

# **ARTS IN ST. LOUIS**

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Arts in St. Louis by Wm. Tod Helmuth

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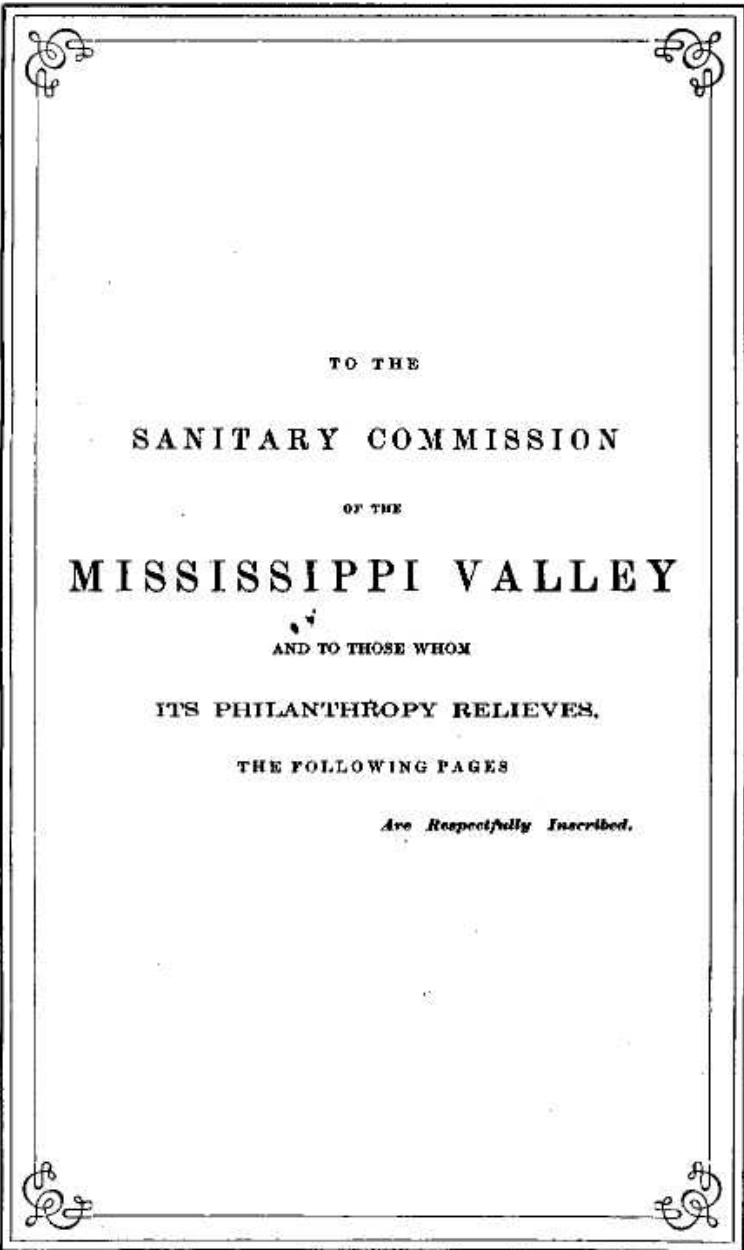
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**WM. TOD HELMUTH**

**ARTS IN  
ST. LOUIS**







TO THE  
SANITARY COMMISSION  
OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY  
AND TO THOSE WHOM  
ITS PHILANTHROPY RELIEVES.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES

*Are Respectfully Inscribed.*



## PREFACE.

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It is not intended, nor could it be expected in a work of so limited an extent as the present, to call the attention of the reader to more than a *single* artist in each department herein represented, as merely an allusion to those who, possessed of much merit, at present reside in our midst, would occupy more time and space than the capacity of the volume would allow.

The object of the following pages is merely to practically illustrate to what extent the arts at present exist in this city, and to point out a few of those artistic performances to which St. Louis may be said to lay especial claim, and which have already attracted the notice of the best critics, both at home and abroad.

It will be noticed, that in addition to both Sculpture and Painting, the arts of lithography, photography and printing are necessarily introduced, the degree of merit in each department, as well as the whole execution of the work, are left to the judgment of the indulgent reader.

The names of those who have contributed to the formation of the volume will be found on the last page.



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## Ancient Art and Modern Science.

It is both an interesting and instructive study to investigate the antiquity of Art, and to observe its phases and modifications as it descends through different ages, and is manifest in the varied nations, from the most remote to the present era in the history of the world.

To the inquiring student in this field, the iconographic researches, which have of late years been carried to a considerable extent, have opened hitherto unexplored fields; while, at the same time, science has been materially aided in the establishment of certain facts in reference to the habits and peculiarities of nations of antiquity.

The oldest statues, in fact, the earliest monuments of human art that probably are now extant, are those which have been brought from Egypt and placed in the Louvre Museum, and are of great value, firstly: In assisting the inquirer to form a correct idea of the art of that country, before it became fettered by a traditional hierarchic type; and, secondly: because, in a scientific point of view, much light is thrown upon the vexed question of the "permanency of skull forms" existing in the same nation for thousands of years.

