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The School House
Stirling

· RECOLLECTIONS OF NAPLES,

BEING

A SELECTION FROM THE PLATES

CONTAINED IN

IL REAL MUSEO BORBONICO,

OF THE

STATUES, VASES, CANDELABRA,

&c.

DISCOVERED AT

HERCULANEUM AND POMPEII.

BY THE

REV. FREDERICK WRENCH, M.A.

Quidquid sub terra est, in apricum proferet ætas.—Hor. Lib. I. Ep. 6.

The Profits of this Work are applied towards the erection of a School House in the Parish of Stowting, Kent.

LONDON :

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186, STRAND.

MDCCCXXXIX.

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THE Royal Bourbon Museum at Naples, as is well known to the traveller, contains the valuable relics of antiquity discovered among the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii. The destruction of these cities, by eruptions of the neighbouring volcano, has proved the means of preserving these masterpieces of art, alike from the hand of time, and the barbarian. The prominent place which these treasures occupy in the studio of the artist, and their capability of being applied to the improvement of our national taste, point out the advantage of a publication, containing a selection of the most elegant specimens of vases, statues, candelabra, &c., from the larger and more expensive work published under royal authority at Naples.—The description of the plates is an abridged translation from the original Italian.



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RECOLLECTIONS OF NAPLES,

BEING

A SELECTION FROM THE PLATES

CONTAINED IN

IL REAL MUSEO BORBONICO.

TO THE SUBSCRIBERS.

In bringing this little Work to a conclusion, the Editor offers his sincere thanks to those Friends who have kindly given him their patronage, and has the greatest pleasure in informing them, that through their liberality and the kindness of his Father, the Patron of the living, who has given him a piece of ground for the purpose, he has been encouraged to erect a School House in the Parish of Stowting, which was opened at Michaelmas, and already receives above forty children for daily instruction.

The Editor trusts that the profits of this Work will nearly defray the expenses of the building.

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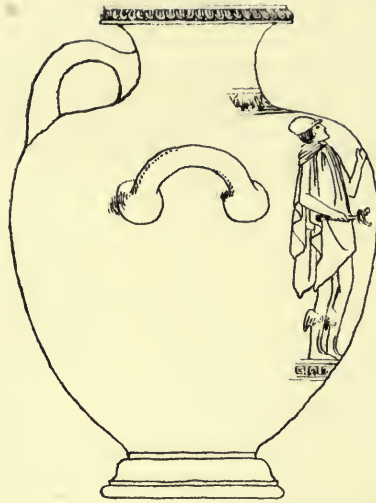
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PLATE I.

AN ETRUSCAN VASE.

THE earliest designs known in the art of painting, are to be found on the celebrated Etruscan vases, of which the finest, as to execution and varnish, have been discovered at Nola, whence the original of the accompanying delineation is supposed to have been obtained. The subject on the vase represents Apollo seated on a fragment of a rock, holding a lyre in his left-hand, the right elbow resting upon his knee, and the palm of his hand supporting his chin.

In the centre of the group is a female with a lance in her left-hand, and her right resting on her side; her eyes are modestly fixed on the god, who regards her with much expression.

Behind her is Mercury, with the chief ensigns of his power and offices, his talaria, or winged buskins, the petasus on his head, and his caduceus in his right-hand. He appears to be assisting the timid female in her address to the god.

Some have supposed this female to be Cassandra asking the gift of divination of Apollo; others, that it is Marpessa, forcibly carried away from her husband, on Mount Ida, by the same god; but the Canon Andrea di Torio is inclined to suppose that it is a representation of Apollo Prostaterius, to whom Mercury is presenting a female anxious to supplicate his assistance on some occasion of importance.



J. W. de L.

PLATE II.

A R I S T I D E S.

THIS elegant production of Grecian art rivals the master-pieces of ancient sculpture; compared with the most celebrated of these, we should hesitate to which to accord the preference. This statue, while it surprises the connoisseur, enchants the cursory spectator. The former sees in it Aristides himself stepping forward to harangue the people, and appreciates the exact evidence it affords of the action in which he is supposed to be engaged. The lightness and elegance of the drapery he regards as the last finish of the sculptor's art. The latter, although incapable of explaining these various beauties, feels their power.

The half bald head, the slightly bearded chin, the air of calmness and repose, indicative of the serenity of the mind, the drapery forming, as it were, part of the figure, the dignified and expressive attitude, as if the orator were on the point of commencing his address, are secrets of which the accomplished artist has availed himself to produce so admirable an effect, while the arms are closely folded beneath the mantle.

The moment chosen is supposed to be that in which Aristides upbraids the Lacedæmonians with not having given their aid and counsel for the preservation of the remnant of Greece from the invasion of the barbarians, who, in consequence of their neglect and inertness, had occupied Athens.

Canova, it is said, was so enraptured with the perfect execution displayed in this statue, that he stood motionless before it for some hours. It is justly considered one of the finest specimens of sculptured drapery extant.

(1) 1850

TABLE

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in 1850

as ascertained
by the
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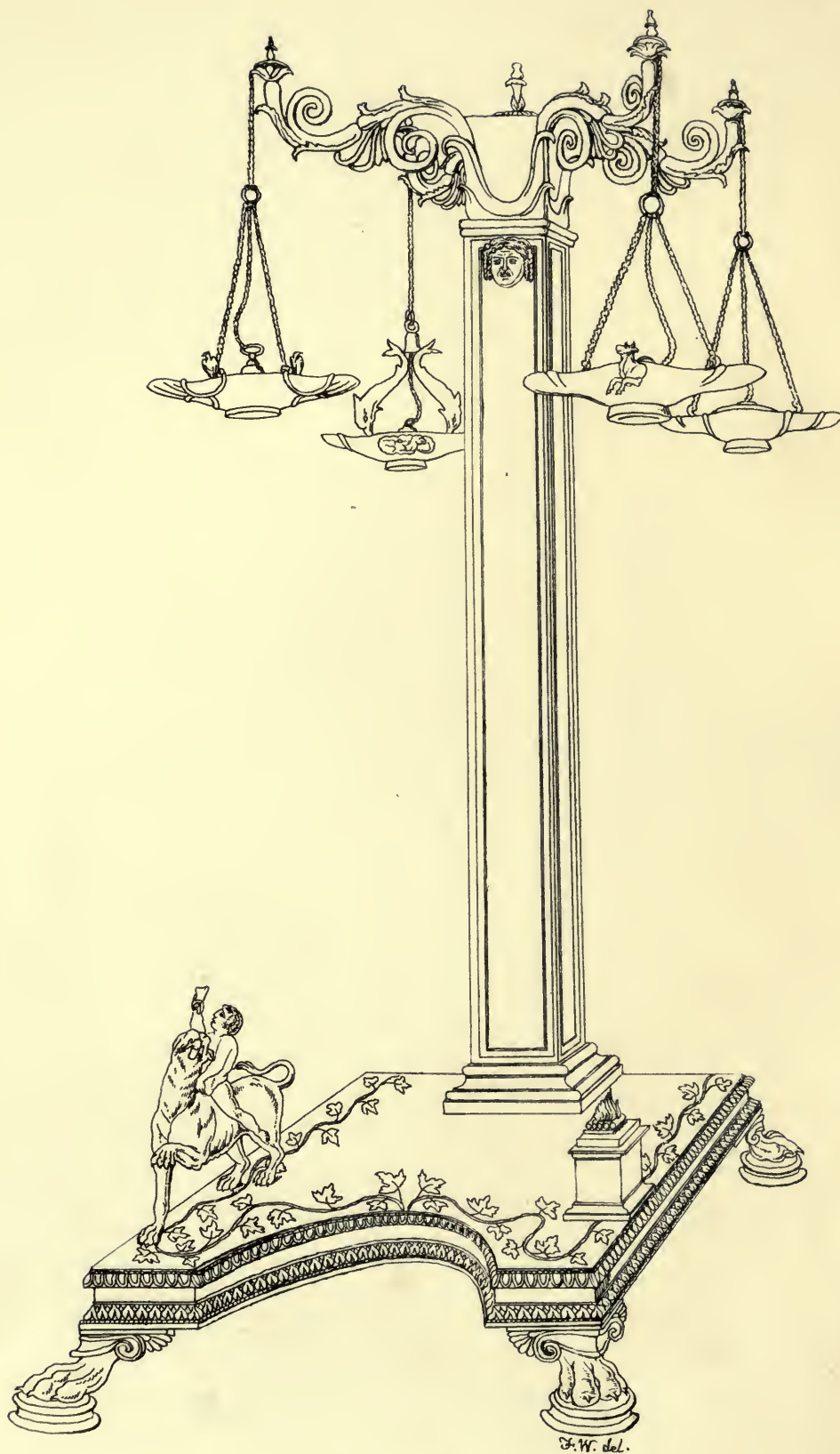


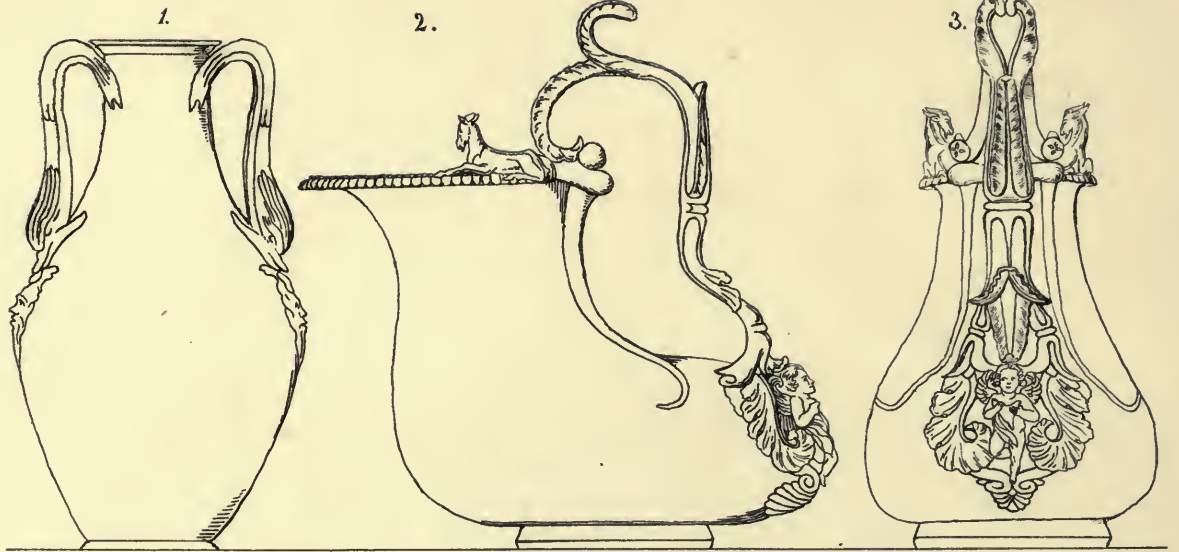
PLATE III.

A BRONZE CANDELABRUM.

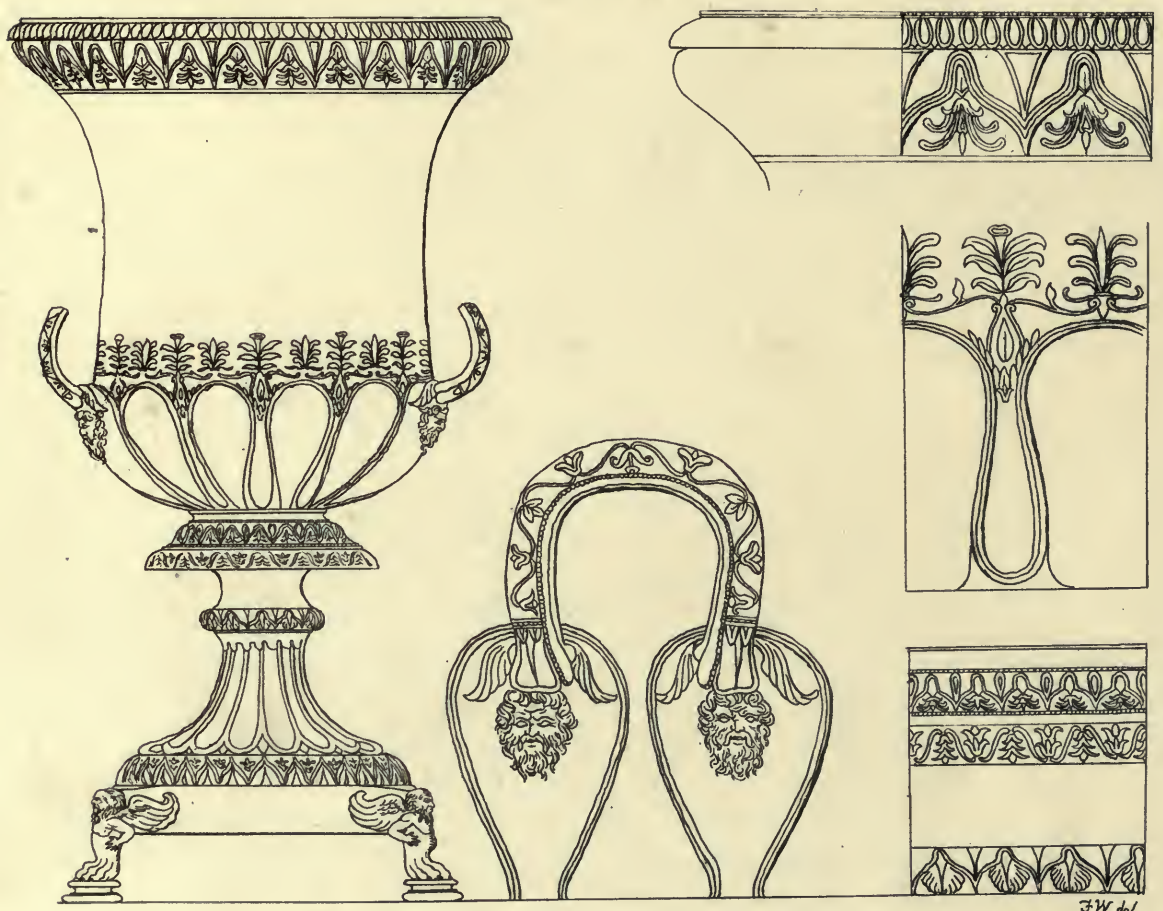
THIS specimen, the original of which was discovered at Pompeii, in 1812, most probably belonged to some votary of Bacchus.

