EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART

1900

EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART.

By the same Author

THE MACGREGOR COLLECTION.

WITH THIRTY PLATES IN COLOUR
AND 187 TEXT ILLUSTRATIONS.

1898.

Egyptian ceramic art

TYPICAL EXAMPLES OF THE ART OF THE EGYPTIAN POTTER PORTRAYED IN COLOUR PLATES WITH TEXT ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN AND DESCRIBED BY HENRY WALLIS

MCM

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PREFACE.

WHEN preparing for publication a previous series of Plates of Egyptian ceramic art—the Collection of the Rev. William MacGregor—I pointed out that the history of the art could not be written until its examples in the great national museums had received adequate illustration. In issuing the present series I venture again to urge the importance of such publication—the reason being, that a classification of the pottery can only be accomplished by the comparison of the known specimens of the art. These, however, are dispersed in museums far distant from each other, and it is unlikely they can be brought together, even for a limited time. Hence the comparison must be made by the aid of descriptions of the separate pieces, carefully noting their special qualities. To render these with clearness and precision it is necessary that their verbal descriptions be supplemented by pictorial illustrations, preferably in colour.

Publication of this nature would be no new departure for the museums. Taking the instance of the British Museum. It has already issued a number of works illustrating its various artistic collections which have been of the highest service to students of art and of history, and which have also been instrumental in advancing the spread of learning and of maintaining the principles of sound taste. The volumes dealing with Greek ceramic art have been a valuable contribution to science, and by the excellence of their illustrations have afforded constant delight to all capable of appreciating those forms of ideal beauty with which the Hellenic artists adorned their vases. But Greek ceramic art was restricted in range, limited in duration, and inoperative

in influence compared with that of Egypt. Before it had come into being the Egyptian potters had acquired a full mastery of artistic design and technical procedure; when it expired they were inventing new methods and were still perfecting their practice. And those methods and practice were to serve as sources of inspiration for the artists of many lands and diverse epochs, even down to our own day. Prof. Erman remarks, in his 'Life in Ancient Egypt,' "The achievements of the Egyptians in this branch of art [the ceramic] stand so high that modern technical skill has barely attained to it even in part." This master-work will hence be pregnant with instruction for the artists of our time, and in placing illustrations of it within their reach, the Museum will be fulfilling one of the most popular functions incidental to its position. Yet there is a higher end even than that of promoting the development of our contemporary artistic industries, namely, to assist in rescuing from oblivion the record of one of the most brilliant phases of the art of a gifted race and a splendid civilization.

When, as in the present case, documentary evidence is not forthcoming, the necessary *data* for tracing the history of a past art must be sought for in the existing examples themselves. The most valuable testimony will, of course, be that of style. But there is a further source of information, and of the most convincing kind, open to the historian of the art of the Egyptian potter. This is to be found in the technical qualities of the examples of the art, and, as the wares are more than usually varied in character, so they offer many distinct clues for classification. Possibly some of the more delicate distinctions of technique can alone be appreciated by the trained eye of the practical potter, and it will therefore be for him to determine identity in cases which only an expert can decide.

The following pages had scarcely been set up in type when the writer received the sorrowful intelligence that Major W. J. Myers, whose collection has furnished the subjects for some of the illustrations in this volume, had been killed at Ladysmith. His death will be deplored and his memory will be cherished by a wide circle of friends, who valued him for his sterling qualities and loved him for his sweet and amiable disposition. In his short career, and during the intervals of his professional duties, he had formed one of the most

important collections of Oriental art brought together in the present century. Students of Egyptian art will owe him a lasting debt of gratitude from his having directed that the Egyptian portion of his collection shall be kept intact. He has bequeathed it to his old school, Eton College, where it will remain amidst the scenes endeared to him by early association, a fitting memorial of a brave soldier and a collector of fine and discriminating taste.

H. W.

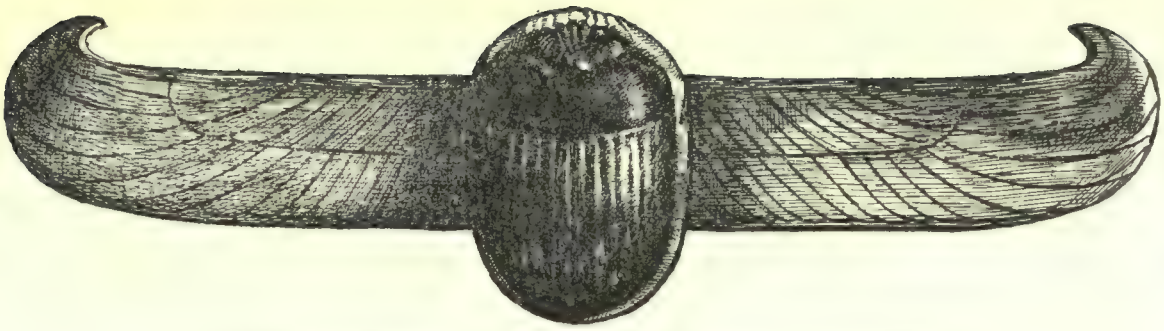


Fig. 1.—WINGED SCARAB. Blue faïence. L. 29 cm. Ghizeh Museum.

INTRODUCTION.

Fig. 2.—GIRL CARRYING A VASE. Wood. H. 31 cm. Musée du Louvre.

As our knowledge of the civilization founded along the Nile valley in the remote past becomes more intimate and precise, so the conviction is strengthened that the special gift of the race settled in that region was the artistic faculty. It was natural that this phase of its spiritual endowment should not have been recognized by the earlier students of the newly discovered remains of this energetic, industrious, and cultured people. The first workers in the field of Egyptian research had their attention engrossingly occupied in the attempt to master a knowledge of the ancient language. Their previous training and education had also probably implanted the belief in their minds that Hellenistic art represented all that was perfect in style and expression—it was a standard by which all others were to be judged. They were perhaps influenced by the *dicta* of the Greek writers, who, while extolling the wisdom and piety of the Egyptians, held their art in comparatively slight esteem. Further, in the infancy of the study in modern times the really artistic objects which had come to light were not then so numerous as now; they were certainly too few to afford an adequate

idea of the abilities or the aims of the artists. The monumental remains of temples were the examples most in evidence; they belonged to a time when the arts of sculpture and architecture were in a state of decay, and they are confessedly not masterpieces calculated to awaken enthusiasm.

Thus the altered estimation in which Egyptian art is held to-day is obviously due both to the natural progress of ideas and the vastly increased representation of the various arts now accessible to the student. These multifarious specimens obtained from the excavations of the past half-century fortunately come precisely at the time when research in the history of every department of art has trained the perceptive powers of the student to a singular keenness of observation, such as, perhaps, has been seldom attained in any previous period. This extended experience undoubtedly tends to secure a ready welcome to the newly discovered remains of any lost form of art. The student seeks to place himself in sympathetic relationship with the new comer, and therefore in an attitude favourable to the comprehension of its spirit and essence. But before it can be asserted that this understanding has been arrived at with regard to Egyptian art, something still remains to be accomplished. All this profusion of objects which the soil of Egypt has yielded up has to be classified, and as it is distributed over many museums and collections it has necessarily to be published, so that the student may know what we possess of actual examples of the different classes of art.

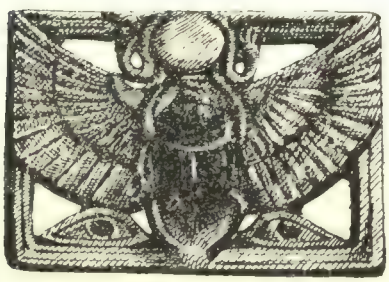


Fig. 3.—WINGED SCARAB. Faïence. H. 45 mm. Ghizeh Museum.

Respecting the intention of the present volume, dealing solely with the ceramic art of Egypt, it may be stated that it follows on the lines of a previous publication *, only having in one direction a wider scope—the reproduction in colour-plates of works in various other collections which, of course, were not included in that volume. Considering the splendid scheme of colour in which the whole series of Egyptian pottery is conceived, it is desirable that any illustration of the art pretending to completeness should be chromatic. The diversity and extent of the Rev. William MacGregor's collection enabled the writer to illustrate the progress of the art from the earliest period to late Roman times in choice, and frequently unique, specimens. Still there are

* HENRY WALLIS, 'Egyptian Ceramic Art: the Collection of the Rev. William MacGregor.' 1898.

some few phases of the ceramic art of which more important pieces are to be found in other collections. It is the representation of a selection of these that the writer issues on the present occasion, trusting that the plates may be useful to the student for reference and comparison when prosecuting his researches in museums containing analogous examples—although not, perhaps, possessing the extreme perfection of execution as in that of master-work like the Ushabti of Ptahmos, at Ghizeh, or the Rameses Bowl of the British Museum.

In the above mentioned volume on Mr. MacGregor's collection an attempt was made, not to set forth a history of the art, but to indicate the special characteristics of its performance contemporaneous with certain prominent dynasties. The writer would not venture to claim for the suggested classification more than the possibility of its proving to be well founded. Where documents are either entirely wanting or are vague and uncertain, as in the present case, accuracy of historical statement and a classification without flaw are only arrived at after a constant revision of texts, and resulting from research conducted by successive enquirers extending often over a series of years. Yet for the student of to-day some arrangement of the known examples in chronological sequence must be essayed. Having lately drawn up a synopsis of the art from this point of view, the writer feels that it is scarcely necessary for him to perform the task again; he therefore begs to refer the reader to the pages of the volume on Mr. MacGregor's collection.

Fig. 4.—MAN CARRYING A VASE. Wood. H. 24 cm. Musée du Louvre.

The reasons determining the selection of the subjects reproduced in the present series of Plates have been their artistic qualities and the fact of some being samples of important methods of ceramic technique or design only lately discovered. Among the earliest in date is the Statuette of the god Bes (Plate II.), of the XIth dynasty. The authentic known specimens of this period are naturally of extreme rarity. There are the few well-known Hippopotami, modelled in the round and remarkable for the fine composition of their paste or "body" and

the purity and brilliance of their thin, even glaze—that is to say in its original state, since all these blue glazes are liable to change, either to a greenish tint or to almost entirely vanish when buried in damp earth, then sometimes leaving the object in a dingy white. In vessels there is the pair of vase-stands, one belonging to Mr. MacGregor * and the other in the Ghizeh Museum; these, however, may belong to a later time. The inscribed Usertesen II. vase of Ghizeh†, although belonging to the XIIth dynasty, may practically be classed with the art of the preceding dynasty. The Hippopotamus from Ghizeh (Plate I.) has been included in the series on account of its being in a good state of preservation, as well as for its fine quality. The next illustrations in chronological sequence are the bracelet of Amenhotep III. (the fellow one is in the Musée du Louvre) and the three fragments of small vases (Plate III.). They are specimens of an inlaid ware which has been known for some time by the Louvre bracelet and by a few fragments of objects of personal ornament; but any specimens of vessels, or portions of them, had not been seen by the writer till two years ago, when he obtained the present fragments from the ruins of the palace of Amenhotep III. at Thebes. The palace stood on the west bank of the Nile, about a mile south of Medinet Habu. The fragments probably belonged to small bottles for perfumes or unguents, or perhaps to hold flowers. The vessels themselves must have been of truly regal dignity in respect to their colour-harmony of lapis lazuli and turquoise, in extraordinary depth and splendour, and for their perfect manipulation. The wall-tile from the palace of Akenhaten, at Tell-el-Amarna, on Plate I., is also a typical example of this class of faïence — inlaid wares — belonging to the XVIIIth dynasty. This piece, of the reign of Akenhaten, happens to be almost intact, allowing one to see the full scheme of its graceful realistic design. It is composed partly of inlaid work, as in the daisies, and partly of painting, as their stems and leaves, together with the thistle and the other passages in blue.

