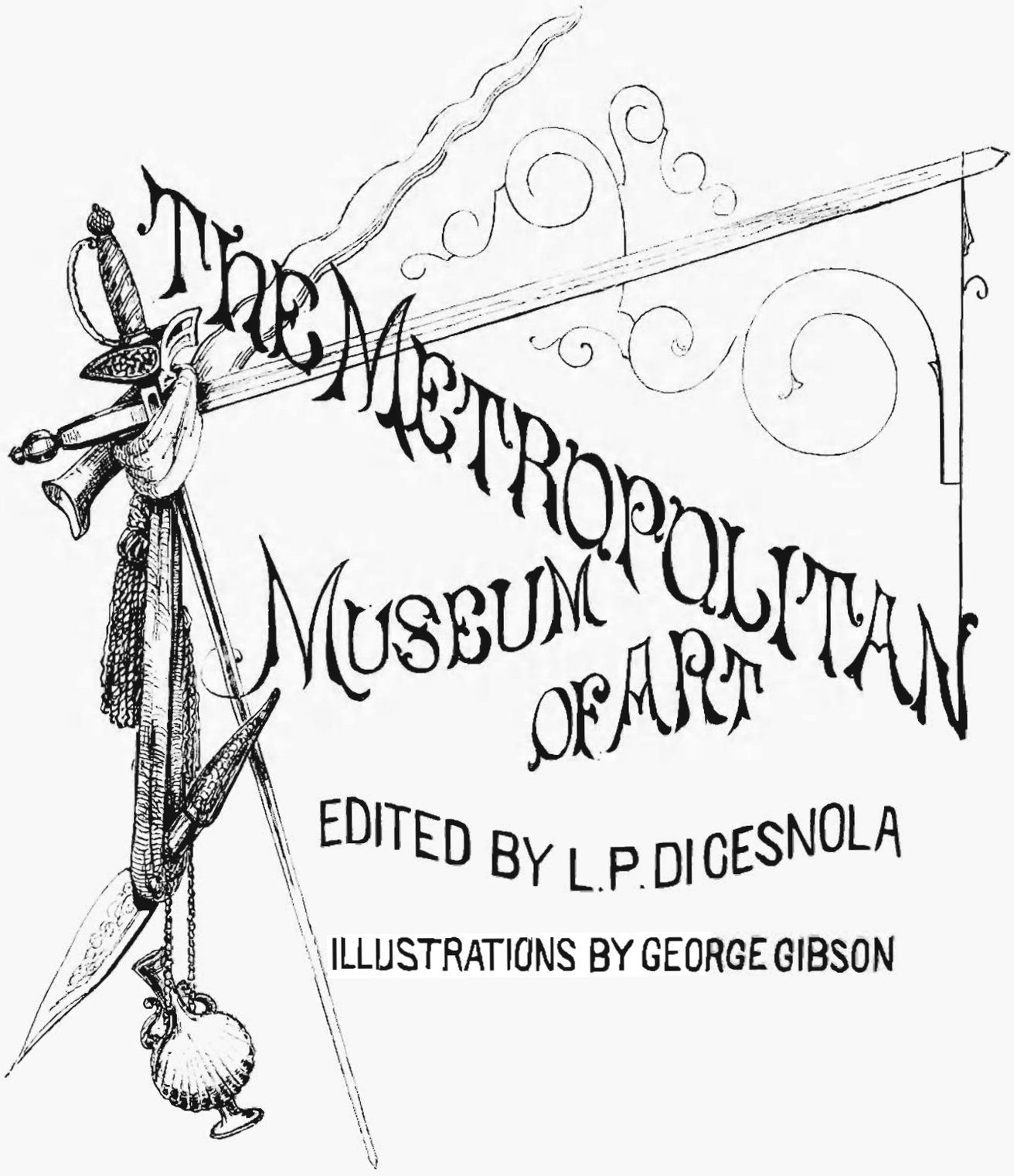

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

I.

Main Hall.

THERE are few pretensions to art, as far as the outside goes, in the construction of the building which contains the collection of the Metropolitan Museum. Square in form, it is not, however, wanting in symmetry. What it has is a certain aspect of massiveness, due to the brick and the heavy stone cappings, which convey somewhat the impression of a safe-deposit building.

If the outside of the Museum presents no attractive features, when the building is entered the impression received is of the most pleasant character. The floors are of tesselated stone, the four staircases are wide, the ascent is not too rapid, and the ventilation and light are admirable. The decoration is grave and sober, but not in the least depressing. Certain tones have been adopted of a maroon colour, with a light contrasting blue, and occasional whites, which are pleasantly harmonious. The ornamentation of an architectural character, imposed on pillars or

cornices, has no obtrusiveness about it. The frame, in fact, for the picture has been decorously imagined, and is in the highest degree creditable to the taste and judgment of the architect. The roof in the main hall rises in a graceful curve, held up by sweeping girders, the iron-work painted of an approved colour. In ascending the stairs, some two stories, to reach the picture-galleries above the main hall, a most charming effect is produced by circular openings, which, without glass in them, allow the opportunity of seeing perfectly into the various rooms. A critical look at the interior of the building justifies much satisfaction on the whole. Its floor and galleries are conveniently arranged, with no meretricious gewgaws, and answer fairly well all the purposes required. In the basement there are convenient quarters for the various officers of the building, with good and light rooms for the packing and repacking of the artistic objects. Here, too, is a fine large hall, though perhaps a little dark, to be devoted to supplementary exhibitions, or for an art-school.

