



AMIENS CATHEDRAL

ARCHITECTURE

SHOWN TO THE CHILDREN

by

Gladys Wynne



YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS
ITHACA, NEW YORK

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ISBN: 978-1-63334-161-6

Yesterday's Classics, LLC

PO Box 339

Ithaca, NY 14851

TO
MY GENTLE CRITIC
WINIFRED

ABOUT THIS BOOK

THIS book is about beautiful buildings, and it has been written to help you to enjoy them. You know how much more delightful a walk in the country is if you know something about birds and wild flowers, and how much more you enjoy a visit to the theatre when you have read the play, and know the different characters and actors. Well, it is just the same with buildings. A little knowledge of architecture will help you to enjoy them. The world is full of beautiful buildings—our own streets are rich with them—if only we had eyes to see! But we pass them carelessly by, with hardly a glance, just because we have never been introduced to them, and do not know how interesting they are. Now, this little book is going to introduce you to some of these buildings. It will show you their portraits, and tell you something of their history and character, so that, when you meet, it will be not as strangers, but friends. And more than that. If you read it very carefully, a curious thing will happen. You will find yourself looking at every building you meet, and will discover, to your joy and surprise, that the streets of your city, which you used to think rather dull and uninteresting, are full of a new and wonderful interest.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

“What has happened to them?” you ask. Nothing has happened to them. The change is in you. You have found the key that unlocks the gates of the House Beautiful, and can now enter in and enjoy its treasures.

G. W.

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INTRODUCTORY

ARCHITECTURE means beautiful or artistic building. Everyone builds in a fashion. Bees build, beavers build, birds build, men build. Our forefathers did not need much architecture when they lived in caves and dens of the earth; and even when they came to the surface, a tent, or wooden hut, or straw roof supported on poles, formed sufficient shelter for them. It was not till thousands of years later that they began to build in stone.

Their first houses would be of the simplest description—just four walls, and a roof to keep out the rain, and windows and a door to let them out and in (Figure 1). But by and by, the love of beauty, which is an instinct in human nature, would assert itself, and they would want to adorn their house.

They might put a little cap above the windows, or pillars beside the door; or they might work mouldings between the door and windows, or carry the outlines of the roof into gables and turrets, and domes and spires. Till at last, instead of a bare up and down flat wall, they would have a beautiful building, full of character and interest.

ARCHITECTURE SHOWN TO THE CHILDREN

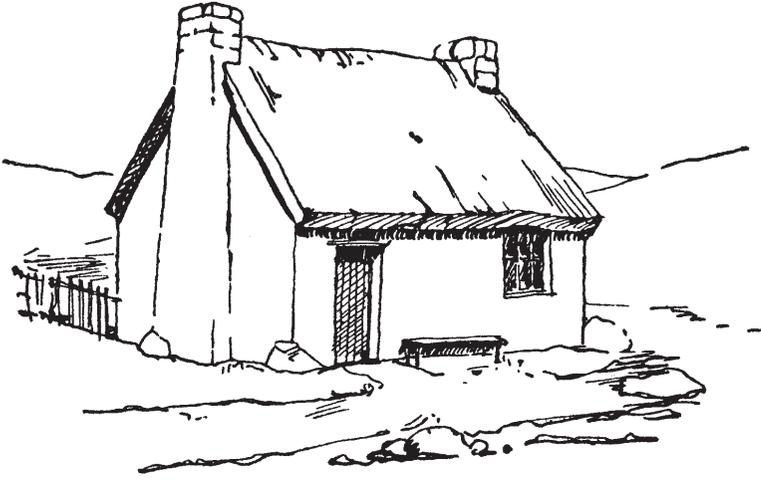


Figure 1. Crofter's Cottage

Figure 2 is a perfectly plain window.

Figure 3 has mouldings. If you compare the two, you will see what a difference the mouldings make.

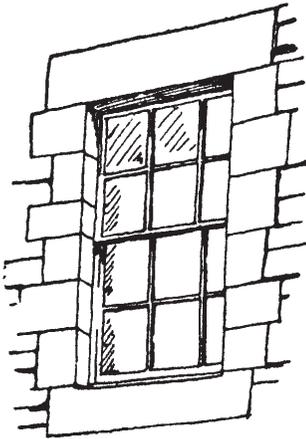


Figure 2. Plain Window

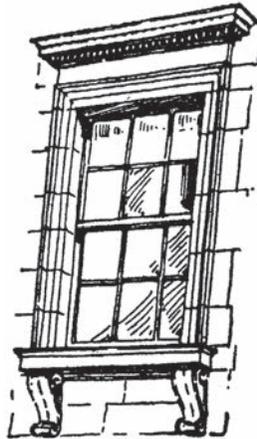


Figure 3. Window with Mouldings

INTRODUCTORY

Great architecture is seen best in the temples of the gods, as we should expect. The builders strove with each other which of them should make these the most beautiful, and the one who succeeded best got the name of "ARCHITECT," which means "MASTER BUILDER." We have many builders now, but few master builders. It is of the master builders and their work that we speak when we use the words Architect and Architecture.