Fig. 5.—QUEEN THII, QUEEN OF AMENHOTEP III. Fragment of Statuette. Faïence. H. 4 cm. Berlin Museum.

The refined and delicate Bowl of Rameses II. (Plate IV.) illustrates another form of the combination of inlaid and painted ornamentation practised in the

* The MacGregor Collection, plate i.

† *Op. cit.* fig. 4.

XIXth dynasty. It is a rare instance of the inlay being on a drab ground. The drab inclines to a golden tint and is cleverly contrasted with the pale purplish blue of the interior of the vessel, the two forming with the light yellow inlay a singularly subtle harmony. One may fairly conclude that this marvel of ceramic art was used at the table of Rameses II. or was a dedicatory offering by him to a temple. Vessels of this form being for drinking purposes must have been in more constant use than other kinds of artistic pottery, therefore more liable to destruction, which is probably the reason why so few have been found in excavations. An interval of many centuries separates this from another royal Bowl—that of Constantine the Great on Plate XII. From internal evidence the date of the latter may be assigned, within the limit of a very few years, to the first half of the IVth century A.D. The recent discovery of this vessel is a striking instance of the present uncertain state of our knowledge respecting the history of Egyptian ceramic art. In the text of Mr. MacGregor's collection the present writer stated that the art in Egypt had in late Roman times lapsed into a condition of extreme degeneracy. The available evidence then appeared to lead to this conviction, which, so far as he was aware, was also the opinion of other students who had given their attention to the subject. Yet we find here, in the latest classical time, an example of the highest perfection of manipulation, and displaying a novel technical method in advance of any known productions of the celebrated artistic epochs of the Pharaonic dynasties. Facts like these tend to induce the belief that the progress of the potter's art may really have been continuous in Egypt, even at that period of her history when she was politically defunct. It appears as if, while the rulers, the politicians, and the priests were wrecking the land, the artists worked quietly on, inventing ever-new varieties of design and combinations of colour. The objection may be raised that, as the historians are in agreement that the country in late Roman time was in a state of great misery and exhaustion, it must necessarily follow that there would be few or no purchasers for objects of refined ceramic art, and therefore they would not be produced. But it is possible that the poverty was mainly in the agricultural districts—among the *fellaheen*, who raised the corn which was Egypt's tribute to Rome. In the great cities like Alexandria there may have been wealthy individuals whose means would permit and whose tastes would incline them to acquire choice and beautiful works of art, whatever their cost. Besides, there were foreign customers, and we know the almost fabulous sums that the Roman connoisseurs

were willing to pay for the master-work of the Eastern artists. The Roman market, it is true, at last came to an end, but when that time came a fresh one was opened at Constantinople. The writer has not been able to obtain a trustworthy account of the locality where the Constantine bowl was found, but it is clearly an instance of a work made for the foreigner; whether it was a commission from the Emperor or a present to him by some high official will probably never be known.

Fig. 6.—CARTOUCHE OF RAMESES III. Faïence. H. 22 cm. British Museum.

Plates V. and VI. illustrate the wall-decoration by tiles and plaques found at Tell-el-Yahoudieh, in the Nile Delta, on the site of what was formerly a palace erected by Rameses II. and decorated by Rameses III. It happens, however, that the principal subject, the full-length figure of a prisoner on Plate V., was derived from diggings in Upper Egypt. Unfortunately nothing is known respecting the arrangement or position of the tiles. Their size suggests that they were intended for the internal decoration of small chambers or corridors. The British Museum possesses a large number of complete tiles and fragments, purchased for it by the late Rev. Greville Chester. On examining these one readily discerns that the decoration included a procession of prisoners, and hence probably there were representations of the king in his war-chariot, and others in which he was making offerings to the gods. We see his cartouche cut in deep and forcible inlay, but we search in vain for the royal effigy. Besides the prisoners there are real and fabulous animals in bas-relief together with well-known motives of Egyptian symbolical ornament; being mostly fragmentary and clearly parts of large ornamental motives, it is evident that we have before us only a fractional portion of the original series. As far as may be judged from the ceramic cases of the European museums these most striking, if unconnected, fragments mark one of the most brilliant passages of the national art. Indeed it would be difficult to point out wall-decoration of any period displaying such vivacity of design, splendour and harmony of colour, artistic treatment, together with what might be termed scientific knowledge—

as in the delineation of the racial types; and assuredly picturesque costume was never more effectively drawn. There have been works of painting and sculpture inspired by a deeper religious feeling or more tender poetic sentiment, but none evincing more ability in placing before the spectator types of humanity distinctly individual and intensely alive. It is realistic art of the highest kind, fashioned by artists gifted with fertile imaginative faculties, romantic, yet keeping a firm hold of nature. Our prisoner was found at Coptos, Mr. MacGregor's example* at Luxor; this is evidence that royal or public edifices at other places besides the palace at Tell-el-Yahoudieh contained similar ornamentation. Further, that as the design and technique are alike in all instances, it is probable that the tiles were made at the same pottery; and if so, it raises the question whether the art was that of Upper or Lower Egypt.

The next illustration (Plate VII.), although representing the art of the XXth dynasty, is conceived in a very different spirit to the tiles of the Rameses III. palace. They dealt with scenes of stirring, active life portrayed with great wealth of colour; the Ushabti of Ptahmos, who was a chief prophet of Ammon, is characterized by refined and delicate manipulation, repose of manner, and a studied purity of colour such as is appropriate to a funereal statuette. The general arrangement of attitude and ornamentation follow on the prescribed lines of the Ushabti figures, which were founded on the symbolic representation of the mummified Osiris. It is rare, however, to find them of such consummate mastery of modelling. No less remarkable is the treatment from a technical point of view; the colouring is perfect, without flaw or blemish, and such precision of delineation must have been difficult of attainment, considering that the different vitreous glazes employed do not all fuse at the same temperature. These are technical excellencies indicating an advanced stage of the art, but the sentiment, the ideal grace, the beautiful and tranquil countenance with its sad and earnest regard, as that of the Angel of Death, are due to the inborn talent of the individual artist. Plate VIII. represents a vase which was intended to hold the mummy of an ibis; it is one of several found by Mariette in the Shounet-ez-Zebïb at Abydos. Although so carefully drawn and displaying such a wide range of brilliant colour, the vase is unglazed, which is scarcely what would be expected in the case of an object whereon the artist must have expended more than usual time and pains. It is possible that it

* The MacGregor Collection, fig. 50.

belongs to a period when terra-cotta wares were particularly admired. The vase is assigned to the XXIInd dynasty: other unglazed vessels are known which, on satisfactory evidence, belong to the XIXth dynasty; of these the four important amphoræ in Mr. MacGregor's collection * are notable examples. In the vase here reproduced the dominant note of colour is red, in others the red is subordinated to a clear blue, again in others the red is altogether absent. The ware, however, is too scarce to permit of more than qualified descriptive statement. That so few pieces have survived arises from the fugitive nature of the colour. Being unprotected by a glaze the pigment would be easily rubbed off when the vessels were in use, and it would almost entirely disappear when subjected for a lengthened period to the action of damp.

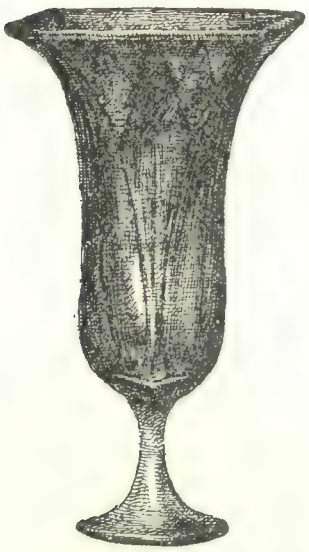


Fig. 7.—CHALICE. Blue faïence. H. 15 cm. Florence Museum.

Among the important pottery finds of past years few have yielded a richer harvest to the collector than a necropolis north of Assiout, known as Tunah. It lies in a hollow of the mountains on the desert, about five hours' ride inland from Milowee. No scene can be imagined more desolate than these desert burial-places. Not a vestige of vegetation is visible, not a sound is heard, not a living creature is perceptible, save that occasionally the spectator is aware of a wolf or jackal stealing along the hill-side. The eye finds no rest from the pervading glare reflected from stone and sand, its monotony unbroken, except perhaps that some few flints and pebbles are burnt black by the fierce and blinding rays of the pitiless sun. It is impossible to resist a feeling of awe in the presence of these vast cemeteries, far away from the habitations of the living, and where the dead have lain in undisturbed solitude for ages. The impression is one of death in its barest, most abstract, and remorseless form. There is no suggestion of life, much less of art; and yet these veritable Valleys of the Shadow of Death are the weird treasure-houses of stores of the loveliest, the most dainty and delicate works of art—the creations of generations of active, versatile, and joyous artists. The artists doubtless had their dreams: some, perhaps, of a renown that might extend beyond their children's children, but

* The MacGregor Collection, plate xv.

assuredly none of an appreciation and honour which would endure over millenniums.

The sum total of the faïence excavated at Tunah was numerically large, and, regarded from an artistic point of view, of the first quality. It is perhaps not too much to assert that if the whole had been kept together, and all else of Egypt's pottery had perished, she could with it alone have gone into competition with the rest of the world, whether of ancient or modern times, and, if the judges were ceramists, with fair chances of taking first honours. There were vessels of all kinds, figures of the gods, elegant objects of personal adornment, and all the trappings and paraphernalia of the mummy. The art also covered a considerable period of time, ranging from the XVIIIth dynasty, over the Ramesside times, to the Roman conquest. There may have been earlier works, but as the excavations were conducted by natives it is not known with certainty what was actually discovered. If any of the pieces were of the earlier dynasties they would possibly have been relatively few and they may have been sold to collectors who would be unaware of their provenance, since the native dealers, as a rule, carefully keep secret the places where their wares have been found. In another respect it is unfortunate that the find was not made by trained Europeans. There must have been along with the faïence many other objects, some probably bearing inscriptions or otherwise offering evidence as to the date of the general contents of the tombs in which they were found. As far as the writer is aware no inscribed pieces from Tunah can now be identified, with the exception of two basalt statuettes of the XIXth dynasty, in the British Museum. No royal cartouches are seen on the pottery (on a chalice belonging to Major W. J. Myers, fig. 36, there are fictitious ones, that is, the hieroglyphs are mere unmeaning signs); hence it may be concluded that the city or district of which Tunah was the cemetery was not a place where royalty resided.