From a rectangular plinth, supported by four lion's claws, which rest upon as many circular feet, rises a rectangular pillar terminating in a fanciful capital. On the front of the pillar is seen a mask of a female Bacchanal, with a beautiful countenance and flowing hair. On the reverse is an ox's head, with the Greek name Bucranios. Four elegantly carved branches spring from the extreme points of the abacus, and from these are suspended four lamps with double burners, which were not found with the candelabrum, but evidently form part of it, though all of them are not exactly of the same size. One only is without ornament; the other three are adorned with representations of various animals. The lamp which hangs at the opposite angle to the plain one, has, in addition to the shells at its two extreme ends, two eagles in full relief grasping thunderbolts. The third has two half-oxen, issuing from its centre, one on either side. On the same part of the fourth, are two elephants' heads, and instead of the chains which uphold the others, two dolphins are introduced, which, at the point where their tails unite, support a small ball with a ring above it, from whence the lamp is suspended. On one side of the plinth, the beauty and peculiar shape of which is particularly striking, is an altar; on the other, an infant Bacchus, mounted on a tigress.

The lucernæ were made of gold, silver, and sometimes even of stone, and their form varied according to the taste of the maker.



4.



F.W. del.

PLATE IV.

THREE BRONZE VASES.

FIG. 1. A gracefully-shaped Hydria, or Water-pitcher, with two handles, in the form of Dolphins, each holding in its mouth a mask, the hair of which is represented by the leaves of some water-plant, emblematical of the use to which the vase is appropriated.

Vessels of this form, being peculiarly adapted for keeping liquids cool, are still in general use in the East, and in most warm climates.

FIG. 2 and 3. A Vase, taken in two different positions; which, deprived of the handle, in shape resembles a buskin. It is supported on a very small base, and the lip is elegantly finished with the egg, or beaded border; but that which peculiarly distinguishes it, is the handle, formed of a curved spear, richly ornamented with a variety of leaves, and resting the two arms into which it is divided, upon two Cornucopia.

Upon the lip are two figures of recumbent goats; and amidst Acanthus leaves, whence the handle springs, stands a winged child, holding in its hands what appears to be a leathern oil, or wine skin.

FIG. 4. This Vase, in the form of a drinking cup, was found in the entrance of a house in Pompeii. It is adorned with specimens of the most exquisite workmanship; and is the more striking from the rare combination it presents of bronze, inlaid with plates of silver, which, from their delicacy, form a beautiful contrast to their dark ground. Our admiration is also attracted by the perfect harmony of form which exists between the foot and the body of the vase; presenting to our view a justly proportioned whole.

When we contemplate the costly splendour of this vase, it is only the absence of any sacred emblem in its ornament, and the circumstance of its having been found in a private house, which lead us to conclude that it must have served for some domestic, rather than religious, purpose.

A front view of the handle, as well as a specimen of the carving, is given on an enlarged scale.



J.W. del.

Chapman & Hall. 136, Strand London 1836

PLATE V.

MINERVA.

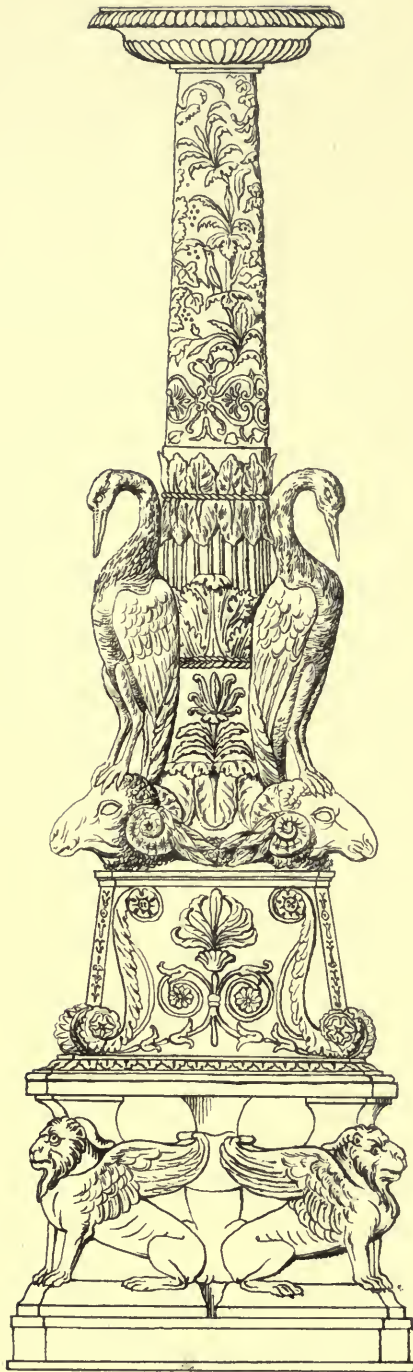
FROM the characteristics of the goddess Minerva, as well as her having sprung armed from the head of Jupiter, she is generally recognised by the Ancients in connexion with warfare and battle ; uniting in her attributes two peculiar essentials for the character of a perfect warrior,—consummate bravery, with unerring prudence.

This idea, formed of the deity, has been well expressed in the beautiful statue before us.

The magnificent helmet, which surmounts the head, is crested by a sphynx, supported on either side by a winged horse ; the former indicative of prudence, the latter of the readiness and celerity with which the goddess executes her warlike resolves. The bucculæ, or oreillettes, are unclasped and turned up, as if to allow of her taking breath after some terrible engagement ; probably that, in which, valiantly fighting at the side of her father Jupiter, she contributed no small assistance in repelling the attacks of the presumptuous sons of Earth, in their daring attempt to scale the walls of Olympus.

The attitude, indeed, of the figure, denotes a temporary rest from contest, as leaning on her spear, (which appears not to have been found with the statue) she, with outstretched hand, counsels the assembled gods the course next best to be pursued. Her bosom, as if panting with recent exertion, seems to cause the knotted coil of serpents, encircling the head of the Gorgon which adorns her breast-plate, to start into life, and twist and untwist themselves in a thousand tortuous folds.

The celestial aspect, the lofty and majestic bearing of the goddess, the ample garments, and arrangement of the shortened peplum, all so skilfully pourtrayed in this exquisite creation of art, vividly embody the idea of Wisdom pouring forth the full tide of eloquence in debate, roused by the fresh excitement of action in the field.



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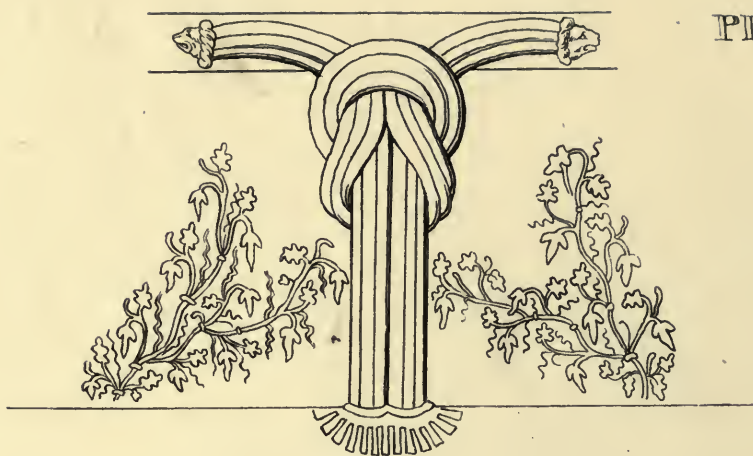
PLATE VI.

A CANDELABRUM OF WHITE MARBLE.

It is worthy of observation that all the choicest candelabra of antiquity, used in the heathen temples, are based upon altars ; doubtless, as a memorial that the first fires with which these sacred edifices were lighted up, burnt only upon altars and tripods ; till through the medium of the fine arts, to which this false religion was indebted for its highest state of perfection, the candelabrum was introduced.

The base of this candelabrum, which is supported by three winged lions, is formed of a triangular altar, tastefully carved in leaves.

From its upper angles jut out three rams' heads, united from the centre of the horns by as many festoons of laurel, and each bearing a stork erect, in its turn supporting the stem of the candelabrum, which, elaborately ornamented with foliage, rises from its base, tapering towards the top, whereon rests the cup in which the light burned.



F. W. del.

Chapman & Hall 136 Strand London. 1837.

PLATE VII.

AN ETRUSCAN VASE.

THE unique form of the component parts, no less than the ornaments which grace this Vase, distinguish it as worthy the attention of the Virtuoso. It equally resembles the two classes, called the bell, and the chalice shaped; but, from the peculiarity of its handles, it is known in Italy as the vase with the knotted handles.

The lip is edged with, what is called, the egg and tongue border, in relief. The handles, formed as though of cords united and knotted together, are adorned at their upper extremities, with the heads of some quadruped. The body of the cup is fluted, and divided into two compartments by a band, on which is depicted a wreath of leaves, with a swan nestling among them. The foot displays the same kind of ornament, but simply drawn in outline, as we have described on the lip.

A car, drawn by four animals at full speed, which, from the rudeness of their execution, may be denominated either tigers or panthers, is represented on the neck of the vase, enclosed between branches of vine. The subject on the opposite side is nearly identical. A winged genius, holding the reins in his left hand, guides them, and urges them on with the spear in his right; while a Cupid, also winged, grasping in his left the bridle of one of the animals, and having in his right a thyrsus, precedes the charioteer.

With the exception of the two cars, and the little mantles of the genii, which, as well as their bodies, are red, the whole is painted in white, with a yellowish kind of tracery on a black ground.

The painter, in the execution of his work, has left much to the imagination; but from the devices on the vase, it may fairly be presumed to have been a wine-cup.

PL.VIII.



F. W. del.

Chapman & Hall, 186, Strand London. 1837.

PLATE VIII.

S A T U R N.

A PAINTING IN FRESCO.

It may not be known to all our readers, that the walls of the buildings, which are discovered under the light ashes, that buried Pompeii, are composed of an extraordinarily compact plaster, which retains the paintings with which they are almost universally decorated, so admirably, that upon water being dashed against them, the subjects stand out with their colours, as vivid and as fresh as if wet from the artist's brush. Many of the best of these fresco paintings have, for their better preservation, been cut out of the walls, and lodged in the Royal Museum, at Naples : among them, one of the most interesting is that of the accompanying Saturn, the god of Time.