GREEK AND GOTHIC

The first thing that strikes one in studying buildings is the variety of styles. Here is one all turrets and gables and round towers, with staircases inside, and all sorts of odd nooks and corners that you would like to explore; and then, again, you come upon another that is square and regular and "coldly fair." The one is Gothic, the other Greek.

These are the two principal styles, and when you know these two you know a good deal; because the others are more or less related to them—descendants, or second or third cousins, so to speak, twice removed, and with a different name, of course.

There are much older styles than the Greek. There are the Egyptian, and the Indian, and the Assyrian; but we cannot study everything, and it is best to begin with the styles nearer home, which we can see examples of in our own country or in Europe. These are:—The Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Romanesque or Norman, and the Gothic. The Renaissance, which followed the Gothic, is a revival of the Greek and Roman.

CHAPTER I

GREEK ARCHITECTURE

THE DORIC COLUMN

THIS chapter is about columns. “A Column” is the grand word for a pillar. Let us look at one—a real good look, not the passing glance we generally bestow. Columns are like people, they are so much more interesting when you really know them.

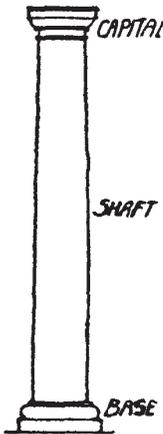


Figure 4.
Greek
Column

A column (Figure 4) consists of three parts:
a base to stand on:
a long body called the Shaft: and
a head or Capital.

Of these, the Base is the least important. It may even be wanting, but we cannot have a column without a shaft or Capital,

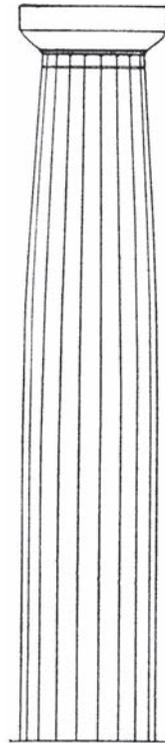


Figure 5.
Parthenon
Column

GREEK ARCHITECTURE

any more than we can have a person without a body or head.

There are many kinds of columns. The three we are going to look at are among the commonest; you will meet them everywhere. But they do not belong to this country. They are strangers in a strange land, and have travelled all the way from sunny Greece.

The best known and the plainest of the three is the Doric (Figure 5). It is short and sturdy, with a simple capital and no base. To look at it, you would think the Doric Column was quite straight, but it grows the least bit narrower towards the top, like the trunk of a tree, and it has a slight swelling about the middle. The narrow grooves or channels all round the column are called "Flutings." You will get the idea of a fluting if you divide a reed pipe into two its whole length, and then put the two halves back to back with their edges.

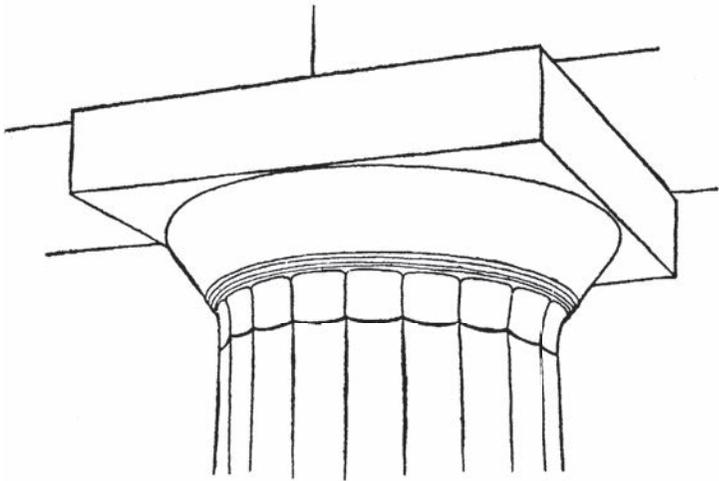


Figure 6. Doric Capital

ARCHITECTURE SHOWN TO THE CHILDREN

The Doric Capital is very simple (Figure 6). It consists of two parts, a sloping one below, called the "Echinus," and a square slab above, which rests on the lower part like the hat on the top of a head. This is the "Abacus," which means a board or tile.