In the west entrance-hall on the main floor, which fronts the park, are the modern statues. In the central hall are the loan collections, in numerous cases, which perhaps break up some little the general effect. Here are the laces and embroideries. At the east end are the Greek and Etruscan vases and the Marquand collection of ancient Greek and Roman glass. Right and left are numerous show-cases, containing the innumerable loans made to the Museum, such as Japanese and Chinese ivories, Egyptian antiquities, rare tomes, old books in their superb bindings, Limoges enamels, antique arms, with Dresden, Sevres, and majolica; Oriental and Japanese stuffs, silver *repoussée*, Venetian glass, miniatures, and an endless variety of artistic objects. In the north and south aisles of the east hall are the Cyprian antiquities, the vases,

Group I.

terra-cottas, bronzes, busts, and statues, of the Cesnola collection. In this hall these Cypriote objects occupy quite three sides of the room, besides being placed in many additional cases. The most careful attention has been paid to their classification, which must be of the greatest advantage to those desirous of studying them. The two sarcophagi, which are the capital pieces of the Cesnola collection, are at the back of the hall. In such a large hall this collection, especially as to the statues and busts, is wonderfully improved, and the advantage of a better locality is at once appreciable. Strung along in the former museum in Fourteenth Street, if they looked like milestones, in the new building, with the good judgment displayed in their arrangement, they present a most impressive appearance. On the left-hand side, facing the entrance, has been carefully placed the immense Cesnola collection of pottery. Mounting to the next floor is an easy task, as the steps are not too rapid. Looking through the gigantic *œils-de-bœuf* before mentioned, which gives breathing-time, the visitor then arrives at the upper halls. Here are the pictures in two halls, the east and west ones. Proceeding along the gallery taken up by the Avery collection of porcelain, the east picture-gallery is reached. Continuing the circuit, the south gallery may now be traversed, which leads to the west hall. This south gallery contains the most precious of General di Cesnola's discoveries, the Curium treasures, with the iridescent glass. Here, too, are objects in bronze, gold, silver and glass, a collection of watches, and *bibelots* innumerable. As to the pictures, the east galleries contain the examples of the Flemish and Dutch schools, the property of the Museum. In the west hall are the pictures loaned to the Museum.

The engraving on the first page of this chapter, giving a view of the main hall, is taken from the left side, toward Eighty-second Street and Fifth Avenue, but is by no means at the end of the room. It has been purposely chosen, as presenting a glimpse, as it were, of the general fine effect of the hall. The statue on the extreme left represents a female figure of rather an archaic type. The statue to her right, seen somewhat in profile, is an antique copy after a Greek statue, and ranks among the best in the Cesnola

collection. On the left-hand side, following along, are placed the Cyprian vases, urns. On the right, the busts, statues of the same collection; and back, other objects derived from Cyprus, as the bas-reliefs, the inscriptions, with the sarcophagi.

The Cypriote collection, which occupies the major portion of the main hall, will form in this first chapter the subject of our illustrations. The objects collected in Cyprus are innumerable, and, putting aside for the present the Curium treasures, may be divided into the pottery, and the busts and statues. Group I. shows some of the earliest forms of pottery. They are crude masses of clay badly fired, perhaps representative of some tutelary deity. The whole lower line of figures in the illustration are of this type. They are hardly even archaic. The fourth figure has the semblance of a head, with four ear-rings. A discussion as to her being a Venus would be out of place here. The fifth and sixth figures undoubtedly are those curious symbols of a double sex, a bearded woman. The large head, with its peculiar cap, has bars of colour on it, and is almost life-size. It undoubtedly belongs to a period many years after the time when the cruder small figures were made. The semblance of a horse with a figure on it is

Group II.

certainly of a most ancient period. This has many repetitions in the collection. It is not, as might be supposed, a child's toy. Such figures, when found in a tomb, have never been discovered in conjunction with the remains of children. It was, undoubtedly, the intention of those who buried a man to give him, with this little clay horse, the semblance of something which, when he awakened, he might use to ride about on in some other state. The small chair with a figure seated in it is painted in yellow and brown, and is perhaps contemporaneous with the coarse figures below, with the exception of the head, and of the two bearded figures; they represent the very infancy of art, and are only curious.

In Group II. a great stride is visible. The left-hand vessel, in red clay, with handle, has a double mouth-piece. The material is fairly smooth. The ornamentation, four small rosettes, is well applied. An idea of form has necessitated greater skill in the making of the piece. The long, slender vase, recalling precisely that shape which Æsop introduces into his fable of the stork and the wolf, is fairly graceful, and shows remains of polish. The large vessel behind it is not wanting in a certain grace of form. It is of red clay, and its ornamentation must have been made by rolling a strip of the red earth, then giving it the pressure of the thumb and finger all along its length, and next applying it to

Group III.

the surface. Next to it, a kind of sack-like form, is No. 155 of the collection. This conventional form is constantly met with among primitive people. It imitated the leather sacks made of the skin of an animal, in which wine or fluids were carried. The two knobs on it were conventional, singularly enough types of ornamental persistence. In the animal, when it was flayed, the dugs might have existed, and these were retained in the coarse pottery. The large vase, on which the one just described leans, resembles in form the one on the left, save that it has a different neck. The two circular forms on the side are not open but closed. It has been suggested that, with their cup-like form, as they might hold fluid, they would represent to a possible purchaser a sample of the contents. The small flat piece on the right at the bottom is the very earliest form of lamp. It is simply a small saucer with one side pinched in, in which the wick could be placed. The two forms above in the illustration are of light clay with black and brown lines, and show an advancing method of manufacture.

In Group III. the central vase is curious. It is about twenty inches high, of a whitish-yellow inclined to an umber, with a poor glaze. On it is painted a chariot with a pair of horses. It is in the very infancy of art, recalling the poorest attempts of our own Indian work. It requires some particular attention to discover whether there are two horses or only one. The colours used are mostly black for the decoration. To the left is a well-shaped vessel of a whitish-yellow, of about a capacity of four gallons. It has no art-pretensions. The right-hand vase is better. It shows human skill. Its form, with so small a base, precludes the idea that it was in common use. This vase shows a smooth polish, and the decoration, in black, inclining to a red, is evenly applied. The central portion, on which the handles rest, has no opening; it is the one on the side through which the fluid was poured. Many years, perhaps centuries, must have elapsed between the time when this object was fashioned and the last of the illustrations, which represents a pot of a most primitive form and material. The material is of a whitish clay, which seems rather to have been sun-dried than baked, though it has undergone some slight firing. It is exceedingly thin, and apparently would scarcely resist the least shock. The colour has been applied here and there by hand, but not, as many of the others, when on the potter's wheel. This decoration is black. On the rim are certain little transverse lines, and portions of the uneven circles which sweep around it are made up of hatchings. The small bottle on the side is of a black ware with a polish, and the ornamentation is scratched. On the neck is a slight protrusion, pierced with a hole, by which it was slung. This shows better material, higher polish, greater neatness, and, consequently, a notable advance. To the right is a small lamp, but slightly differing from the simplest form in Group II., by having a lip turned in to prevent the contents of the lamp from being spilled, and as a prop for the wick.