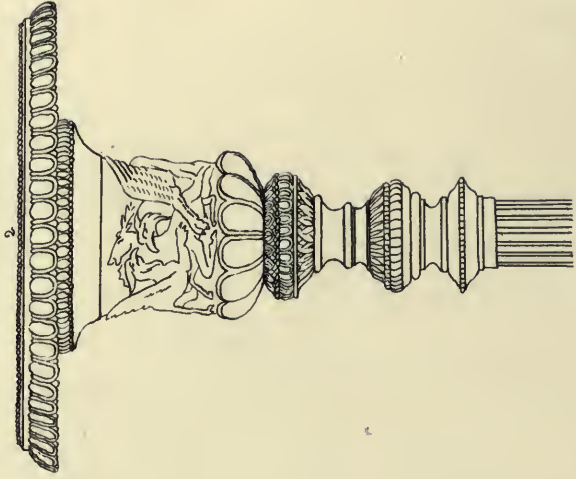
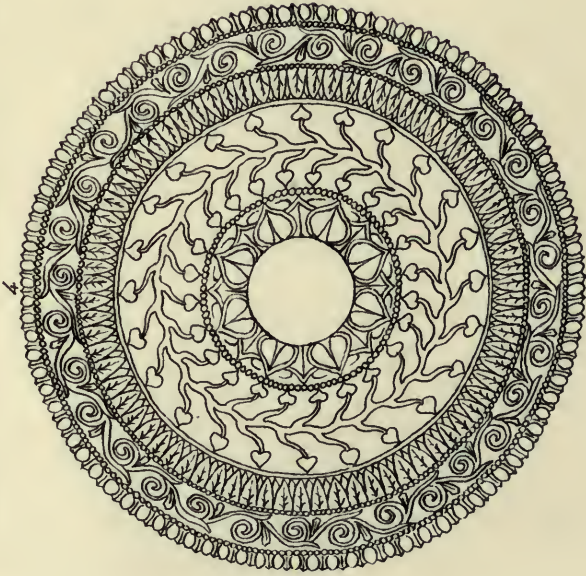
The head and figure are enveloped in a white mantle ; while the right hand grasps a sickle or scythe, as a memorial of that æra, when Saturn, dethroned by Jupiter, fled into Italy, and gave name to Latium, where he civilized the wild and barbarous tribes, and taught them the arts of agriculture and commerce.

*Aurea quæ perhibent, illo sub rege fuerunt
Secula : sic placida populos in pace regebat.*

Deservedly was that enlightened and benevolent reign termed "the golden age," and deservedly in its honour were the Saturnalia instituted.

The circumstance of the head being veiled, as it is usually found, in statues of this god, is supposed by some to denote that he was constantly employed in meditating plans for the benefit of mankind ; or, as the learned Visconti has suggested, it may signify the obscurity in which the origin of Time was then involved.

Representations of Saturn are very rarely met with, either sculptured in marble or in stone. A single painting has, however, been discovered in the sepulchre of the Nasoni family ; and this scarcity greatly enhances the value of our present subject.



5716 del.

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PLATE IX.

A BRONZE CANDELABRUM.

THIS beautiful candelabrum is singularly rich in ornaments. The embellishments of the disk chiefly consist of leaves gracefully and fancifully disposed, but those of the vase, surmounting the fluted column, display more taste and invention. On it are represented four griffins, in the act of devouring their prey; two of them having seized a majestic bull, while the others have fastened on a stag.

Griffins are so often introduced as favourite ornaments on ancient reliques, that it may not be inappropriate to observe that these animals were formerly supposed to guard the golden sands of the river Arimaspias, in Scythia; and we find in Herodotus, Pliny, and other ancient writers, frequent allusions to their combats with the Arimaspi,—a people, like the Cyclops, with one eye in the middle of their foreheads, who lived on its banks. They are also said to have attacked and prevailed over the lion, and even over the ponderous elephant; the tiger alone, among all the quadrupeds, having been able, by its extreme swiftness, to evade their pursuit.



F. W. del.

PLATE X.

AN ETRUSCAN URN.

It was considered among the Ancients one of the most devoted acts of respect and affection to the memory of their deceased friends, after having burnt their remains, to collect the ashes in an urn of costly materials, or rich decorations, according to the wealth or rank of the deceased. From the ceremonies in which the figures painted on this vase are engaged, this is evidently a funeral urn.

On one side is a female, whose noble rank is apparent from the richness of her dress, her radiated crown, and the ornaments on her neck and arms. She is seated in a pensive attitude, on the steps of a sepulchre, with her left arm affectionately encircling the pillar, which is surmounted by a vase and fillet. Another female, crowned with a chaplet, and carrying on her head a basket containing a fillet, apples, and branches of cypress, stands before her, and presents the funeral wreath, and the customary vase of precious ointment. Behind her is an old woman, clad in a loose robe, who bends over the tomb, in the act of depositing, as her offering, a sprig of myrtle.

This interesting scene reminds us of that in which Euripides has represented the aged nurse of Agamemnon bewailing her beloved master, and, at the command of his daughter Electra, bringing her myrtle bough to his grave. It also explains the words of Hyginus, "that apples, (the *εγκαρπα τελη* of the Greeks,) were in honour of her deceased Protesilaus, brought by a servant to Laodamia."

On the opposite side of the urn we have likewise a woman sitting, and richly attired, although her dress differs slightly from that of the former figure. She is also crowned and adorned with jewels, and has a sceptre in her right hand. A bearded figure, the head of which is encircled with a wreath, presents to her with one hand a chalice, while with the other he supports himself on a staff.



F.W. del.

PLATE XI.

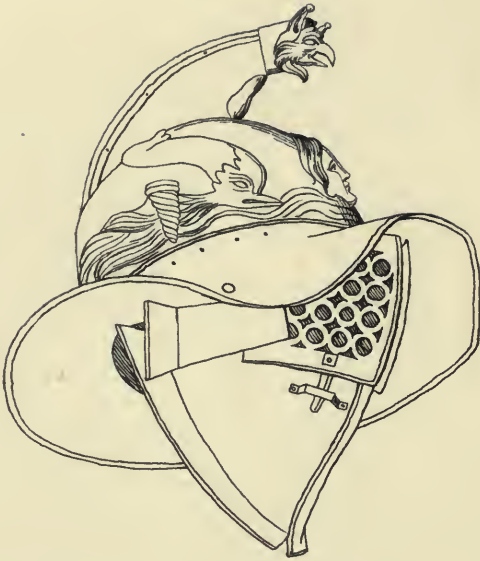
C E R E S.

A PAINTING IN FRESCO.

THERE is so much simplicity, yet dignity, in the attitude—such an air of benignity and seriousness, tinged with a slight expression of languor and melancholy in the countenance—of this painting of the goddess Ceres, that our gaze is instantly arrested with admiration. At a glance, they tell of her maternal affection and suffering, when wandering over the world in search of her daughter Proserpine, and of the wisdom with which she roused the inhabitants of earth from their sleep of ignorance, and benevolently taught them to cultivate the barren ground, till it should yield abundance of golden grain, and bring forth all its variety of fruit and vegetation. In her left hand the goddess bears, close to a small pillar, an osier basket, filled with ears of corn and other fruits of the earth, that she may at once be recognised by her attributes as “the great benefactress of mankind.” In her right she holds an ivory torch, entwined by a ribbon, in allusion to the two lofty pines which she lighted at night from the flames of *Ætna*, to assist her in her disconsolate search for her lost Proserpine.

Her beautiful fair hair is simply arranged, and ornamented with a wreath of wheat-ears, interlaced with a long string of pearls, which falls from her head over her shoulders: these pearls probably are in the place of the acorns, with which, as the primitive food of mankind, the original representations of Ceres were adorned. Her violet coloured robe falls in majestic folds to her feet, which are covered with white socks or slippers: over this robe is a white transparent peplum, drawn closely round the neck, and disposed with inimitable grace.

This figure is painted on a red ground; and the effect is greatly enhanced by the glory, or celestial cloud, which, as the characteristic symbol of the more eminent divinities, encircles the head.



J. W. del.

PLATE XII.

A HELMET AND GREAVES OF BRASS.

It appears from Homer, Hesiod, and other writers of their times, as well as from Virgil, and authors of a later date, that the armour of the primitive heroes was usually made of brass. The original helmet of the annexed plate, is of Roman workmanship, and bears on it, sculptured in relief, a head of the beautiful Medusa, the favourite of Neptune, supported by two dolphins; whence we may conclude the helmet to have belonged to some naval hero. Under the dolphins are small tubes, in the form of shells, in which to fix the feathers, and, for crest, appears a griffin's head, with ears erect. (This animal was first introduced as an ornament to the helmet, by Phidias, in his famous statue of Minerva at Athens.) The endeavour to render the crest, from its towering height and imposing form, an object of terror to the enemy, was considered by the ancient warriors a matter of some moment; hence Virgil introduces his hero Turnus, bearing on his triple crest the dreadful Chimæra; and we read in Homer, that the infant Astyanax, started back at the sight of his father Hector, fully equipped for the battle, scared at

“the shaggy crest
Playing tremendous o'er his helmet's height.”

Attached to the bucculæ, under what is metaphorically termed *γείσον* or penthouse, is the vizor, used to protect the eyes from assault, and to conceal the countenance of the warrior, when he wished to pass unknown.

Below is given the front and side view of a greave, which, unless time has destroyed its fellow, served to protect the right leg while the other was left to be defended by the shield as, says Vegezio, was sometimes the custom. Pliny relates that the Carians were the first inventors of greaves, made of brass, and highly ornamented. Homer constantly distinguishes the Greeks as *χαλκοκνημίδας*—the brazen-greaved Greeks. On the two side edges of our drawing, are small rings or buttons, (*επισφυρία*) with which the greaves were fastened on the leg. Various masks adorn part of the surface; some resting on a tripod, and others on a bacchanalian basket, accompanied by a club and a shepherd's crook, and amid the variety of arabesque work which covers the rest of the greave, is seen an eagle fighting with a serpent, the favourite emblem of military courage used by poets and artists; while ears of corn, carelessly intermingled with pieces of oak, seem to signify that martial courage is best exercised in defence of the country, the groves, and peaceful fields.



F W del.

PLATE XIII.

TWO SILVER CUPS.

ERE the art of moulding and cutting glass was discovered, (we are told by Pliny) that the drinking vessels of the wealthy were generally made of gold or silver. Herculaneum and Pompeii furnish from their ruins a variety of cups of these precious materials, adorned with subjects the more choice, and workmanship the more exquisite, in proportion to the value of the metal of which they are formed.

On the first of these cups, of which only two fragments remain, is carved the combat of two warriors. An arm, in the act of hurling a spear at the enemy, alone is left, of one of the figures; and of the other combatant, who raises his shield to ward off the blow, enough remains to show how happy must have been the conception, and how accurate the execution of the whole. The youthful hero carries on the contest, clad only in his helmet and his *εφαπτις*, or military cloak, after the custom of those martial times, when the warriors, relying more upon their skill than upon armour for defence, spread throughout the world the fame of their bravery. It was the prowess of these heroes of the ancient world, which furnished subjects to the romantic imaginations of its artists. Thus Perseus, Hercules, and Theseus, may be seen constantly sculptured, engraved and painted, on a thousand different relics.

On the other cup, which is in a much better state of preservation than the first, are four branches of Plane, remarkable for the delicacy and boldness of the chiseling.



F. W. del.

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PLATE XIV.

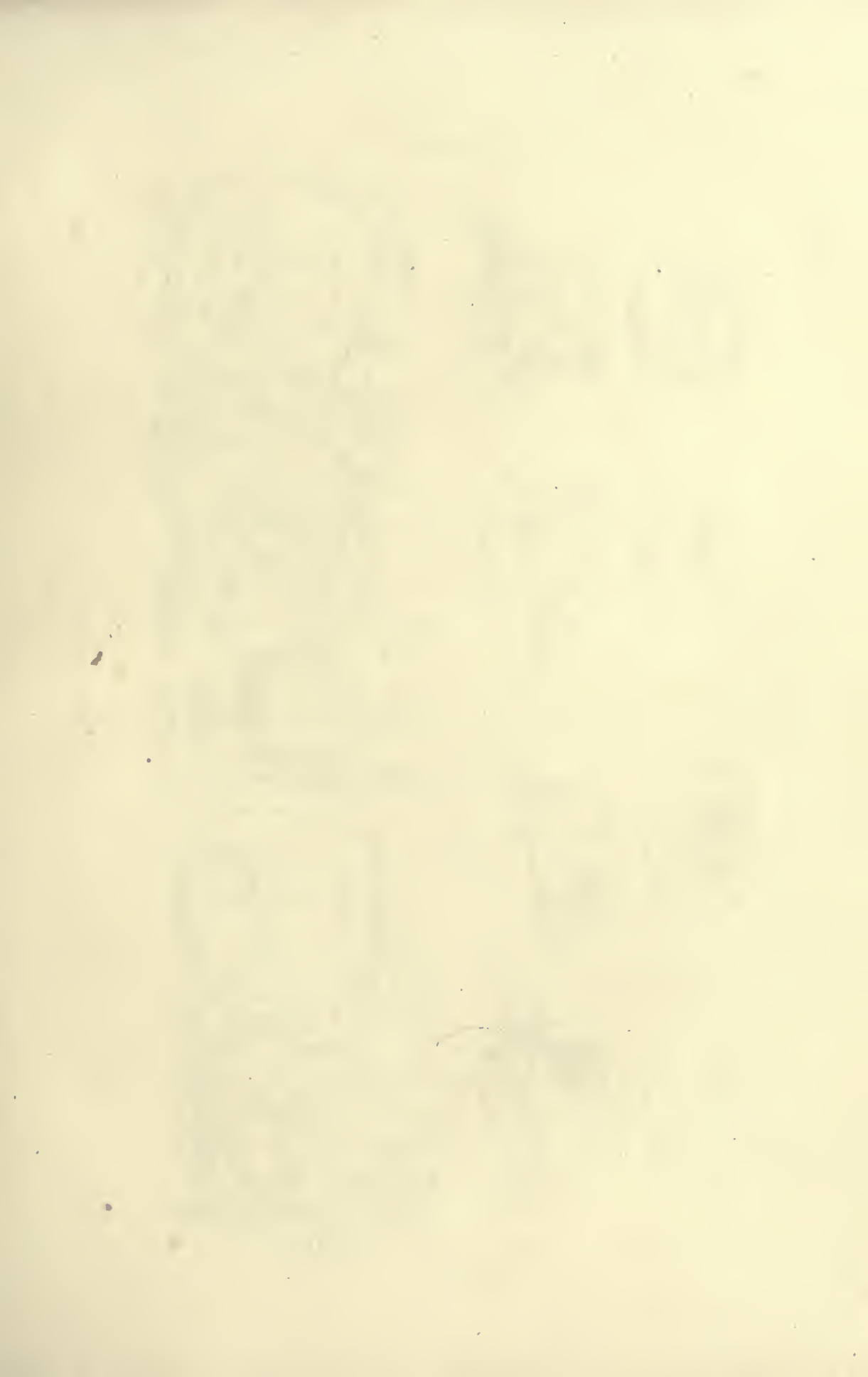
THALIA.