THE IONIC COLUMN

The Ionic Column is a contrast to the Doric. It is slender and graceful, and has a base, a capital, and flutings, which are deeper than the Doric, and more numerous. But the capital is its distinguishing feature. It reminds one of rams' horns, or, as some people think, of a young lady's curls, the horns or curls being known as "Volutes" (Figure 8). One peculiarity of the Ionic capital has been a good deal criticised, namely, the front and the sides are not alike, the profile differing from the full face as much as it does in most humans.



Figure 7.
Greek
Ionic
Column

Every column has its favourite moulding, just as every young lady has her favourite ornament, and the favourite moulding of the Ionic is the "egg-and-dart," so called from its supposed resemblance to an egg and an arrow (Figure 9). Some people think that this moulding had an allegorical meaning, the "egg" typifying "Life," which usually originates in an egg, and the "arrow" "Death."

GREEK ARCHITECTURE

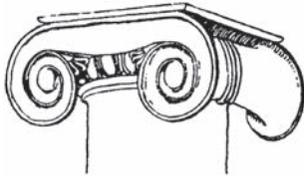


Figure 8.
Greek Ionic Capital

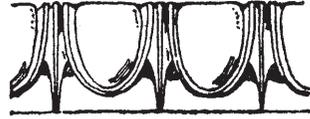


Figure 9.
Greek Egg and Dart

THE CORINTHIAN COLUMN

The Corinthian is the third and last member of our little Greek family. It is the most ornamental of the three, and the greatest favourite, with the Romans at least, who admired it so much that they adopted it. This column has a base and flutings like the Ionic, but its capital is quite different. It consists of two parts, a leafy one below and a square flat slab above (Figure 11). There is a pretty story told about the origin of this capital. It is said that a young girl in Corinth having died, her nurse collected all her little toys and ornaments in a basket and put them on the grave, covering them with a tile to keep them from being blown away. This basket was placed on the root of an Acanthus, the Greek thistle (Figure 12) which, though pressed

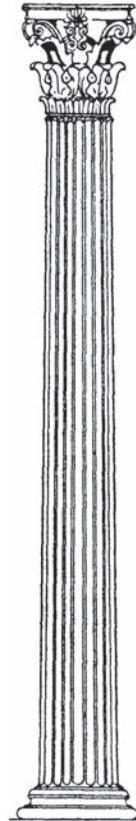


Figure 10. Greek
Corinthian Column,
Monument of
Lysicrates

ARCHITECTURE SHOWN TO THE CHILDREN

down by the weight, shot up its stem and leaves in the spring, taking graceful curves and bends at the angles of the tile. Now, it so happened that when it was looking its best a famous sculptor passed by, and, stopping to



Figure 11. Greek Corinthian Capital



Figure 12. Acanthus

admire, suddenly the thought came to him that this basket, with its delicate foliage, would make a beautiful and original capital for a column. So he hastened home and experimented, and the graceful Corinthian capital which you see here was the result.

THE ENTABLATURE

Such, then, were the three Greek columns, and, according as a temple was built with the one or the other, it was said to belong to the Doric, or the Ionic, or the Corinthian ORDER.

But there is more to be considered in the Greek "ORDER" than the columns. There is the ENTABLATURE.

GREEK ARCHITECTURE

This is a long word. Let us try to guess the meaning. You will see that the second syllable almost spells TABLE—EN-TABL-ature; and the entablature has just this likeness to a table, that both are flat. It is the flat block or beam that rests on the columns and supports the roof (Figure 13). Like the columns, the entablature consists of three parts:—

1. The Cornice.
2. The Frieze.
3. and the Architrave.

Cornice means “Crown.”

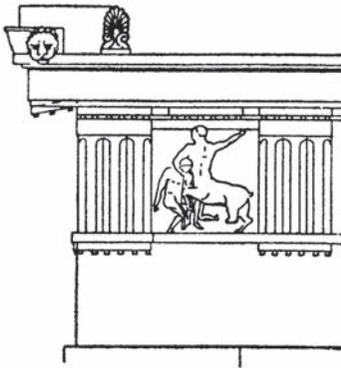


Figure 13. Greek Doric Entablature

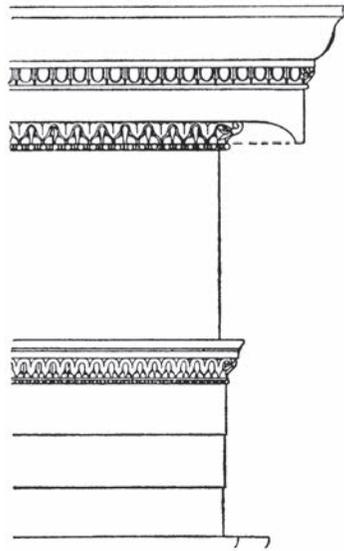


Figure 14. Greek Ionic Entablature (Erechtheion)

It is at the top, and crowns the whole entablature. The Frieze is the middle, and the Architrave below all.

