

Still more celebrated than this statue of Athene was the colossal ivory and gold statue of Zeus (Jove), made for his temple at Olympia. This was regarded as the masterpiece not only of Phidias, but of the whole range of Greek art, and was exhibited only at the great festivals of the god, being at other times concealed by a splendid curtain. We must not here attempt a description of this great work except by mentioning the artist's own idea. When asked what model he had followed in producing the statue, he answered, that of Homer in the *Iliad* (i, 528): "Kronion spake, and nodded his dark brow, and the ambrosial locks waved from the King's immortal head; and he made great Olympus quake"—lines which are thought to be imitated by Milton (*Par. Lost*, iii, 135:

"Thus while God spake, ambrosial  
fragrance filled  
All heaven, and in the blessed spirits  
elect  
Sense of new joy ineffable diffused."

Phidias was rewarded by the democracy of Athens as it was their wont to reward their great men. The enemies of Pericles, having failed in the attacks they made on that great man, turned their enmity and wrath against his friends; and one of these was Phidias. Their charges were either false or frivolous; but they succeeded in having him cast into prison, where he died B.C. 432, six years after the building of the Parthenon, when he was about 58 years of age. Can we wonder that artists have often preferred the patronage and protection of the autocrat to the caprice and fickleness of the mob?

If, for a moment, we pass from Phidias to Praxiteles, we recognize the change which has been undergone alike by Athenian thought and Athenian art. Yet both are still great.

The age of Praxiteles was the age of Aristotle, the most learned and most universal of philosophers, of Demosthenes the greatest perhaps of all the orators of the world, and of Alexander, the mighty Conqueror. Praxiteles was both a statuary in bronze and a sculptor in marble. He stands at the head of the later Attic school, as distinguished from the earlier school of Phidias. "Without attempting those sublime impersonations of divine majesty, in which Phidias had been so imitatively successful, Praxiteles was unsurpassed in the exhibition of the softer beauties of the human form, especially in the female figure. The most celebrated work of Praxiteles was his marble statue of Aphrodite (Venus), which was distinguished from other statues of the goddess by the name of the Cnidians who purchased it. It was esteemed the most perfectly beautiful of the statues of the goddess. Many made the voyage to Cnidus expressly to behold it. So highly did the Cnidians themselves esteem their treasure, that, when King Nicomedes offered them, as the price of it, to pay off the whole of their heavy public debt, they preferred to endure any suffering rather than part with the work which gave their city its chief renown. It was afterwards carried to Constantinople, where it perished by fire in the reign of Justinian." The model for this great statue was a certain beautiful, but not altogether proper woman, named Phryne, of whom he made several statues. An amusing story is told of this lady, and of her device for obtaining one of his best statues. She had been promised any that she might choose; but the artist declined to tell her which he considered to be his best. The lady, determined to obtain assurance on the subject, caused a slave to inform Praxiteles that his works of art had been burnt. The