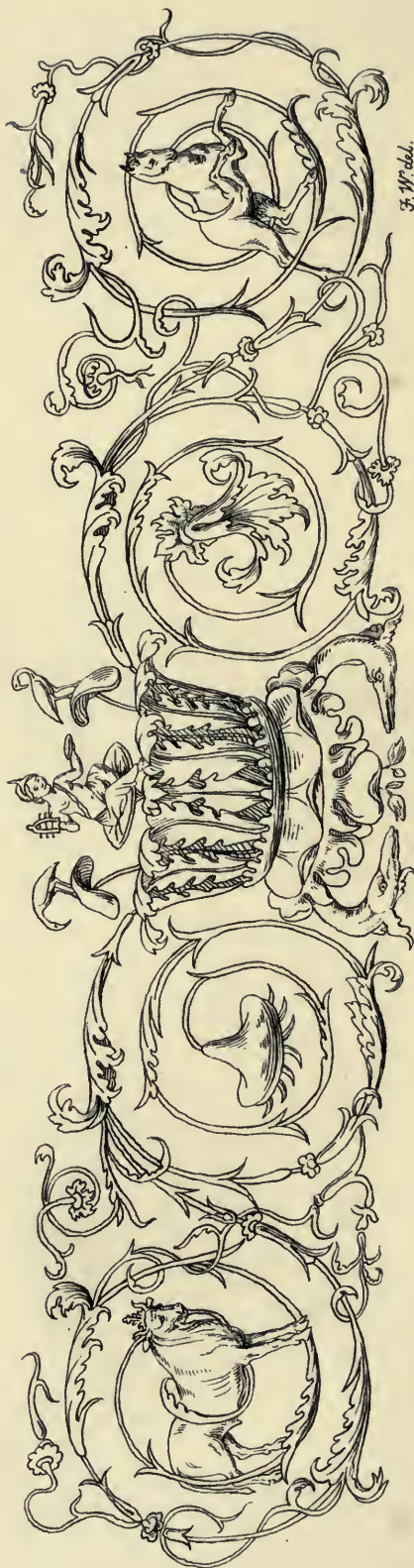
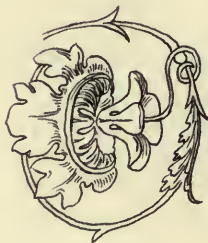
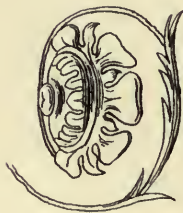
(A Statue in Grecian Marble, from Herculaneum.)

“Io de' comici numeri maestra
Son la Musa Thalia, che dalle scene
Festiva il vizio scherzando pungo.”

So well does the attitude of playful simplicity in this beautiful statue, embody the classical poet's description, that we should not have hesitated for a moment in affirming it to be the Muse of Comedy, if the head, hands, and emblems, had not been wanting when it was rescued from its incrustation of lava at Herculaneum; and we are, nevertheless, still tempted to agree with Signor Solari, who, from the composition, the disposal of the drapery, and the similarity of the sandals to those found in other representations of that muse, was induced to restore it as a Thalia.

The tunic is folded in plaits, and the sleeves are fastened up with small studs; the mantle, which falls loosely over the left shoulder, and is then carelessly thrown round the figure is elegantly gathered up under under the left arm. The modern restorer of the statue has thought fit to add the crook, or curved stick, by which Thalia was distinguished as presiding over rural scenes, pastoral subjects, and the arts of agriculture, as well as the mask which points out her peculiar patronage of comedy and the drama.





J. W. G. del.

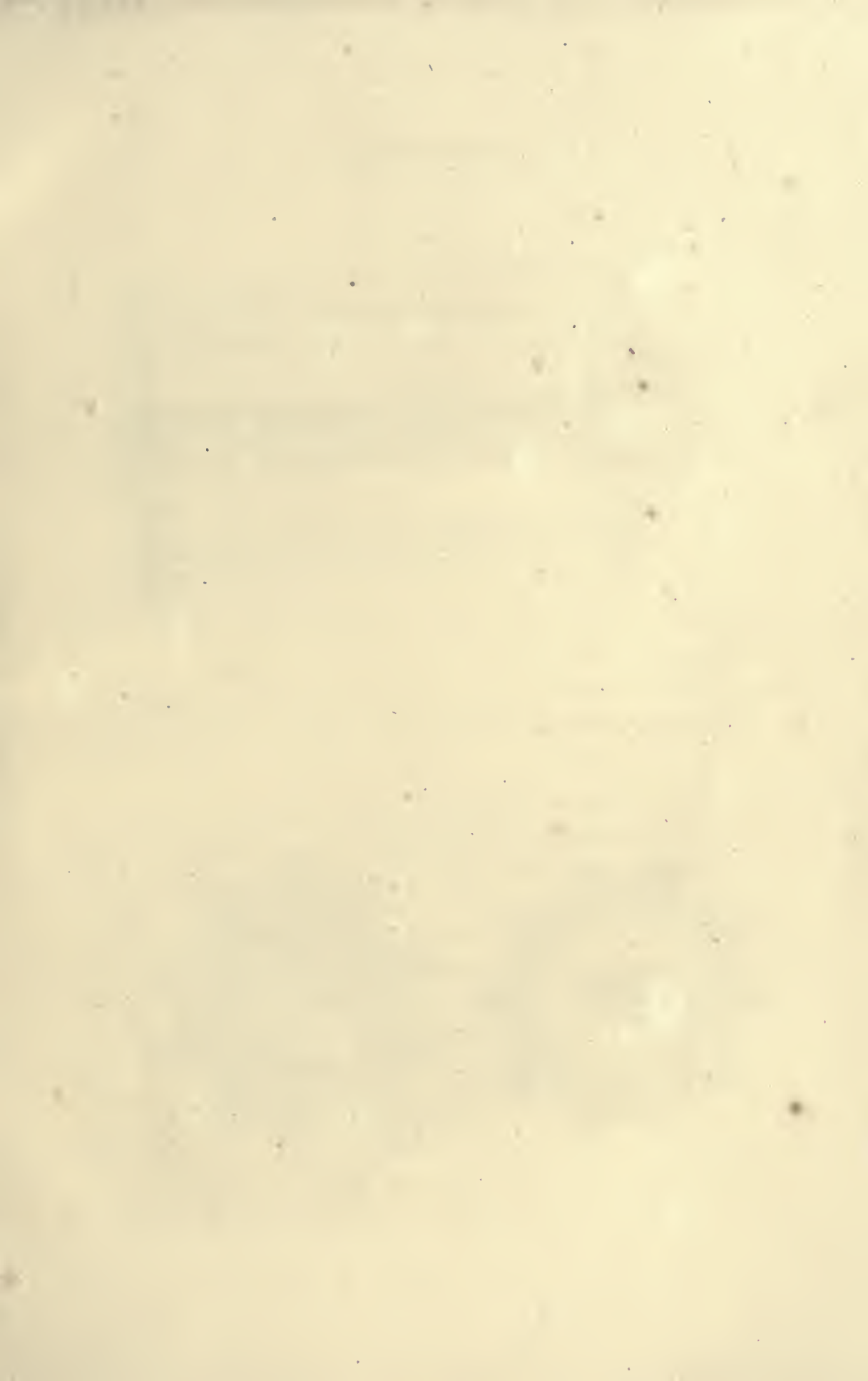
PLATE XV.

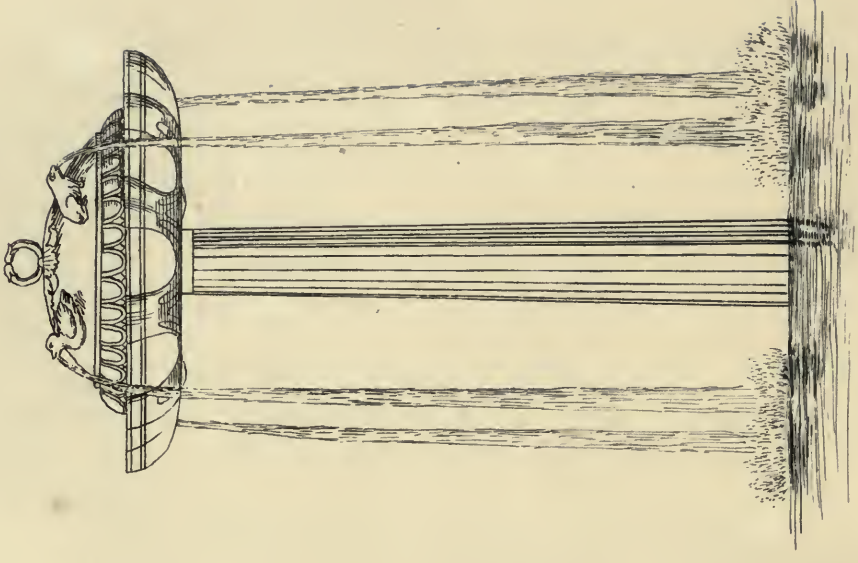
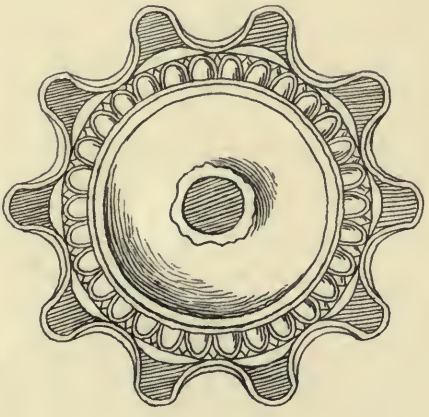
AN ARABESQUE.

(In Fresco.)

IN clearing away the ruins of the palace of Titus, at Herculaneum, a suite of chambers was brought to light, full of grotesque paintings, (thus named from the grottoes in which they were so generally found,) composed of whimsical arrangements of animals, birds, flowers, &c. It was while wandering among these excavations, or grottoes, that Raffaele and Giovanni da Udine were so struck with astonishment and admiration, at the beauty and perfect state of preservation of the paintings, the colours of which, from their not having been exposed to the air, remained fresh and unfaded. Giovanni, inspired by the scene, forthwith applied himself zealously, not only to copy the drawings, but to imitate the stucco, and after various experiments, and much labour, he acquired great fame by his success.

The originality of the accompanying design, taken from one of these fresco paintings, consists in its representing a lion, a tiger, and other animals, at speed, traversing the leafy boughs of some plant, which, like coils of rope, encircle them; a bull, entangled by the horns, in a species of lotus, is arrested in his full career, as if by magic, without his weight's affecting the natural involutions of the plant, the flower of which rests upon two crocodiles, whose fore paws are converted into leaves. The little figure with a sistrum, or timbrel, in his right hand, and a patera in his left, perched at ease on the centre stamen of the flower, some have supposed to be the Egyptian divinity, Harpocrates, or Orus, often found on Egyptian monuments, in the form, of an infant; and the birds on either side of him are probably figures of the venerated Ibis, a waterfowl of the great river of Africa. These last are lightly poised on the anthers of the flower, which rise rather higher than the stamen on which the boy sits.





J. W. del.

PLATE XVI.

A FOUNTAIN IN GRECIAN MARBLE.

That the Ancients paid attention to the decoration of their fountains, may be inferred from the numerous remains to be met with at every step in the several streets of Pompeii; for there appears scarcely to have been a house, either in that city or in Herculaneum, without its fountain.

During the progress of the excavations made in October, 1716, which exposed many gems of art, the academicians of Herculaneum were induced to examine a house in Pompeii, opposite the entrance of that called 'the house of the Faun.' It was in the Tuscan court of this house that the beautiful relic before us was discovered, turned upside down, near the basin for the reception of the water from the surrounding roofs. It consists of a fluted column, supporting a vase; upon its cover are sculptured two ducks, a frog, and two doves, from the mouths of which the water flowed.