It was probably in the Middle Empire the ancestral seat of a great feudal noble, who may have been hereditary governor or nomarch of the province. This would account for the pottery being of high quality and representing the art of several centuries; yet if such was the case it is singular that the family name has not been discovered. Possibly it will be known some day. At least it can be asserted that there was a centre of culture near Tunah which had been maintained in a prosperous state during many successive generations. The chalice on Plates IX. & X. affords a clue to the tastes of its former anonymous owner in one or two directions. He must have been fond of field-

sports and probably much interested in agricultural pursuits. The relief ornamentation in the principal band of the vessel shows men fowling or fishing from the boats made from papyrus stems, so often seen in the painting and sculpture of the monuments. In the band beneath it oxen and horses are crossing a stream or canal, one of the horses being seized by a crocodile rising from the water. The topmost band is devoted to birds of all kinds and in every variety of action, including nests with chicks in them and others in which the eggs are still unhatched. These animated pictures of rural life are familiar to us from the many similar representations on the walls of the tombs, the well-known tempera paintings in the British Museum being typical specimens of the class. They essentially belong to the class of subject which would interest the country noble and the man who was in constant and intimate contact with nature. The storied cup was ever a sure indication of the proclivities (not always elevated) of its owner; in this case, however, it may safely be affirmed that they were manly and healthy. Our friend, like Ameny, the Nomarch of Beni-Hassan, was not only the country lord who busied himself with the management of his ancestral estate or diverted himself with the pleasures of the chase; he was equally ready to serve his king and country on the battle-field. His exploits as a warrior are delineated on another chalice in the collection of Major Myers, where he is represented in his war-chariot and on foot valiantly confronting the enemy, and with the slain lying around in all directions *. The vessels are so similar in size, style, and technique, that there can be no reasonable doubt of their belonging to the same series and most likely were executed by the same hand.

When examining any fairly representative collection of Egyptian pottery there is one phase of the art which none will fail to observe, namely, a class of small objects in which the ornamentation is wrought with a precision and delicacy truly marvellous. They suggest more the art of the jeweller or graver than that of the potter; and perhaps the former were the makers of the earliest glazed objects, such, for example, as the scarabs of the Old Empire. But these were cut in schist, a close, soft stone of a texture well adapted for minute carving, while the quartz frit of the pottery, not being tenacious, is difficult to manipulate. Nevertheless, the Egyptian potters succeeded in executing finer and more minute work in this intractable material than can be found in

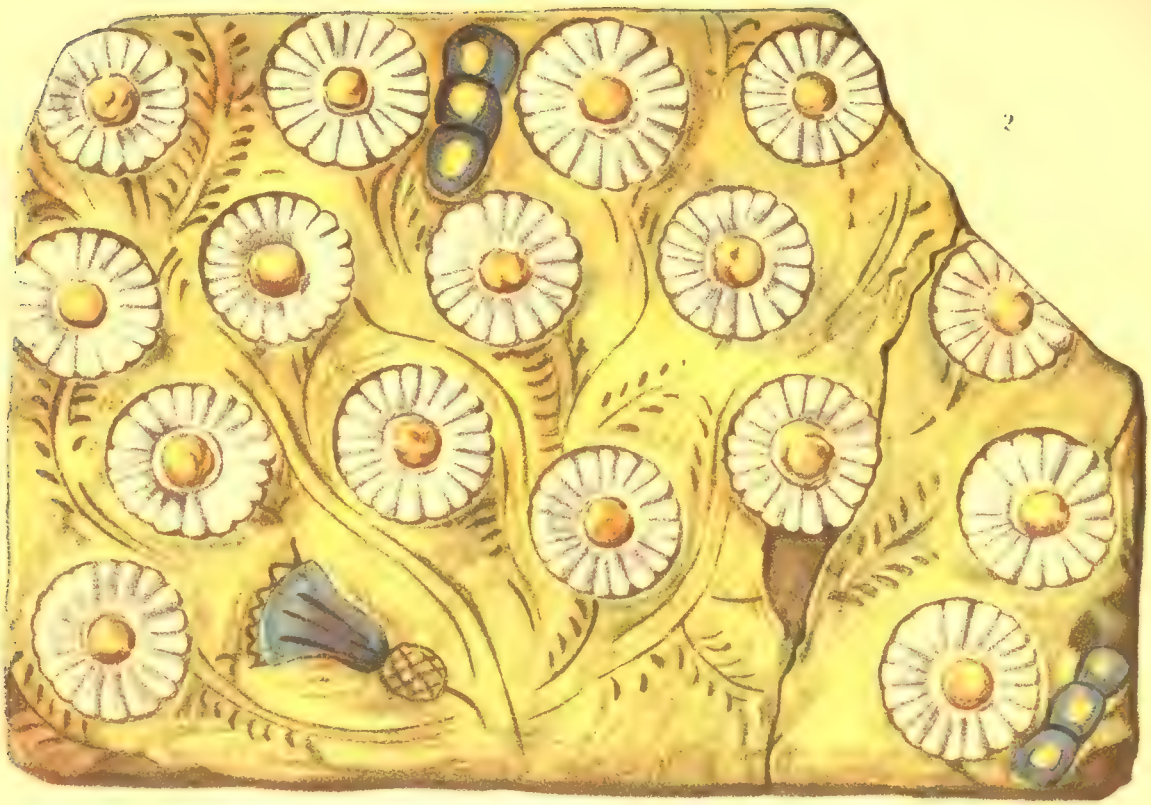
* For a learned and valuable account of the early Egyptian nobles and their position in relation to the State, see Prof. Erman's 'Life in Ancient Egypt,' ch. v.

the wares of countries where the clay was more plastic. Among these small articles are pendants or necklace ornaments for the living, but perhaps more often for the adornment of the mummy—at least, more of these latter have naturally been preserved. On Plate XI. will be found a small series from Tunah. The god Bes belongs probably to the XVIIIth dynasty. It is curious to note that since we last saw him, in the XIth dynasty, he has developed with increasing centuries a decidedly cynical humour. Could it have been the fashionable "attitude" of the period? Later on, in Roman times, and when in extreme old age, he assumes a jovial air—indeed, occasionally, is almost boisterous. The most gracious illustration on the Plate is the Isis suckling a young prince. Although on a scale so small it has all the dignity of monumental sculpture. It may be compared with a similar subject in glazed schist in Mr. MacGregor's collection; in that instance the prince is known to be Amenhotep IV.* The two plaquettes having figures on either side have presumably belonged to mummies. The compositions apparently refer to purificatory rites, which the dead had to go through "on those beautiful ways where the glorified travel" before entering the realms of Osiris.

* The MacGregor Collection, fig. 24.

Fig. 8.—INSCRIPTION ON BRACELET OF AMENHOTEP III. (Plate III.)

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATES.



EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART.

PLATE I.

1.—HIPPOPOTAMUS. Ornamentation: lotus flowers, birds, and butterflies painted in deep manganese over the surface of the animal. XIth dyn. Blue faïence. L. 21 cm. GHIZEH MUSEUM.

The representation of the lotus flowers etc. covering the beast is a naive way of indicating that he is in his native marshes. There are about half a dozen examples of this figure (perfect or fairly so) in museums and collections; a few other imperfect ones, and wherein the original pure and brilliant blue glaze has become tarnished, are also known. The whole are believed to have been found in the XIth dynasty tombs of Drah abou 'l naggah. An account of the present specimen is given in Prof. Maspero's excellent Guide to Boulaq Museum, p. 103.

2.—TILE. Ornamentation: on a pale yellowish-green ground are displayed daisies, a thistle, and two unknown objects. The stems and leaves are painted in pale brown; the flowers have been modelled separately and are inlaid. XVIIIth dyn. Faïence. L. 17 cm. PETRIE COLLECTION.

The above tile was found by Prof. W. M. Flinders Petrie in excavations at Tell-el-Amarna. Along with it were numerous fragments of other tiles, some being in the same pattern as the above. Other fragmentary pieces had portions of naturalistic leaf-ornament drawn with truth to nature; these were mostly delicate in colour, but in some of the pieces, where the objects are drawn on a small scale (see figs. 9, 10, 11), the colour is deep and brilliant. The series is remarkable from its illustrating the singularly beautiful phase of naturalistic art which arose in Egypt during the reign of King Akenhaten.

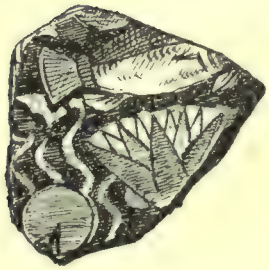


Fig. 9.—FRAGMENT OF FAÏENCE. L. 6 cm.

Fig. 10.—FRAGMENT OF FAÏENCE. L. 5 cm.

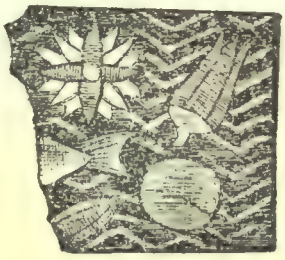


Fig. 11.—FRAGMENT OF FAÏENCE. L. 6 cm.

PLATE II.

1.—STATUETTE OF THE GOD BES. The eyes and eyebrows, the long hair or wig, the toes, etc. are painted in deep manganese purple, likewise the serpents held in his hands and curling round his legs, together with the pedestal, are in the same colour. In the original the left hand is missing. XIth dyn. Blue faïence. H. 17 cm.

HENRY WALLIS.

The evidence for dating this unique figure consists in the fact of its being identical in technique and ornamental method with the Hippopotami from the Drah abou 'l naggah tombs, where it also was found. The modelling has the same breadth and knowledge of form displayed in the animals, the snakes are painted, like the insects on the hippopotamus, and the glaze and 'body' are precisely similar in both instances.

Fig. 11 *a*.—VASE WITH COVER. XIXth dyn. Blue faïence. H. 29 cm. Lieut.-General Sir Francis Grenfell.

2 and 3.—VASES WITH COVERS. Blue faïence. H. 20 cm. HENRY WALLIS.

Vases of this form were made from the earliest known times down to the latest. Mr. MacGregor's tall amphora* belongs to the XIXth dynasty. The intaglio in the Ghizeh plaque of the IVth dynasty, illustrated on page 33 of the MacGregor Collection, shows also a similar form. The present vases are said to have been found in an early tomb, which from their style may be possibly the case, but its locality is not known to the writer. A large and important vase of this form is in the collection of Lieut.-General Sir Francis Grenfell (fig. 11 *a*), the ornamentation being in manganese on a turquoise-blue ground.

* The MacGregor Collection, plate XV.

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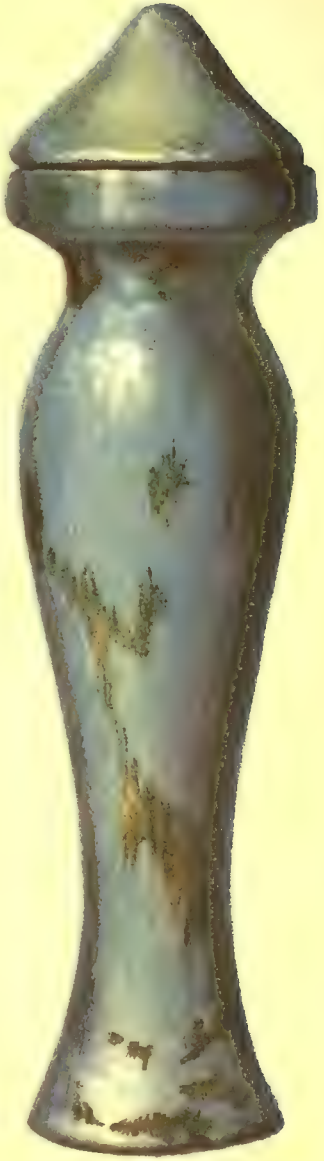

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4 3 5

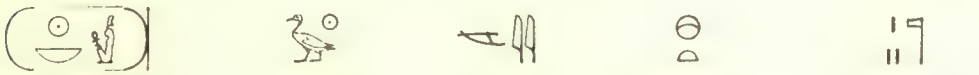
EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART.

