

There is a delightful study in chalks of an "Infant with Arms Outstretched" from the Louvre. Rubens was very successful with children. There is also a very charming study at a very young age of his son Nikolaus, which was used later for the head of the Child in "The Virgin Adorated by Four Saints" at Cassel. Nikolaus is the youth at an older age who appears in the portrait group of Rubens' boys, of which there are two copies, one at Dresden and the other in the Liechtenstein Gallery.

## COLOUR AND THE DIVINE PROPORTION

**Colour in Interior Decoration.**  
By John M. Holmes. 25s.  
(Architectural Press and Scribners.)

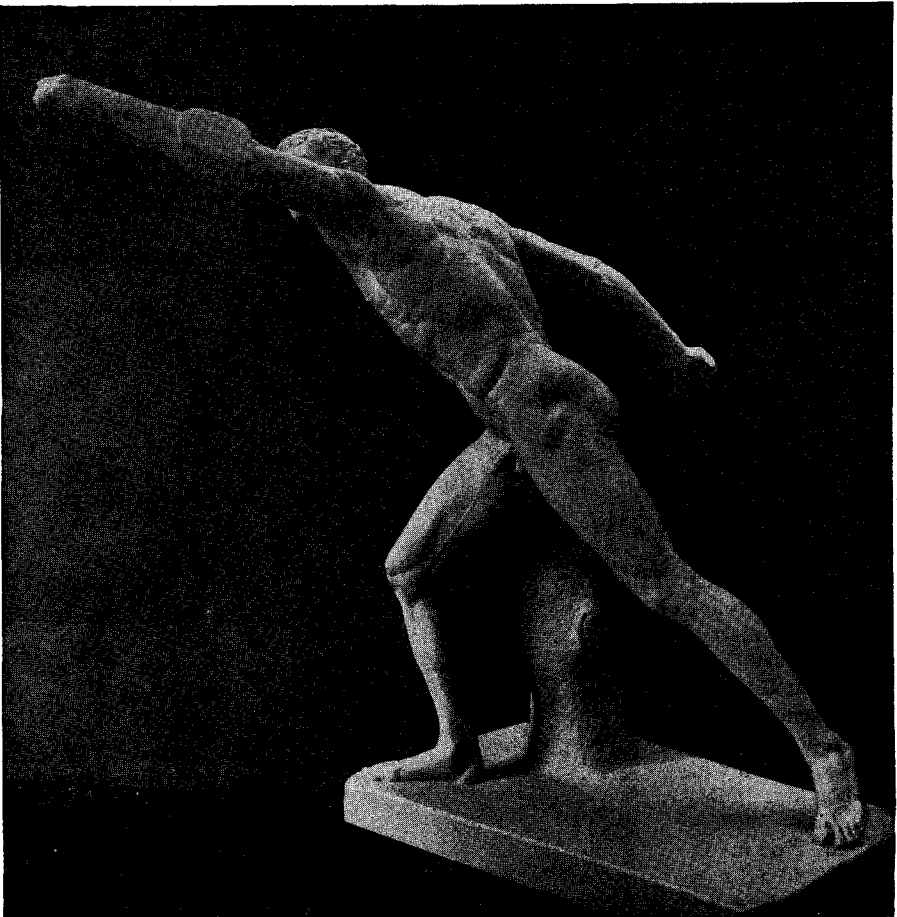
**An Introduction to Colour.**  
By T. Elder Dickson, M.A., D.A.  
3s. 6d. (Pitman.)

**Rhythmic Form in Art.**  
By Irma A. Richter. 21s. (John Lane.)

by Hesketh Hubbard

Of the many recent books on colour, most merely repeat what Field and Church, Sargent and Carpenter have said already. Mr. John Holmes's book, whilst covering the well-trodden tracks, does lead us a little in new directions. He attempts for instance to tackle the complex subject of the relationship of shape to colour. It is true he does not go beyond the tentative formula that if shapes are harmonious they should be coloured harmoniously; if discordant their colour should be so also. I hope Mr. Holmes will pursue his inquiries further in this direction and give us the benefit of his research.

Another new and welcome feature in this book, which is



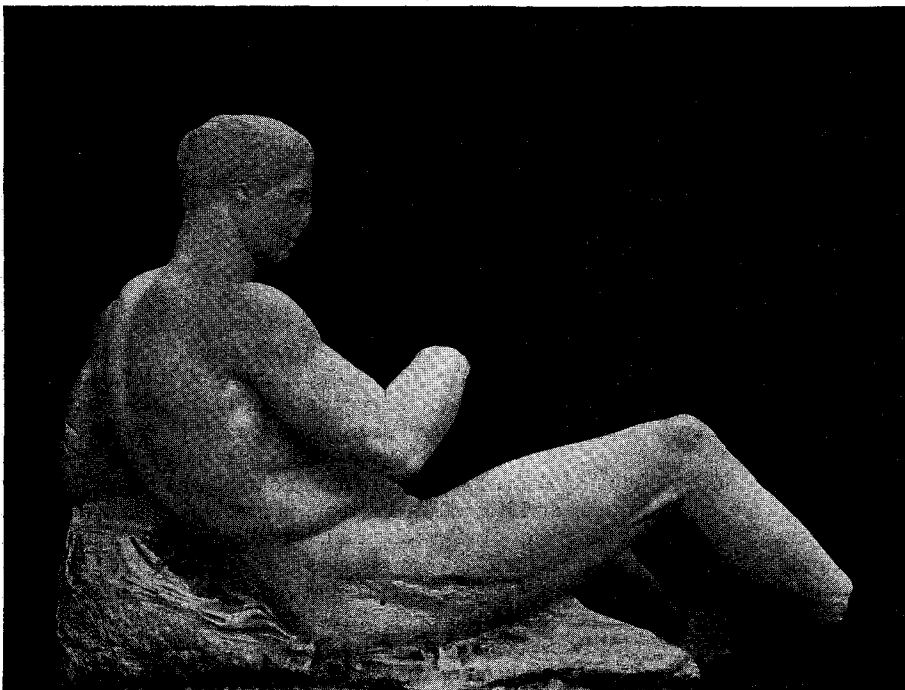
*From Greek Sculpture and  
Painting*  
By J. D. Beazley and Bernard Ashmole  
(Cambridge University Press).