Group IV.

These figures, which are very faithfully drawn, represent certain types in the collection which are brought in this first chapter into evidence as illustrative of a very early period in the ceramic art of the world.

II.

CONSIDERATIONS, apart from those of a purely artistic character induced Mr. Calvert Vaux, the architect of the Metropolitan Museum, to place on each landing of the stairs leading to the picture-galleries, large, open, circular windows. As the visitor mounts the stairways, which are of easy ascent, these *œils-de-bœuf* naturally attract attention, as an excellent view can be had of the main hall, and the few moments of rest thus obtained very much diminish the fatigue of stair-climbing. A glimpse of the main hall, as shown in the illustration, is taken from the northeast portion of the building, and looks directly on that range of cases of the Cypriote collection containing the series of heads and busts. The case directly in front is No. 10. To the left, on the top of the wood-cut, is shown the door which opens to the west gallery. As to the interior construction of the hall and its galleries, it should be distinctly understood that these galleries are but temporary. In fact, the whole building is but a small portion of some grander plan, which in time to come will have some nine hundred feet and more of frontage. The initial letter C to this engraving is a careful copy of a silver bracelet, with a lion's head of archaic type, from the Curium collection.

Continuing a description of the pottery collection, Group V., composed of eight pieces, represents, with the exception of the triple-bulbed bottle, the pitcher with the woman's head, and the fish-formed object, about the same period of Cyprian Art. The horse-shaped vessel is of white clay, and has for decoration lozenges made with cross-bars, of a brownish black. It has a handle for convenience of carrying. The fluid was poured into the funnel-like aperture back of the handle, and was taken out of the mouth. It was possibly an oil-feeder. It is poorly and coarsely modelled, and in the infancy of Art. Next to it is a curious circular piece, showing notable advance in the manipulation of the clay. This circular form is a very common one, and may be found in endless variety in the Cesnola collection. The ram's head is not inaccurately modelled. Its use was possibly for sacrificial purposes. The vase with the antelope-heads, with crossed horns, shows much greater skill than the first two objects described. The heads are typical of the animals, and show freedom in treatment. How the vase could be used, remains rather doubtful. In studying this object, comparing the enlarged proportions of the top with the narrow vase, by simply inverting it, putting the bottom on top (providing the horns of the antelopes could be removed), we arrive at a much more natural form. Evidently the Cypriote potter was sometimes desirous of changes in the appearance of his vessels, and in this way the design was imagined. The decoration is brown and red, though these changes of colour may be due to

Group V.

imperfect baking. Next to it is a three-bulbed bottle, possibly imitated from a water-plant, as the idea is followed out in the gullet, which has a leaf-like form. It is made in white clay, with a dark-brown decoration. These triple bottles, little triumphs of the potter's art, belong to the early period of ceramics, and have been repeated by all races.

When we come to the first object, on the left hand of the lower plan of the group, we arrive at a period when Art was more advanced. This is a vase fairly modelled, having on top the rather crude form of a woman's head. The fluid to be contained in the vessel would be poured out by the double spouts, which show faintly the swellings of a woman's breasts. This recalls, in the most positive way, the worship of the Phœnician Astarte. Like all Cypriote work, where the Art-sense was dull, the handle is wanting in grace of curve. The ornamentation just below the neck is geometric—a series of circles, one within another. For comparison' sake, the student should look at a vase almost beside it, which embodies the same idea, and has truer Greek feeling in it. The form is more graceful, and the whole details better worked out. The Cyprian workman, with very few exceptions, rarely improved when he copied. It is worth while to comment somewhat on these geometrical decorations to be found on so many of these Cyprian objects. There can be no doubt that man first fashioned clay into the forms required for use, and that bronze followed afterwards. Archæological studies teach us of the immensity of time which separated these two events. But, once that bronze was made by the Etruscans, it asserted itself by its shapes and ornamentations, and impressed itself on the workers in clay. Forms are followed in pottery which were originally made in metal, and in the geometrical decorations one can see the bronze ornamentation. In the Cesnola collection there are many bronze mirrors which have exactly this circular decoration. This ornamentation presupposes the use of some instrument, like a compass. When, then, such decorations appear, they never can belong to a very primitive period. A long and interesting chapter might be written on Art as developed by handles. If we boast to-day of those advantages derived from the subdivision of labour, and believe that thereby we produce more perfect objects, the ancients were by no means ignorant of this. Modern researches of an archæological character tend to show that the bronze makers of