PLATE III.

1, 2.—BRACELET OF KING AMENHOTEP III. Ornamentation: an inscription in hieroglyphic characters on either side, that on the one being

ānχ *neter* *nefer* *neb* *taui* *neb* *àri* *χet*

[Long] life to the beautiful god, lord of the two lands, the lord maker of things,



Neb - Maāt - Rā *sa Rā* *meri* *paut* *neteru*

Neb - Maāt - Rā, son of the Sun, beloved of the company of the gods.

Âmen-ḥetep ḥeq Uast *ṭā* *ānχ* *senb* *Rā mà* *t'etū*

Âmen-ḥetep, prince of Thebes, giver of life, and health like Rā for ever!

On the other side the characters are slightly altered, but the meaning is the same. XVIIIth dyn. Deep blue faïence with the inlaid hieroglyphs in a paler blue. D. 9 cm. HENRY WALLIS.

The writer is indebted to Dr. E. A. Wallis Budge, Keeper of the Egyptian Antiquities, British Museum, for the translation of the above inscription, and also for that on page 15.

3, 4, 5.—FRAGMENTS OF VASES. The same technique and period as the Bracelet. No. 3, H. 6 cm.; No. 4, H. 45 mm.; No. 5, H. 25 mm. HENRY WALLIS.

The Bracelet is evidently the fellow to the similar one in the Musée du Louvre, both probably coming from the tomb of Amenhotep III. The fragments were obtained by the writer quite recently at Thebes. When there he was shown by a dealer a number of portions of small

bottles in coloured glass of the XVIIIth dynasty, among them one of the above fragments of faïence. This led him to enquire where the objects had been found. He learnt that they came from the ruins of the Palace of Amenhotep III. at Thebes, on the west bank of the Nile. Continuing his enquiries among the *fellaheen*, he obtained several other fragments besides those on Plate III. They all belong to small vessels of a very choice character, the execution being of great delicacy and refinement. It is possible that they were made only for the royal use, since among the specimens seen by the writer those bearing royal cartouches, either of Amenhotep III. or his queen Thii, are relatively numerous. Some of the fragments are in a white ground with the ornamentation in blue and red, others only in blue. The large bowl at Ghizeh (fig. 12) is an illustration of the former scheme of colour; the fragment belonging to Mr. MacGregor, with portions of cartouches of Amenhotep III., Thii, and Hont-Taui (fig. 13), of the latter. The white in this ware is the 'body' of the vase, the ornament is incised, and, for the blue, filled in with a coloured paste, the red being in glass paste already fired; the whole is then covered with a colourless vitreous glaze. The process is different in the case of the blue grounds; here the object is fashioned in a 'body' in which a deep blue is mixed with the white frit. The pattern is then incised and filled in with a white paste, the

Fig. 12.—BOWL. Faïence. D. 17 cm. Ghizeh Museum.

Fig. 13.—FRAGMENT OF VASE. Faïence, H. 5 cm. MacGregor Collection.

object is dipped in a turquoise-tinted glaze and fired; the result being that the deep blue attains the quality of lapis-lazuli and the inlay that of a turquoise.

The writer has not seen a perfect example of one of the small blue vases in this ware, nor pieces sufficiently large to determine the precise forms of the objects. The fragments suggest that they were akin to the known glass bottles, shaped like amphoræ and aryballi, having an inlaid ornament, more frequently yellow and pale blue, on a dark blue ground. The ornamentation of the faïence vases appears to have covered the major portion of the ground of the exterior surface. The Leyden Collection contains a largish vase which probably belonged to this class and period (fig. 14); its upper band and the incised inscription is turquoise, the remainder being a deep blue; unfortunately, this important example of the art is imperfect. Another specimen of some size is in the Berlin Museum (fig. 15); it is rather paler in colour and has likewise suffered damage.

There must have been still another variation of the class wherein the ground is a deep ultramarine-blue, in which the colour scheme is

Fig. 14.—VASE. Faïence. H. 25 cm. Leyden Museum.

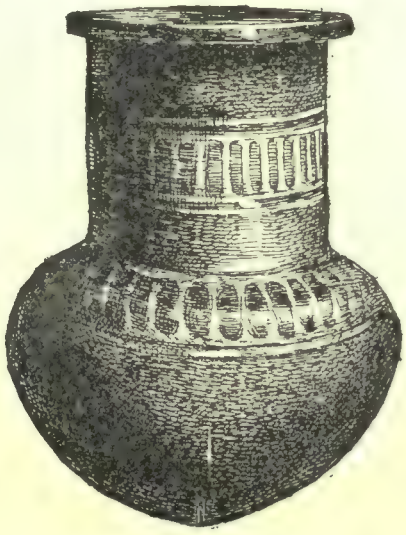


Fig. 15.—VASE. Handles missing. Faïence. H. 14 cm. Berlin Museum.

extended by the addition of a pale yellow in the ornamentation, and which therefore implies a modification of the technical process above described. Only one example was discovered by the writer; it is, however, of remarkable artistic excellence, and is confirmatory evidence of the matchless quality of this particular phase of Egyptian ceramic art. The piece in question is a portion of the rim of a vessel, having below it the head and neck of a man modelled in bas-relief, and is in open work; the height of the fragment being 27 mm. The rim, which is 9 mm. high, is ornamented with a band of lancet-shaped leaves in turquoise, and another above it of half-rounds in pale yellow; the face and feathered head-dress are carefully modelled, and the incised ornament is of extreme precision. It may be supposed that the figure was represented in full length, and was probably part of a composition of several figures. A specimen so fragmentary gives no indication of the form and intention of the original object, hence it remains for the present another instance of a highly characteristic ware known only by a single specimen.

Continuing the record of the various arrangements of colour on objects having the same technical procedure, a portion of a cylindrical vessel (which may have been for holding kohl) in the possession of the writer has the ground in apple-green and the inscription, containing the cartouche of Amenhotep III., in blue inclining to violet. Another scheme of colour was based on a yellow ground, with the ornamentation in blue, red, and white. The Louvre kohl-vase (fig. 16) is a typical specimen of this variety; it is also intact and without any discoloration. The yellow in this instance is not pale, as in the example referred to above, but it is a deep cadmium colour, as deep as the royal yellow in Chinese porcelain. It will be noted that the object bears the cartouche of Amenhotep III., so also did the handle of a dagger in yellow faïence once seen by the writer. So far as his experience extends, this particular tint of yellow is rare in examples of the Amenhotep III. period. Can it have been at this time in Egypt, as since in China, that yellow was only permitted on objects in faïence intended for the service of the king?

Fig. 17, from a fragment of a funerary stela in the Athens Museum, must have been, when perfect, one of the most imposing examples of the art. The ground is deep blue, the figures and hieroglyphs have rather a greenish tinge, probably due to discoloration; and

Fig. 16.—VASE WITH COVER. Faïence.
H. 9 cm. Musée du Louvre.

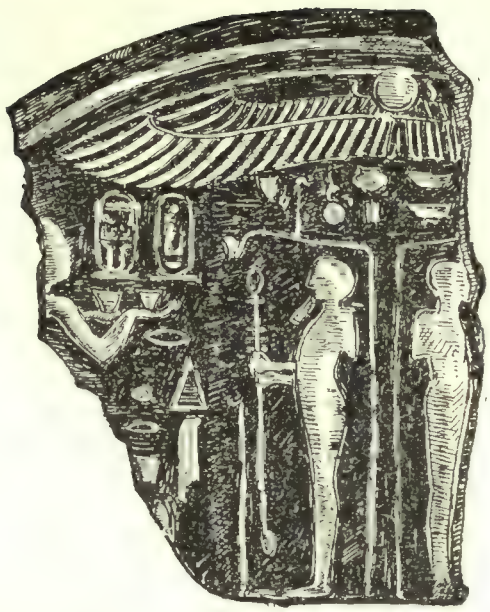


Fig. 17.—FRAGMENT OF STELA. Faïence.
H. 15 cm. Athens Museum.

if so, the slab must be classed with the bracelets and the ware represented by Nos. 3, 4, 5 of this Plate.

The illustrations 18 to 21 are given as types of the deep-toned blue pottery, with dark purple manganese ornament, which prevailed during the XVIIIth dynasty. In the finer specimens, and when in good state of preservation, both the blue and purple of this period are of extraordinary splendour, and the glaze is of corresponding quality. It is sometimes applied rather thickly, and being slightly granulated gives a velvety effect to the purple lines of the ornamentation, analogous to the burr on a dry point line in an etching. In the choicer examples, and where the ornament is in blue relieved off the purple ground, the design is drawn in with a point and the surface, where the manganese is to be applied, is slightly lowered. The incised line naturally catches the light on one side and casts a shadow on the other, thus imparting a special vivacity to the scheme of ornamentation. Nos. 2 and 4 in Plate X. of the MacGregor Collection are specimens of this method.

Fig. 18.—WINE-STRAINER? Faïence.
H. 19 cm. British Museum.

Fig. 19.—VASE WITH LID. Faïence.
H. 19 cm. British Museum.

The funnel-shaped vessel from the British Museum (fig. 18) is distinguished for its excellent fabrication, its depth of colour, and the dignified simplicity of the ornamentation. It was probably intended for a wine-strainer. One of the Tell-el-Amarna relief sculptures represents King Akhenaten holding a bowl into which an attendant is pouring wine through a strainer, thus showing that such was the practice on some occasions. It could scarcely have been general, because in the ordinary Egyptian banqueting and convivial scenes the wine is poured into the bowl from a jug without the interposition of a strainer. Possibly some particular kind of wine required straining? At the present day in Sicily it is no uncommon thing to find the skins and stones of grapes in the wine of the country when brought to table. An illustration of a strainer in the shape of a bowl with two spouts is given in the MacGregor Collection, fig. 54. Terra-cotta imitations of this article were in use in Greece and Cyprus, one being in the Athens and others in the British Museum. They all belong to the Mycene Period. Those found in Greece may have been made in Ionia or Cyprus.

Fig. 19 is a larger example of the kind of vase represented in fig. 16;

Fig. 20.—BOX. Faïence. H. 15 cm. Musée du Louvre.

Fig. 21.—STAND FOR VASE. Faïence. H. 9 cm. British Museum.

it was probably intended to hold unguents, or something of a similar nature, for toilet purposes. The box from the Louvre Museum (fig. 20), in the shape of a hut, the conical roof forming the lid, may perhaps have been intended for some similar service, or it may have been among the utensils belonging to a temple.

Considering the number of Egyptian vessels, as bowls, bottle-shaped and upright vases, having rounded bottoms, the stands on which they could rest in a vertical position must have been very common objects. It happens, however, that perfect examples are rare, the reason probably being that they are exceptionally fragile from the fact of their being cylinders open at both ends. The earliest known specimens are a pair which, from their technique, have been assigned to the XIth dynasty: one is in the Ghizeh Museum, the other in the collection of Mr. MacGregor (The MacGregor Collection, Plate I. no. 2). Fig. 21 is believed to be the only one yet discovered having the Mycene ornament and belonging to the XVIIIth dynasty.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the student of Egyptian art that examples of this phase of the XVIIIth dynasty potter are found in the cup and bowls, either half-globes or shallower and standing on a base. The writer having reproduced some of these in colour in the MacGregor Collection, thinks it needless to repeat them on the present occasion.

