There are two manners of imitating the *antique*. The first, improperly called imitation (*See* this word), consists in reproducing only the appearance through copies. The second consists, on the part of the imitator, in appropriating the principles of the *antique* and consequently its genius or its causes, along with their consequences.

The first manner is naught but a routine aping, which is likely to discredit its own model in the eyes of those who lack discrimination in this respect. Nothing is easier than this so-called imitation. In fact, the architect here, finds a given number of forms, parts, or members—kin to what in rhetoric is known as the parts of the discourse—that are the necessary elements for implementation, only whose value derives from the reason that determines their place, and the genius that employs them toward the proposed goal.[…]

The true manner of imitating the *antique* consists, then, in a wise penetration of the spirit and the reasons behind its works; in an understanding of the motives that once caused the artist to employ certain means of execution; and in discovering the veritable causes of the impressions that we receive from such and such a combination of correlations, dimensions, or decorations. The necessary and the useful form the first requirement of works of architecture. From the useful must derive the agreeable, and from their intimate union results the favourable impression received by us. Utility, or need, was the basis and the principal generator—as we shall see elsewhere—of the Greek or the splendid *antique* architecture. It is in following the precious thread—in the study of monuments—that once guided the inventors of this art, that the moderns could learn to be the continuators of the Greeks.

New needs or different uses will oppose on many a point a conforming reproduction of a great number of ancient edifices within modern works. But the imitation is not the copy. Consequently, the difference in customs and in practice in the new compositions of the art of building, could only pose a difficulty for one who has not learned to read the great book of antiquity, or one who understands only material evidence. However, one who is schooled, not in the letter, but rather in the spirit of these teachings, knows that imitating the *antique* is not repeating what the ancients built, but rather as the ancients themselves would have built, were they to answer to the same exigencies of other needs and new conditions, as they themselves did.[…]
Restitution

[...]One restores a dilapidated or partially destroyed work of art, based on the surviving remains that allow, more or less, the repetition of what is missing; one restitutes a work or a monument that has entirely disappeared based on the authority of descriptions, or sometimes based on indications furnished by other works of the same kind.

In devoting oneself in restitutions to a kind of research whose nature—that always includes some element of instinctive foresight—is at once attractive and hazardous, one must not shut one's eyes to relevant reservations in order to avoid the dangers that surround this work. Before all else, the general theory of imitation must teach us to distinguish between the works of art described by writers—those that find counterparts amid existing works, or where the narrative transmits an authentic image—from those whose ensemble and details elude all forms of language.[…]

An architectural ensemble is generally a composite of identically similar parts. Sometimes, there is but one column in an edifice that displays the largest number of columns; and likewise, there is but one capital in a colonnade. The same applies to ornamental details. The description of a Greek edifice is highly precise when it indicates the type, the order and the measurements, especially for one who has the knowledge of similar works. One must admit however, that there is a beauty that no narrative, or better still, no copy could transmit. But it would be unfair to require from a restitution, that which is not even required from a drawing made after the original.[…]

Besides, if such restitutions do not increase the number of original architectural models for artists and students, they will always offer the advantage of expanding the knowledge that pertains to this art; enlighten its taste with a large number of parallels; facilitate the understanding of texts; furnish authentic facts to the history of art; and offer diverse materials for criticism, which, without this research would remain unknown, and, so to speak, lost. […]

The restitution of monuments based on the descriptions of writers, is therefore not a fruitless task or a simple curiosity, even if these descriptions do not permit reproducing with complete faithfulness the totality of the true relations or the qualities that made the merit of the originals.[…]

Indeed, it is important, in order to succeed at such restitutions, that the same man be at once the translator and the artist. When the double operation of translating and drawing combines within the activity of one intelligence, then, the translation and the drawing exchange reciprocal influences. The clear and precise intuition of the proper forms of the described object is of marvellous help for the meaning of the words that designate it; and in its turn, the form of the object to be discovered, will emerge more faithfully from the pencil of the artist who appropriated the knowledge of the words and the precise meaning of the description.[…]
[…] Architecture, in fact, is necessarily composed of similar parts that can be identically copied or reproduced by means of an exact observation of measures. Talent does not figure in such an operation, which can be reduced to the simplest mechanism. One can imagine the difficulty, and perhaps the impossibility, of matching the top or bottom half of an Apollo or a Venus, to the other, thing needed by a monument, in order for it to be missing half. But one cannot understand the danger to a mutilated building, if its peristyle were to be completed, for example, with one or several columns, built in the likeness of their model, and in the same materials and measures. Such is, in many cases, the nature of the art of building, that similar additions could be made to a half ruined building, without altering the preserved part in the slightest.

Consider the peristyle in the Pantheon of Rome, which was restored by replacing the granite corner column, and by the reconstruction of the entablature in this same part, without this operation harming the rest of the composition, and without the slightest depreciation as to opinion. In fact, who prefers to see this beautiful ensemble degraded by an unfortunate mutilation? On the contrary, who does not prefer to enjoy the totality of its composition, especially when the restoration in question induces no one into error? How many antique monuments would be preserved if only the care was taken to put back in place the fallen materials, or to replace a stone by another stone?

A ridiculous prejudice has prevailed over this subject for a long time. This is owing to the kind of mania that was engendered by the so-called picturesque system, of the genre of irregular gardens, which by excluding from its compositions all buildings or complete constructions, seems to admit only ruined buildings in its landscapes, or those that appear to be so. Painting had also previously made fashionable the genre called of ruins. (See RUINS) Since then, any project of restoring a ruined antique monument was subject to the disapproval of the followers of the picturesque.

However, we acknowledge that there is a middle ground to be kept in the restoration of antique edifices which are more or less in ruins.

Firstly, one must restore the extant remains, only in view of preserving that which is likely to offer some valuable examples to the art of models or to the science of antiquity. Thus, the measure of these restorations must depend on their pertaining interest, and the degree of dilapidation of the monument. A prop is quite often the only thing needed by a monument, in order for it to be assured of many more centuries of existence.

Secondly, if the building in question is composed of columns, with entablatures and friezes ornamented with sculpted foliage or filled with other figures hewn and cut by the ancient chisel, then it should suffice to bring back the missing parts in their ensemble, and treat their details such a manner that the observer is not mistaken between the ancient work and the work that was brought solely to complete the ensemble.
What we are proposing here has recently occurred in Rome with respect to the famous triumphal arch of Titus, which has fortunately been extricated from all that obstructed it, and whose defaced parts have also been very wisely restored, precisely in the manner and the measure that has just been described.