

NORTH AND SOUTH.

BY OWEN MEREDITH.

Far in the Southern night she sleeps;
And there the heavens are hushed and there,
Low murmuring from the moonlit deeps,
Faint music lulls the dreamful air.
No tears on her soft lashes hang,
On her calm lips no kisses glow.
The throb, the passion and the pang
Are over now.

But I? From this full peopled North
Whose midnight roar around me stirs,
How wildly still my heart goes forth
To haunt that silent home of hers!
There night by night, with no release,
These sleepless eyes the vision see,
And all its visionary peace
But maddens me.

The New-York Tribune.

SUNDAY, JUNE 30, 1907.

When "C. S. C." celebrated the organ grinder in one of his poems he indicated that he had chosen the theme "for a change." Probably it was for some such reason that Mr. Charles M. Harvey wrote the essay on "The Dime Novel in American Life," which is printed in the current "Atlantic." The topic is not, to-day, fraught with burning interest. But it does not matter. The essay makes capital reading. Speaking of noted men who have been readers of the dime novel, Mr. Harvey mentions Lincoln and Seward, and he quotes Zachariah Chandler as saying that "the man who does not enjoy 'Onomoo, the Huron,' has no right to live." We like that saying. The man who did not read dime novels in his boyhood is to be pitied. He missed a fearful joy. It is not to be denied, either, that, as Mr. Orville J. Victor, an heroic worker in this field, once said to Mr. Harvey, "almost without exception the original dime novels were good. Their moral was high. All were clean and instructive." It was only when the big profits in the business led to furious competition that the tone of the stuff was lowered, and the dime novel became "an atrocity." Moreover, Mr. Harvey makes a legitimate point when he says that not all dime novels, even of to-day, deserve this epithet. It is absolutely true that "between some of them and some of the bound novels the only recognizable difference is the difference between 10 cents and \$1.50." Many a work of contemporary fiction, claiming to be a work of art, is by its morbidity, coarseness or shrieking sensationalism sunk to a level far below that of a dime novel.

It is rather puzzling that the publication of Professor Walter Raleigh's monograph on Shakespeare, in the "English Men of Letters Series," a book of considerable merit, should have excited discussion a little more vehement than that provoked by much Shakespearian literature of far less importance. It has been very cordially praised, but it has been just as cordially denounced, one peppery critic going so far as to call it a ragbag. Perhaps the true explanation of the excitement it has created is to be found in the fact that Shakespeariana are beginning to get on the nerves of readers. Mr. W. Teignmouth Shore, who apparently admires Professor Raleigh's work, but regards his "Shakespeare" as "quite unnecessary," has this to say in "The Academy" on the excess of talk, in print, about the poet:

It is high time that those who love him, but do not desire to see his works used as pegs for absurd critical hats, should raise some voice of earnest protest. It is the publishers who are the sinners, and unlike most sinners, can reap no pleasure from their sinning. Most of the serious—that is to say almost all—volumes of Shakespearian criticism find their way to the remainder shop, bringing ruin to the earnest student who picks them up cheap, and no profit to the publishers. Is it in vain then to appeal to the latter? To ask them to stay their hands, and by mutual agreement to enter into an alliance of self-denial, and not to publish any more books that treat of Shakespeare and his life and his writing?

The suggestion calls up to the mind's eye a beautiful picture. Imagine a year, or even a month, in which the world saw no new book on Shakespeare!

Joseph Knight, who died in London last week, was one of those writers who not only command respect but are regarded with some warmth of feeling. He was a man of letters of the gentle, mellow type. A delicate courtesy governed all his writings. Chiefly known as one of the soundest dramatic critics in London, he also had much experience as a biographer and as a writer on miscellaneous subjects. To American readers he is best known as the editor of "Notes and Queries." For the last twenty-odd years he presided over that famous little periodical, and constant readers of it plainly discerned the signs of his handiwork in its pages. It must have made for him a host of friends all over the world. "Notes and Queries" is an institution apart, a publication as delightful as it is useful. Its very form has helped to endear it to its wide public. The small pages of creamy paper, the clear type and the compact arrangement of the text, make it a pleasure to browse amongst the familiar "Notes," "Queries" and "Replies." Then, too, it always contains such fantastically varied reading. One never knows when one is going to find a precious oddity in the collection. To those unfamiliar with it it might seem as if it were a technical publication, designed only for scholars and the like, but no human creature with an ounce of intelligence could fail to be amused by a number of "Notes and Queries."

ROMAN SCULPTURE.

A Plea for More Liberal Recognition of Its Merits.

ROMAN SCULPTURE FROM AUGUSTUS TO CONSTANTINE. By Mrs. Arthur Strong, LL. D. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. 141, 408. Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons.