It is evident from what have been already discovered that decorative objects in faïence must have been exceedingly numerous in the XVIIIth dynasty. The material was employed for works of art of all sizes, sometimes even for those of monumental dimensions, as the colossal Uas bearing the cartouche of Amenhotep II., now in South Kensington Museum. It probably stood originally in a temple, wherein the architectural ornamentation may also have been in faïence. The minor objects are of every variety; among the more remarkable are the small statuettes, which were modelled with masterly ability. The little head of Thothmes III., illustrated in the MacGregor Collection (Plate I. no. 3) has all the artistic qualities of heroic sculpture. Then there are articles of personal and ritual ornament, animals, &c., all showing the same fine qualities of design and executive skill. Fig. 22 represents a wig belonging to a statuette of a king, the figure being lost. The general surface is a brilliant blue; the fillet is gold colour having inlaid imitation rubies and emeralds, these being in glass paste. Remembering the methods of the Egyptian sculptors, it is possible that the statuette may have been in wood or stone. The Athens sistrum—fig. 23—is in dark blue without inlay, although possibly the inscription on the missing handle had the hieroglyphs in a paler tint. It is distinguished by its massive sculpturesque style of modelling.

Fig. 22.—WIG. Faïence. H. 10 cm. British Museum.

Fig. 23.—PART OF A SISTRUM. Faïence. H. 17 cm. Athens Museum.

Judging from the style, the shallow bowl —fig. 24—appears to belong to the XVIIIth

Fig. 24.—BOWL. Faïence. D. 11 cm.
Berlin Museum.

Fig. 25.—BOWL. Faïence. H. 11 cm.
Major W. J. Myers.

Fig. 26.—FRAGMENTS OF A VASE. Black faïence.
H. 10 cm. Petrie Collection.

dynasty; it might be taken for a small model, in blue faïence, of the stone vases of the IVth dynasty. Possibly their fabrication was continued into the XVIIIth dynasty, otherwise the bowl must be regarded as archaistic.

Among the examples of Egyptian faïence of uncertain period there are perhaps none more puzzling to date than the beautiful bowl belonging to Major W. J. Myers (fig. 25). The inscription is almost effaced; there are, however, indications of a cartouche, which has been attributed to Sebek-hotep II., of the XIIIth dynasty, but it more probably belongs to the XVIIIth dynasty. Whatever the period, the object is more than ordinarily attractive. The colour is a deep mysterious blue, full of varying tints and superb in quality.

A few pieces have been found in excavations in Egypt of a black-and-white ware, very effective although rather rude in execution. The 'body' has apparently been coloured black and the ornamentation incised and filled in with a white substance.

The two fragments in fig. 26 were found by Prof. Petrie at Kahun. The chief motive of the ornamentation consists in two

opposing animals standing on their hind legs on either side of a symbolic tree. Too little of the design is seen to speak with certainty; it may, however, be an example of a more primitive art than that of Amenhotep III.; possibly it dates from the XIIth dynasty.

Fig. 27 represents a box with two small vases which were found inside it. The box itself is very neatly and ingeniously constructed in dark-coloured wood, and is ornamented with inlaid ivory panels of a simple yet effective design. It was probably a travelling toilet-case. The vases are a brilliant turquoise colour, and are rather thick in substance for their size, therefore less liable to break when carried about. Their form and technique suggest that they may be of the XIIth dynasty, or even more likely of the XVIIIth. It will be observed that the box is similar in shape to the little toilet-box in glazed schist of the latter dynasty at Berlin (see The MacGregor Collection, fig. 21). The Berlin Museum contains yet another and more capacious toilet coffer, possibly also for travelling use. It is inscribed with the name of an early queen, Mentu-hotep. Half a dozen small alabaster vases of very choice make were found inside it, along with articles for the toilet. The coffer rests on an elegant wooden frame: the whole has a light wooden covering standing on four feet; there is a final outer box of massive wood on which are painted symbolic designs and inscriptions.

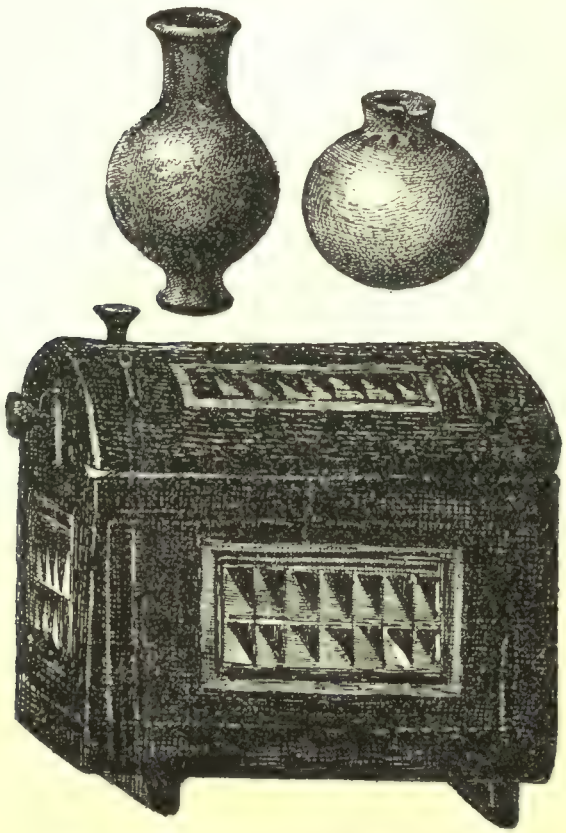


Fig. 27.—BOX WITH VASES. Faïence vases. H. 7 cm. and 4 cm. Berlin Museum.

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2

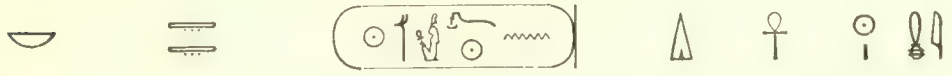
EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART.

PLATE IV.

BOWL. Ornamentation: on the exterior two bands, the upper one composed of the following inscription, the lower one of a row of rosettes, an open lotus flower at the base. The ornamentation is incised and filled in with pale yellow paste, the ground being a light raw-umber colour having a greenish-golden tinge. The lotus flower is drawn in brown lines. The inside of the bowl is plain, being below the yellow rim a pale purplish blue. XIXth dyn. Faïence. D. 10 cm. BRITISH MUSEUM.

ānχ *neter* *nefer* *taȧ* *Rā* *suten* *en* *ḥequ* *Rā* *mȧ*

Life to the beautiful god, the emanation of Rā, the king of princes like the Sun,



neb *taiu* *ṭā* *ānχ* *Rā* *mȧ*

the lord of the two lands, Usr-Maāt-Rā-setep-en-Rā, the giver of life like the Sun

t'etta *sa Rā* *se-ḥetep* *neteru* *nebu* *mȧ* *Ḥeru-χuti* *neb*

for ever, the son of the Sun, pacifier of all the gods like Harmachis, the lord

χāu *Ámen-meri-Rā-meses* *ṭā* *ānχ*

of crowns, Rameses (II) beloved of Rā, the giver of life [for ever]!

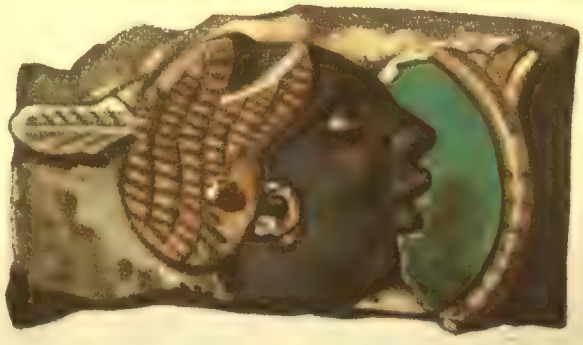
Fig. 28.—CHALICE. Faïence; blue, purple, and white. H. 85 mm. British Museum.

The current notion respecting the art of the time of Rameses II. is that it was pompous, stilted, and mechanical, deficient in grace, and lacking fancy or suppleness. Hence this bowl in its quiet simplicity and harmonious colour comes rather as a surprise. The explanation may be that the generally received ideas of the art of this reign have been derived from the monumental works, the temple ornamentation, together with the statues of the king and the divinities.

Rameses, it must be remembered, was a

great builder, and, like others who erect temples and palaces for ostentation, was not gifted with taste. Moreover, he probably insisted on the work being executed with rapidity. He knew that if his cartouches were not inscribed on the temple or statue during his lifetime, they would certainly not be after his death. He himself had even ordered the cartouches of former kings to be erased from their monuments and his own substituted in their places, and his knowledge of human—or Pharaonic—nature would not incline him to suppose that his successors would be more scrupulous. Thus the king's passion for showy splendour created a class of official artists, facile executants who were ready on the shortest notice to pile up columns and hew out long files of colossal statues which appear to be rather the product of machinery than the carving of sculptors. Their stony stare is destitute of any spark of vitality; yet doubtless they were acclaimed as highly impressive by the flatterers of the monarch, and probably complacently regarded as such by himself. There is evidence, however, that besides the official "machines" there were other departments of art where at the same time excellent work was being produced. The bowl is an example of genuine and healthy progress in the ceramic art. The raw umber, in itself a very agreeable colour, was probably invented in this reign.

The incised or "graffiata" process is continued from the last dynasty and is used with greater freedom than formerly. It was a method of ornamentation to which henceforth the Egyptian potter was always partial, and he employed it in various manners with excellent effect. The simpler form of graffiata, wherein the incised line was filled by the general covering glaze, appears to have been first practised in the preceding reign, that of Seti I. The earliest example known to the writer is an Ushabti bearing the cartouche of that monarch. The effect is that of deep blue ornamentation on a turquoise-coloured ground, the darker tint arising from the extra thickness of the glaze. In this form the method was destined to a career extending even down to the present day. It was practised in Egypt with great success during the Middle Ages; it was the system in general use by the Eastern and Byzantine potters, then, advancing westwards, it spread over Italy, from Sicily to the Alps.



EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART.

PLATE V.

1.—A PRISONER, full length and in bas-relief. A bearded man with a rope round his neck, the head seen in profile. He is dressed in a long, richly embroidered, pale yellow robe confined at the waist by a sash in many folds. The robe is ornamented at the neck and feet with coloured bands; the body and bottom of the skirt are covered with stars and spots in red; about the thighs and loins it is divided into squares in green and red decorated with wavy lines; three tassels are at the knees, a medallion hangs at the neck. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 30 cm.

GHIZEH MUSEUM.

2.—HEAD OF A PRISONER, in bas-relief. A beardless man seen in profile; long auburn hair bound with a fillet. He wears a necklace. The head is relieved off a light ground. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 75 mm.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

3.—HEAD OF A PRISONER, in bas-relief. A dark-skinned African seen in profile. He wears a close-fitting cap with a feather in it and a ring in his ear. Relieved formerly off a green background. An ankh is incised on the reverse. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 6 cm.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

4.—HEAD OF A PRISONER, in bas-relief. A negro seen in profile. He wears a close-fitting cap with a feather in it and a ring in his ear. The face is relieved off a green ground. XXth dyn. Faïence. L. 75 mm.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

The surface of the glaze is now covered with a thin whitish incrustation which dims the full force of the colour, but when sponged with water the colour recovers some of its original depth and purity.

Fig. 29.—A SYRIAN PRINCESS? (Tell-el-Yahoudieh). Faïence. H. 12 cm. British Museum.