As we see it restored, on the right hand side of the plate, it bears the form of a lamp of ten burners, richly sculptured on the under side, with five masks of fauns and satyrs, among graceful foliage; indeed it has all the essentials of a lamp, except that the cavities at the mouths have no communication with the interior of the body of the vase: and since the Ancients formed no work of art without some useful object in view, it appears that the fountain was made in this form, in order that the ten projecting openings might, in lieu of other lights, serve to hold ten small lamps to illuminate the piazza, in the midst of which it was placed. It is easy to imagine the delightful effect that would result from these lights, sparkling upon the limpid waters of the fountain. We may fairly conjecture the house to have belonged to a votary of Bacchus; because, independently of the characteristic ornaments on the fountain already described, there were many other objects found in the house, which had reference to his mysteries; and this is not extraordinary, as the worship of Bacchus prevailed throughout the Campania.



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PLATE XVII.

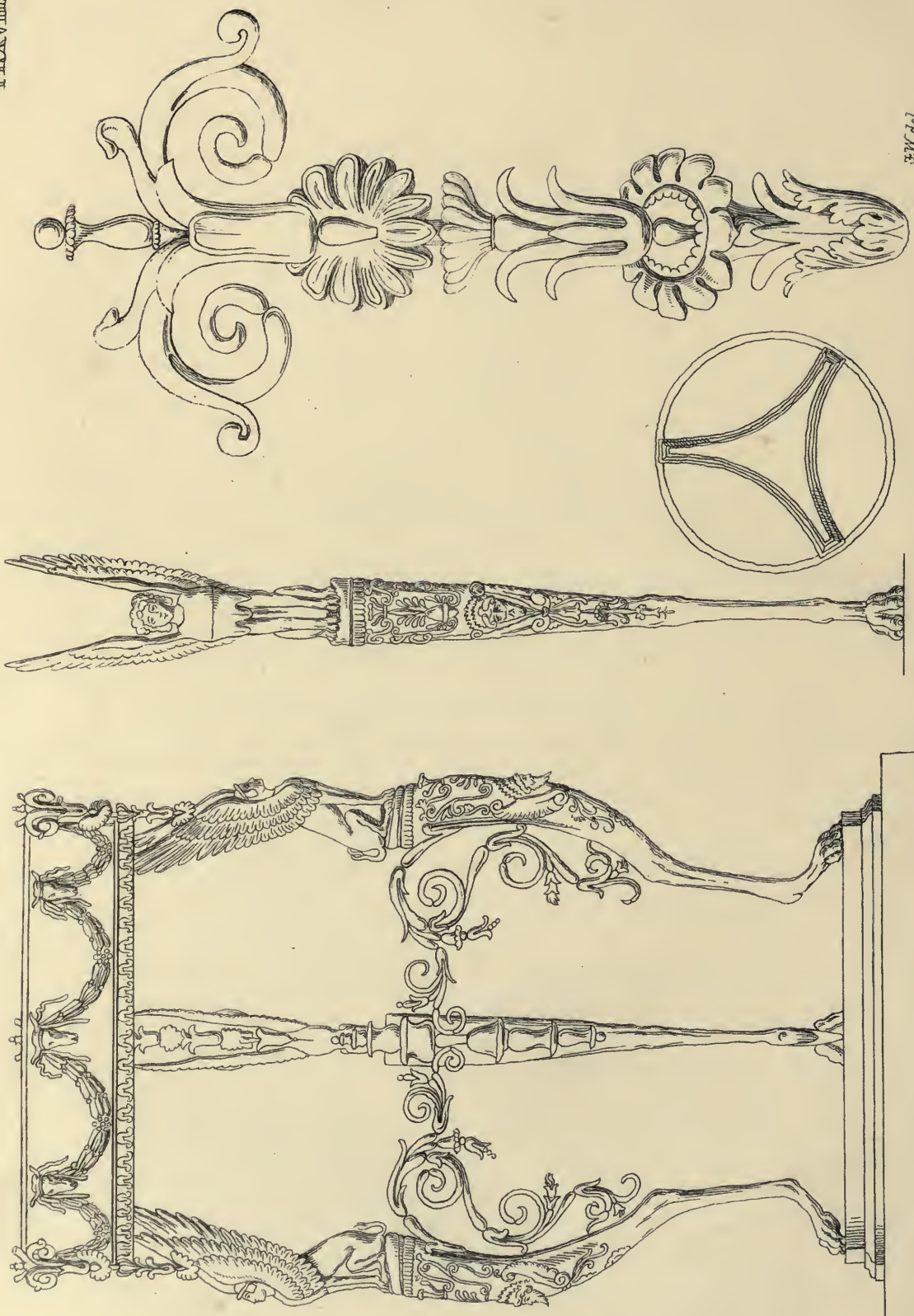
TWO MUSICIANS.

A Painting found in Herculaneum.

In this design, two female figures, the one playing on two* pipes, the other striking the cymbals, appear above a wreath of clustering grapes and vine leaves, whence a small wine-bucket is suspended by a green cord. The foreground is carpeted by tiny leaves, interspersed with roses and other flowers, among which vine leaves and tendrils here and there wildly shoot forth. The mutilated state in which this painting was found, renders its original purpose and extent very doubtful; but from there being a second perpendicular garland on the right of the painting, (where a tiger appears to be springing from among the flowers, and a goat feeding on Bacchus' sacred plant,) corresponding with that already described, we may conclude the two to have been companions; and both wreaths being raised, and united at the top in the shape of an arch, may, as an ornament on some terrace, have formed an agreeable arbour for those who sat beneath its shade.

* In an open space before the church of San Martino, under Fort St. Elmo, at Naples, a soldier was sitting on the ground, playing upon two pipes, precisely in the fashion of those represented in the annexed plate. This mode of playing on double pipes is still by no means uncommon in Italy.—M. S. JOURNAL, Naples, 1830.





371. del.

PLATE XVIII.

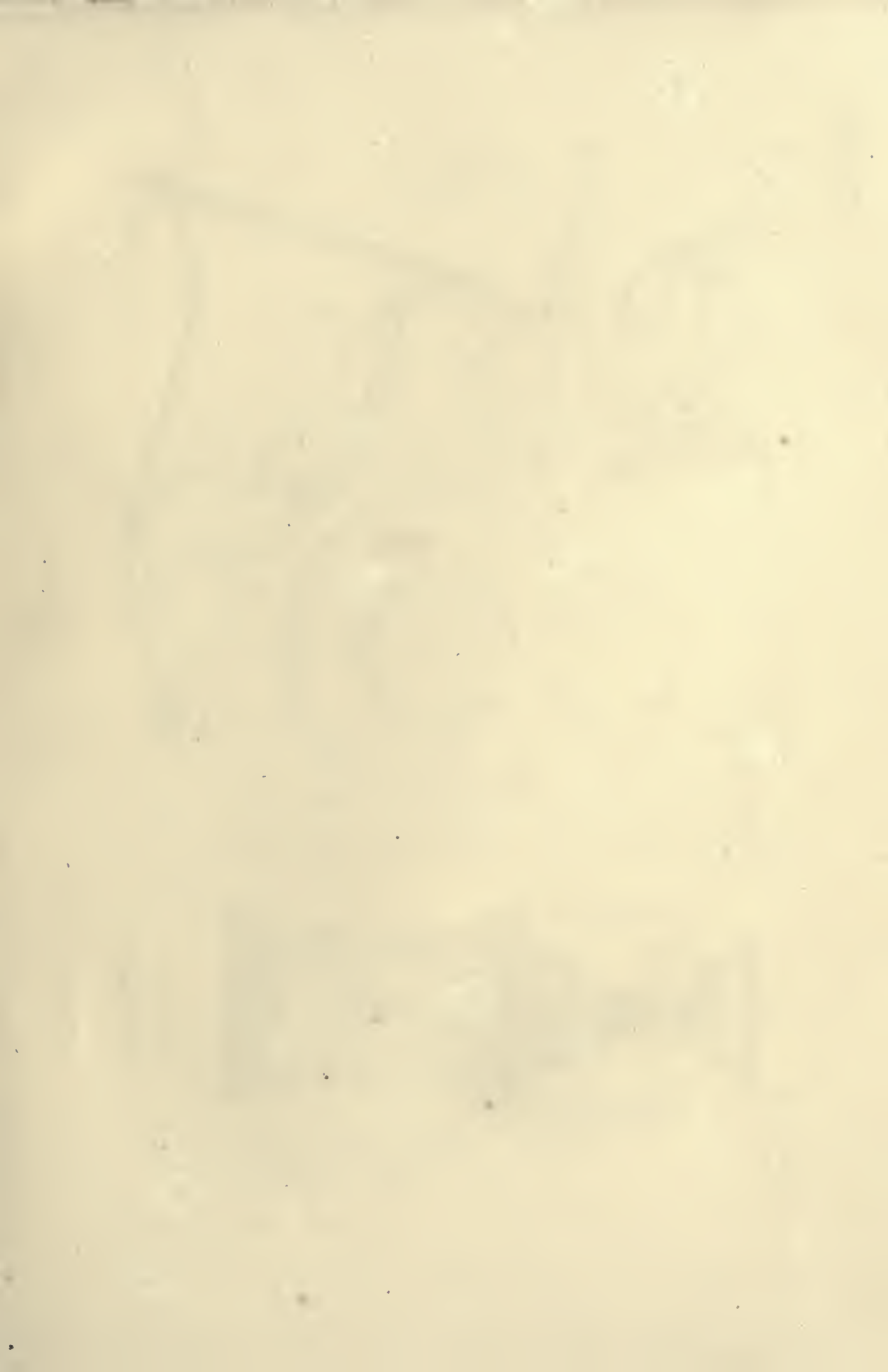
LARGE TRIPOD,

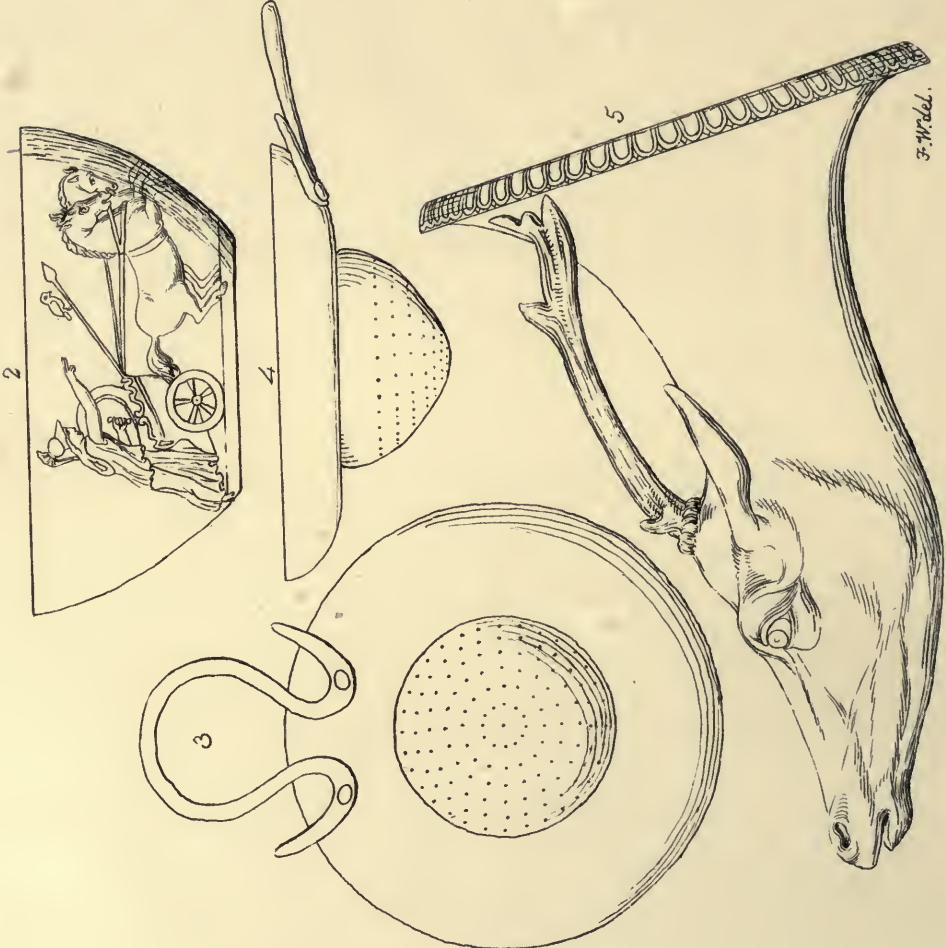
In Bronze.

In the cultivation of the arts, it was a peculiar excellence of the Greeks to adapt the form of their utensils to the purposes for which they were intended, and, by their embellishments, to render them objects of ornament as well as use. A vessel which was to be used indiscriminately either with or without fire under it, could not answer its end better than when placed upon at least three feet ; and thus in the most ancient times, tripods, *lebetes tripôdes*, λεβητες τριποδες were invented.