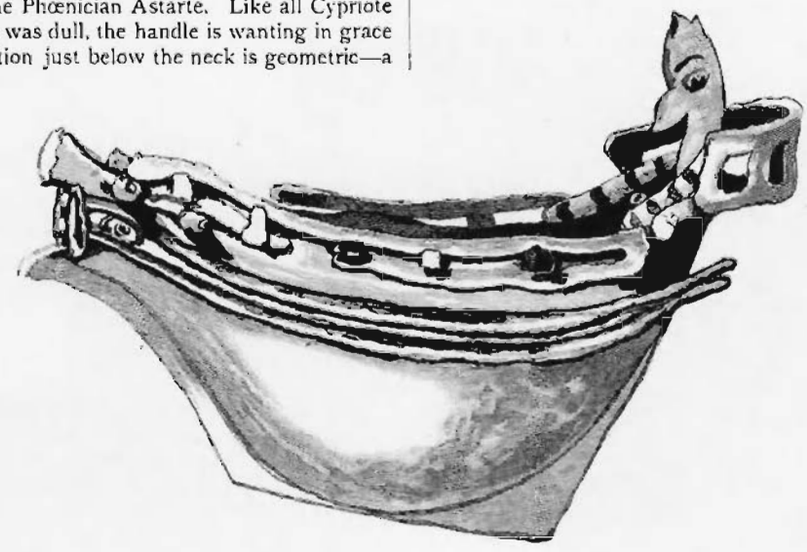
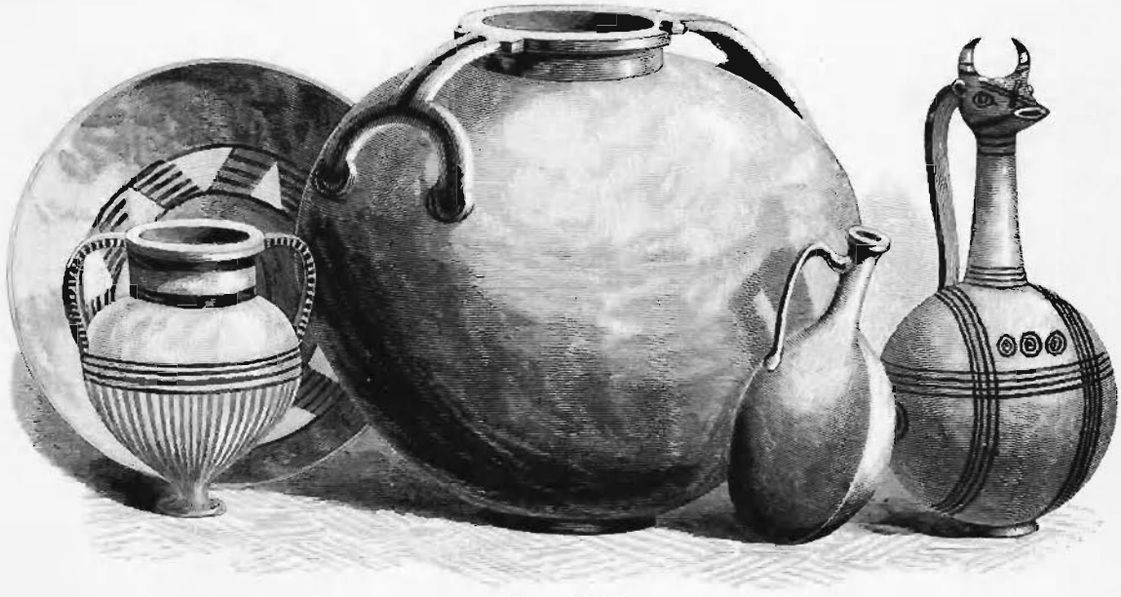


Fig. 6.

Etruria had each separate lines of work, and even that handles alone were made in some workshops, which handles were afterwards distributed, to be added, by less accomplished workmen in other countries, to vases of their own construction. There probably is not a greater touchstone in ancient Art than the consideration of a handle. How it is applied, how shaped, makes or mars the general contour of an object. We shall endeavour to show hereafter how, in handles and the decoration of many objects in the Cypriote collection, Greek Art was copied, and how the adaptation of the one material, clay, for the other, bronze, was made.

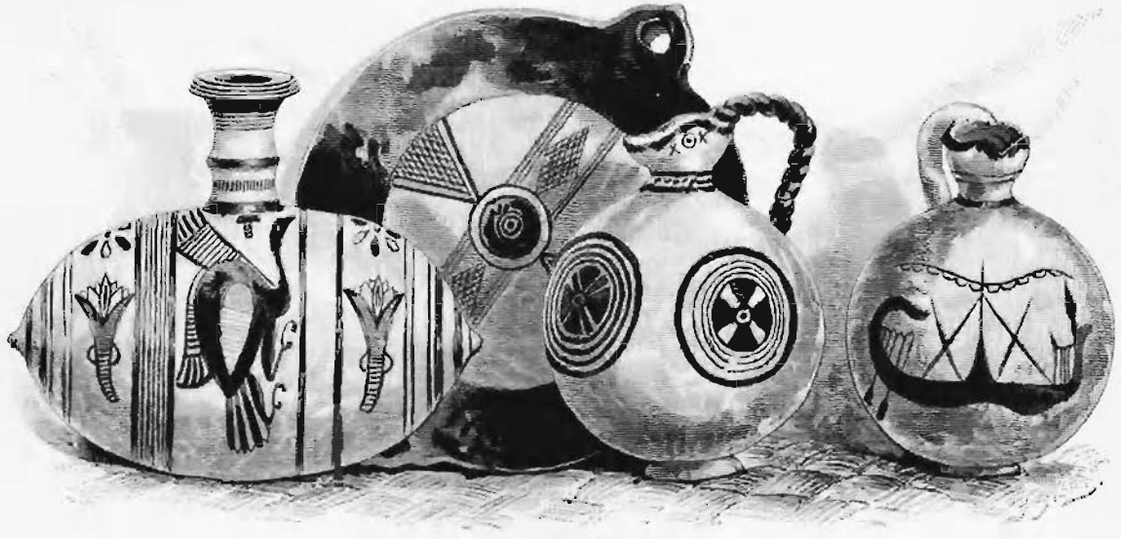
Fig. 7.

The fish-like form of vase belongs to a more recent date than any of the others in the group. It is made of a dark clay, and the ornamentation is scratched into it. The dorsal, caudal, and anal fins of the fish are seen, and the eye is strongly marked. There is a fair attempt made to indicate scales, and the handle, a simple ring, is put in a good position. The last two figures, of birds, the first of some aquatic fowl, the last a duck, are purely archaic. They stand on three feet. In the last bird, the first joint of the wings has been made, while in the other a relief in clay indicates the pinion. The fluid was passed into the funnels, and then poured out of the beaks. The smaller duck has a fish painted on its side.



Group VIII.

Figures 6 and 7 (Nos. 385 *b* and 385 *a*, of the Cesnola collection), are exceedingly curious, as representing the sailing-craft



Group IX.

of a very early period. Fig. 6 is evidently a galley, to be worked with oars. The least nautical of readers can appreciate at once that, though this object is made roughly in clay, the lines are excellent, and that the beam of the craft and the keel are not very much out of the way from the approved models of to-day. We have in the prow something which survives to-day. In the stern is a crude figure, seated on an overhanging deck, the place occupied by the steersman. No. 7, though less elaborate than No. 6, teaches us a great deal. If this little boat is looked at facing directly towards the prow, it will be found to be even nearer to our small boat of to-day than the other one. In fact, with very slight variations, this model could be used, and it would be found to combine all the necessary qualities of safety and speed.