Fig. 30.—REKHIT (Tell-el-Yahoudieh). Faïence. H. 10 cm. British Museum.

Fig. 31.—REKHITS (Tell-el-Yahoudieh). Faïence. L. 7 cm. British Museum.

It will be observed that in the full length prisoner the upper portion is deeper in tone than the lower. This arises from its having become discoloured from long contact with a damp substance, probably wet earth, while the other part was buried in dry soil. The writer was informed by M. U. Bouriant that he himself found one of the halves at Coptos *, the other was purchased from a native dealer by the Keeper of Ghizeh Museum.

It is stated above that, besides the human figures, many of the Tell-el-Yahoudieh tiles bore representations of symbolical ornament, birds, &c. Examples of these are given in figs. 30 and 31. The technical processes of inlaying are more than usually elaborate. The ground is cut away, as in champlevé enamelling, and is then sometimes filled in to a flat surface; but in other instances the filling-in is in bas-relief, which, again, may be incised and filled to the surface of the relief.

* A text states that Rameses III. erected a Ramesseum at Coptos. The tile may have formed part of its decoration. See Henry Brugsch, Hist. of Egypt, 1879, vol. ii. p. 154.

EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART.

PLATE VI.

1.—TORSO AND ARMS OF A PRISONER, in bas-relief. The arms are bound over his breast, one hand is missing. He wears a long robe with tight-fitting sleeves. The forearms are ornamented with a chequered embroidery in blue and white; bands cross the breast and hips, stars are on the breast, a lioness and cub and a bird are embroidered on the lower part of the body, beneath that a fringe with pendants. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 14 cm. BRITISH MUSEUM.

2.—LEGS OF A KNEELING PRISONER, in bas-relief. The part of the outer garment covering the thighs is embroidered with a griffin in blue on a drab or raw-umber ground on one leg and on the other stars and spots in warm brown on a pale yellow ground. The under dress is in plaited linen with an embroidered edging. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 14 cm. BRITISH MUSEUM.

3.—LEGS OF A KNEELING PRISONER, in bas-relief. An embroidered girdle with falling ribbons terminating in tassels confines the skirt, on which is embroidered a griffin in blue, and stars and spots in red and blue. Below there is an ornamental border, and on the lower portion of skirt are animals, stars and spots in pale green on a dark blue ground; a richly ornamented border at the bottom of the robe. XXth dyn. Faïence. L. 14 cm. BRITISH MUSEUM.

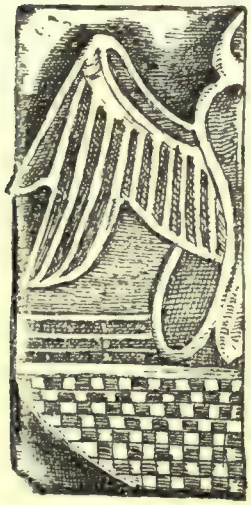


Fig. 32.—FRAGMENT (Tell-el-Yahoudieh). Faïence. H. 13 cm. British Museum.

A descriptive illustrated notice of the Tell-el-Yahoudieh tiles, written by the late Professor T. Hayter Lewis, was published in the 'Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archæology,' vol. vii. part 2 (1881). It contains some interesting information relating to the tiles and the site where they were discovered, giving drawings of the excavations. The coloured Plates, however, are not very successful, the drawing being generalized and the colour apparently not copied directly from the originals.

PLATE VII.

USHABTI OF PTAHMOS. The face, neck, and hands are turquoise-blue colour, the head-dress and the collar are violet and yellow; the ground of the whole figure is white, having the hieroglyphs and the vulture on the breast in dark violet. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 195 mm.

GHIZEH MUSEUM.

Fig. 33.—FAÏENCE. H. 5 cm. Berlin Museum.

This is the only known example of a perfect Ushabti of the style and colour. A few fragments of the lower portions of what have evidently been similar figures in white, with the same coloured inscriptions, have been discovered, one being in the British Museum. The large majority of the faïence Ushabtiu are in blue, a limited number, however, are in white, with the inscription painted in manganese purple. These have the faces and hands modelled in a red vitreous paste, and are inserted in cavities cut into the figure, the same as was probably the case in the present instance, but not approaching it in delicacy of execution. The red paste is the same substance that is found piled on in the coloured ornament in the Rhodian pottery of the XVth century A.D.; it is what is known as Armenian bole. An interesting instance of its use in ancient times is found on a small object in the Berlin Museum, fig. 33. It may have been an amulet, and probably there was originally a head at the top, where it is now fractured. The ground is white, the ornamentation in red (in relief), turquoise-blue, and dark manganese, being the same scheme and quality of colour observable on choice Rhodian faïence, thus affording an example of the intimate relationship of the Oriental ceramic art of our era with that of ancient Egypt.

EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART.

EGYPTIAN CERAMIC ART.

PLATE VIII.

VASE, to contain the mummy of an ibis. The shape is that of a canopic vase, the lid being a hawk's head modelled in the round. Ornamentation: at the shoulder, a chequered band and another band of lancet-shaped leaves surmounting a broad red band. On the body a column of hieroglyphic inscription terminating in a winged scarab, a red disc, and two sacred eyes. On either side the inscription are the genii of the dead with Horus and Anubis. On the reverse: a winged tet having human arms holding sceptres between Isis and Nepthys; below are two ibises, above is a hawk with extended wings and two lines of inscription. XXIInd dyn. Terra cotta. H. 58 cm. GHIZEH MUSEUM.

Fig. 34.—VASE. Terra cotta. H. 50 cm. Ghizeh Museum.

Fig. 34 represents a somewhat similar vase found with the preceding by Mariette inside the Shounet-ez-Zebib — the old fortress at Abydos. The lid with the bands on the shoulder nearly resemble the vase on the present Plate. The genii of the dead are omitted on the side bearing the inscription; the Horus and Anubis are retained. The reverse is seen in fig. 35. The winged figure is the goddess Khut. For an account of these vases see MARIETTE, 'Catalogue général des Monuments d'Abydos,' Nos. 1479, 1480, 1481.

Fig. 35.—Reverse of fig. 34.

PLATE IX.

CHALICE. The ornamentation is in relief. The body of the cup is divided into three bands containing figure and animal decoration ; below these is an open lotus flower: the stem and foot are ornamented with palm-branches. The upper band contains twenty-three birds of different kinds, such as are common in Egypt; they are in various life-like attitudes; there are besides six nests, some containing eggs. (The treatment throughout is naturalistic.) On the central and largest band is represented a scene of pastoral life in Egypt. Two boats are laden with five men and an ox. One man holding a boomerang has caught a bird, another punts the boat. In the second boat one man holds a net, another acts as boatman; a third holds the horns of an ox, which he is guiding through the water. Three men standing in the water are engaged with the oxen. The background is composed of papyrus stems, for the most part symmetrically arranged, some, however, are bent down ; a bird has built its nest among them. The third band shows a composition of two men driving four horses and two oxen across a river. A crocodile rises from the water and seizes one of the horses. The colour, both on the outside and the inside, is a brilliant turquoise-blue. Found at Tunah. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 16 cm. HENRY WALLIS.

Two chalices of the same form, and with the ornamentation in relief, are in the collection of Major W. J. Myers; they were likewise found at Tunah. Fig. 36 has three bands of ornamentation; with the open lotus at the base of the cup and the stem and foot ornamented with inverted papyrus reeds. The motive of ornamentation of the first band from the top is a repetition of the sacred eye. The middle band is divided into six panels, in each of which a prince or king is slaying an enemy, whom he has vanquished. The prince stands in energetic action

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Fig. 36.—CHALICE. Faïence.
H. 15 cm. Major W. J. Myers.

Fig. 37.—CHALICE. Faïence.
H. 16 cm. Major W. J. Myers.

brandishing a mace; the prisoner is kneeling. A slight variation is perceptible in the attitude of the groups. In each panel are a couple of illegible cartouches. The lowest band has six panels containing representations of the above subject. The colour has been turquoise-blue, it is now rather of a greenish tinge.

Fig. 37 is similar in form and general design to the preceding chalice. The top band is composed of birds and papyrus stems. The second shows a frieze of prisoners being led in procession; there is also a space in which are two large vultures and a hawk surrounded with papyrus stems, together with a figure of Isis and a prince. The subject is rather obscure on account of portions of the cup being broken away and missing. In the third band a king or prince is seen in a war-chariot drawn by two horses. Another group shows the prince combatting the enemy; the ground is covered with the slain, lying in various attitudes.

Fig. 38.—PORTION OF A CHALICE.
Faïence. H. 13 cm. Berlin Museum.

Fig. 39.—CHALICE. Faïence.
H. 18 cm. Athens Museum.

As in the companion chalice, there are cartouches, also unreadable. The whole composition is evidently intended to represent a battle-scene, in which probably the principal actor was the original owner of the chalice. The stem and foot are similar to the coloured plate. The colour is a deep blue of a lapis-lazuli tint. As before stated, the three chalices evidently belonged to the same series, and probably were found in the same tomb. Major Myers acquired his two at Tunah, when the objects were first offered for sale, but the third one was not shown to him. That was kept secret for a year and then produced after the rest of the find was disposed of—following a common practice with some of the native dealers of holding back the choicest piece of an important find to sell by itself.

A limited number of faïence chalices of this shape were likewise found at Tunah and may now be seen in the various national and private collections. None, however, have figure or animal decoration. Instead of these the outsides of the cups are ornamented with the petals of flowers modelled in relief, so that the cup resembles an open flower. An example is seen in Plate XII. of the MacGregor Collection. Other

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Fig. 40.—CHALICE. Blue faïence.
H. 20 cm. British Museum.

Fig. 41.—CANOPIC JAR. Blue faïence.
H. 24 cm. Rustowitz Bey.

chalices from Tunah show modifications of the shape, wherein the cup is shorter and wider, but retaining the modelled petals: see the MacGregor Collection, Plates XII. & XIII.

Examples of drinking-cups in the form of these chalices were known previous to the Tunah find, but they were rare in museums. Perhaps one of the most elegant is that in the Florence Museum—fig. 7—which may be of the XVIIIth dynasty. The ornamentation is simple, consisting only of the expanded petals of the lotus flower, the top being rectangular. The colour is a deep ultramarine-blue. The cups in figs. 38 & 39, from Berlin and Athens (the former a gift to Prince Sheshonk, son of King Sheshonk I.), show relief ornamentation as in the Tunah chalices; they are both in pale blue. They were found long before those from Tunah, but the localities are not known.

PLATE X. shows the relief ornamentation on the three bands of the chalice on Plate IX.

PLATE XI.

1.—PLAQUETTE, of oblong form. Each side contains a separate composition in relief. The figures represent a prince in the presence of divinities, the prince undergoing purificatory or initiatory rites. (In this illustration the central wall dividing the two compositions has been purposely omitted.) XXth dyn. Faïence. L. 4 cm. Madame Brugsch Bey.

2.—SEKHET, standing in a naos. The cornice of the naos is decorated with a winged globe and above it a frieze of uræi. The goddess holds the ankh in her right hand, the left is extended to a colonette or standard. A ring for suspension at the top. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 65 mm. Henry Wallis.

3.—ISIS SUCKLING A YOUNG PRINCE. The goddess is seated on a throne; she wears the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt. Her right arm is over the shoulder of the boy, her left hand presses her right breast. The prince is standing, holding in each hand a hand of the goddess. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 87 mm. Ghizeh Museum.