Dedicated as they were to the service of the temples,—consecrated especially to the worship of Apollo and Bacchus,—given as rewards to conquerors in the games,—they could not fail to become objects whereon artists would lavish their utmost skill. The tripods of the statuaries, Aristandros, Calon, and Polycletus the Argive, were especially celebrated among the Ancients. The subject of the print attracts our admiration by the beauty of its proportions, its arabesques, and its other exquisite carvings. The legs, which are united by fancifully disposed foliage, (as a substitute for the cross-bars, called *ραβδοι*,) terminate in the paws of a lion, these latter resting on a base.

On the exterior of these supports, are sculptured with much taste, bearded heads, above which sit sphinxes, emblematical of the obscurity of the oracles pronounced from the tripod, by the Pythia. The interior of the vase of the tripod, called *κυτος* or *τιβην*, is what we see engraved on the third part of the plate, and upon the band which encircles this vase like a crown, called *σεφανη*, are festoons and heads of oxen in relief. These emblems remind us, that the tripods were destined to receive the blood of the victims sacrificed, when important compacts were entered into.





F. W. Del.

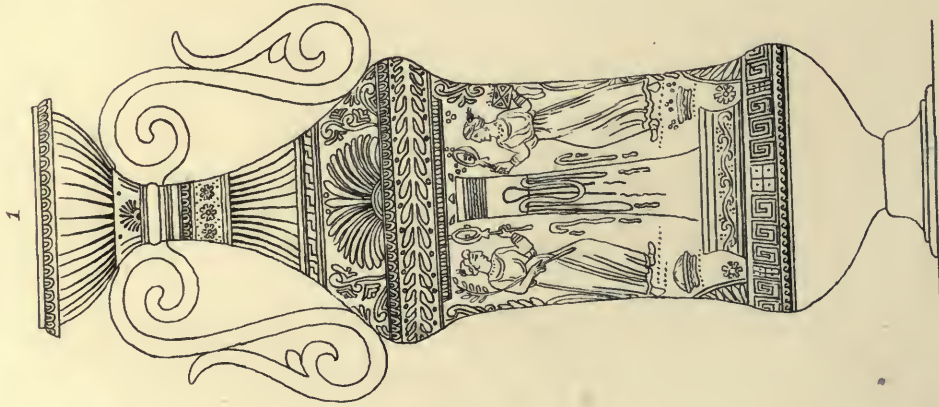


PLATE XIX.

FOUR DIFFERENT DESIGNS.

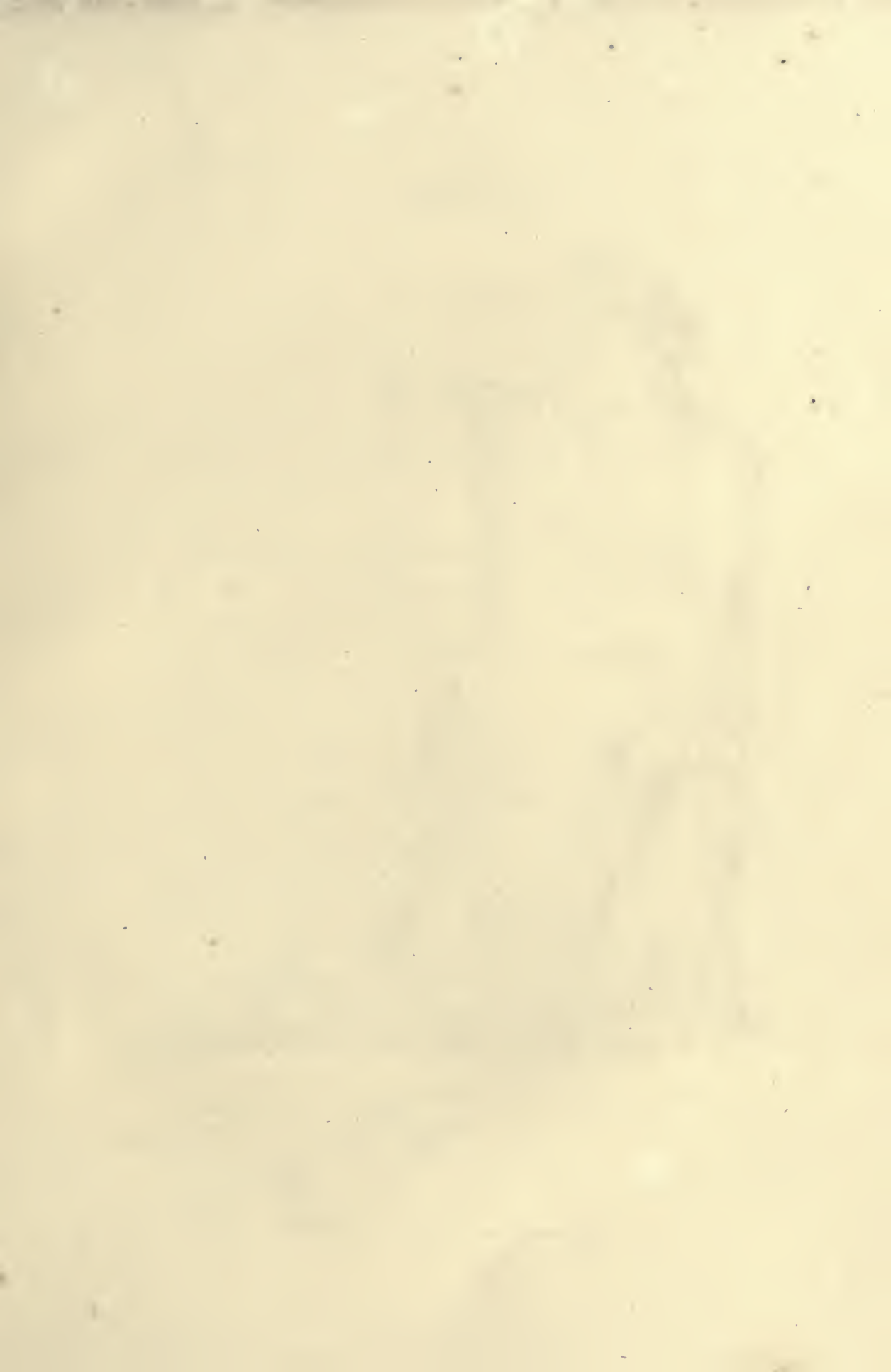
1. It has been generally supposed, that the vases found in ancient tombs were of two classes; one consisted of such as were used to contain the ashes of the dead, and the other of those which the piety of surviving relations caused to be painted in appropriate designs, and consecrated to their memory. This Grecian specimen, pleasing in its form, and beautiful from the graceful arrangement of its various ornaments, is presumed to be of the latter class. Upon the side presented to us, appears a funeral tablet, rising from a widened base, and supported on either side by a female figure, bearing in each hand a characteristic offering.

2. A silver cup, with designs emblematical of victory, chased in basso-rilievo. The side shown in the engraving represents Minerva armed, the owl seated fearlessly on her spear, as a symbol of prosperous augury. *Γλανξ ιπταται*, was a proverb applied to things auspiciously commenced, and happily terminated. The very natural manner in which the figures are delineated, the spirited action of the horses, and the grandeur of the composition, render this a most valuable gem to amateurs of the fine arts.

3. A colander of pure silver.

4. The same in profile; remarkable only for the delicacy of its form, and as showing how little time has improved the fashion of these utensils.

5. A beaker, of bronze, in the form of a stag's head, the antlers supplying the place of a handle; the eyes are inlaid with silver, and at the mouth is the opening usually found in drinking vessels of this kind.





J. W. del.

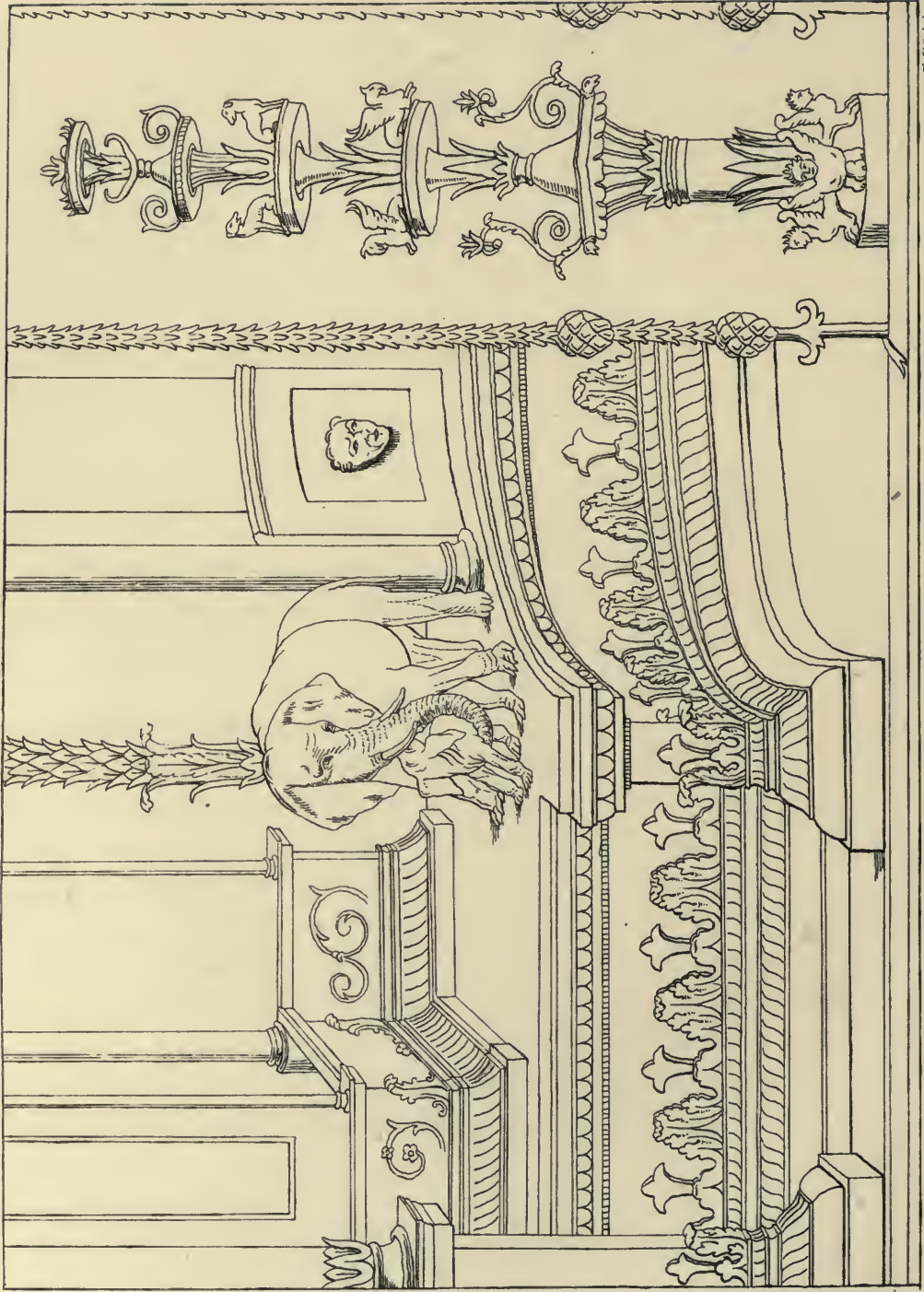
PLATE XX.

APOLLO CITAREDO.

(From the Casa Farnese.)

THE restoration of this semicolossal statue,—inferior to no known sculpture in *pietra dura*,—was the subject of lengthened discussion, among the artists and men of letters, who flourished at the time of its discovery. The controversy arose from its being without its extremities when it was dug up. From the long robes, reaching to the ankles, they at first supposed it to be a female figure; but on more minute examination they decided it to be of masculine proportions, and some suggested that it might have been designed for Pindar on Mount Parnassus. On the further contemplation of the statue, however, the large mantle flowing from the shoulders, and thence falling across the knees, and the tunic with long sleeves and confined at the waist by a girdle, which is the theatrical garment worn by minstrels called “*Palla citharedica*,” gave the sculptor, Albaccini, the idea of restoring it as Apollo bearing the lyre. He supplied the extremities in white marble, encircled the unshorn locks with a laurel chaplet, and placing a lyre in the left hand, and a plectrum, or instrument wherewith to strike the chords, in the right, endeavoured to express in the countenance the air of inspiration which should belong to the god of poetry and song; so well did he succeed, that the modern additions were declared to be in perfect keeping with the original.

When we examine the depths in the folds of the garments, and consider the difficulty of so skilfully sculpturing from a single block of the hardest porphyry, we become sensible of the merit of the ancient artists; who, sparing neither time nor labour in the improvement of the arts, have left us works unrivalled in excellence, even in the present day.



F. H. del.

Chapman & Hall, 186, Strand, London.

PLATE XXI.

A GROTESQUE PAINTING.