Architrave means “Chief Beam.” It rests immediately on the columns: that is why it is called Architrave. The Archbishop is the chief bishop, and the Architrave is the chief beam.

ARCHITECTURE SHOWN TO THE CHILDREN

Now you know what an entablature means; suppose we compare the entablatures of our little Greek family. You will find that they differ almost as much as their columns, especially in the frieze and the cornice.

The Ionic and the Corinthian frieze (Figure 14 and Figure 15) is one continuous piece of sculpture while the Doric frieze is broken up into square slabs or panels, called Metopes (Figure 13). And very lively squares they are! (in this particular frieze). At least “every other one” is lively: the alternate square has a simple ornament consisting of three grooves or channels, called “Triglyphs” (Figure 13).

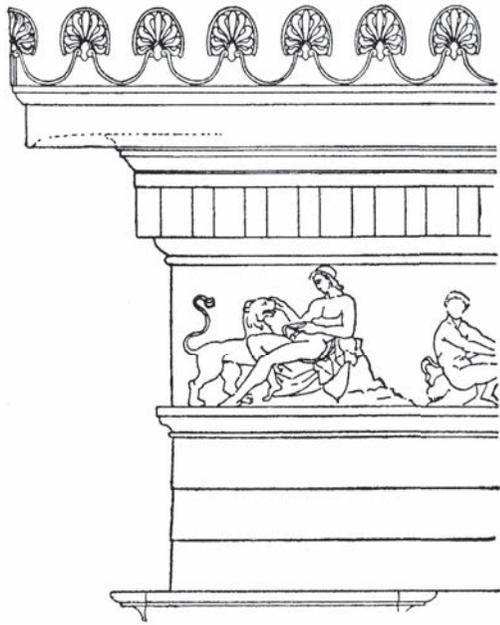


Figure 15. Greek Corinthian Entablature
(Monument of Lysicrates)

GREEK ARCHITECTURE

But we are more interested in the lively squares. There are 92 of them, and no two are alike. (Compare that with any modern building.) They represent a contest which took place at a marriage feast between the Centaurs and the Lapiths, the Centaurs being fabulous creatures, half horse, half human, while the Lapiths are entirely human. Each Metope or slab is a kind of framed picture in stone, representing a single incident in this great contest. The Centaurs seem to be getting the best of it. Here is one carrying off a Lapith woman (Figure 16). Notice the pointed ears, so characteristic of a low type. Below is another Centaur in the act of crushing his foe with a wine vessel, while

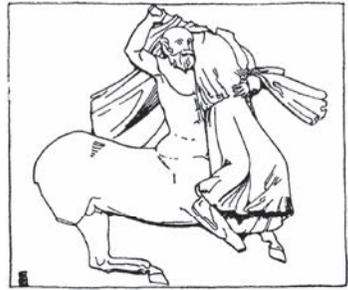


Figure 16.
Parthenon Metope



Figure 17.
Parthenon Metope

the poor victim in falling endeavours to protect himself with his shield (Figure 17).

It is a curious fact that the finest remains of Grecian sculpture represent fabulous events and fabulous animals. These fighting Centaurs, for instance, have been more multiplied than any other subject. Perhaps the reason lies partly in the fact that they typify in a kind of allegory the first contests between civilisation and barbarism, the Centaurs standing for barbarism, and the Lapiths for civilisation.

ARCHITECTURE SHOWN TO THE CHILDREN

Ruskin puts it beautifully in one of his books when he says: “The Greeks were the first people that were born into complete humanity. All nations before them had been partly savage—bestial, clay encumbered: still semi-goat or semi-ant, or semi-stone, or semi-cloud. But the power of a new spirit came upon the Greeks, and the stones were filled with breath, and the clouds clothed with flesh; and then came the great spiritual battle between the Centaurs and Lapiths, and the living creatures became the Children of Men.”

THE ERECHTHEUM

On the steep rock in Athens called the Acropolis there stand the remains of two temples made of the purest white marble. Both are Grecian, therefore both beautiful, but with a difference; for the one is Doric, the other Ionic. The one bears throughout the impress of repose, solidity, and strength; the other of grace and delicacy. In the one, the columns are short, powerful, and closely ranged together. In the other they are taller, lighter, and farther apart.