4.—THE GOD BES. He is represented as a dwarf wearing a huge crown of feathers; his mouth is open and his brows corrugated. Each side presents a front view. XXth dyn. Faïence. H. 6 cm. Henry Wallis.

5.—PLAQUETTE, of oblong form. Each side contains a separate composition in relief. The subject is apparently of the same class as that on No. 1, although the divinities are different. XXth dyn. Faïence. L. 5 cm. Ghizeh Museum.

The above are given as specimens of the small faïence objects from the Tunah find. They do not include the representation of all the

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classes of amulets and small figures of divinities, nor the objects for personal adornment, as rings, which are often remarkably elaborate in their ornamentation. All these small articles are modelled with extreme care and finished with the graver. The blues are pure in colour and the vitreous glaze soft and rich in quality.

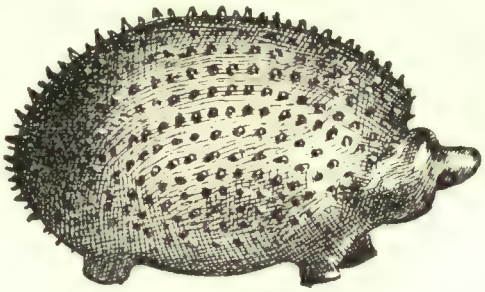


Fig. 43.—A HEDGEHOG. Blue faïence. H. 5 cm. Berlin Museum.

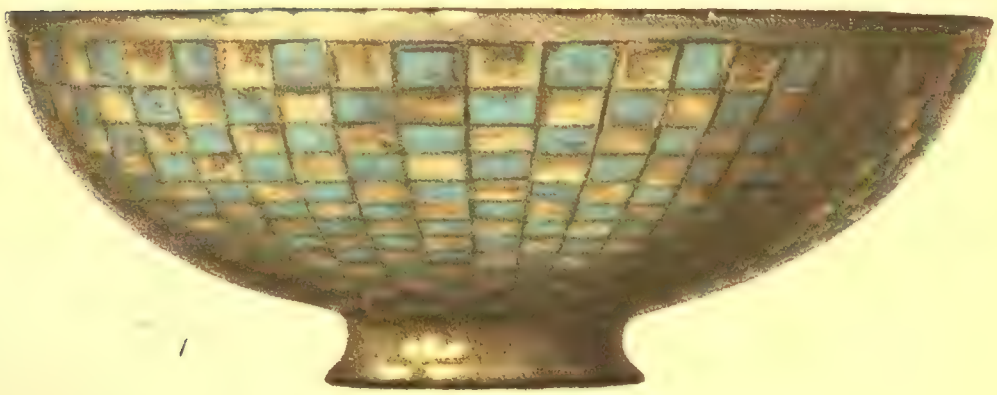
Fig. 42.—VASE WITH LID. Blue faïence. H. 24 cm. Florence Museum.

Fig. 44.—VASE WITH LID. Blue faïence. H. 11 cm. British Museum.

PLATE XII.

BOWL. The form is that of a shallow basin standing on a small foot. Ornamentation: on the exterior, a plain band of white below the rim, beneath a chequered pattern in blue and white (reserved). The chequers are formed by seven bands diminishing in size from the rim and intersected by lines at right angles to them. On the interior, beneath the rim and between double lines, an inscription:— . . . . VAL · COSTANTINVS · PIVS · FELIX · AVGVSTVS · CVM · FLAV · MAX · FAVST. . . . . Within the band of inscription is a seated figure of our Lord, His arms extended. His face is bearded and encircled by a nimbus in double lines, the cross within it in triple lines. He wears a mantle covering the left shoulder, the lower portion of the body, and the knees. The tunic beneath is embroidered on the breast; it is seen on the right side of the body and the right arm; the sleeve descends to the wrist. A triple-lined bar crosses the background horizontally in the centre. In the spaces of the ground above the shoulders of Christ are two medallions, containing profile portraits (indistinct). The whole design, including the inscription, is in white lines on a pale fawn-coloured ground. The foot is hollow and slightly curved outwards, having on the inside a rayed ornament in finely incised lines; it is covered with a yellow glaze. The thickness of the sides is barely 2 mm. IVth cent. A.D. Faïence. D. 13 cm. BRITISH MUSEUM.

A remarkable feature of the ornamentation on the interior is that it is only apparent when the bowl is filled with water. When dry it vanishes, and the surface presents an uniform colour of ivory-white; or, rather, it should be stated that this was the case formerly. The white has now become toned and traces of the design are visible. The change was observable after the long immersion rendered necessary while the drawing for the Plate was being executed. The "body" is



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doubtless decayed from age, and the water may penetrate to a greater depth than previously, thereby having modified the substance or "body." It is likewise probable that the body is influenced by the climate of London, which being moister than that of Italy, it remains permanently damper since the object has been in England.

The bowl formerly belonged to the late Count Tyszkiewicz, who acquired it not long before his lamented decease. The writer chanced to visit the Count shortly after its purchase, and was at once shown the bowl as something in which his host thought he would be specially interested. He naturally expressed his gratification on seeing so remarkably delicate an example of Egyptian pottery, and of a form differing from that of the generality of Egyptian drinking-cups. The Count then asked his visitor whether he observed anything peculiar or unusual about the inside surface of the vessel. In point of fact it appeared to be a white enamel, and it was only on turning it about in the light that faint indications of two raised circles were then perceptible. On receiving a reply to that effect the Count assumed a mysterious air and said, "We will now see what happens when water is poured into the bowl." When this was done the charm immediately began to operate, the genial host evidently vastly enjoying his visitor's surprise as he watched the transformation gradually taking place on the surface of the enamel. The Count thereupon explained that the object had been brought to him one day by a dealer, but not recognising the class of ceramic art, or the period to which it could be assigned (the interior was then white), and besides not collecting vases other than Greek, he declined making the purchase. He went on to relate that a few weeks afterwards the dealer returned in a state of excitement and again produced the bowl; this time, however, with the figure of Christ and the inscription plainly visible. The worthy man asserted that thinking the object might look all the better for washing (the outside has little irregularities on the surface which would retain dirt), he put the bowl in warm water and presently, to his great astonishment, beheld the apparition of the image of Christ becoming visible on the inside of the vessel. It is unnecessary to say that there was no hesitation on this occasion as to the purchase, it was bought there and then. The Count, knowing the writer's interest in Egyptian pottery and in that of the

early Christian period, kindly allowed him to make the acquisition of the relic *.

Students of Chinese ceramic art will doubtless remember the tradition of the Chinese cups in porcelain on which paintings of fish and animals appeared when they were filled with water. It is supposed that all trace of the ware is lost in China, and there is no record of any specimens reaching Europe †. The late Sir Wollaston Franks used to point out an ancient Chinese porcelain bowl in the British Museum as belonging to a ware perhaps related to the *Kia-tsing*. Its incised design is certainly more apparent when seen through water, but the colour of the bowl remains the same. There is also a kind of Chinese porcelain where the ornamentation is in light colour on a darker ground. The design is in outline and is tinged by the colour of the ground, which seems to have

* There is reason to believe that a tracing had been made of the figure of Christ before the bowl was brought a second time to the Count. The writer has lately seen at Rome a flat, flask-shaped vase in blue glaze, having on one side a rough copy of the Christ painted in white lines. The figure is so alike in size and general outline to that in Plate XII. as to have been evidently transferred by a tracing. The vase itself is clumsily made, heavy, and is, in short, a palpable forgery. A similarly shaped object, likewise the same in colour, with pretended early Christian ornamentation, but of another design, has also recently been offered for sale at Rome. Fictitious Christian glass has long been a drug in the market; now it appears the Italian forgers of antiquities have broken fresh ground with faïence.

† The description of *Kia-tsing* by the Père d'Entrecolles is as follows:—"Voici un procédé que les Chinois se plaignent d'avoir perdu. Ils avaient l'art de peindre, sur les côtés d'une porcelaine, des poissons ou d'autres animaux qu'on n'apercevait que lorsque la porcelaine était remplie de quelque liqueur. Ils appelaient cette espèce de porcelaine *Kia-tsing* (c'est-à-dire azur mis en presse) à cause de la manière dont l'azur était placé. Voici ce qu'on a retenu de ce secret; peut-être imaginera-t-on en Europe ce qui est ignoré (aujourd'hui) des Chinois. La porcelaine qu'on veut peindre ainsi doit être fort mince. Quand elle est sèche, on applique la couleur un peu forte, non en dehors, selon la coutume, mais en dedans, sur les côtés. On y peint ordinairement des poissons, comme s'ils étaient plus propres à se produire (à paraître), lorsqu'on remplit la tasse d'eau. La couleur une fois séchée, on donne une légère couche d'une espèce de colle fort déliée, fait de la terre même de la porcelaine. Cette couche serre l'azur entre ces deux espèces de lames de terre. Quand la couleur est sèche, on jette de l'*huile* (de l'*émail*) en dedans de la porcelaine; quelque temps après, on le met sur le moule et au tour. Comme elle a reçu du corps par dedans, on la rend par dehors le plus mince qu'il se peut, sans percer jusqu'à la couleur. Ensuite on plonge dans l'*huile* (l'*émail*) le dehors de la porcelaine. Lorsque tout est sec, on la cuit dans le fourneau ordinaire. Ce travail est extrêmement délicat, et exige une addresse qu'apparemment les Chinois n'ont plus. Ils tâchent néanmoins, de temps en temps, de retrouver l'art de cette peinture magique, mais c'est en vain. Cependant l'un d'eux m'a assuré depuis peu qu'il avait fait une nouvelle tentative et qu'elle lui avait presque réussi."—Quoted by Stanislas Julien, *Histoire et Fabrication de la Porcelaine Chinoise*, p. 240.

flowed over it, giving it the appearance of being seen through water. The effect is very delicate and charming, but it is fixed and permanent. These examples of the art of the Chinese potter afford no clue to the discovery of the *Kia-tsing* process, but they show an appreciation of its result, namely, the additional softness and brilliance which would be imparted to the ornament by the novel condition to which it was subjected. There is, of course, no intention to suggest that the invention was imported into Egypt from China. Nothing certain is known respecting the Chinese ceramic art of the IVth century. If it included glazed wares they would probably have been heavy and massive. Hence it must be concluded that the discovery was made independently in the two countries. That it should have been is not surprising when it is remembered that the potters of Egypt and China had so much in common. They both were remarkable for their manipulative dexterity and the range of their technical knowledge; they were both ingenious and inventive, delighting in novel and surprising exhibitions of their mastery over the material in which they worked. It is therefore precisely a process like *Kia-tsing* which would possess a special charm for the artists of the Nile Valley and those of the Flowery Land. Whether it was generally known and practised by the Egyptian potters cannot be stated. The extreme fragility of the ware would account for its disappearance. Unless a piece were hidden away with great care it would almost certainly have been destroyed or injured past all recognition. Instances have occurred of hoards of precious objects, including pottery, having been secreted in ancient times and only found in our day, and such may have been the case regarding the present object. That other examples have not been found may also be accounted for by the secret of the procedure having been known only in one pottery, and hence the output would have been very limited. However, questions of this and like nature can only receive solution from the spade of the excavator. We stand only on the threshold of the enquiry into the history of Egyptian ceramic art.

