

two gentlemen are, I am pretty sure, themselves extremely desirous of furthering, as far as is in their power, any movement likely to lessen the risk of North Atlantic navigation, and it is impossible to doubt that there are many others equally well qualified with them, and quite as anxious as they can be to forward so desirable an object.

Parliament has usually more work on hand than it can conveniently overtake, and it would be well if by intelligent local action we could settle this business of the lane routes outside the walls of St. Stephen's—at least, make it a matter of plain sailing for legislation to deal with; besides, to my simple understanding, the voyage through Parliament of the last shipping bill was rather a

stormy one, the bill having reached port in a very battered condition indeed.

But I am drifting from my subject into rather troubled waters. The misfortune is, that no ordinary warning can disturb our sense of security; it is only on the occasion of some unlooked-for calamity, attended with loss of life, that we can be awakened from our lethargic indifference. The rude shock to our feelings has a grain of remorse in it, in so far that we cannot help reflecting that, if we had only directed our attention to the weakness a little earlier in the day, a catastrophe might have been averted.

The foregoing reflections are harvested from many wearisome and anxious hours spent on a steamer's bridge, while steaming through a fog.

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### THE SO-CALLED VENUS OF MELOS.

In the year 1820, before the struggle between the Hellenic population of the Turkish empire and the Porte had begun, and when all that attracted the notice of the civilized world to modern Greece was the little preserved to us of her art,—occasionally and fragmentarily found in the ruins of her great communities,—a peasant, whose name was Theodore Kondros Botoni, working in his field to enlarge it by clearing away the *débris* of the walls and structures of ancient Melos (which had been built on a steep hill-side, on a series of terraces, more or less natural or artificial, so that the ruins of one terrace fell down upon and encumbered that below it), saw, to his great bewilderment, the heap of rubbish which he was digging away at the bottom suddenly crumble down and display the upper part of an antique statue. The peasant hastened to the French consul to inform him of the discovery, and the latter negotiated the purchase of it for five hundred piasters and a complete dress of the fashion of the country. This was the statue known as the Venus of Melos.

So far, there are no variations of the history, but one account says that the first or upper part was found several days before the lower, and the other, that they were found together; but the inexactitude of the documentary contemporary evidence is clear from the examination of the ground to-day, and from the contradictions contained in it. Dumont d'Urville, the commander of the *Chevette*, a French man-of-war which visited Melos after

the statue was found, alluding to the discovery of the theater, says: "All the ground is covered with drums of columns and fragments of statues. One finds here and there great pieces of wall of a very solid construction, and many important tombs have been opened through the curiosity of strangers, and the cupidity of the inhabitants." But neither the wall nor the tombs, nor any drum of column or fragment of statue (if any was found), could have had anything to do with the theater. The theater is very late work, and was never nearly finished, so could have possessed neither columns nor statues. This shows that the idea the commandant carried away was confused and untrustworthy as to details. He goes on to say: "Three weeks before our arrival at Melos, a Greek peasant, digging in his field inclosed in this circuit, struck some pieces of cut stone. As these stones, employed by the inhabitants, have a certain value, this induced him to dig farther, and he thus happened to uncover a species of niche, in which he found a marble statue, *two Hermes*, and some other marble fragments. The statue *was in two pieces, joined by two strong iron clamps*. The Greek, fearing to lose the fruit of his labor, had carried the upper part to a stable. The other was still in the niche. \* \* It represented a naked woman, *whose left hand raised an apple and the right held a drapery*, well composed and falling negligently from the hips to the feet. For the rest, they are both mutilated, and actually detached from the body."

I note by italics the points which are to be contrasted with other evidence.

M. Dauriac, captain of the frigate *La Bonté*, writes from Melos, date 11th of April, 1820: "There has been found, three days ago, by a peasant who was digging in his field, a marble statue of *Venus receiving the apple from Paris*. It is larger than life; *they have at this moment only the bust as far as the waist. I have been to see it.*" Mr. Brest again writes, 12th of April: "A peasant has found in a field which belonged to him three marble statues, representing, one Venus holding the apple of discord in one hand, the other represents *the god Hermes, and the third a young child.*" The correspondence shows that Mr. Brest was entirely ignorant of everything connected with the matter. He probably heard one of the officers say that one of the objects was a Hermes, and he changes it into a statue of the god Hermes, but we see that there was only one Hermes. November 26th, Brest again writes: "His Excellency has left me orders to make researches in order to find the arms and other *débris* of the statue, but to do that it is necessary to obtain a *bouyouroul-don* which will permit us to make excavations at our own expense, *because in the same niche where it was found there is reason to hope that we might find other objects.*"

The contradictions are so palpable that it is clear that these documents are only of value as secondary archæological evidence. No one seems to have made an observation with exactitude.

We have the whole statue found, in one, bound together by iron clamps; in another, only half had yet been found; in one, the statue is found holding the apple of discord in one hand; in another, receiving it from Paris; and in another still, we are told that search has been ordered for the arms, etc.

About 1862 I visited Melos, and having made the acquaintance of Mr. Brest, son and successor of the consul who secured the statue for the Louvre, he politely offered to guide me through the ruins of the ancient city. Among other things, we visited the locality where the statue was found, and he showed me the niche still standing as when the discovery was made.

It was a rudely built work, of the height, *as nearly as I can remember*, of ten or at most twelve feet, and about eight wide. It formed a part of an old boundary-wall of the field on which it opened, and above it the ground was level with the crown of the arch of the niche. It had, as Brest then remarked to me, apparently been made for the purpose of concealing the statue. It had no suite or connection with any other structure, and there