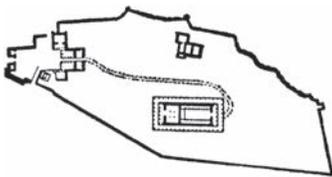


Figure 18.
Plan of Acropolis

Here is a plan of the Acropolis, with the two temples marked on it (Figure 18). The big one near the middle is the Parthenon, the most perfect building in all Greece.

But we are going to look first at the other temple, the little irregularly shaped one, near the north wall.

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This is the Erechtheum. (Plate I.)



Plate I. The Erechtheum, Athens, from the West

The most striking thing about this temple is its irregularity. The typical Grecian Temple consisted of an oblong chamber (the NAOS or CELLA), more or less adorned with columns. According to the number and position of these, the temple received different names. For instance, if the columns entirely surrounded the building, it was called Peristyle (Figure 19). This word is derived from the Greek “Peri,” around, and “Stulos,” a column.

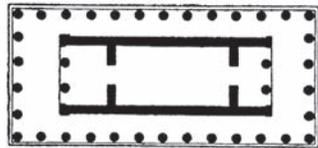


Figure 19. Temple Plans

If, again, the columns were at the two ends only, the temple was said to be Amphiprostyle (Figure 20). (“Amphi,” both, and “Pro,” in front of: that is, at both fronts.)

ARCHITECTURE SHOWN TO THE CHILDREN

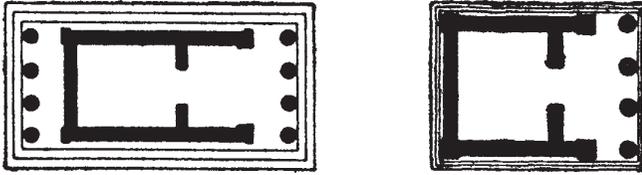


Figure 20 and 21. Temple Plans

If at one end only, it was Prostyle or Pronaos (Figure 21). (“Pro,” in front of, and “Naos,” a temple.)

Such were the commonest forms of a Greek temple, but the Erechtheum was like none of these. It had three porticoes, and two of them in the wrong place, from the Greek point of view. Instead of being at the east and west end, they were east, north, and south. There was a good reason for this, as for everything else the Greeks did. You remember what St. Paul said to the Athenians: “I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.” Had he lived in the days of Pericles, when this temple was built, he might still have had reason to say so, for it was to cover two sacred objects, an olive tree and a salt well, that the Erechtheum was built in this particular way.

I know you are wondering who these graceful women are in the porch. They are called Caryatides (Plate II), and a good name too, for they carry a considerable weight. Some people think it does not look very kind or natural to see women carrying such a heavy burden, but you know women do carry heavy burdens. Some people think they support the whole nation, so why not this little porch?

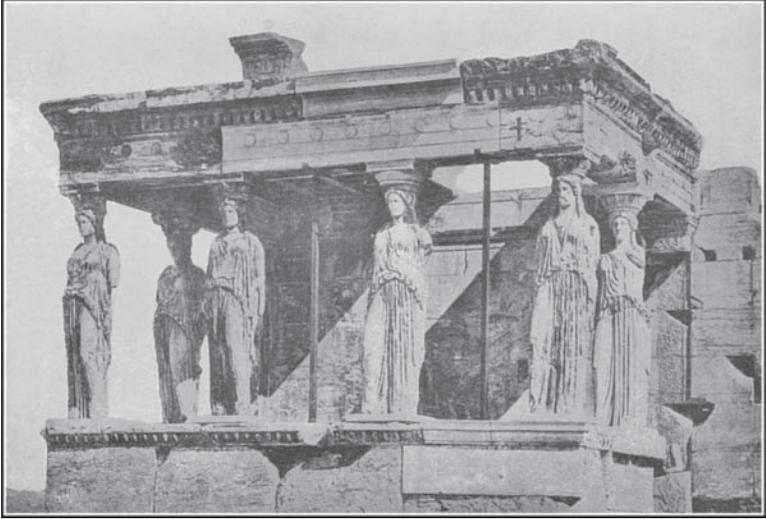


Plate II. Caryatid Porch of the Erechtheum, Athens

THE PARTHENON

*“Earth proudly wears the Parthenon
As the best gem upon her zone.”*

You may have seen buildings something like this in your streets (Plate III). The Parthenon, from which they are copied—or rather, on which they are more or less modelled, for there are not many exact copies—is the most perfect building in all Greece, or, as some people think, in the world.

You would not guess that, would you? It all looks so simple: just an oblong apartment, with a colonnade of columns all round, and a double row at the two ends, and a few statues, or the broken fragments of them, in the gables. You almost feel as if you could make a Parthenon yourself! But there you would be mistaken. There is a great deal more in this building than you think.