As to the evidence for assigning the bowl to Egypt, it may be briefly pointed out that the conclusion is arrived at from analogies with other examples of Egyptian pottery. In glaze, colour, and technique (for the exterior) it resembles certain circular plaques or rosettes found at Tell-

el-Yahoudieh. Some of these have Greek characters inscribed on the reverse; they therefore most likely belong to the Ptolemaic period, and may have formed part of the decoration of additions to the palace of Rameses III. by order of one of the Ptolemies. The "body" resembles Egyptian pottery generally, although it is rarely found so thin. Still, there are instances in the so-called Naucratis ware of vessels having their sides of equal tenuity. A small vase in the Myers Collection is so thin at the neck as to be semi-transparent. Another delicate little vase in the Museum of University College, London, is almost as slender, and although not of the same colour as the bowl, nor having the tints fugitive, is yet not unlike its exterior in technique. The incised and champlevé system of applying the coloured ornament is, of course, essentially an Egyptian procedure. Further, it will be remembered that no similar incised pottery, the fabrication of other countries in ancient times, has been discovered. Glazed wares had been made both in Europe and Asia prior to the IVth century A.D., but not to a large extent; nor is the writer aware of any displaying a mastery of manipulation and technical skill such as is shown in the present instance. It is well known that the European pottery of the time of Constantine was not remarkable for its fine execution. As for that of Egypt generally during the same period, the ascribed examples are not choice in quality. But it is possible that the art in its higher departments continued to be cultivated in Egypt. Among the first references to pottery in the Middle Ages is the passage in the 'Safer Nameh' by Nassiri Khosrau, a Persian traveller of the XIth century. He describes an Egyptian ware implying extraordinary proficiency in the potters of that country in his day. This would scarcely have been possible had not the traditions of the ancient art been maintained during the intervening centuries.

Regarding the ornamentation of the exterior of the bowl, the chequered pattern is frequently met with in Egyptian pottery of various periods. Fig. 32 is an example of the time of Rameses III.; figs. 186, 187 of Mr. MacGregor's Collection show the same on Naucratis pottery. As to the ornamentation of the interior, the system of placing an inscription round the edge of a vessel is seen in the bowl of Rameses II. The writer can cite no instances of figures of our Lord being found on Egyptian or any other pottery of a period so early in date as the time of

Constantine. The general conception of the figure, the facial type, the attitude and arrangement of the drapery are the same as in those colossal paintings of Christ depicted on the apse behind the sanctuary in Coptic churches, some attached to the *deirs* of Upper Egypt being perhaps the earliest extant Christian edifices. Possibly none of these pictures are in their actual original state; but although most likely the majority have been repaired, yet the old design would have been retained. Its venerable character, consecrated by the devotion of centuries, would ensure the retention of a visible realization of the Christ which had been familiar to the eyes and had been stamped upon the minds of the faithful during successive generations. It is a conception of the Redeemer at once majestic and touching. It is profoundly penetrated with that feeling of genuine piety which found such noble and pathetic expression in the primitive art of the early ages of Christianity. By whom it was first conceived may never be known. We meet with it reproduced in various materials in the localities where the first Christian churches were established and also at Rome. Yet it is scarcely at the Imperial City that its invention must be sought for. Rather may it be surmised that it originated in Egypt, the land where more than elsewhere art had ever been devoted to the service of religion. The remains of objects of Christian art are now rare in that land. What, however, have been discovered of late are inspired by the same spirit and are analogous in style and manner to this, the first artistic conception of the personality of the Founder of the new faith *.

* Artistic objects produced in late Roman and Byzantine times, and in countries where Christianity was the dominant religion, are now, even in the more important national museums, comparatively scarce; still they exist in sufficient numbers to afford an adequate conception of the prevailing decorative motives employed by their designers. Of these works, whether in metal, ivory, glass, or enamel, the large majority which have been preserved were intended for religious usages—either for church service or private devotion. In some the ornamentation is merely conventional or symbolic; but in others are found figure subjects, scenes from the gospel history or effigies of sacred personages, and among these the representation of Christ is not uncommon. It may therefore be concluded that a similar practice prevailed in the decoration of vessels and ceremonial utensils made in faïence. Yet, saving the present instance, none is known or, at least, has rewarded the diligent search of the writer. It can, perhaps, hardly be determined whether representations of the Redeemer delineated on a plane surface would have been included among the idolatrous objects destroyed by the iconoclasts of the age of Leo III., the Isaurian; although the decision arrived at by the General Council summoned by him—that all visible symbols of Christ except in the eucharist, were either blasphemous or heretical and were to be broken or

For the ceramist the most interesting question relating to the technique of the bowl is that dealing with the metamorphosing quality of the interior ornamentation. It is certainly a point on which the writer would desire to speak with the utmost diffidence. Since the Chinese potters confess themselves unable to rediscover the *Kia-tsing* process, it may appear presumptuous for a layman to offer an opinion on the subject. Hence the writer only ventures to suggest what may possibly serve as a clue to the mystery. In cases like this the difficulty is, perhaps, not so much in the perception of a possible solution of the problem as to successfully work it out in practice. The procedure followed by the potter seems clear up to a certain point—the final glazing of the object. According to the ancient Egyptian practice the bowl would have been thrown in a "body" tinged with the colour of the ground; it would then probably have been reduced to its present tenuity by the lathe and have received its first firing. It would now have been ready for the incision of the design and inscription, which would be filled in with a white paste and coated with the usual transparent vitreous glaze. The result would have been a remarkable design and an agreeable harmony of colour, but both would have been at once apparent. If, however, this final glaze instead of being transparent had been white and opaque, and also permeable to water, which at the same time would

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erased—seems to suggest that they were condemned equally with the images. But whatever may have been the actual intentions of the Emperor and the Council, their authority was not of long duration, extending only over the reigns of the three next emperors—Constantine V., Leo IV., and Constantine VI. An edict of the Empress Irene revoked the sentence of condemnation, and the images again resumed their former position in the sacred edifices and the dwellings of the faithful. Granting, however, that the iconoclastic crusade may account for the disappearance of many of the objects in question, yet many also would have escaped, and, moreover, the crusade did not prevail in the countries holding the tenets of the Western church; so that even if there are no existing examples in museums or private collections, it is almost certain that among the buried treasures of the East some will hereafter be found, in condition more or less perfect, by the intelligent excavators of the future. At present, the earliest specimen of a representation of the Saviour on faïence in the European museums hitherto identified is the dish at Sèvres inscribed DON GIORGIO . 1485. Christ is here depicted, a half-length figure, standing in His tomb, the Cross with the symbols of the Passion being displayed on the background. The dish may probably be assigned to Deruta or Faenza. A Faenza plaque in the Museum of the Hôtel Cluny, dated 1475, shows in the centre the monogram of Christ, surrounded by straight and wavy rays, similar to the design on the tablet held by St. Bernardino in Italian XVth-century pictures of the saint.

have rendered it nearly transparent, the present condition would have been realized. A stanniferous glaze would give the white surface, but it would be an opaque enamel. It might, however, be possible to render a tin glaze sufficiently porous as to imbibe water; but on this point the writer is unable to offer an opinion. He has seen glaze on Egyptian faïence exuding water to such an extent that it has flowed down the sides of the objects and formed small pools at their feet. When this happens it may be accounted for by an excessive quantity of soda having entered into the composition of the glaze, and which has absorbed the dampness in the atmosphere. This occasional sweating must have been observed by the Egyptian potters, and may have given one of them the hint to discover a white glaze which, when soaked with water, would be sufficiently transparent to show coloured designs on the surface beneath. The inventor would of course have been aware that such a novel method of ornamentation would considerably enhance the interest in his wares.

Fortunately, a question which so often is a subject of perplexity to the student of ceramic art can in the present instance at once receive a satisfactory answer—there can be no reasonable doubt respecting the date of the bowl within a very short period. Bearing the name of Constantine the Great and his wife Fausta, it would have been made previous to the death of the Empress, since, as she was privately executed for adultery, her name after that event would not have been associated with that of the Emperor on an object made for his particular service. Again, the presence of the image of our Lord proves that the vessel was made after Constantine had announced his acceptance of Christianity. This may be taken as having occurred at the time of, or not long previous to, the publication of the Edict of Toleration. Here we have two events—the death of Fausta in 326 and that of the Edict in 324—thus limiting the date of production within a period of about two years.

The inscription is incised in clear well-formed characters. It was read first by Count Tyszkiewicz, afterwards by Mr. C. H. Read of the British Museum, and also by the writer. In each instance there was agreement, except that the Count read at the commencement . . A · VAL and terminated with FAVSTA. There are certainly indications of letters at the beginning and ending of the inscription, but the abrasion of

Fig. 45.—INSCRIPTION ON BOWL, Plate XII.

the surface at the points of breakage makes it difficult exactly to determine their form. The inscription, following the general rule, probably began at the bottom, in a line perpendicular with the head of Christ. The two ends, again following the rule, would be separated by a space having a cross or some small ornament, thus leaving room at the commencement for FL—Flavius. The space at the end, being longer, admits of various conjectures. The reading suggested by Mr. F. Haverfield—that the missing portion may have been A · AVG · VX · VIVAT · IN · DEO—is very probably correct; it is of the requisite length to fill the vacant space.

The locality where the bowl was discovered is unknown to the writer. He had intended asking Count Tyszkiewicz the name of the dealer who sold the object, together with other particulars; but seeing that the Count at the time was evidently unwell, he waited for a more convenient opportunity. That occasion never occurred. When next the writer visited Rome the most amiable and intelligent of connoisseurs, the most enthusiastic of modern collectors, had departed this life. As the dealer appears to have been resident in Rome, it might naturally be supposed that the bowl had been found either in that city or elsewhere in Italy. But the Count's reputation for being a ready purchaser of rare works of ancient art extended beyond the land of his adoption. It is therefore possible that the dealer may have been merely acting as agent for another member of the confraternity in the East or elsewhere.

The regret is natural that no tidings can be learnt relating to the discovery of the object. At least some information respecting its history and classification might thereby have been obtained. The situation,

however, is not singular. Some of the most interesting works of ancient art have presented themselves to the notice of the student in a manner equally mysterious and unaccountable. They have seemed rather to have dropped from the clouds than to have been dug out of the bowels of the earth. Not all of these have belonged to a hitherto unknown class; but where such has been the case, future discoveries have often, happily, revealed their true artistic position and relationships. The Constantine bowl is but one of several instances which have occurred within the past dozen years, where what must have been important classes of Egyptian ceramic art have become known by the discovery of single examples of the wares, and sometimes only by small fragments.

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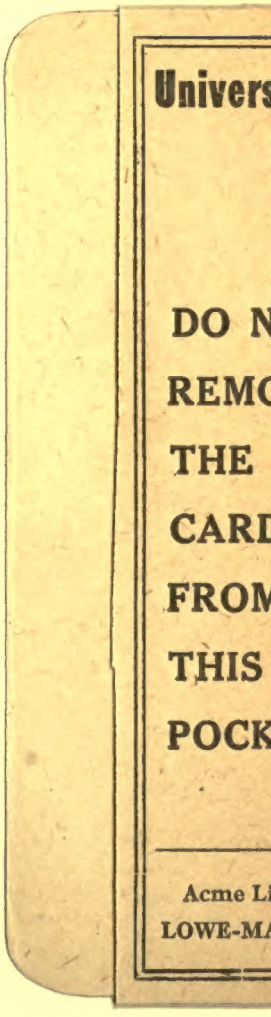
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