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THE RENDERING
OF NATURE
IN EARLY GREEK ART
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BY
EMANUEL LOEWY

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
BY
JOHN FOTHERGILL

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Professor Loewy's "Die Naturwiedergabe in der älteren griechischen Kunst" was published at the end of 1900, but appears not to be much known by English students of Greek art. That an essay of great value should have been thus neglected is due probably to two causes: first, the work is a closely reasoned argument, which can neither be condensed nor given in excerpts; second, Professor Loewy's method is unfortunately strange to us.

A strict scientific discussion is a tonic much needed by our archæology. Many of our histories, hand-books, and lectures substitute for precision of fact and explanation a deal of superfluous moral comment and æsthetic make-believe, so that one whom the beauty of the works attracts to study their history is deterred by the method of study in vogue. Less pretentious, infinitely more useful, and far more difficult to write would be a history that should give merely a plain statement of the formal changes in art, develop-
ment of technique, differences of subject, and the like: a history whose chapters should be like the present essay.

In it Professor Loewy traces only the course of artistic conception of form from the primitive period to a period of greater freedom. He gives the artists of even the earliest period the credit of energy and desire; he explains their illiterate attempts by psychological causes, and does not admit as all-sufficient the current and inadequate explanations of those who would attribute them to technical or material constraint, or the restriction of civil or hierarchic decree, to convention, and so on. It is this psychological criterion which is applied with remarkable power of analysis and synthesis to explain the artistic phenomena, and the reader will find that it illuminates the study of not only Greek art but the art of every nation and period.

The translation may occasionally be found elliptical because Professor Loewy, writing for German archæologists, is content to allude to points of controversy familiar to them but not to us. But I trust that only a few lines will thus disconcert the reader.
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Professor Loewy has argued his case so consistently and so honestly that his conclusions must stand till his principles can be overthrown. Any trifling objection can be answered, I think, by the book itself.

I am greatly indebted to Professor Loewy, Professor Studniczka, Mr. E. P. Warren, and Mr. John Marshall for their unsparing help in what I have found a difficult task.

Professor Loewy has slightly amplified the text in two places (pp. 30, 84), and has added a few notes and references (brought down to the summer of 1906). There are twenty illustrations which did not appear in the German edition. Mrs. Strong has kindly helped to secure these.

John Fothergill.

Lewes, May 1907.