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Plate III. The Parthenon, Athens

It is the height of art to conceal art, and there is a great deal of concealed art in this simple-looking building. It is a work of genius, the result of infinite labour and skill, and knowledge and pains. Every little bit of it is carefully planned, and thought out and calculated for down to the smallest detail. There is not a thing in the whole building you could alter without spoiling the effect: not a change you could make that would not be a change for the worse. You could not add one inch to the height of a column or take away a fraction from its breadth. Everything is calculated, nothing left to chance. It is not an accident, for instance, that the Parthenon has just forty-six columns, and that the columns are of that particular height and breadth. The Greeks did nothing by accident. They knew that these measurements would produce the best effect, and make the most pleasing impression—hence they used them.

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There is nothing startling about the Parthenon, or eccentric. Its beauty is of a quiet order—quiet and restful. Everything is orderly, symmetrical, well-balanced, and in perfect proportion. The Greeks knew more about the laws of proportion than any other nation, and it would have pained them to see anything that was out of harmony with these laws. The columns are all of the same height, and the same breadth, and the same distance from each other. (That is what is meant by symmetrical.) Its lines are horizontal. No soaring vaults here, nor heaven-aspiring spires, as in the Gothic. It is not stimulating, but restful: its quiet beauty will grow on you. The longer you look, the more you will see in it.

Yes, in “It!”—that is, in the Parthenon, not in any modern imitation of it; for between the two there is a great gulf fixed. The temple *was* a temple—not a bank or store-room. It was made of the purest white marble, adorned by the greatest of Grecian sculptors, enriched by colour, and warmed by the glorious sun of Greece. Lastly, it contained one of the two most celebrated statues in the ancient world: that of Athena Parthenos, or the “Virgin Goddess,” in whose honour the temple was built. “Parthenos” means “Virgin”—hence the name Parthenon.

Once upon a time, had you gone inside, you would have seen a colossal gold-and-ivory statue of the goddess, standing nearly 40 feet high, with a spear and shield in one hand, a figure of Victory in the other, and the head of the Gorgon Medusa on her breast. This statue was by the world-famous sculptor Pheidias, the same who designed the Parthenon, and was one of the

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two most celebrated statues in the ancient world; but it is gone now, along with so much else that was the pride and joy of the Greeks.

A FAMOUS FRIEZE

“To copy the form of the Parthenon without its friezes and frontal statuary, is like copying a human being without its eyes and mouth.”

RUSKIN.

In one of his eloquent books of Art, Ruskin says:—
“I do with a building as I do with a man—watch the eye and the lips; when they are bright and eloquent, the form of the body is of little consequence.”

Now, what does Ruskin mean by the eye and the lips of a building? He just means the painting and sculpture that adorn it, which he considers the principal part because it is the part in which the mind is contained.

The eye and the lips of the Parthenon are its friezes. We saw the frieze of the entablature on this temple, but a frieze is not confined to an entablature. It is the name given to any horizontal band, enriched with sculpture; and the frieze we are going to look at now ran all round the temple, on the outside walls or cella, just behind the columns. It was, unfortunately, not in a position to get much light, so, to counteract this defect and give it all the light possible, it was made in very low relief. This means that it does not project much from the wall, scarcely an inch.

You know that flatness gives light, and projection

GREEK ARCHITECTURE

shadow. If you want shade on a hot day you look out for a porch or something that projects, and you avoid the flat wall, which gives unbroken light and sunshine. So the Greeks very wisely made this frieze flat, or in low relief, that it might have as much light as possible.

The subject represented is the PANATHENAIC procession; that is, the "ALL ATHENS" procession. "Pan" is a Greek word for "ALL," and the PANATHENAIC procession was the procession of Athens, and all her dependencies, which took place every four years, in honour of the Goddess "ATHENA." The figures in the frieze are marching to place a sacred veil or mantle (the Peplum) before the statue of the goddess in this very temple. The frieze starts from the south-west angle running east and north, and meets at the eastern front before the assembled gods, who receive the sacred veil from the hands of the maidens.

On the west front you see them preparing for the procession. Some are standing by their horses. Others have already mounted, and are impatient to start. The fiery irregular movements of the horses contrast with the firm seats and steady attitudes of the riders. In front of the cavalry are the chariots and charioteers, preceded by the old men carrying the olive branches. Here, again, there is a fine contrast between the animation of the chariot groups and the quiet and leisurely walk of the old men. In advance of these is a band of musicians, preceded by the bearers of offerings, and next the victims for the sacrifice. Here is one, an ox "lowing to the skies" (Plate IV). Poor beast! it is going to be sacrificed in honour of the goddess, but it does not

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know it, and looks quite happy. On the eastern front you see the maidens who have worked the sacred veil, preceded by a group of magistrates who receive the advancing processions. Between these are twelve seated figures of the gods, and in the centre of all is a group which is supposed to represent the offering of the sacred veil to Athena.