ANOTHER specimen of the fanciful genius and skill of the ancients in ornamenting their apartments, presents itself in this drawing, taken from a fragment of the wall of a house in Herculaneum.

The candelabrum which stands on the left, painted in gold colour on a red ground, is most gracefully and fantastically fashioned. Its stem supports four salvers rising in gradation, upon which are placed the figures of animals and plants. Near this is the basement of some grotesque building, on which the principal figure is an elephant, caressing its offspring. Elephants when well trained, were frequently used by the Romans, in their triumphal processions, spectacles, and public games, and were taught the most extraordinary feats for theatrical entertainment; they were doubtless, in like manner, familiar in their public exhibitions, to the inhabitants of Herculaneum. Hence, from the prominent position of the elephant, accompanied by the scenic emblem, a mask, painted on a panel to its left, little reason is left us to doubt, that this painting was copied from the pulpitum, or stage, to the proscenium of a theatre.





J.H. del.

PLATE XXII.

A MARBLE VASE.

THIS vase was found in the excavations of Pompeii; its first destination was to ornament one of the apartments of the royal palace, whence it was taken and added to the collection in the Museo Borbonico. The basin is supported upon three winged sphinxes having women's faces, and the feet of lions, as was the fabled nature of the sphinx, a monstrous creation of the inhabitants of Egypt, to commemorate the inundation of the Nile, which took place in the months of July and August, when the sun passes through the signs Leo and Virgo. The female head is terminated by an acanthus leaf, which extends considerably over the lion's leg.

Such is the perfect harmony of the pedestal with the vase, both being of massive proportions, that neither appears to overpower the other, or to strike the eye as being heavier than the strictest rule of criticism may warrant.





3M. 262.

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PLATE XXIII.

A PAINTING ON PLASTER.

(From Pompeii.)

IN the midst of a garden, tastefully planted with trees, a huge and scaly serpent coils itself about the cortina* of a tripod; on either side stands a picturesque damsel. They are alike in attitude and costume, with Phrygian caps, and on their feet little buskins, and clad in azure tunics without sleeves, girded up with the most classical elegance. The veils which lightly floating upwards form an arch over each head, are of rose colour. One hand holds aloft a drinking horn, as though they were about to pour its contents into the small bucket which they hold in the other. From the wall of the garden, between the two damsels, hangs a festoon of roses mingled with boughs, apparently of palm tree, which gives an admirable finish to this fragment.

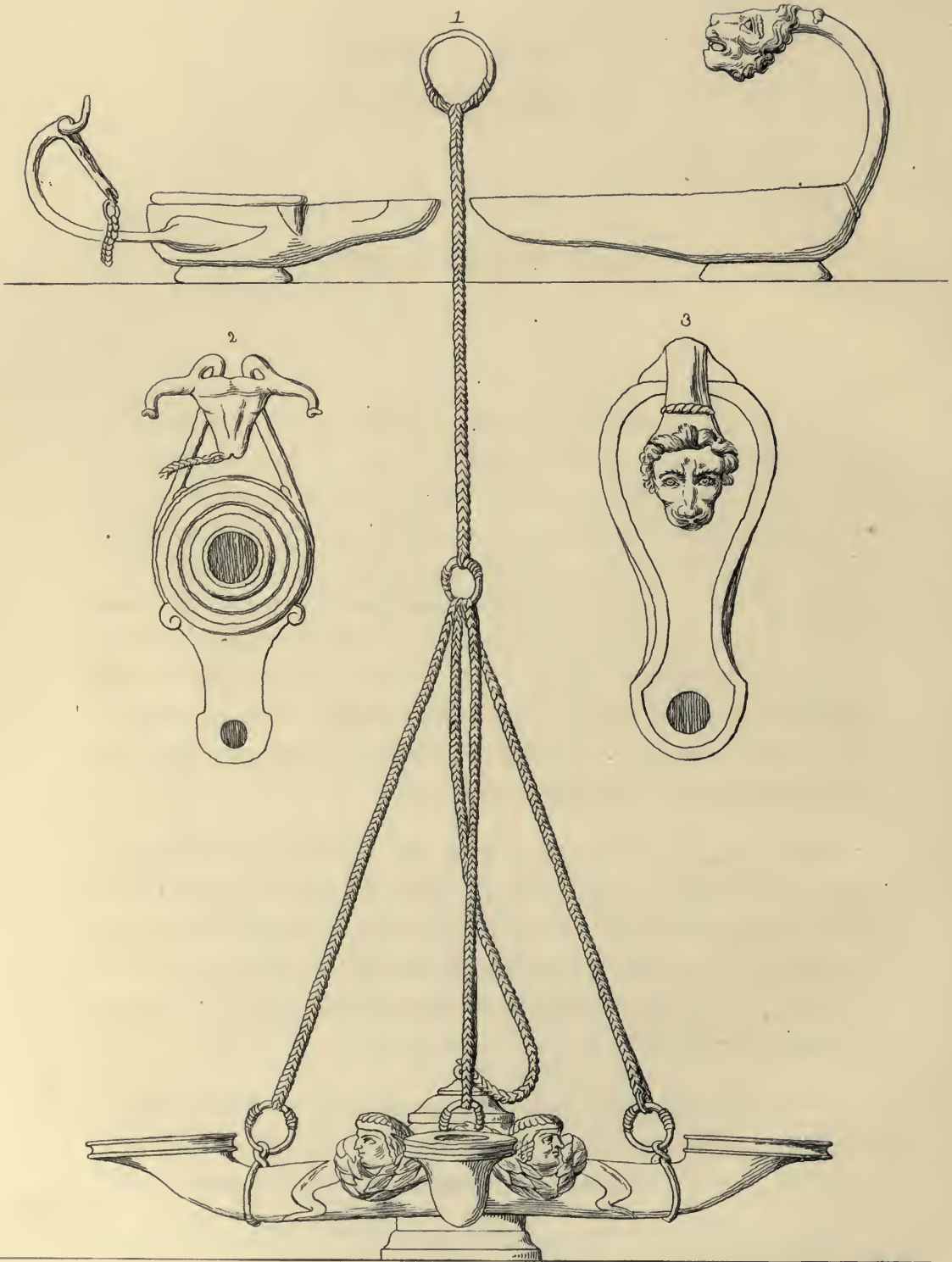
There is an ease and buoyancy in the attitude, and a brightness of expression in the countenances of the figures, which can hardly be surpassed, heightened as it is by being contrasted with the dreaded and hideous appearance of the savage reptile between them. It is very probable they may be making libations to the genius of the place under the form of a serpent, and that the painter has added the cortina as indicative of the auguries with which these animals were propitiated.

* The cortina was the covering of the tripod, seated upon which, the Pythian priestess uttered her prophecies, and hence :—

“visa repente,
— mugire adytis cortina reclusis.”

VIRGIL.

Some maintain that it is derived from corium a skin, and say that the covering of the tripod at Delphi was made of the skin of the serpent Pytho.



J.W. del

PLATE XXIV.

THREE BRONZE LAMPS.

Figure 1. This lamp, ornamented with two female heads, was suspended from a candelabrum by three small chains attached to the three branches, the fourth serving only to hold up the cover of the orifice into which the oil was poured, though some antiquaries have erroneously supposed this cover was used to put out the light. Superstition forbade the extinguishing of light at all, and the effluvia of expiring lamps were considered so injurious to health, that they were commonly placed in some solitary situation, to go out by themselves, excepting those in which the size of the wick and the quantity of oil were so well-proportioned to the time required for their burning, that they were both consumed at the same moment, whence the light was said to fall asleep, and lamps so constructed were called sleeping lamps; thus the "dormitans lucerna" of Ovid.

Various reasons have been assigned for the objection of the ancients to extinguish their lights, some supposing they fancied the flame to be allied to the immortal and everlasting fire, or that they were unwilling to inflict death on any thing animate, as they believed it to be; but the more probable cause is, that it was out of respect to the divinity of which light was the symbol in all the then prevailing religions of the East.

The two other lamps, figures 2 and 3, are remarkable both for the elegance of their shape and for their peculiarly formed handles; the one having at its extremity the face of a bull, and the other a lion's head, probably used as amulets against sorcery.

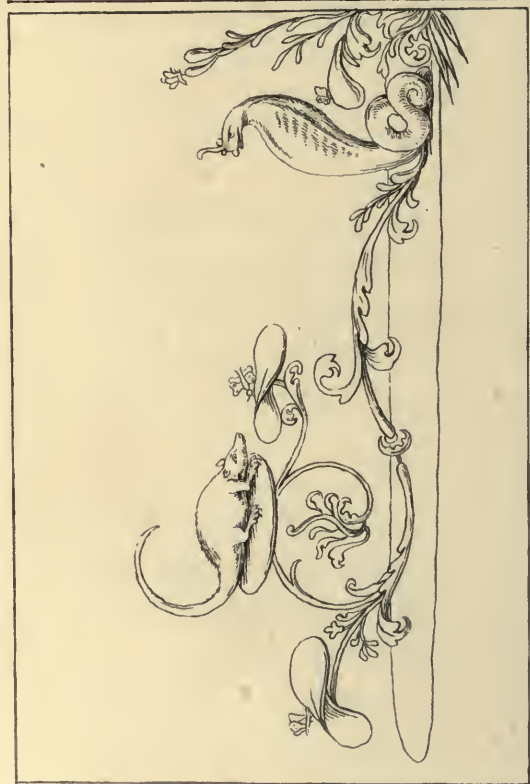
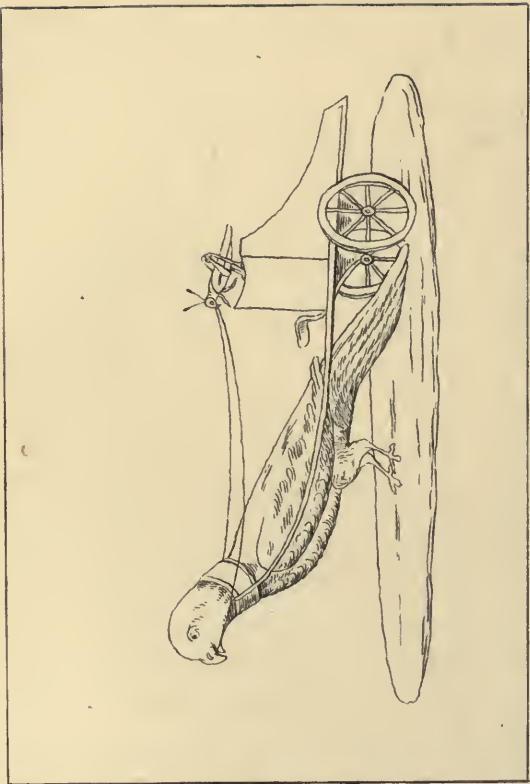


PLATE XXV.

FRESCO PAINTINGS,

From Pompeii.

IN the first compartment we observe, on the leaf of a mallow plant, a kind of rat attempting to ensnare a butterfly settled on another leaf, and which, aware of its danger, spreads its wings to escape. The name of this animal is doubtful, but from its being accompanied by a serpent, we may suppose it to be of the same species as those found stamped on the money of Egypt, at the time that country was subject to the Romans.

In another square a grasshopper is represented perched on the edge of a car, driving a parrot, each holding the reins in its mouth; a most fantastic conception, intended, no doubt, to convey this moral: when the grave and stately parrot allows itself to be driven by the gay and volatile grasshopper, whose fault is it if it be hurried beyond its speed? Equally unjust is it for men to ascribe their failures to the caprice of Fortune, when they abandon their sober judgment to her guidance.

In the raging of the troubled ocean, the fertile invention of the ancients, pictured to themselves monstrous inhabitants of the deep; half horse, half fish, or some other animal, which, in their wild struggles to free themselves from their watery prison, lashed the billows into a tempest; and in the roarings of the foaming waves, imagination heard their bellowings and lamentations, at finding all their furious efforts unavailing. Tritons having the form of men to the waist, and terminating with the legs of a horse and a fish's tail, or, as in the representation before us, in the body of a crawfish, guided these monsters over the vast plains of the ocean, for the diversion of the wandering daughters of Nereus, enlivening their track with the notes of the lyre.

In this spirited painting how swiftly do they seem to gallop along, while attendant dolphins sport around them. It is painted on an azure ground, and was found adorning one of the chambers in the house of the Quæstor at Pompeii. The execution is free and felicitous, and its freshness most striking. The pencil, says our original, seems to have flown with the velocity of thought.



F. W. del.

PLATE XXVI.

A PAINTING OF A TROPHY.

TROPHIES were originally constructed of the arms and spoils taken from the vanquished in battle, and suspended on the trunk of an oak or other tree, on some elevated spot, as a memorial of victory.* These trophies were chiefly in use among the Greeks, for the Romans deemed it unmanly to insult the conquered, and, as well as some states of Greece, held in great detestation those who hung their spoils on pillars of metal or stone, and thereby endeavoured to perpetuate the disgrace of the conquered. With the advance of civilization these generous sentiments gave way to the ambition of Victors to declare their deeds of arms to after ages; and nobler and more lasting monuments in marble, or brass, were erected to immortalize their triumphs. Such monuments of martial pride exist to this day at Rome in the superb group on the Capitol, called the Trophy of Marius, the columns of Trajan and Antoninus, the triumphal arches of Titus, of Septimus Severus, of Constantine, &c. &c.