were no evidences of ruin or of foundation of antique buildings about it. The opening had been closed with rubbish, not with masonry, as was evident from the face of the side walls, which were of smooth, if not carefully laid, masonry. If not built for the concealment of the statue, it had been made for some unimportant purpose; perhaps the protection from the weather of the poor Hermes which is said to have been found with it. C. Doupault, architect, has published a *brochure* with what he supposed important evidence on the question, in which, from data given him by old Brest twenty-seven years after the discovery, he reconstructs the apse of a seventh-century church, in which he places the statue. The whole study has no value whatever, as the sketch does not correspond with the ruins which I saw, and looking back to the correspondence quoted, it is clear that Brest, knowing nothing of archæology or art, caught at certain suggestions of the officers who saw the statue, and affirmed what they surmised. As to the fragments found, to which constant reference is made, there is not the slightest evidence that they were found in any connection with the statue, as none of the early evidence indicates that they were known when the statue was first taken under notice—on the contrary, it is said explicitly by Brest that he had orders to make researches to find the arms and other portions of the statue; indicating clearly that the arms alluded to had not been found with the statue, and that the connection of them and it was an after-thought, either of the peasant, who wished to increase the value of the statue by connecting with it fragments which he had found in other parts, or of the archæologists, who, seeking to restore the statue to what they judged to be its true action, connected the arm found, no one knows where, except at Melos, with the statue. It is undeniable that when the letters before quoted were written, there had been only conjecture as to the arms. Dauriac, writing on the 11th of April, says that they have only found the bust. Brest, November 26th, says that there is reason to hope that they might find other objects *in the same niche*—proof that it had not even then been cleared out. In fact, all we have of documentary evidence goes for nothing beyond showing that the statue was found at a certain place on a certain date; and if the two halves of the statue did not fit exactly we could not be certain that they were found at the same time and place. The hypothesis of the apple of discord is based on a conjecture of some of the officers, and on no further ground than that an arm and hand, with what may be an apple or a cup, seem to have been found somewhere in the

island about the same time; but they evidently are not of the statue, nor even of the same epoch.

Over the niche an inscription was said to have been found which records the dedication of an exedra by a gymnasiarch to Hercules and Hermes. The date of this inscription, according to conjecture based on the inscription itself, is about a century before Christ, *i. e.*, long after any possibility of such a work being produced had gone by.

These are all the positive data we have to work on. They suffice, however, for about twenty monographs in French, German, and English; and a late German work, by Dr. Goeler von Ravensburg, exhausts all the possible and impossible conjectures to establish its character in accordance with the original attribution of a Venus receiving the apple.

In the year 1880, I made another visit to Melos, on commission from this magazine, to photograph whatever might remain which had any connection with the statue; but found the niche gone, and no trace of foundations of any kind, or walls, city or other, very near the spot which was again pointed out to me as that where the Venus was found.

It would seem that in the energetic excavation that followed the last great archæological revival, everything that was suspected to conceal works of art had been dug away.

I found an old man, a pilot well known in our navy, Kypriotis, who had seen the statue when it was brought out, being a boy of about fourteen. At that time Mr. Brest was a child, and retained no recollection at first-hand of the event; but it was evident that he, like his father in 1847, had mingled in his impressions conjecture of others and his own, with facts perverted, and details conceived without sufficient basis. Nothing new was to be got.

The old Melos is utterly deserted, and the modern town is built on a pinnacle above it, which does not seem ever to have been included in the range of the city. The port is changed from the ancient site, where now a breakwater would be needed, as the land seems to have sunk greatly, and the old basin of the port is filled up to a point at the bottom of the bay, where a comparatively modern village has grown up, called Castro.

The magnificent harbor used to make of the island an important station before telegraphs were established, and might again, if the telegraph were laid to it; but now a man-of-war rarely calls, except to take a pilot for the Archipelago, and a Greek steamer stops once in a fortnight. But in heavy weather, any ship caught near runs for Melos. This keeps the

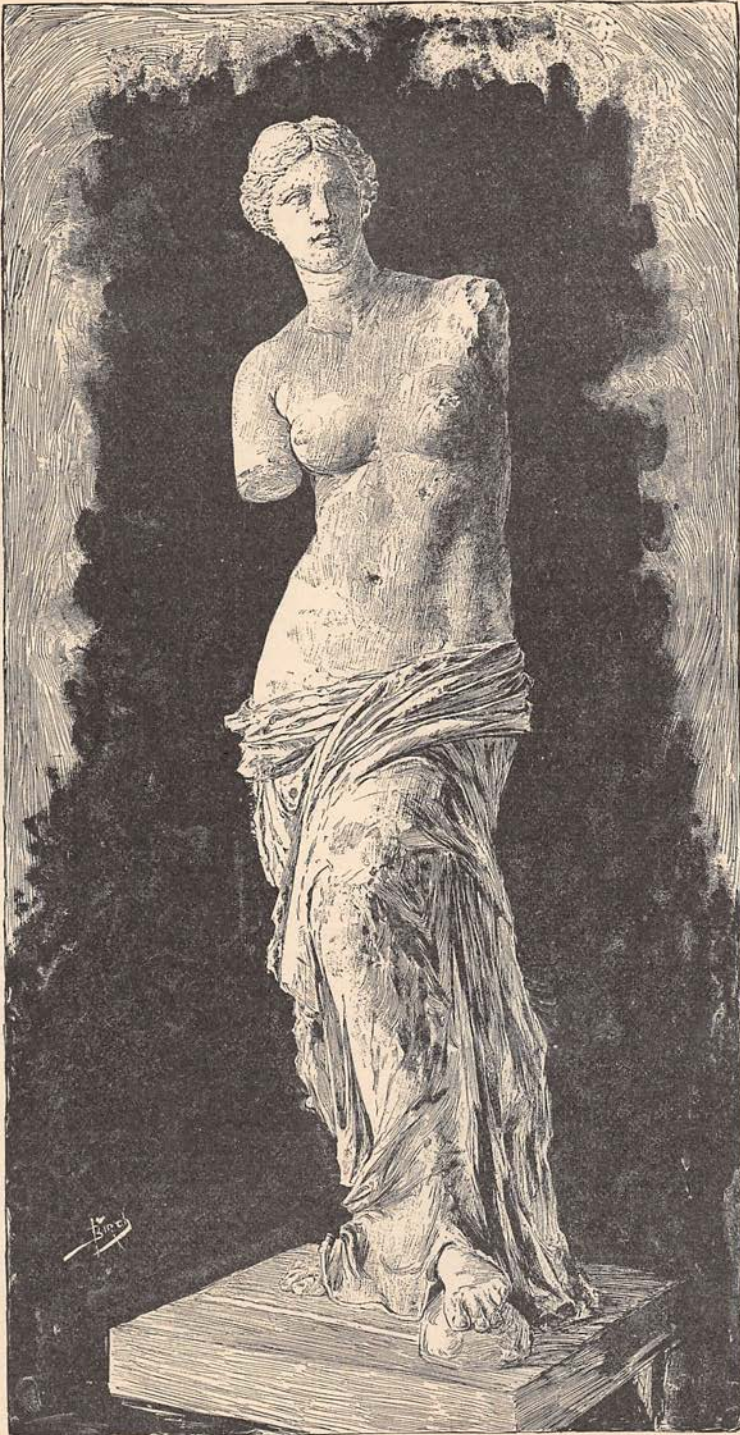
place alive, but it has dwindled to a mere island village, where the vast labyrinths of tombs which perforate the hills show more human industry than the dwellings of the living. Earthquakes and malaria have desolated and almost depopulated it.