Plate IV. Bull Going to Sacrifice (Parthenon Frieze)

Such was this frieze, the longest piece of continuous sculpture in Greece, and the most beautiful in the world. If it had been executed only yesterday instead of two thousand years ago, it would still have been as wonderful and as valuable as it is now. And that for two reasons: firstly, because it is a beautiful work of art, and secondly, because it is an important historical document. It teaches us more and gives us a truer picture of the

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Athenian people than a hundred treatises; for it sets before us in a way which no mere words can do the very form and spirit of Athens in the age of Pericles.

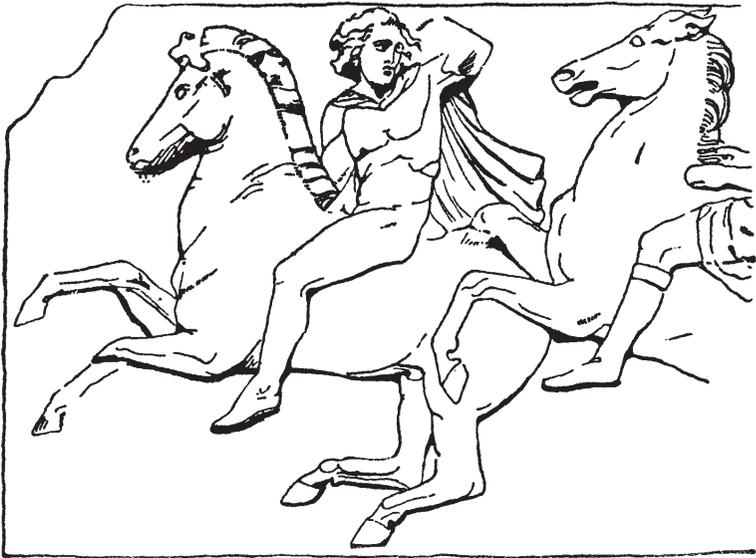


Figure 22. Parthenon Frieze

As a work of art, its surpassing excellence consists in its variety and its vitality. The variety is very striking. There are more than a hundred figures, and no two are alike. They differ in age, in attitude, in action, in form, and in sex. Every class is represented: the charioteer and slave, the stately magistrate and venerable seer, the victors in their chariots drawn by the steeds which had won for them the priceless garland, the splendid cavalry, the noble youths on their favourite steeds in the flush and pride of their young lives, the train of high-born maidens marching with bowed heads and quiet gait, the gods of Olympus, with their priests, and the poor dumb victims which bled upon their altars.

ARCHITECTURE SHOWN TO THE CHILDREN

And the vitality is as remarkable as the variety. We can scarcely believe that the figures are not alive. The horses appear to live and move, to roll their eyes to gallop, prance, and curvet. The veins of their faces and legs seem distended with circulation. It would be interesting to find the secret of this extraordinary vitality. One writer suggests a possible explanation. He says that



Figure 23.
Parthenon Frieze

many of the figures in the frieze owe their charm and vitality to a conflict between two distinct movements, as, for instance, where a rider, while controlling the curvetting of his horse, turns to speak to a comrade behind them (Figure 22), or where a youth, preparing to take his place in the procession, stoops to bind his sandal, and at the same time looks up to watch those who have already started (Figure 23).

WHY THE GREEKS EXCELLED IN SCULPTURE

“But,” it might well be asked, “why were the Greeks such clever sculptors? How is it that they were able to produce statues which are the delight and despair of succeeding generations?”

One reason is that they had so many opportunities

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of seeing graceful figures that their eyes became trained to beauty of form, and it was only natural that they should produce beautiful forms, and produce them with ease. They had not far to go in search of models. They met them everywhere. The Greeks were a nation of athletes. They engaged in all sorts of physical exercises; and, generally speaking, unencumbered by clothing. They had friendly contests in running, wrestling, leaping, boxing, disc-throwing, and by these means their bodies were rendered beautiful and their motions graceful. Then there were the Olympic Games, to which the competitors and spectators thronged from all parts of Greece. The much coveted prize was a wreath of wild olives, and to gain it the successful competitor had not only to show skill but grace. Think what an impulse all this would be to the art of sculpture!