In Group VIII. is a capital piece: the large vase being specially notable. It is made of red clay, handsome in form, and would hold about eight gallons. The handles are curved and perpendicular, following the shape, and are placed just where they should be. At a glance the fitness of the handles to bear the weight of the vessel is seen. It is such really good work, though not intended to be ornamental, that, assuredly it does credit to the old workmen. The handles follow absolutely some well-known forms of Greek work in their best period. To the right is a round globular vessel, terminating with a narrow neck, surmounted with a cow's head. This piece is very perfect in form, has a good glaze, and the geometrical work is quite accurate. In the mouth of the cow the fluid in the bottle could be poured. This is a divergence from the usual shape, though in common use when the form of an animal is employed. The handle is crude, and evinces little grace in form or application. This piece (No. 2,300, in case 23) refers itself to early Cyprian work. Alongside of it is a bottle in red ware, very accurate in form, and showing very great cleverness of work. It was possibly made in two pieces and then joined. The clay is red and it has been well smoothed, having still the gloss of the potter's tool. The small vase on the left (No. 2,289 *a*) is of red clay with black lines and scratched ornamentation. The mouth of the vase shows want of knowledge of proper proportion, and the vase is too small. The handles are imitations of a better Greek form, but they have been put on with a misconception of what is graceful. Back of this vase there is a strainer of clay, the dish being possibly used for placing in it something from which a fluid would drip.

Group IX. consists of three vases with a soup-plate-formed dish. The vase to the left is very peculiar as to form, and bears on it a bird with a floral decoration on each side. The shape, Mr. Murray thinks, was extended sideways "out of mere desire for novelty, or to accommodate the favorite design of vertical circles." Next to it is the pitcher (No. 5,879, in case 19). The decoration here is not half geometrical, the centers being filled with a St. Andrew's and a Maltese cross. The top of the pitcher is pinched in, and there is an eye painted on it. This top, followed out by the potter of unknown antiquity, was formed by a pressure of the fingers only, and may be seen in the Wedgwood tobies of to-day. The last piece to the right is curious in decoration, representing a vessel with mast and furled sail. The form of the boat is very peculiar. It is to be supposed that in the ships of that day the keel rose in the middle. This would present great difficulties of construction. It is quite possible that this crude picture was devised by an artist, who wanted the outlines of his vessel to conform in some way to the shape of his pitcher. The plate which forms the background is curved and shows some little variety in design.

Fig 10.

The large vase (figure 10) is quite remarkable. It is of whitish clay with brown-and-red decoration. The lower part from the neck downward is better than the upper portion. The neck has a couple of borderings of an eight-leaved flower, which is often repeated on the garlands which crown the statues. Around the vase an ornamentation of lotus-leaves is drawn, with a certain amount of boldness. One bud has been commenced and left unfinished, and the last stroke of the decorator's brush is visible. Now, as to the handles. We can see here quite distinctly, beyond the shadow of a doubt, how the bronze vase suggested the clay form, where in the illustration the heavy dark shade ends, then merges into a somewhat lighter tone, the black is the true termination of the handle. Beyond this the old artist has applied his colour to apparently extend the handle. Now, without a single exception, antique bronze vases for ornament or use are made in one piece, either cast or beaten out, and the handles were distinct, to be joined to the vase afterwards. Most of our metal vases of to-day are made in this way. The handles then were put on, either by rivetting or soldering, sometimes both processes being used. A number of bronze handles in the Cypriote collection show this. In the present earthenware vase, the decorative artist recalling this thinner portion of metal, gave his vase a slighter application of colour. The persistence of ornamentation is one of the curious facts in Art, and may give indications of origin. In Group IX. the pitcher with the twisted handle closely resembles the Greek form, and, as before stated, the large red vessel in Group VIII., not only in shape but most particularly in the handles, imitates the Greek bronze.

III.

NONE of General Cesnola's discoveries in Cyprus yielded richer fruits than the excavations on the site of the ancient city of Curium, situated on the western shore of the island, and once a royal capital. The city was built like an eagle's nest, on the summit of a rocky elevation, three hundred feet above the level of the sea, and was inaccessible on three sides. Forty feet up from the ground a large plateau was found cut on the slope, about one hundred feet wide, and then scooped twenty-five feet deep, resembling a moat around a modern fortress. It was soon discovered that this moat was not dug for defensive purposes alone. Every inch of available space, both at the base of the rock, and in the wall opposite, had been husbanded for a city of the dead. Here had been constructed thousands and thousands of rock-tombs. Not only had the builders honeycombed with tombs the base of rock, the ditch, and the inner side of the wall, but they had cut their larger sepulchres, consisting of two or more chambers, into

Group XI.

the slope of the surrounding hills—wherever, in fact, they had found rock. Even the plain below had not been spared, and it was, in fact, in these tombs, which never had been opened, that the explorer made his richest finds, aside from those in the treasure-vaults of the temple of Curium. It is to the latter that the greatest interest attaches. In one place, in what must have been the heart of the ancient city, eight shafts of brownish granite columns were noticed imbedded in the earth. Investigation uncovered under these shafts a mosaic pavement, of small *tesseltæ* of marble and stone of four different colours, inlaid in different patterns and forming large lotus-flowers. Careful excavations were pursued under a portion of the mosaic, which sounded hollow, and after considerable digging a gallery was found, one end of which had formerly connected with the temple above. At the other end of this rock-gallery appeared a doorway, carelessly fastened with a stone slab. This opened into an oven-shaped cavity,

which was nearly filled with the fine earth that had filtered from above. On removing the earth from the chamber, another opening appeared in the north wall, which led into an inner room filled in like manner. A third and a fourth chamber were afterward discovered, and in a month of hard labour these subterranean vaults were cleared of the dirt-accumulation of nearly thirty centuries. These rooms were the treasure-chambers of the ancient temple, and here it was that the priests concealed their most precious possessions, the votive offerings of worshippers and the gifts of kings and other men of wealth and rank. The treasures found in these old temple-vaults consist of a great quantity of gold and silver jewellery, chains, armlets, bracelets, anklets, necklaces, diadems, rings set with various jewels, intagli, cameos, bronze-work, and various superb specimens of pottery. It is to the latter, however, that the attention of the reader is now called, as seen in Group XI., which is case F in the south aisle of the great hall of the Museum. These vases and statuettes were found with fourteen alabaster vases, two bronze lamps, and three bronze *fibulæ*. This group is specially noticeable, for it not only presents pieces which are great novelties in the collection, but shows the best examples of their class. It seems reasonable to believe that the offerings of worshippers to the gods were better than their gifts to their dead friends, such as are found in tombs; and that the priests stored in these vaults the best pieces from the offerings.