We had left Cerigo for Crete, and intended to take Melos on our return to Peiræus, but when within an hour of land we were caught by a terrific south-wester, the most to be dreaded of all the winds of the Ægean, and in spite of all we could do we were obliged to give up and run before the gale where it would send us. It was late in the evening when its fury came down on us, and taking in all sail except a small storm-sail at the foot of the mast to keep from coming up into the wind, we ran into the black night. I knew that there were no rocks ahead before Melos, and if we only made the island by daylight, we could easily enter the port; but if not, and the yacht ran at night into the little archipelago of which Melos is part, it would be next to impossible to choose where our bones should be laid, for there are no lights, and many islands and rocks. The sea was for our little twelve-ton craft something fearful, and we thumped and hammered till the little thing quivered, when a wave struck her, almost as if we had come to the rocks. Sleep was out of the question—to sit or stand, equally so, and we kept to our berths, as the only way to avoid being pitched about like blocks. How long that night was! and in the middle of it I attempted to get up, and when I put my foot on the cabin-floor, found myself stepping into the water. We had sprung a leak with the straining.

But day came and cheerfulness. We ran in between the huge cliffs which form the portal of Melos harbor, with the wild surges beating against them till the spray flew high enough to have buried a larger craft than ours. Tired, aching, and hungry, for nothing could we get to eat till we arrived in port, we cast anchor in the welcome harbor late in the afternoon. Even then, the sea ran so high that we could not land until the next day.

Castro is a pile of white houses, rising in terraces from the shore; the streets mostly stair-ways, and the houses all whitewashed till they blind one in that rarely broken sunlight.

I landed, and, as usual, went to the little café, where the magnates of the village were discussing the arrival and the storm—the worst, they said, for many years. I called, of course, on Brest, who, to my surprise, remembered me after eighteen years; and we made an appointment to revisit together the sites I knew, and to see those I had



THE SO-CALLED VENUS OF MELOS. (DRAWN BY BIRCH FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.)

not known before,—important excavations having been made since my former visit.

admirable statues, now in Athens, had been lately found. The owner of the little field by the water, which occupies the site of the inner

port, having occasion to sink a well, struck the ruins of a temple of Neptune, and three statues were found, one of Neptune, a female goddess draped, but lacking the head, and a mounted warrior, apparently Perseus.

The Greek Government, according to their laws, forbade the exportation of them by any foreign government, and finally purchased them for thirty thousand francs—certainly a very small price. I succeeded in seeing them later, still in their boxes at Athens, and though not equal to the Venus, or of the same epoch, they are very fine works.

But there the excavations stop; the owner had no means to pump out the water that flooded his diggings, the Government had no more, and as no one is allowed to dig unless for the Greek museum, whatever remains under ground and water is likely to remain there another generation.

We then climbed up the zigzag road to the theater. It is, as I have said, of late times, probably Roman, and was never complete. Fragments of unfinished ornament lie still where the scene should have been, but it had clearly never been carried up above the seven ranges of seats now existing. It was just outside the wall of the inner city, on the brow of the hill, and overlooked the spacious harbor and looked out to sea. There is no record of any sculpture having been found there. It was purchased and excavated by the King of Bavaria.

Less than half a mile beyond, going with the sea at our backs, was the field where the statue was found. The Greeks have enter-

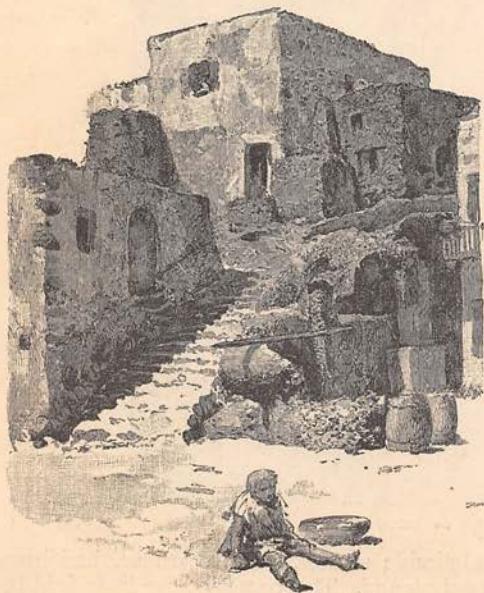
tained a great deal of indignation at the rape, which they affect to call robbery; but the civilized world may thank the French captain who, coming to get it, and finding it already half-embarked on board a Turkish vessel, destined for Constantinople, made the most legitimate use that was ever made of *force majeure*, and took it away from the Turk to transfer it to the hold of his own ship. Otherwise, no one knows what vile uses it might have gone to, or what oblivion and destruction. All the world knows it now, but Greek genius would have forever lacked one of its greatest triumphs in our modern times if it had disappeared in the slums of Stamboul.

As I have said, there is now no trace of any construction of any kind to be seen at the locality. The wall in which was the niche was gone, and the field of the present owner has encroached considerably on the space beyond, the *débris* being piled up in huge masses like walls, and two or three terraces above runs the citadel wall, a mass of Hellenic masonry built of blocks of lava. The Pelasgic walls, of which some authors speak, do not exist anywhere about the site. Brest took up a stone and, as we stood on the wall of *débris* above, cast it into the field, and said, "There stood the Venus!" In the illustration I have put a white cross on the spot.