But there was another influence at work, almost as powerful as the Games, and that was the Dancing. Now you must not suppose that this dancing had anything in common with our modern ball-room dancing or the ballet-dancing of the stage. With the Greeks dancing was not a mere recreation, but a thoughtful and highly intellectual exercise. It aimed at expressing emotion and at telling a story—the story of some old Greek legend. And the story had not only to be clearly, but gracefully and beautifully told; for the dancing was done in public, before a crowd of eager spectators who criticised every false attitude or awkward gesture. The standard was a high one—nothing short of perfection would satisfy. It was a severe school, but a magnificent one. With such a training, and such models ever before them, can

you wonder that the Greeks became a world-renowned nation of sculptors?

THE PEDIMENTS OF THE PARTHENON

When a person or a nation can do anything particularly well, that person or nation is very fond of doing it, and the Greeks were no exception to this rule. They lost no opportunity of practising their art, and of exhibiting it when done. They did not put it under a glass case, or into a museum, but on the outside of their temples, where everyone could see it, and enjoy it and be the better for it. Now, look at the Parthenon, and see if there is any place that could still be utilised, any little vantage ground or foothold for a statue.

What about the Pediments, those triangular spaces at the east and west front formed by the ends of the roof above the two porticoes? Do you suppose the Greeks would leave them empty as we do? No, indeed; both pediments were filled with colossal statues of gods and goddesses, of which, however, only mutilated fragments remain, many of them headless, yet priceless. Here is a group known as "The Fates" (Plate V). Not one of the three figures has a head, but how much is expressed by their bodies and their draperies. Each fold has a meaning and a purpose in the general scheme. Then, again, all the figures in the pediment are adapted to their position. Those at the angles, such as the first figure in the group of "The Fates," are made lying down;

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Plate V. The Three Fates (Pediment of Parthenon)

those next them are in sitting posture; while those in the centre, where there was most room, stand upright.

These figures are not mere isolated statues of gods and goddesses. They tell a story. The eastern pediment represents the birth of Athena, who is supposed to have sprung out of Zeus' head one day when he had a headache. The moment depicted is the one just after her birth. Unfortunately the figure of Athena is lost, but we can see the other gods and goddesses looking around in amazement, as well they might. When we remember that Zeus is the source and Father of all the gods, and that Athena is the Goddess of Wisdom, we need not wonder that she "came out of his head" as the Greeks thought, and as we say. The other pediment represents the contest between Athena and Poseidon for the land of Attica. It was decided that this land should be given to the one who produced the thing most useful to the citizens, the twelve gods being appointed judges. Poseidon struck the ground with his trident and produced a salt spring, or according to another version,

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a horse; while Athena produced an olive tree. The gods decided in favour of the goddess. The scene of this contest was the Acropolis, just where the Erechtheum now stands, and it was to commemorate Athena's victory, and mark the spot of the sacred olive tree and salt spring, that the Erechtheum was built so irregularly.

THE ELGIN MARBLES

If you live among artists you will hear them talk lovingly of the Elgin Marbles, and you may wonder what these are.

Well, they are just the very sculptures we have been considering, or the broken fragments of them. For the poor Parthenon had a sad history.

Until two and a half centuries ago it remained comparatively unchanged, but in 1670, when Athens was besieged by the Turks, a shell exploded in this shrine (which had been turned into a powder magazine), "and instantly, with one wild roar, as though Nature herself were shrieking at the sacrilege, the Parthenon was ruined! Columns on either side were blown to atoms, severing the front of the temple from the rear, and covering the whole plateau with marble fragments, mute witnesses of beauty for ever lost to us." But some of those precious fragments were saved from the general wreck, and these are the famous Elgin Marbles.

This is how they got their name.

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A Scottish nobleman, named Lord Elgin, was living at Athens about the beginning of the nineteenth century, and such was his admiration for these sculptures that he bought many of them from the Turkish Government for an enormous sum of money, and sent them home to Britain in chests. But, alas! one of the ships was wrecked, and the precious marbles went to the bottom of the sea, whence, however, they were with difficulty recovered by skilled divers, and, after much tossing to and fro, at last found their way to England, and a home in the British Museum.

Here you may see them any day if you are fortunate enough to live in London. If not, you can see casts of them in the Edinburgh Museum and elsewhere.

The Grecian style of architecture is much admired, and you will see examples of it everywhere. In London, for instance, the front of the British Museum is a reproduction of a Grecian temple; and if you live in Edinburgh you will make some interesting discoveries for yourself of buildings modelled on the Greek. But all these are copies. If you want the genuine article—a real Grecian temple built by Greeks for Greeks—you must go to Greece itself, or to Asia Minor, or to Southern Italy, which, from its numerous Greek colonies, has been called Greater Greece.