Group XII.

The striking characteristic of these vases is that they belong to the early Greek style, with one or two exceptions, and show only a slight trace of the Semitic influence, which is very perceptible in much of the other Cypriote pottery.

Prominent among them is the great terra-cotta vase, four feet nine inches in height, which instantly addresses itself to the eye. This vase was found broken to pieces in the door connecting the last two chambers opened. It shows the characteristics of its class with great clearness and fulness. These may be summed up as follows: The ground is not coated with paint; the colour of the clay is a pale brown; the vase is covered with decoration from bottom to top, on the lower half with belts and concentric circles, on the upper half with geometric and animal decoration; the animals are horses, deer, and water-fowl, and not Asiatic lions and panthers; the animals are arranged either uninterruptedly in girdling rows or in compartments extending around the vase; absence of all vegetal decoration; surprising persistence in filling up vacant spaces; continual forms of chequer-work; great frequency of girdling rows of disks or concentric circles, joined each to each by a diagonal line from the bottom of the one to the top of the next; no curved lines except the disks, concentric circles, dots and gores employed in filling intervals; great frequency of the meander or spiral form; the rectilinear decoration is confined to framing the vertical sides of compartments. This vase has a shape unique in

the Cesnola collection, for it is the only one with four handles, and it rests on a high foot. The lid is noteworthy, and is crowned with a little hydria. From its size and profusion of decoration it is one of the finest specimens of its class known, and must have been one of the most magnificent art-works of its day. A set of three compartments is repeated between every two of the four handles, the middle of each set containing a high fir-like tree, flanked by a pair of deer, stag and hind, browsing on the tree, a decorative motive probably of Asiatic origin. In all other respects the vase is of the purest early Greek style, and one might easily fancy it was imported from Athens, were it not for the other vases found, essentially resembling it in decorative spirit. A striking feature of these vases is seen in the geometric patterns, which are such as would naturally be evolved in the processes of metal working and weaving. For instance, the rows of spirals which make such a graceful element of design on them are a simple application of what is seen in a piece of gold or bronze wire with its tendency to take the spiral curl. So, again, the chess-board and other rectilinear patterns are no less obviously derived from the process of weaving. The vases of the Athenian class are distinguished from the other Cypriote pottery in that the decoration of the latter is purely mechanical, and seems not to have arisen out of any process of workmanship. In the case containing the pottery of the Curium treasure will be noticed a number of high-necked vases of the Greek style, on the shoulder of each of which stands or sits a woman, holding in her hand a jug, which forms the spout of the vase. These evidently belong to the classical period. The female figures, in attitude, features, and drapery, are excellent, except the hand holding the little jug, which seems to have been the bungling work of the workman who fastened the statuette to the vase.

The peculiar interest of the Cesnola collection is the outcome of the fact that in Cyprus there appears the record of something like a consecutive development of the art spirit and method from the earliest times, when the attempt to express ideals in forms of sculpture and pottery displayed the purely Phœnician and Assyrian

Group XIII.

types, to the more perfect evolution of the Greek age. A few of the vases and statuettes of the Curium treasure show traces of the Asiatic influence, the features of the women's faces being distinctly Semitic in type, though in general the modelling and contour of the figures are Greek. For fine examples of the more archaic sculpture we must look to the results of the excavations made at Golgoi, an excellent illustration of which is found in Group XII., which is found in the north aisle of the main hall. At Golgoi, as in other parts of Cyprus, it may be stated, the statues do not belong to any one period, but we find, among the great number taken from this graveyard of ancient races, groups which distinctly refer themselves to the most ancient art development. The Cypriote type of face, that prevailing in the statues of the Phœnician period in Golgoi, taken from the tombs and from the site of the temple, indicates clearly the Asiatic origin of the people. Golgoi was one among the fifteen most important towns of Cyprus, and was a prominent centre of the worship of Aphrodite, who derived her title of Golgia from it, though at what time the Assyrian Astarte became the Greek Aphrodite it is difficult to determine. Long after Greek immigration had the influence to effect this, however, it appears that the Phœnician or Assyrian conception, modified by the Egyptian, governed the sculptor's efforts. The Phœnician sculptor desired not to create beauty, but to produce a likeness. He was interested only in the face, and it did not disturb him that he made the hair and beard fall like folds of cloth. To the Greek, on the other hand, the beauty of life was above everything else, and he neglected nothing. So he carved rather imaginative embodiments or types of men and women than likenesses. The colossal head of stone, two feet ten and a half inches high, which is the principal object in Group XII., was found in conjunction with thirty-two statues of various sizes, all more or less mutilated, and twenty-six bases, some with and some without the feet adhering to them, together with a promiscuous mass of legs, arms, and bodies, scattered about in the vicinity. The body belonging to this huge head was not discovered. The massive stone features belong clearly to the Assyro-Egyptian style of art, and it is most probable all the statues found here were portraits of native Cypriote dignitaries, since the style

of face delineated very much resembles the type of the Cypriote of to-day, a fact which proves the permanence of race characteristics. In the Phœnician statuary of Golgoi, detail seems to have been suppressed with great firmness. Form is rendered, but texture neglected in the head, while in the body the sculptor is indifferent to both. This summary execution shows itself in the heads represented in the group illustrated, specially in the treatment of the beard, where a few lines divide it into four columns, which end in a curl. In the genuine Assyrian reliefs, on the other hand, the beard is disposed in a mass of curls. The conical cap, with the knob on its top, is characteristic of all of the Phœnician sculpture of Cyprus. The meaning of this cap is not fully known. It is not believed to be an imitation of the Assyrian helmet, as there is an absence of accompanying arms. This conical cap went out of fashion in the statues of the Greek period, as it interfered with that free and noble effect of the head which the Greek, in his pursuit of the ideally beautiful, aimed to attain. All of the stone heads in Group XI. belong to the Golgoi find, and they are so closely allied that to describe one is to describe all.