It has so long been customary to regard Greek sculpture as the consummate flower of plastic art that the undervaluation of Roman sculpture has become a fixed convention. It is the object of Mrs. Strong to restore the balance of things and to give Roman sculpture its due. Like every scholar with a case to prove, she is disposed, here and there, to weight her argument with more than it can carry. But she is too well trained an archaeologist, and is possessed of intellectual qualities too fine, for her book to take on the dubious characteristics of a mere controversial pamphlet. She is a judicious writer, and the essentials of her work must remain unchallenged. It is the more welcome inasmuch as her much misunderstood subject has been left practically untouched by her countrymen. The translation which she made of Professor Wickhoff's "Roman Art," seven years

subject to a new reading. The situation at this period is well indicated in the following passage:

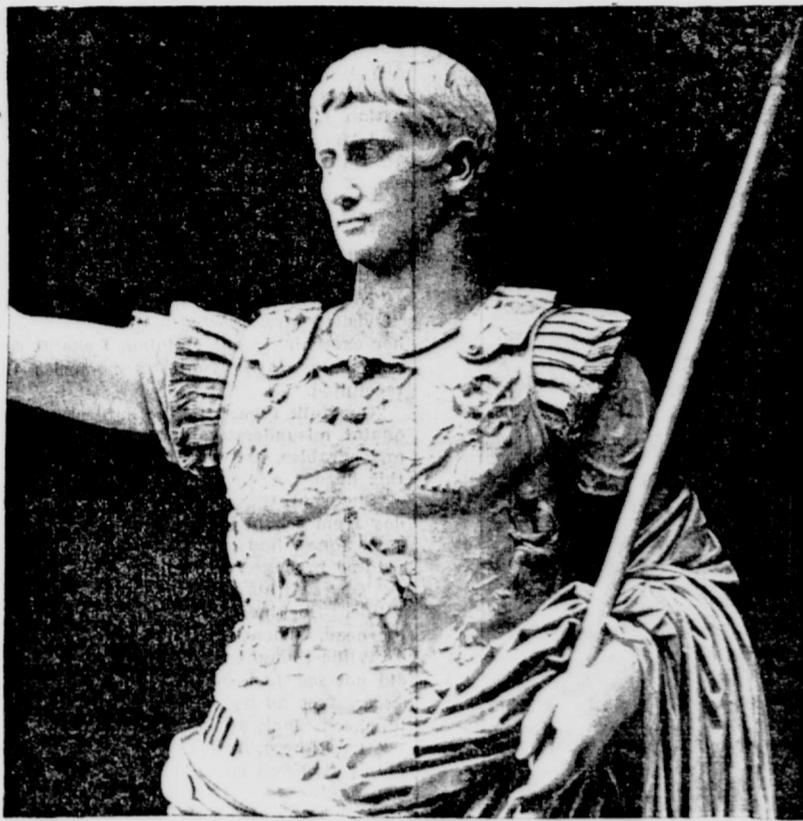
Toward the close of the Republic, many Greek masterpieces were brought to Rome as the result of the growing mania for collecting and connoisseurship indulged in, as in the eighteenth century in England, by wealthy aristocrats. Thus, at the advent of Augustus, Greek art must have been quite familiar to the Romans. But the change that took place under Augustus was the displacement in favor of Rome of the actual centres of Greek artistic production. With the foundation and development of the Empire, or, more correctly, with the dawn of the Imperial idea, Greek art, instead of being a mere sporadic apparition in Rome, passed absolutely into her service, and devoted its technique to Roman subjects. The Romans, moreover, are generally represented as artistically unendowed, caring only for the art treasures ingathered from Greece and Asia Minor in a brutal, superficial manner, as appendages of wealth or tokens of conquest. But the way in which Greek art grew and blossomed afresh in Rome shows abundantly that the soil was rich, as well as ready to receive it.

It is at this point that the investigator faces a parting of the ways. Hitherto, as a rule, he has shown no hesitation whatever, but has marched straight in the direction of an hypothesis which leaves Greece with all the honors. He sees Roman sculpture as practically but a decadent continuation of Greek. Whatever he finds on Roman soil he identifies as work brought from Greece or fashioned in Italy either by Greek craftsmen or by Romans following in the footsteps of the latter. It is Mrs. Strong's



CESAR.

(From the bust in the Museo Barracco at Rome.)



AUGUSTUS.

(From the statue in the Vatican.)

ago, is, indeed, the only publication we have in our own language which enters seriously into the question as to whether Rome did not, after all, possess far more artistic originality than most connoisseurs have been willing to believe. This volume, packed with information and with thought, clearly written and exceptionally well illustrated, is, in short, nothing more nor less than a boon.

We lack the documents necessary for a full and authoritative conception of early indigenous Roman art. There is evidence that it was developed under Etruscan influences, but recognition of this fact does not carry us very far, and when our sources of information become richer, in the Augustan age, we are confronted by that problem which Hellenists solve so easily to their own satisfaction, but which Mrs. Strong would

object to disprove this convenient view of the matter and to do it on the basis of something better than the familiar distinction drawn between Greek idealism and Roman realism. It is important to distinguish between the single figure carved in the round and the group containing two or more figures. The first type was wrought in perfection by the Greeks, but they were less successful when they sought "to apprehend or convey the relations of objects to one another in space." They saw their object or objects from in front. "Now, it is the peculiar merit of Roman artists," says Mrs. Strong, "or of artists working under Roman influence, to have approached and partially solved the tridimensional or spatial problem, thus creating what Wickhoff has happily named the 'illusionist style.'" Where the Greek went for the abstract, generalized his ideas, and achieved a type, the Roman sought the concrete fact, worked somewhat in the spirit of our modern naturalists or our even more modern impressionists, and achieved a living portrait of whatever he had set out to commemorate. Mrs. Strong enforces this point through luminous and intensely interesting analyses of certain salient monuments, following a chronological system, and thus heightening the force of her argument.