A leader, so signalized, would not only place the spoils of the conquered nation in some conspicuous part of his palace, but would also have his trophies painted on the walls. The copy from just such a painting on plaster, excavated from Herculaneum, has here been exactly delineated. Victory and the victor are met together to form the trophy, and the trunk of a tree is already dressed in a cuirass of brass, and a short red military cloak with the usual belt, and surmounted by a superb iron helmet with two horns, symbolical, as Spanemio informs us, of military valour. At either opening for the arms in the cuirass is an iron gauntlet, holding a spear; Victory habited in a white tunic, and wrapped in a violet mantle, holds a hammer in one hand, and with the other attaches a shield to the back of the trophy, while the victor, crowned with a ribbon garland, and grasping a long spear, adorns the whole with a square white standard taken from the vanquished enemy. The other helmet with a high crest or plume, and two more shields, lie near, not yet having had their place assigned them in the trophy.

* Vide Virg. *Æn.* XI. v. 4.

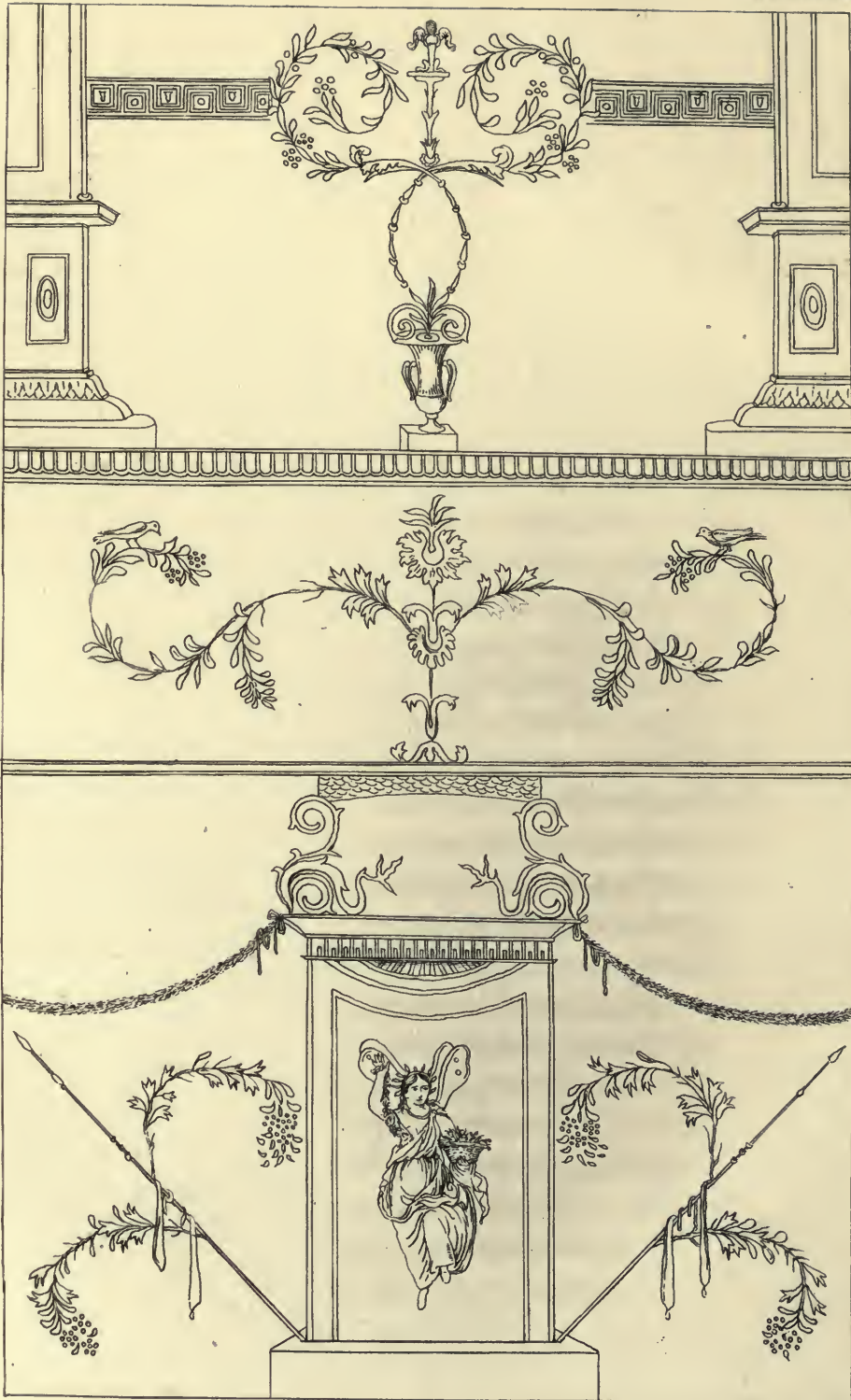


PLATE XXVII.

FLORA,

A Painting in Fresco.

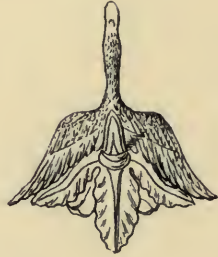
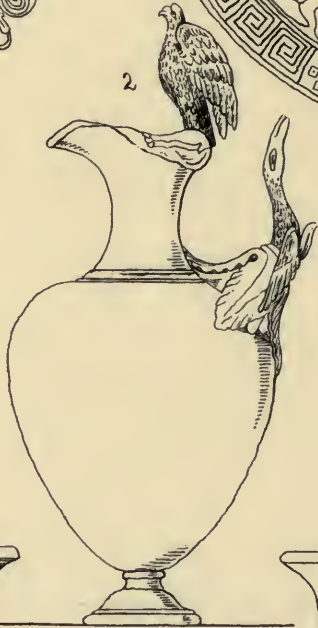
“WE should dip our pen in the brilliant colours of the rainbow, to render ample justice to the merits of this painting,” are the rather florid expressions of our original. The shields and vases of the pedestals, on either side, in the first division, are red on a violet ground; the flowers are white, the base of the vase and the arabesques green, and the winged sphinx in the centre, and the rest of the ornaments gold colour. The tasteful arrangement of every object, and the delicacy with which the artist has handled the flowers and foliage, render this portion most valuable. Scarcely less so is the second, which is separated from the first by a white cornice over a gold coloured band; in it a large green plant is represented, from which spring forth boughs richly laden with white blossoms, and bent back by the weight of two red birds perched at their extremities. The belt which divides this from the next compartment is ornamented with red and white, and the shrine is painted in gold colour, the interior of the little cupola being green. The dolphins above it are of gold colour, as are the remaining decorations, except the flowers and foliage, which are, as in the last, white and green. From the upper angles of the shrine two festoons are suspended, and beneath we see the figure of Flora. Her fair hair is wreathed with leaves and blossoms, and she wears a fanciful necklace; her rose coloured tunic being clasped over her left shoulder, and the left arm, over which the border of her azure vest is gracefully thrown, supporting a basket of flowers, from which she raises aloft a garland with the right hand. She is adorned with four rosy wings, full of eyes like those of the butterfly, whence doubts arose whether the figure was intended for Psyche, but the decision seems to be in favour of the fair wife of Zephyrus.



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J.W. del.

PLATE XXVIII.

1.—A GRECIAN CUP.

VERY few of the vases discovered amidst the ruins of Pompeii, will bear comparison with this magnificent Nolana cup. The figures grouped on it, are painted in red on a black ground. One of the two that adorn the interior, from the axe, quiver and other accoutrements, and from the different parts of her costume, especially the head dress, must be an Amazon. She addresses an armed warrior, who, leaning on his lance, appears to be listening. The figures on the outer part of the vase, in their varied and spirited attitudes, form an agreeable contrast to each other. The cup bears the following very ancient Greek inscription:—ΚΑΛΕ ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΕ ΚΑΛΕ Χ (c) ΥΕΙΕ ΑΝΔΡΟΜΑΧΕ ΚΑΛΕ. Its form, and the fanciful tracing with which it is ornamented, far surpass, in beauty and taste, any of the kitchen utensils of Nolana workmanship, which have been found.

2.—A BRONZE VASE.

This vase is one of those known under the general name of *Προχοος* by the Greeks, and *Gutturium* by the Latins, which words describe their form and the use to which they were applied. The narrowness of the mouth is well calculated to pour out any liquid drop by drop on some particular spot and thus these vessels were peculiarly adapted for making libations, being called by the Greeks, if used for wine, *Σπονδειον*, and if for oil, *Λοιβειον*, and by the Latins, *simpulum*. One cannot but be struck with the elegant proportions and very uncommon embellishments of this vase, as well as the fanciful conceit in the handle,—a goose rising rapidly from its leafy covert, scared by an eagle perched in quiet dignity on the rim above.

3.—A JUG OF TERRA COTTA.

The droll mask formed here by the modeller with so much skill into a drinking vessel, was often used, it appears, to frighten children, and upon the ingenuity of the artist depended the terror these faces inspired; hence Martial—"Sum figuli lusus," &c. The grotesqueness of the monstrous conceptions in these vessels was of use to the improvisatori at the wine feasts, in serving to excite the laughter of the bystanders, and also to bring into derision intemperance and drunkenness. This represents in caricature a Persian prince, with a long beard, mustachios and ass's ears, and on his head a lofty diadem, upon which the figures of a priest and female, standing on either side of an altar, are painted, and the leaves of the polypodium fill up the rest of the space.



PLATE XXIX.

TWO DANCING FIGURES.

WITH a garland of ivy encircling her head, clad in a yellow tunic and green mantle bordered with purple, yellow shoes, and adorned with double golden bracelets, the graceful dancer on the left of the engraving, carries a golden beaker in her right hand, and in the left a plate, also of gold, in which are three figs. To such a pitch was the luxury of the ancient Romans carried, that it is believed they were attended upon at their feasts by these dancing girls, who danced while in the act of ministering to their appetites. From the emblematic ivy wreath, as well as from the figs, we imagine the one we are describing to be a Bacchanal; Bacchus having been called by the Spartans *Συκίτης*, because they thought it was he who first introduced this delicious fruit to mankind.

The other dancer holds a sceptre, the emblem of gods and kings, in her left hand, and a cedar bough in her right, whence she is supposed to represent the goddess Venus, who is reputed to have planted the cedar first in Cyprus. This figure has fair hair, which is gathered into a cap of yellow, a white tunic, over which is a blue mantle bordered with purple, and wears sandals on her feet.

* Might it not have been in such a character that the daughter of Herodias danced before Herod?—
ST. MATTHEW XIV.



F.W. del.

Chapman & Hall 136 Strand London

PLATE XXX.

ACRATUS, A MOSAIC IN PIETRE DURE.

STRANGERS as we in England are to the art of Mosaic work, we can scarcely imagine the patience necessary in arranging, and the difficulty of fitting in such a multiplicity of little stones as are required to give the various shades and gradations of colour, in forming a picture; and can only wonder at the artist's skill which, as in the subject before us, has so beautifully designed the figures, and so perfectly blended the colours as to produce a composition rivalling the finest oil or fresco painting, while in durability it surpasses either of them.

In the winged child before us we recognize Bacchus, called by the Athenians *Ακρατος*, Acratus, from his drinking unmixed wine, the intoxicating effect of which is so evident in all representations of him. The boy, his fair hair bound with yellow berried ivy, and a golden anklet clasped round his right leg, guides a panther with a silver bit, a white mantle being thrown over her back in lieu of a saddle. The animal, inspired by the mirthful Acratus, goes gaily along, a branch of vine heavy with grapes hanging about her neck; but panting she slackens her speed, and turns round with open mouth and earnest look to her conductor, as though hoping he would offer her, as was his wont, the remainder of the liquor in the large glass vase, which he, with difficulty, holds in his right hand against his breast. Acratus meanwhile will not see her, and instead of loosing the red reins, endeavours to drain the cup to the last drop. The size of the cup is too much for him, and, overpowered by its weight, and by the strength of the wine, as we perceive by his drowsy look and half closed eyes, he is obliged to spread his wings in order to keep his balance.

The artist has very tastefully adorned his work with two concentric cornices: the external represents a frieze in imitation of the waves* of the sea, and the other a festoon rich in leaves, fruits, and flowers, interwoven with broad bands, on which are various masks to denote that tragedy and comedy took their origin amidst the rustic diversions of the vintage.

This Mosaic was found at Pompeii, in the house of Pan.

* The same are seen on the medals of Tarentum, to signify the sea, under the dolphin ridden by Taras, the son of Neptune, who, as some suppose, built and gave name to that ancient city.

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