The examination of the various objects in bronze belonging to the Cesnola collection affords the amplest opportunity for study. Archæologists have of late years somewhat modified their ideas as to the source whence were derived the two materials, tin and copper, which, when combined, make bronze. Up to the last few

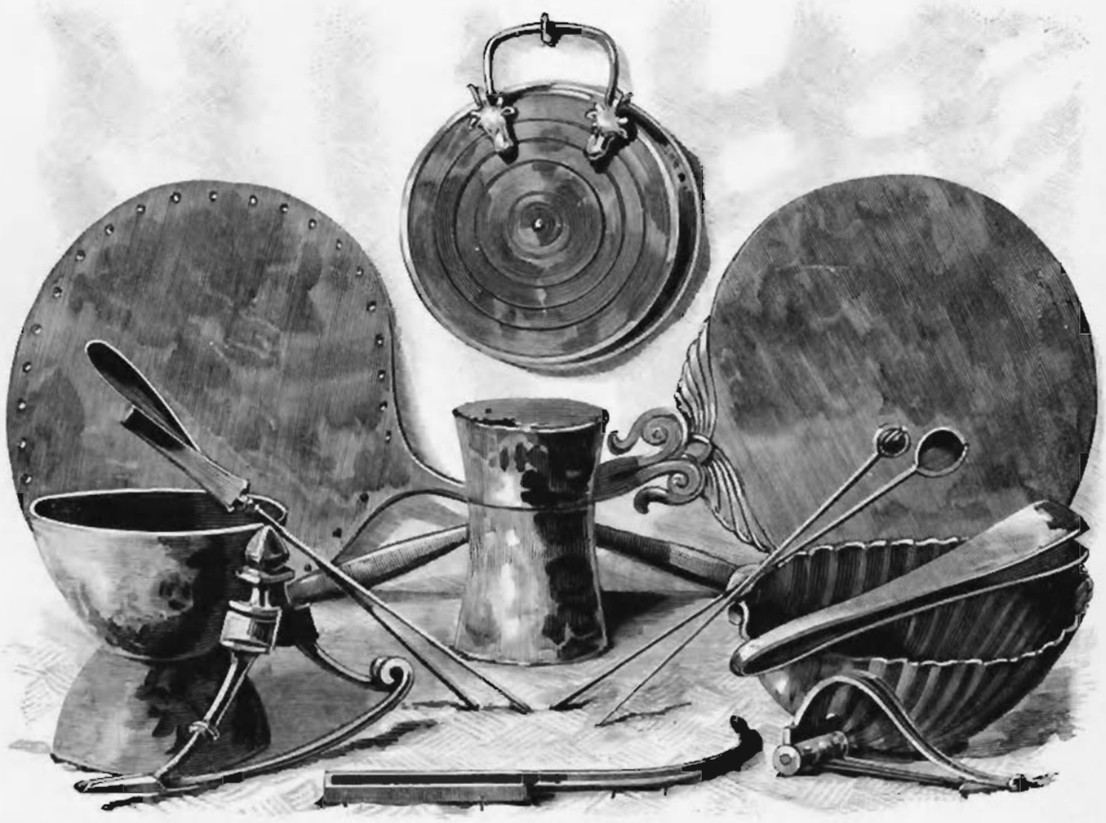
Group XIV.

years it was thought that the Phœnicians, deriving their supplies of tin and copper from Britain, alone furnished the supplies for the ancient metal-consuming races. Modern research has, however, shown beyond a doubt that the Etruscans had, in Italy, mines of both copper and tin, and made bronze among the very first. Burton's later discoveries in the land of Midian also seem to show that Egypt must have obtained her metals from this country. Very often in archæological study, while we are endeavouring to accommodate facts to speculations, simpler causes present themselves, and offer easy solutions to complex subjects. In the prehistoric period, as in the bronze age, this compound metal was, of course, in certain localities, exceedingly scarce, but everything leads us to suppose that in early historical times it was comparatively plenty. The material which Britain furnished might have been but a quota of that brought to old Greece, Italy, and the Mediterranean islands, in the early periods. Britain was almost unknown for some centuries before Cæsar; and bronze, so largely in use by the inhabitants of Italy, must have been derived from nearer sources.

In Group XIII. are four objects in bronze. The first is a strainer, with handles, possibly used for wine. The second is a jug, perfect in model, and absolutely familiar. The flat, dish-like bronze has an outer bronze ring, with ornamentations. These decorations are shaped like the knuckle-bones of animals. They are placed around the dish at different intervals. Possibly the two pairs on the opposite sides, which are the nearer, held a handle,

while the others have been lost. The use of the last vase, with a kind of hook or agraffe, with its long, square spout ending in a lion's head, cannot be determined. It might have been used for sacrificial purposes, as the dropping of oil in the fire. It has been suggested that the spout was passed through some partition of a building, the vase being concealed behind a wall. However, the handle seems to show that it was intended to be carried about. The whole work is very good, and the preservation of the piece perfect.

Group XIV. contains two capital objects, the large cauldron-shaped vases. The first has a diameter of twenty inches, the second of some twenty-five inches. The handles on the lower bronze are very peculiar, ending in a lotus-shape. The small vase



Group XV.

to the right, on top, is graceful in form, and has a well-turned handle. The depression on top in the mouth is frequently repeated in the ceramic collection coming from Cyprus. The last vase, on the right hand at the bottom, is certainly Greek, and of a good period. The handle, which comes to the very top, terminates in a lion's head, which grasps in the mouth the egg-pattern around the top of the vase. The form is full and ample, though the spout is insignificant. By comparing the outlines of this vase with the one in Group V. (the vase with the woman's head), save that in the last the spouts are doubled, the persistency of form may be found.

