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42. The Registration of Works of Art in Occupied Countries

Author(s): C. Hercules Read

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Art.

Read.

The Registration of Works of Art in Occupied Countries. By **42**
Sir C. Hercules Read:

A note under the above heading appears in the March number of *The Burlington Magazine*, signed by Mr. More Adey. In such a magazine the reference is naturally to ancient or mediæval works of art of European origin, but Mr. Adey's sympathies are wide enough to make an appeal to the readers of MAN, whose interests are mainly anthropological.

Mr. Adey cites first a manifesto issued through the notorious Wolff Bureau, stating that, "Although the Higher German Command did all in its power during " the march through Belgium to collect the art treasures of the occupied territories " and preserve them from destruction," the German "Kunstwissenschaft" is going yet further and will draw up an inventory of all art treasures in Belgium and photograph them, to promote the study of art. The *Informations Belges* makes a caustic reply to this naive statement of these protectors of Belgian monuments in terms that can well be imagined. There is, however, a most practical side to the matter, as Mr. Adey points out, and we might here, as in other cases, learn from the enemy. His words are quite to the point and may as well be quoted: "There are plenty of both " officers and men in Palestine, Mesopotamia, and the less explored frontiers of " Egypt, well able to use initial discrimination in registering works of art and " to preserve them when found. Nor ought any objects of primitive Negro art " which German Kunstforschers have missed, to be overlooked by our troops in the " occupied portions—now almost the whole of German Africa. Several of the popular " books on the African campaign by those who took part in it show excellent faculties " for general observation, and the writers' faculties should be utilised in that direction. " Moreover, we already owe much knowledge of Negro art to the independent action " of intelligent officials before the war."

Mr. Adey's suggestion is practical and opportune, and there would not only be no serious difficulty in putting it into practice, but I am very sure that a large proportion of both officers and men of our forces now in Africa would welcome so intelligent a diversion from the routine of field or camp life. The only danger that I foresee is lest some disciplinarian in a high place should promptly condemn the scheme as non-military and a waste of time. To avoid this it would be desirable to obtain a fiat from the powers at home, commending it as a means of putting the leisure of the soldiers to an intelligent use. To discover exactly how all this should be attained, in these days of multitudinous Commissions, would probably be difficult, though it should be possible. But that it is worth doing, and is, in fact, akin to a duty, will, I think, hardly be denied.

C. HERCULES READ.

Ibo: Folk-tales.

Thomas.

Stories (Abstract) from the Awka Neighbourhood (IV). By N. **43**
W. Thomas.

13. NKENU AND OKWOLI.

Nkenu* and Okwoli were good friends. Nkenu went to Okwoli's home, and *vice versa*. Okwoli collected fish at the waterside. The wife of Nkenu went to Okwoli's house. Okwoli's wife was cooking soup. She put half the fish in it, and gave it to Nkenu's wife, who wanted fire. Nkenu's wife said her husband was (useless) foolish, he could not catch big fish. Nkenu's wife went back. Nkenu had some small fish, and his wife abused him. He said he would try to catch big fish, and asked Okwoli to go with him. Okwoli called Nkenu to come, and said

* Nkenu, a small bird.