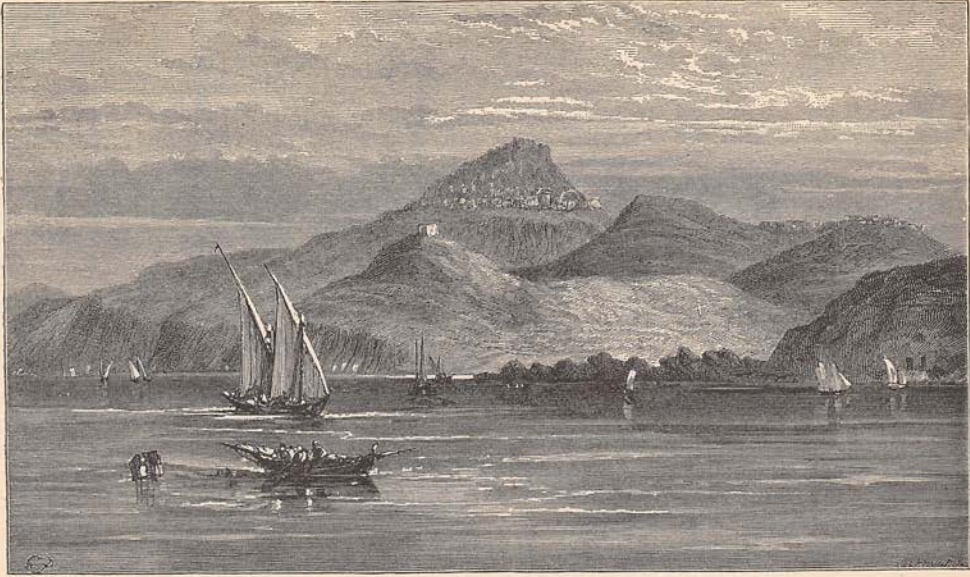
There cannot remain the slightest doubt that the statue had been concealed, and to my mind, the circumstances indicated for its concealment are these: The niche, judging from its character, had been built in Roman times; as the nibbly nature of the masonry indicated, probably covered with stucco, as it would have been if intended for ornament, and was designed as an exedra, or as a shelter for an altar, or for the statue of some divinity—Terminus, Hermes, Pan, or Faunus, the more Roman companion of him. Here the inscription and the Hermes found furnish a plausible clew, and agree with the indication of the masonry in pointing out the epoch of this conjunction of circumstances as subsequent to the second century before Christ; how long after we cannot in any wise indicate.

Now, as to the epoch of the statue there can be no doubt that it was of the immediately post-Phidian epoch; and all the most authoritative opinions attribute it to the Attic school, and probably of the time and school of Scopas—and some of the weightiest authorities have accepted Scopas himself as the author.

Anything more definite than this it is impossible to establish by any now known evidence. The concealment of the statue, then, was several centuries later than the execution of it.



STREET IN CASTRO.



THE SITE OF OLD MELOS, FROM THE PORT. (WHITE CROSS SHOWS WHERE THE "VENUS" WAS FOUND.)

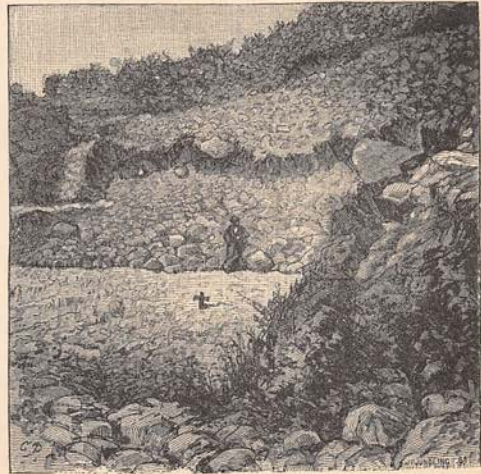
The Greeks of the classical epoch, even down to the first century after Christ, retained, amidst all the degradation of their contemporary art, a distinct recognition of the excellence of the elder work, as the enormous artistic as well as pecuniary value of some of the masters' *chefs d'œuvre* prove. That this was one of them, and of one of the chief masters, all civilization agrees, and, although we have lost the name of the author, the people who hid it must have known it well. The availing themselves of the niche, ready-made to their hands, indicates that the possessors of the statue worked in haste, piling up stones in front of the niche, instead of walling it up.

This indicates the haste of impending attack, or work done in secret. In either case, if the statue had a temple in that locality, it would be concealed near it, or near the place where it was accustomed to stand. We may remember the contrast with the colossal and magnificent Hercules found in a drain at Rome, carefully covered over with good masonry. Concealment was the object in both cases, and the greater haste and furtiveness with the Melian statue indicate rather that it was brought from a distance than that it could be a divinity of the island.

Conjecture as to the origin of the statue, if my hypothesis is true, points to Athens, not only because the work is Attic, but because we know by the coins of Melos, which in all the latest coinages still bear the owl of Athens, that Melos belonged to that

city as late as she had any Greek allegiance, which must have been some time into the Empire, as the Romans long made it a policy to preserve a certain kind of autonomy in the Greek states, even when their subjection was complete. That it is Attic, no one can doubt in face of the evidence I shall show. That Athens was the only city likely to send to Melos a treasure of this kind, concealment of which was impossible in Athens, is, by all the circumstances, made most probable.

I conclude that it was one of the most highly valued statues of Athens, sent to Melos in time of great danger, to be concealed



FIELD WHERE THE "VENUS" WAS FOUND.



MEDICEAN VENUS.

and preserved. What period this might have been is only to be guessed at; it is therefore hardly worth while to say more about it, except to indicate that three periods in late Athenian history might furnish the motive requisite: when the army of Mithridates, under Archelaus, took Athens; the wars between the factions of Marius and Sylla; and the invasions of the Iconoclasts. The Romans do not appear, in spite of all their plundering, and the enormous quantity of statues carried away from Greece, to have desecrated the temples of the Greek gods, as we see that Pausanias, in the century after Christ, found the most

valuable of them *in situ*, as, for instance, the Diana Brauronia of Praxiteles, the Perseus of Myron, with others of great fame. The above conclusion, considering all the known and reasonably conjecturable details of the discovery and concealment, seems to me justifiable,—as well as that it was concealed at some time between the century or two centuries before Christ and the first century after. The reason for this later limitation I shall give farther on.

Now, what was the statue? We have so long been in the habit of accepting all female statues, not distinguished by well-known symbols of their divinity, as Venuses, that we make no distinction even in cases where the type demands it. And yet the dominant characteristic of Greek sculpture is this close adherence to established types. We are never at a loss to distinguish Diana, Minerva, Juno, or even Ceres and the lesser deities. Venus, it is true, came into vogue as subject for the sculptors of sacred statues later than some of the others; but all that we know of the Venus of the artists indicates that it was *par excellence* the womanly type. The treatment of the head



VENUS URANIA.

in Greek sculpture was a point apparently of doctrine, as it was in Byzantine and in the later ecclesiastical art of Greece. It is always in a conventional type, utterly separated from the individual.

This unquestionable fact should have taught us to reject from the Venus category many statues which are now included in it, as, for instance, the Callipyge, and all in which a trace of portraiture is to be found, besides diminishing that category by all the statues of the heroic type, as in none of the legends or beliefs of the Greek faith was Venus ever endowed with a heroic quality. The preconceived notion that the Melian statue was a Venus has been a continual cause of confusion.

