gilt top, and published by Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., of Boston and New York. It contains nine grave to gay essays, but gayer than grave, by Miss Agnes Repplier, and its price is a dollar and a-quarter. Miss Repplier has a felicitous style, and by varied reading and some travel has become acquainted with a large number of literary, historical and other facts, with which she pleasingly illustrates her themes. The first of these themes is "The Eternal Feminine," which shews that women's rights are no new thing, but as old as society. "The Deathless Diary" is an interesting epitome of the literature in which Pepys, Evelyn, and Boswell shine. "Guides : A Protest," is an amusing narrative of an attempt to escape these continental plagues. Some people will not like "Little Pharisees in Fiction," which makes grim fun of goody-goody tales of youth for the Sunday School and the Home. Miss Repplier has a special dislike to the Elsie books, and the specimens she gives of them seem to justify it. The "Fete de Gayant" describes a scene in Douai. "Cakes and Ale," remarkable subject for an American lady, is a temperate eulogy of drinking songs. "Old Wine and New" takes Froissart for a text, but really contrasts the romantic ancient with the commonplace modern method of writing and teaching history. The volume concludes with two essays on light literature, "The Royal Road of Fiction" and "From the Reader's Standpoint," equally entertaining to the lover of books. Miss Repplier's repertoire is so large and varied, that all but an omniverous student will be sure to find something new in it, and even the omnivorous will not find a dull page. Her criticism is ever kindly, and betrays a sunny temperament calculated to diffuse happiness in a manner both genial and refined.

Another of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.'s books is