

# Bronze in Architecture

*Interest in Bronze Work Stimulated by the Establishment of Bronze Statuary Casting.*

FOR the first time in the history of this country the art of bronze casting, which reached its zenith under the Florentine Masters, is being cultivated. The part played by bronze in the development of civilization is indicated by the fact that a whole period or era of the human race is known as the Bronze Age. It was the cycle immediately following the crude stone age and preceding the age of iron, which brings us down to the present, a heterogeneous period of many phases, but still the iron age.

The bronze of classical antiquity consisted

made, as is proven from discovered relics.

The Assyrians are recognized as the first to introduce the casting of bronze into the making of statuary. Remains of Assyrian statuary have been found containing a core of iron, which, owing to the difference in the coefficient of expansion and contraction of the iron and bronze, was not satisfactory.

The Greek artists were pioneers in the art of casting bronze hollow, the introduction of this method being a great gain to sculpture. It enabled models of clay, which could be made quickly, to be accurately reproduced, although



BRONZE FIGURE, SIX FEET HIGH, BOY WITH TURKEY,  
FOUNTAIN MAISONNEUVE MARKET.



BRONZE FIGURE, SIX FEET HIGH, BOY WITH NET AND FISH,  
FOUNTAIN MAISONNEUVE MARKET.

chiefly of copper, with an alloy of one or more of the metals, tin, zinc, lead and silver, the character of the alloy changing as times changed or as was required for different purposes. The Greeks used bronze for coins consisting of an alloy of copper and tin up to 400 B.C., after which lead also was introduced. The Romans also used lead for a time as part of their bronze alloy for coins. The earliest employment of bronze for artistic purposes was to hammer it out into thin plates, which were fastened together with nails. The first statues were so

the difficulty and expense of this process placed it at a disadvantage as compared with marble. It was, however, frequently employed, and in the case of large statues it had no rival.

The Colossus of Rhodes, a figure of the sun god Helios, and one of the seven ancient wonders of the world, said to be one hundred and five feet high, was an example of the utmost that art could do with bronze. It was thrown down by an earthquake after standing fifty-six years. A bronze statue of Zeus at Tarentum was sixty feet high.