This was, as I have shown, the first hypothesis of the French officers, none of whom appear to have been possessed of any archaeological knowledge, and who had the commonly prevailing notion that any nude statue must be a Venus. I have taken the pains to collect a number of representations of the various so-called Venuses, and most of which the type, or symbols, justify us in so classifying; and a comparison of their character will show what is the Venus type,—making this proviso, however, that we have no other than internal evidence for denominating most of them Venuses. The chief of these in what we seek for most, *i. e.*, the impersonal type, which was inseparable from the Greek deities down to the decline of art, which began in the time of Alexander, are: the Medici, a distinctly marked Attic work, later, however, than the Melian statue; the Capitoline, apparently a still later reminiscence of the Medici; and the "Venus coming out of the bath," at Naples, a better work than the last, but still already widely separated from the purely conventional type of the Medicean, which we may authoritatively accept as the Venus type of the best period

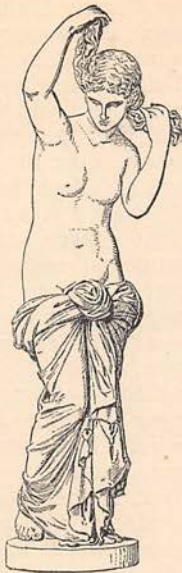


CAPITOLINE VENUS.



VENUS OF THE VATICAN.

of the Venus sculpture. The close comparison of the heads and details of the flesh will give those who do not know the originals an invaluable lesson in the treatment of the figure in Greek art. The so-called "Venus Urania," at Florence, marks, to my mind, a distinct departure from the Venus type,—so marked, indeed, as to make me decline to accept it as a Venus, while the still typical character of the face is one which must place it in a good period of art, before ideality of treatment had given way to individuality. The art is of too good an epoch to have departed so far from the type of Venus, if intended for her, and indicates rather a nymph, or some inferior deity. The Venus of the Vatican is too late and too low down in the scale of art to be an authoritative witness in the matter; while the Venus Anadyomene, while still reserving the ideal character, resembles the Urania rather, in a separation of the type from the Venus. Later still, and perhaps at the end of that period which may be called the ideal period of antique sculpture, most probably of Græco-Roman art, is the Venus Victrix of the Louvre; unquestionably a Venus, for she bears in her hand the apple—symbol of fruitfulness. But how far from the type of our Melian treasure! There is the most distinct approach to the Athena type—a purely heroic ideal. I cannot believe that its sculptor intended it for a Venus.



VENUS ANADYOMENE.

burg accepts with approval—viz., the restoration of Mr. Tarral (an Englishman residing in Paris for many years, who has given his chief attention to this problem)—shows so entire a want of appreciation of the character of antique design, which is, after all, our only clew, that I shall not hesitate to put aside, not only the solution proposed, but the judgment that could accept as satisfactory such a solution of one of the most interesting of artistic problems. I give the figure which



RESTORATION OF THE STATUE AS PROPOSED BY MR. TARRAL.

Von Ravensburg publishes as Tarral's restoration of the statue, that one may see how absolutely its inanity is at variance with the spirit of Greek design. The mere completion of the statue, in this sense, destroys the dignity and unity of the work so completely that to look at it is enough for a cultivated judgment to decide that, whatever it may have been, this it was *not*. The author gives, also, photographs of the fragments found—fragments so imperfect and corroded that we can only say that they appear to be from a very low period of art, and are utterly worthless as data for measure or opinion, from their extremely fragmentary state.

Besides, I have shown, from the records of discovery, that there is no further reason to



VENUS VICTRIX OF THE LOUVRE.

The patient German admirer of our statue, which Von Ravensburg is, has gone through all the literature and all the conjectures which it has given rise to, as to the chief problem which gives interest to any investigation, *i. e.*, the restoration of the statue. No attempt will satisfy all the investigators; but that which Von Ravens-



FRAGMENTS FOUND AT MELOS ATTRIBUTED TO THE STATUE.





VENUS OF CAPUA.

connect them with the statue than that they were also found at Melos.

In following the whole course of the demonstration which Von Ravensburg attempts of this solution of the problem, I arrive at the conclusion that, with all his patience and research, his judgment is utterly untrustworthy on a problem which requires not only freedom from preconception, but long cultivation of artistic perception and general critical ability. Mr. Tarral's attempt proves, to

my mind, only that this was not the solution.

The various suggestions, more or less authoritative, made as to the restoration, and thence as to the determination of the attributes of the statue, are to be summed up briefly. The Count de Clarac, the then curator of the antiques of the Louvre, adopted

the Venus with the apple hypothesis, but afterward abandoned it in favor of one put forward by Millingen, that it was a Victory. This is one of the theories of the restoration which has found the greatest number of adherents. Several restorations have been proposed, which make the statue part of a group, all which, though defended or proposed by many *dilettanti*, I reject, for what to me seem sufficient reasons, viz.: *Firstly*. We have in the statue no evidence whatever that it formed part of a group, and without some such the hypothesis is gratuitous. *Secondly*. We have—with one exception, which I shall presently note, and which gives no countenance to such a theory—no statue or parts of statues which agree with it in artistic quality, or even none which lend themselves to a group, if such were made up by various sculptors. *Thirdly*. That, at the epoch in which the statue was produced, any group which has been suggested would have been out of accordance with the aims of art, as practiced by the Greeks. The only evidence in favor of such a theory is that in some antique fragments or coins are indications of such a figure as the Melian in combination. But, as this statue must have been in its own time nearly as celebrated, relatively, as in ours, it must have given rise to many imitations and adaptations. It has given rise to some which support the



VICTORY OF BRESCIA—FRONT.



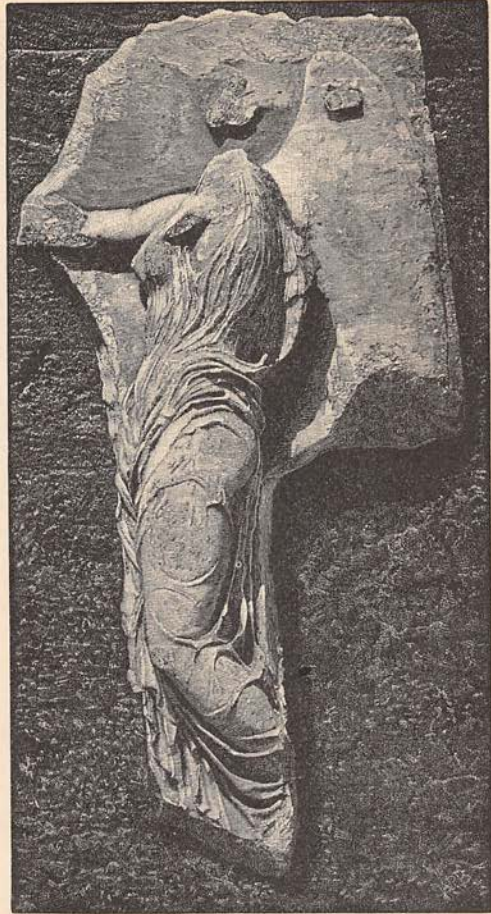
VICTORY OF BRESCIA—SIDE.

group theory, but to more which support an opposing theory.