If it can be proven that the cranial characteristics of the different races of mankind remain the same, that is to say, *in their type*, (of course, there may be variations in species)—if it can be proven that the cranial characteristics of the different races of men remain the same in their *type* for ages—if the permanency of skull form from generation to generation can



be established, then a great point will be gained in the contested question.

Certainly we would be disposed to regard any proofs arising from such artistic comparison as of greater importance than those deductions which have been introduced by philologists, who endeavor, by comparison of languages and the derivation of words, to throw light upon the subject; and simply for the reason that language will be found to be constantly changing, while, from facts lately elicited, we may be led to believe that crania may remain the same in their type through hundreds of generations.

Some of the most clearly demonstrable proofs in relation to the permanency of skull forms, and those possessed of high interest, are those which result from the late discoveries and exhumations at Memphis by M. Auguste Mariette. These relics are many pieces of statuary, executed in a high style of Egyptian art, and belong to the *earlier days of the pyramids*. They were removed with great care and expense to the Louvre, and there remain as permanent monuments of Egyptian art, as it appeared THIRTY-FIVE CENTURIES BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ERA, and continuing in an unbroken series to the present day.

That the reader may have some idea of the interest with which these venerable mementoes of antiquity are regarded, both by the Artist and the scientific enquirer, as bearing upon the permanency of artistic forms, the following quotation describing them will not be devoid of interest: "The crouching statuette of a Scribe, celebrated at the Louvre as '*le petit bon homme*,' is the crowning master piece of primitive art, revealed through Mariette's exhumations. It is from the venerable tomb of the Fifth Dynasty, five thousand years old, which the late constructors (above two thousand years ago) of the ancient avenue of Sphinxes, leading to the Mephitic Seraphum, had cut through and walled up again.

"The material is white sandstone, colored red. The profile view exhibits the excellence of its workmanship no less than the *purest*

*type of an ancient Egyptian. Beneath it Mr. Glidden has repeated the same head, with the sole addition of the moustache and short beard, and the mutation of the head-dress into the quilted cotton skull-cap of the modern peasantry; and thus we behold the perfect preservation of a typical form of man through five thousand years of time, in the familiar effigy of a living Fellah."*

It has been argued by some, that however perfect may be the resemblance between the heads of many of the statues and the physiognomy and head-form of the modern Egyptian, it is quite impossible to decide, with certainty, the real age of those sculptured remains to which so much interest has been attached. Without entering upon any disquisition on this point, it need only be mentioned that later researches have fully established this important question; and that the name of the tomb from whence they were taken, the draperies, grouping, &c., bear witness to the great age of these monuments of ancient Egyptian art.

If such may be considered as somewhat conclusive proof in the matter, why should one nation differ from another in this peculiar permanency of cranial conformation? and may not, if opportunities offer for similar investigation in reference to other inhabitants of the globe, similar results be attained?

But the student-artist need not stop here—another step may be taken, and without entering upon the primary development and ultimate growth of brain matter and calvaria, it may be to a certain extent asserted, that the configuration of the brain is expressed, in a degree, by the outer covering of bone; and as, in different nations, differently shaped crania and facial skeletons are discovered, by comparing the mutual relations of these, we may be enabled to ascertain at least the indications of those distinguishing marks which may be called characteristic of the habits and peculiarities of whole races of mankind. Some writers, and those too of considerable eminence, have endeavored to base the vast structure of political economy upon the very facts which have been here so cursorily alluded

to. If the brain be expressed by the configuration of the skull—if the brain be the seat of the mental faculties—then, as the actions of the body are caused by volitions of the mind, and as the acts of a community are composed by the individual action of each separate member of that community, then is not the history of a nation, both civil, religious, political and artistic, dependent upon the natural and physical characteristics of its citizens? and may not these be judged by the comparison of those bony casements which even express the *convolutions* of the encephalon on their internal surfaces, and which expand and grow with that mighty mystery?

Such, then, are the vast fields which the study of the antiquity of Art forces upon the student, and it will clearly be seen what import to Science are these beautiful and interesting investigations, tending as they do more and more to astound us with the perfection of the Art of the ancient Egyptians.

The earliest statue now extant is said to be that of KAM-TEN, belonging to the III Dynasty, which is in a remarkable degree of preservation.

It is a somewhat strange fact, however, that while Egyptian Art had arrived at such perfection, yet was it limited to the isolated land, belonging only to the Valley of the Nile, while the Shemitic races were tending to spread civilization by their migrations, colonizations and conquests, [all over the known world. Still, however, Egypt claims precedence in the Fine Arts, because Painting and Sculpture being proscribed by the most sacred rites of the Hebrews and Arabs, they could not be expected to excel either in plastic or pictorial beauty.

These two nations, however, together with the Phoenicians, raised themselves to great pre-eminence in civilization, and the *Arts* distinguishing these from the Fine Arts. To them we owe the phonetic alphabet, the coinage of money, the invention of bills of exchange, &c., the increase of commerce, and many of the most important and essential points tending towards high civilization.