Her first example of prime importance is that famous altar of peace which the Senate erected in honor of Augustus in the year 13 B. C., the altar familiarly known as the "Ara Pacis." Though its sculptures are scattered amongst half a dozen European museums, the theoretical reconstruction of the edifice has already gone far enough to enable the scholar to arrive at a fair notion of its effect as a whole, and to estimate the true significance of its carved embellishments. In these Mrs. Strong finds abundant confirmation of her whole idea of Roman sculpture. The vast composition is put together with a freedom and spontaneity which would have astonished an Athenian if it did not scandalize him. It has the measure and dignity proper to monumental art, but it is animated by the breath of life, which is to say, of complex and moving life, the life of groups progressing almost artlessly to a common end. The same spirit that is shown in the figures is shown in the decoration. Here flowers are conventionalized into a kind of pattern, but are at the same time carved with an extraordinary feeling for



FRAGMENT OF FRIEZE OF THE ARA PACIS. (From the marble in the Museo delle Terme at Rome.)

the individual character of each leaf and blossom, and for what can only be described as atmospheric effect. Mrs. Strong declares that as we sit in the cloisters of the Terme studying these floral decorations "the sensuous sounds and fragrant warmth of an Italian garden seem to surround us," and though the figure is perhaps a little forced, it is not altogether inappropriate. She points out, too, that the technique employed in the rendering of these flowers is far more flexible than the technique disclosed in Greek treatment of similar motives. The Roman sculptor's conception of his task and of his art may have been nourished at Greek sources in the beginning, but as the years went on and he found himself, he developed an artistic language which Mrs. Strong is surely justified in considering largely original.

It waxes stronger, too, with the passage of time. On the foundations laid in the Augustan age the Romans built to amazingly good purpose in the Flavian and Trajanic ages. Mrs. Strong is especially eloquent, and with good reason, on the reliefs of the Trajan column, the significance of which she thus tersely brings out:

Let us for one moment compare our Trajan column to the Parthenon frieze—that other sublime expression of the antique—not in order to depreciate either, but to understand how each solved its peculiar problem. In no other way can we so well come to understand how great artists can make the very limitations of art at different periods subservient their purpose.

The Greek artist of the Parthenon frieze conceives an "idealized" state, a whole nation raised momentarily to a higher power of existence by its participation in the goddess feast; hence the procession of the Parthenon frieze is severely localized in a free ideal space, which is nowhere defined by the introduction of monuments or of landscape accessories.

The Roman artists, on the other hand, are inspired by an opposite conception. They do not want to transport their subject into an ideal space; on the contrary, they want to bring the event as realistically before the spectator as material and means permit. Their reliefs, in a word, as a recent critic has acutely pointed out, are the splendid counterpart of their historic prose. Hence no detail of landscape or architecture, of costume or character, escapes them; no ethnical trait is too trivial to be noted and expressed.

There is an elaborate description of the column in this book, accompanied by photographs showing details, and, written with positive gusto, it leaves a singularly exhilarating impression. The work is placed in a new light and the reader is bound to look at it with heightened appreciation ever after, no matter how well he knew it before. Mrs. Strong is equally stimulating in her studies of other and later monuments, and gives a particularly stirring accent to her chapter on Roman portraiture. There can be no doubt at all about the success of her effort to expose in Roman sculpture a technique, a note of design, a character, and especially a kind of vitality, distinctly different from the kindred elements in Greek sculpture.

Roman sculpture, then, is to be accepted as forming an "independent episode." In so accepting it, however, we must be upon our guard against a confusion of values. Mrs. Strong, as has already been hinted, does not altogether escape this danger. Her tendency is to view Roman sculpture as not merely more different from Greek than has generally been admitted, but as a finer product in every way than criticism has allowed it to be. She might argue thus within limits and still hold her reader, who must indeed be grateful to her for pointing out beauties that have perhaps been veiled from him. But there are occasions on which she is carried away by her enthusiasm. Speaking, for example, of a certain relief on the Arch of Trajan at Benevento, she says that "not even the gods created by Pheidias for the Parthenon surpass in nobility of conception the group on this arch." One does not need to be a rabid Hellenist in order to deprecate this overstatement of the point, or to discern in the similar drift of much that Mrs. Strong says elsewhere a snare for the feet of the unwary. Roman sculpture at its best remains immeasurably inferior to Greek in spirituality, and, above all, in sheer beauty. The inexperienced student might be tempted to forget this as he is swept along in the tide of Mrs. Strong's advocacy of the art to which she is so sincerely devoted. On the other hand, it would be positively discourteous to attach too much importance to her fervid moments. To one rendering so solid a service to the study of the antique as is rendered in this book, much may be granted.