Von Ravensburg goes over, in detail, all the group theories, and easily finds fatal objections to all. What most surprises me is, that any one ever tried to put it into a group, so completely by itself does it stand in every sense of the word.

Millingen, in 1826, started his theory that it was a Victory holding a shield in both hands. I am quite convinced that many who have started other theories would have adopted this if they had not been anticipated in proposing it. The vanity of archæological research and eagerness to propose something new is so dominant in most archæologists that they exercise more ingenuity to advance some new theory than would be requisite to show the validity of an old one. And the statue of Melos has been preëminent in fruitfulness of theories of all qualities and grades of improbability. Millingen, however, supported his theory by a similar statue known as the Capuan Venus, a reproduction, I believe, in Roman times, of the Melian statue, probably through some other intermediate copy or reproduction, as the sculptors of the Capuan statue could not have seen the Melian. We have only to note the awkwardness of the arms to be assured that these are either a modern restoration or, if antique, that they do not agree with the pose of the original. I believe them to be entirely modern restoration, but I am unable to refer to the statue, which is at Naples. If so, they tell nothing; if the contrary, the statue gives its weight against the apple theory. And here, again, I must protest in passing against the attribution to the Venus type of all nude or semi-nude statues. There is nothing in the Capuan which indicates that it was intended as a Venus. Millingen quotes Appollonius of Rhodes as describing a statue of Venus looking at herself in the shield of Mars, which she herself is holding, but this is no evidence of the type correspondence, and the gravamen of the matter lies precisely in the diversity of the type from the recognizable Venuses. But the Capuan is too far in type and treatment from the Melian to serve as definite argument. Such as it is, an item in the discussion, I will not exaggerate its importance.

"The Victory of Brescia" is another of the recollections, rather than reproductions, of the type of which I believe the Melian statue to be the original. It is in bronze, is later, and has the wings, but the type is unmistakable, and the action of the torso and head is sufficiently different from our statue to show that it was only an emulation, and not a plagiarism, that was intended.



VICTORY RAISING AN OFFERING (TEMPLE OF NIKÉ APTEROS, THE ACROPOLIS, ATHENS).

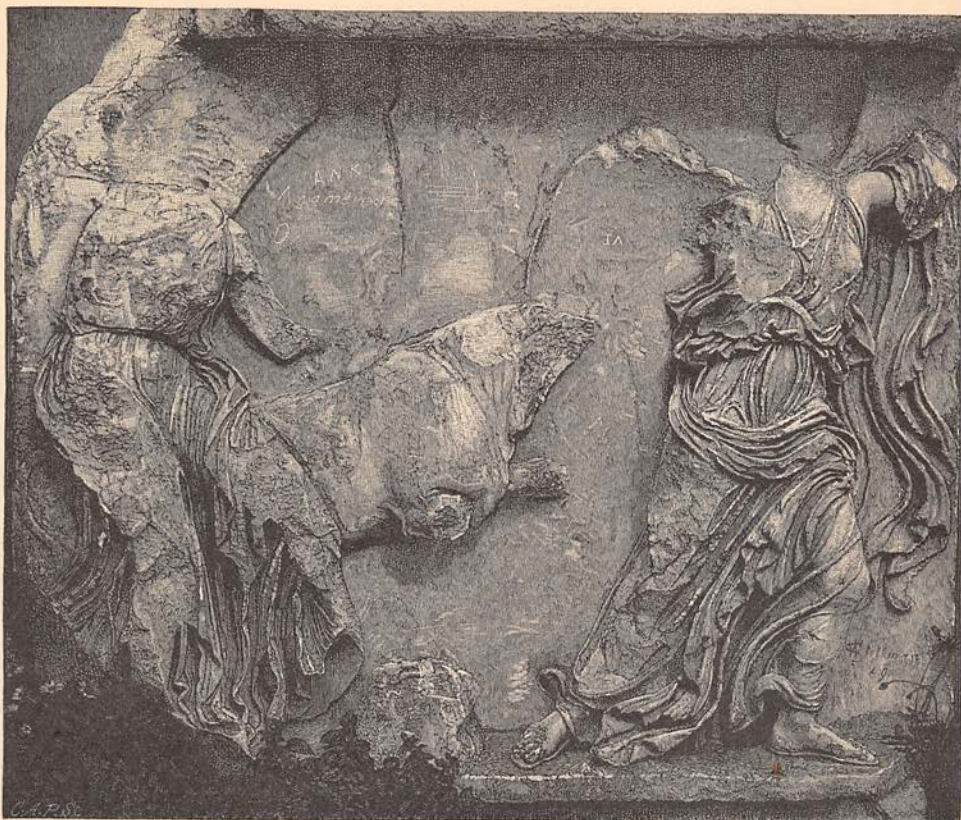
The drapery differs in the arrangement, being of bronze and agreeing with some undisputed Victories at Athens, but the action of the left leg holding the shield is the same, and that of the arms corresponds very nearly as far as the arms remain in the Melian work. As a whole, it reminds one more of the latter than does any other of the statues of its class.

The case is one in which archæological knowledge is of very little value, unless it be aided by thorough artistic study and a knowledge of the requirements of art proper. The archæologist, like other scientists, must have positive evidence to work on; and the testimony of pure taste, the intuitions of an artistic education, are of no use to him except as confirmatory. The intuition of the artist, whose taste has been educated by long study of the works he has to deal with, arrives at opinions by a kind of inspiration to which science often lacks all means of access. In the case of this statue, archæology has no evidence to weigh, and the ponderous



VICTORY UNTYING HER SANDAL (TEMPLE OF NIKÉ APTEROS, THE ACROPOLIS, ATHENS).

erudition which Overbeck, Müller, Jahn, Welcker, and others have piled on the question has no foundation. We can determine with comparative certainty that the statue belongs to the epoch between Phidias and Praxiteles, because we have the work of



VICTORIES LEADING A BULL TO SACRIFICE (TEMPLE OF NIKÉ APTEROS, THE ACROPOLIS, ATHENS).