**MARBLE WARRIOR IN THE LOUVRE.**  
(MISSING, SWORD AND SHIELD.)  
Signed by Agasias of Ephesus, and of the  
second century B.C.

primarily meant for the interior decorator, is the section devoted to the use of the natural colours of building materials, such as stone, brick, glass, woods, metals, etc., as the key-note of the colour scheme. Schemes of decoration in which no paint, stain or dye have been used, that rely only on the natural colours of materials, are most satisfying, though they demand perfect craftsmanship.

The author is a born teacher; he writes from the studio or workshop where his knowledge has been acquired. His explanations are always clear and admirably illustrated by good colour reproductions. I am glad to see he draws attention to the hopeless lack of system that the sample books put out by the colour manufacturers reveal. It surprises me that Mr. Holmes should omit any reference to triads, the most lovely but most difficult set of colours with which to achieve colour unity, and I see no point in confusing us with new terms, such as "primary tone order" in place of "natural order," or "contrasted" colours for the more universally used "complementary." But the book should do much to improve the standard of colour in interior decoration.

Mr. Elder Dickson's "An Introduction to Colour" is just what it sets out to be. It is a well



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served-up réchauffé—practical; a book that will be welcomed by the teacher and self-teacher. Various progressive experiments and exercises are suggested, and if anyone will take the trouble to work through these he will be equipped to study and appreciate the more subtle problems of colour dealt with by Mr. Holmes.

Anyone at all sensitive to such things feels that there is behind a work of art that is satisfying a perfection of proportion; that unity is due to the perfect relationship of every unit in a design. Herr Kelsch, in his "Canon Tibertius," explained the Law of Isocephaly, or the relationship of various canonical points in a picture, which for years had been a forgotten secret; Mr. Hambridge published over a decade ago his theories on Dynamic Symmetry, and Mössel and Ghika, in German and French, have gone deeply into the question of proportion. Miss Richter's "Rhythmic Form in Art" finds a natural place on the bookshelf beside such works. She explores fully the theory of "divine proportion," giving us a simple scheme which can be used conveniently for every kind of design. As she shows us, stage by stage, how the builders of the Parthenon set about their task, the methods they employed to insure that every detail in the building should bear a fixed relationship to every other part, large or small, anyone who is alive to the beauty of numbers and proportions will feel a thrill akin to the joy of appreciating metre in poetry.

A prearranged scale of proportions can, of course, be more readily applied to architecture than to painting, but the authoress proves that the divine proportion of Pythagoras was thoroughly understood and often used with incredible nicety by the great painters so long as painting was wed to architecture. Even Fragonard and Hogarth, whose work was not very "architectural," partly understood and sometimes imperfectly applied these principles.

I am glad to see the authoress thinks that the theory of divinely related concentric circles can be applied to the ground plane of a picture as well as to the picture plane. I wish she had attempted to illustrate this rather than devote so much space to the religious and symbolic

significance of the divine proportion in a book intended to deal with rhythmic form in art.

**MEMOIRS OF AN ARCHITECT.** By Sir Reginald Blomfield, R.A., M.A. 10s. (Macmillan.)

Very few architects have written their own biographies. Sir Gilbert Scott wrote his and the result was entertaining—more entertaining perhaps than he intended. Sir Reginald Blomfield's autobiography is not unlike Scott's; it has the same robust assurance, the same proud flourish of the laurels of achievement. But it is on the whole rather less entertaining.

The first part of the book is a miscellaneous bunch of childhood and school-day memories. We read of the author's narrow escape from his brother's catapult and how an ingenious tale about the pigs having eaten the apricots failed of acceptance. Then comes the deplorable school of Mrs. X—and an uncomfortable seven years at Haileybury. Then Oxford. Architecture begins with the author's entry into the office of his uncle, Sir Arthur Blomfield. Here he found, instead of the high enthusiasm and scholarship which he had anticipated, "a somewhat depressed managing clerk, two or three assistants and half a dozen cheerful young fellows, most of whom were much more

interested in the latest news, whether sporting or otherwise, than the latest experiment in architecture."

One would have liked to hear more of the famous Victorians with whom the young man came into contact in these years. William Burges (given as J. W. Burgess) is mentioned and there is a just appreciation of Pearson. But Street (who died in 1881, not 1883 as stated), surely a finer architect than Pearson, is unfairly chastised for his intolerance of the classical. Bodley is given his due, although Sir Reginald appears to think a good deal less of him for not paying attention at Academy Council meetings.

The rest of the book is the story of an active life spent chiefly in building, writing and arguing. Sir Reginald has always been ready to champion a cause which intrigued him. Academy reform, architectural education and historical monuments have claimed his attention in turn. His hard-fought battle with the authorities saved the city



From *Gypsy Dorelia*  
By Dorothy Una Ratcliffe  
(John Lane).

THE ANGER DANCE.