Phidias, and sufficient comparative data for that of Praxiteles, and now, since the discovery of the Hermes at Olympia, positive data to judge from; and we have a right to say that the Melian statue came between these, but beyond this nothing—no clew except what lies in the design and the unities attendant on it, of which *per se* the professed archæologist is no judge.

In working about the Acropolis of Athens some years ago, I photographed, amongst other sculptures, the mutilated Victories in the Temple of Niké Apteros, the "Wingless Victory," the little Ionic temple in which stood that statue of Victory of which it is said that "*the Athenians made her without wings that she might never leave Athens*"; and looking at the photographs afterward, when the impression of the comparatively diminutive size had passed, I was struck with the close resemblance of the type to that of the "Venus" of Melos. There are the same large, heroic proportions, the same amplexness in the development of the nude parts, the same art in the management of the draperies.

They are little high reliefs, part of a balustrade which surrounded the corbel of the

Temple of Niké Apteros, hardly three feet high in their perfect state, and now without heads or hands or feet. There are four of them: one apparently untying her sandal; another,—that which shows best the type of the figure,—raising an offering or crown, and two others leading a bull to sacrifice. I give the series. Note the exquisite composition of the drapery below the knee of the Victory raising the offering, and the superb flow of the entire draperies in the sandal-tying figure, but, above all, the Victory type in the whole assemblage. How absolutely it agrees with that of the Melian statue, and how utterly alone in all antique art that is but for these!

Since I have begun this study, it has twice happened that artist friends trained in the French school (*i. e.*, in the only school which cultivates the perception of style in design, and the only one that emulates the Greek in its characteristics), both trained draughtsmen, came into my room, and without any remark I showed them the photographs of the Victories at Athens. They were new to both, but in one case as in the other the first expression was: "How like the Venus of Melos!" And the similarity runs through the



THE SO-CALLED VENUS OF MELOS—SIDE.



THE "VENUS" RESTORED—SIDE. (TRACED FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF A LIVING MODEL.)

treatment of every part—the management of drapery to express the action of the limbs, the firm, heroic mold of the figure, and the modeling of the round contours. Compare the right shoulder of the Venus in the side view with that in the stooping Victory. The slight differences which exist are just what might be expected between a figure which stands as principal, isolated, and to be seen from all sides, and one which was secondary, subordinate, of partial decorative use, and to be seen only in one view. My illustrations will hardly convey the strikingness of the similarity, but I defy any one to compare side by side the series of Victories and the Melian statue in casts and not admit that the type, the treatment, the ideal, are the same, as sisters may be the same, or at least as mother and daughter.

The little Temple of Niké Apteros had once, we know, a statue of Victory without wings, and we know the *bon mot*, which I have given above, which it suggested. The decorations of the temple are attributed to Scopas and his school, and Victory was unique so far as we know in being wingless. We may well conceive, with the symbolical meaning—talismanic, rather—implied in what

we know of it by this witticism, that the Athenians would have a special anxiety to keep it from becoming a trophy in the hands of an enemy, even one who might not be disposed to desecrate the temples of the greater gods. Niké was rather an attribute or variation of Athena than a distinct goddess, and was as such both of great value to the Athenians, being the *alter ego* of their patroness, and of less care to the enemy, as not Minerva herself. At all events, when Pausanias visited Athens the Niké Apteros had gone. Her temple still stood there, and near it on the Acropolis hill stood some of the greatest antiques of the antique world untouched.

My theory, open to the grave objection that it is one in which hypothesis bears an undue proportion to proven fact (yet not so great as any of the group theories, and hardly more than any other theory, for all are constructed out of the same aërial substance), is that the Melian statue is the original Niké Apteros from the little temple on the Acropolis of Athens. If so, one can understand the whole of my theory of concealment, attribution, and type; and the restoration becomes that of the Victory in some attitude connected with regarding, or recording, on the shield or a tab-



THE SO-CALLED VENUS OF MELOS—FRONT.



THE "VENUS" RESTORED—FRONT. (TRACED FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF A LIVING MODEL.)

let the names of the Attic heroes, or possibly holding out wreaths to the victors. I incline to the former as accordant with all traditional antique treatment and the emulation we have. The minutiae of description of many antique works of art which we owe to Pausanias and Pliny was plainly impossible with this. Neither ever saw it, but its memory existed in artistic tradition and has been repeated in the statues we have seen, probably only a few of those which once existed.

Von Ravensburg sums up the objections to the shield-bearing Victory and to the theory of Millingen as follows: The theory would indicate that she leaned back to balance the weight of the shield, but the objections urged are that if the shield were larger it would hide too much (yet in an earlier part of the book the statement is made that a part of the figure, and just that part covered by the shield, is comparatively unfinished, which has given rise to the theory of a group in which one side of the statue was hidden), if it were small, the weight would not be enough to account for the attitude. And, in the next breath, he urges that the grand heroic character *is an objection to her struggling with a burden*. But if a goddess, and of this robust type, the

burden ought not to oppress her, however great, humanly speaking. But in point of fact there is no noteworthy degree of backward inclination. To test the question, I photographed a model in the attitude required to hold a shield on her left knee and write on it.

The result was very slightly different from that of the statue. A part of the backward action of the model was due to the necessity of a support to enable her to remain in the pose necessary to be photographed, but the action of writing is better expressed by the statue.

The action of the statue is that of a figure which stands nearly balanced and in repose, with the first movement in a forward action, like one who reaches out to give, take, or write, or any similar action. The particular shade we cannot determine without the possession of the fore-arms. Von Ravensburg goes on to say that he does not mean to affirm that the holding of a shield does not suit the action of the upper part of the body, but maintains that it does not explain it *particularly well*. But after the inane restoration given forth with his high approval, we may be permitted to doubt that his artistic taste has been as carefully developed as his archæolog-

ical acumen. He quotes Overbeck as objecting, to the shield resting on the left knee, that there are no traces on the left thigh which the hand holding the shield must have left; but Wittig and Von Lützow seem to have recognized these very marks. But they are both wrong, for there are no such recognizable marks, nor are they to be expected, for the shield, if there was one, was in all probability of bronze, held well out from the body, and resting on the knee raised for that purpose, and supported on a helmet lying on the ground. But, further, he says these considerations are quite superfluous, for the position of the left leg of the Melian statue contradicts the shield-supporting, and he quotes in support Valentin, that the left thigh would incline outward to secure a balance, and that the supporting of a heavy object on the thigh thrown in would violate the laws of equilibrium. That this is not true is shown by the "Victory of Brescia," in which the action is precisely this, and the action of the thigh is the same as that of the Melian statue. Moreover, I tried a model again in this view, and the result is given in the illustration.

The knee took quite readily the action indicated, and, indeed, would be compelled to by the pressure of the shield if the weight rested partly on the left hand, as it must to have left the right free for any action whatever. Both nature and the antique assert precisely the contrary to that which Valentin assumes. The length to which the argument against this restoration is carried by him may be judged from the assertion that the action of the "Victory of Brescia" is that of an outward push of the left thigh, to make it agree with that of the theory Von Ravensburg lays down. But the assertion is purely gratuitous. If the Brescian bronze is an argument, as far as it goes it obviates every difficulty in the interpretation of the Melian statue by taking, so far as the action of the limbs is concerned, the very action I attribute to the latter.

There is but one objection to the restoration theory I propose which deserves serious consideration—that of the goddess looking off or above the point at which she would be writing. Half the ingenuity displayed in many of the proposed restorations, or half the sophistry employed by Von Ravensburg to combat this, would carry us over much greater difficulties. In later Greek work, when art was sought for its own sake, and consistency continually sacrificed to the grace of a pose and harmony of the lines, we should not be surprised at the goddess looking at one point and writing at another; but at this period the dramatic unities were sacred alike in poetry as in art. But if we suppose that, unlike the Brescian statue,

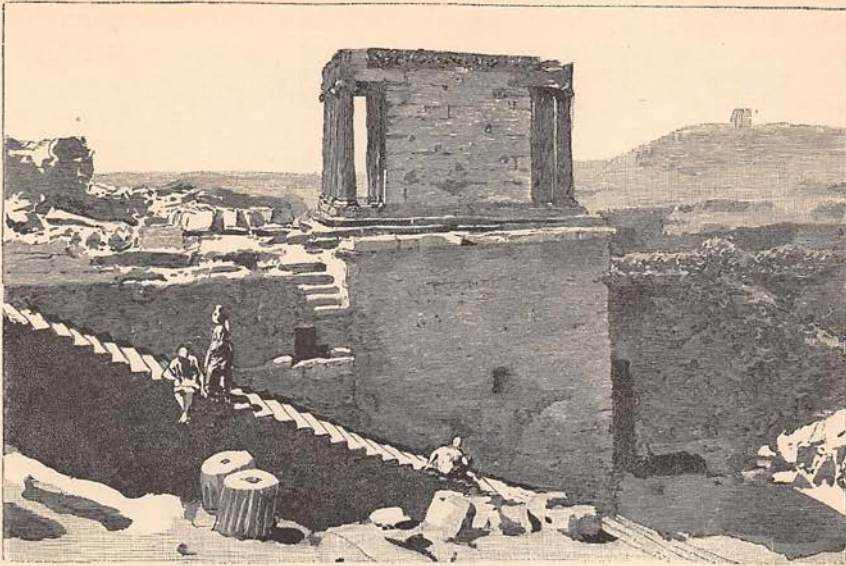
she is not at the moment engaged in writing, but pausing as having just finished, and, looking out from her pedestal in the little temple, gazes out toward Marathon, in which direction the temple opens, there is no difficulty in the restoration. A little of that kind of imagination so much abused in modern art-criticism, which consists in attributing to the artist all the fancies which arise in our minds in the contemplation of his work, all the far-fetched and poetic visions our own eyes have conjured up, would supply all deficiencies in our theory.

But while I maintain that my theory has more accordances with the known facts and actual qualities of the statue than any other, and presents fewer gaps in the demonstration, I am unwilling to lay down any theory not sustainable by what we know of Greek art, and I admit the difficulty as frankly as I state those of other theories. Doing so, however, I still maintain that not only is there the means of reconciliation of my hypothesis of an actual shield-writing Victory with the statue as it is, but even in case I am compelled to abandon this particular point, and advocate the modification of Millingen that she holds the shield with both hands and looks at it, my main hypothesis—that the statue is a Victory and no Venus, and the particular wingless Victory of Athens—is untouched. We do not know what the Niké Apteros was doing. What we can see is that this statue was more probably holding a shield, either contemplatively or writing on it, or pausing, just having written, than taking any other action.

If we may accept the analogy of the Apollo Belvidere, which also looks off in the same inexplicable way, it would illustrate my hypothesis still further, but the Apollo is later and less dramatic. If we hold to the strict dramatic quality of the best Greek art, we must suppose that the goddess has just finished writing, and looks up and out toward the field where her heroes died. Or even if the shield was a high one, such as the Spartan wounded used to be brought home on, she might still be looking at the shield, if not at the words she has just written. In fact, several suggestions offer



VICTORY OF CONSANI.



TEMPLE OF NIKÉ APTEROS.

themselves, and none open to accusation of such flagrant inconsistencies as those involved in Tarral's restoration, which shocks the dramatic sense beyond endurance.

The objection that the shield would hide so large a part of the figure goes for absolutely nothing. We continually find Greek work completely, or nearly so, finished in positions where by necessity much of it must have been hidden. As the pediments of the Parthenon were originally placed, they would never have been half seen, and how the Panathenaic frieze could have been adequately seen, once the building scaffolds were taken down, we can much less easily conjecture than how the Victory could have been seen behind her shield. The Brescian, a later and more realistic work, is seen behind hers. Consani has made a very happy emulation of the motive in his Victory. It is amongst the best of the modern Italian works of its class, and illustrates the manner of avoiding the difficulties we have seen adduced.

The little Temple of Niké Apteros has had a destiny unique amongst its kind. Like the Parthenon, it was standing little more than two hundred years ago, but during the Turkish occupation it was razed, and its stones all

built into the great bastion which covered the front of the Acropolis and blocked up the staircase to the Propylæa. It was dug out and restored, nearly every stone in its place, by two German architects during the reign of Otho, and it stands again, as Pausanias describes it, on the spot where old Ægeas watched for the return of Theseus from Crete, and seeing the black sails of his son's ship returning, token of failure (for Theseus had forgotten to raise the white sail, the signal of success), threw himself from the precipice, and was dashed into black death on the rocks below. Off in the distance is Salamis and Ægina, and the straits through which the ships came from Melos and Crete, and off to the south is Hyettus, beyond which is Marathon and the road by which the Persians came, and the Turks after them; and below the rocks still offer sudden death. How little has really changed in these two thousand and more years since the temple was built!

There certainly was the spot, and this the occasion, if ever, that an Attic sculptor should rise to that spiritual enthusiasm below which Greek art stopped and lost the clew which, in later centuries, the Florentine found again and followed to new, if not higher, heights.



COIN OF ATHENS (SIXTH CENTURY B. C.).