In Group XV. we have numerous objects, most of which belong to the toilette of the old Greeks. The round bronze suspended from a hook, the handles terminating in cows' heads, is a mirror-case. Similar cases, of Etruscan and Grecian origin, are found all over Europe. The circles engraved on it recall the geometrical figures, before spoken of, in the small earthenware vases. This case contained the mirror, which was detached. In former times (they are even in use to-day) we made a small portable pocket glass in a box very much in the same way. The mirrors were of bronze, covered with tin, and female slaves, with their soft palms, constantly burnished the faces. These covers are often miracles of *repoussé* work, and are among the most prized of all antique objects. Generally they reproduce some Homeric or mythological story, with a realistic tendency, different from the backs of the mirrors themselves, which were engraved. The engraving is by no means deep, only finely scratched. The mirrors are more conventional in design, even archaic. Those found in Etruria may be considered as models, which all the rest of the old workers in metal followed.

To the right and left are two fan-shaped mirrors, the one to the left ornamented in an Egyptian manner, the disk of the sun with the two wings. These shapes are peculiar to Asia Minor and Egypt. In the centre is a bronze box, not very much unlike our toilette-powder receptacle of to-day. The shell-shaped bronze was possibly used for ointment. Across it is a pair of tweezers. Invention went very far in tweezers in antique times, and they are found in many shapes. Some have a straight piece of metal between the tongs, so that the depilatory process was very much facilitated. The four bronze objects leaning to the right and left are pins for the hair, two made like oar-blades. We have revived to-day the *fibula*, or safety-pin, twenty centuries old, though it survived during all ages. The curved implement between the *fibulæ* is a *strigilum*, or bath scraper, numbers of which are found in all parts of old Greece. Our own American Indians used a bone, of the same shape.

In all these bronzes there is not one which recalls the Cyprian manner of treatment, save in the ornamentation of the double handles of the large vessel in Group XV. The art is excellent, the same as belongs to the Etruscans, with but the faintest approach in a single object to an Egyptian inspiration. All were possibly imported into Cyprus. We cannot but have the utmost respect for the metal-workers of that olden time. All that they produced was excellent, and they were imbued with a very clear perception of what was beautiful in Art. An analysis of the materials used shows that the old Greek or Etruscan was perfectly familiar with the exact proportions of tin and copper necessary to produce the best of bronzes. The Cypriote collection contains a certain number of bronze swords, spear-heads, bronze axes, and a most interesting series of detached ornamental objects, showing how universal was the use of this metal. Many of these objects are deeply coated with oxide and verdigris, but some are almost as perfect as when they left the maker's hands.

IV.

Hall of Ancient Statuary.

FROM the left-hand side of the large main hall, looking towards Fifth Avenue, an admirable standpoint is gained, permitting a view of some of the capital pieces of the Cesnola collection. In the first illustration, the sarcophagus discovered at Amathus is on the extreme left. This sarcophagus is undoubtedly a production of the Græco-Phœnician period, the first influence being the stronger. On the sloping lid, a portion of the cover of the sarcophagus only remaining, are two Sphinxes. Around the whole monument runs a border of lotus-flowers, and at each corner is a sacred tree. The preservation of this sarcophagus is very bad, but it gives a good conception of an ancient sepulchral monument. On each side *bas-reliefs* are found, with figures on foot, and in chariots, with horses. The peculiar forms of the chariots are worthy of study, with the outline of the wheels, the spokes and hubs. The method of harnessing resembles that in use in Egypt at the same period, the collar being placed high on the neck of the horse, the reins passing through it. In one of the

chariots an attendant holds an umbrella over the driver. The umbrella in ancient Art, of as early a period as is this sarcophagus, is exceedingly rare. The drapery and general treatment of the figures are partly Persian, partly Assyrian. The three soldiers on one side of the sarcophagus, following one of the chariots, are Greek: while the two men on horseback who precede one of the processions, both of whom wear pointed caps, are Assyrian, such head-costumes, with some slight modification, being in use to-day by the Persians. In the illustration, some little to the right, extended to its full length, is a large sarcophagus of marble, the lid having on it a head with long tresses. Its resemblance to an Egyptian mummy-case is striking. In the cases at the back of the picture

Group XVI.

are to be found the statues belonging to the Egyptian and Egypto-Phœnician periods. At the extreme end of the hall are two more sarcophagi, one with a Cupid and Psyche, found at Tarsus.

In examining Group XV., in the last chapter, we see the forms of mirrors. These, as far as their outlines go, are constant. There is the round mirror, which was suspended. This is invariably circular. For this special purpose the oval never was adopted. For hand-mirrors we have the round form, some little changed by ornamentation at its base where the handle joined it; or the oval form, the handle coming out from the longer side of the oval. Intermixtures of these forms never exist. An oval mirror with handle, such as we have adopted to-day, common in a lady's toilette, the Greeks, Etruscans, or Phœnicians, were ignorant about. There is conventionality to be considered as a fixed characteristic in all such ancient ware. When it comes to the decoration of such objects, then a wider scope is given, and Art is untrammelled. In Cyprus there were many mines of copper, the bronze implements showing native handiwork. All the fine

bronze objects in the Cesnola collection bear the marks of Cyprian make, and are not likely to have been imported from Italy or from Greece. As to the minor and smaller implements for the toilette, such as hair-pins, fibulæ, and strigilla, these forms were repeated through many centuries, commencing almost with prehistoric times, and ending with the period of Charlemagne.

In Group XVI. the figure in bronze at the right is some four inches high, and is exceedingly curious. It was designed as the handle of a mirror, as you can see the holes where the disk was affixed. The figure stands on a frog, which is supported by a cross-legged stool. The frog in Egyptian symbolism represents time. The hands of the figure hold cymbals. The ornamentation on the head is only slightly Egyptian, and rather Hindoo in character. The modelling of the body, which is rather full and corpulent, is not suggestive of Egyptian form. This is just one of those figures which puzzle the artist and archæologist, and the determination of its source must remain for some time to come unknown. What it does prove is, that Cyprus certainly drew to itself work from the farthest countries of antiquity. If it be Asiatic, which is highly probable, it shows that trade existed between the far East, Greece, and the islands of the Mediterranean, some centuries before the conquest of India by Alexander. The large circular disk standing on the tripod represents the bottom of a bronze bowl. This design is very elaborate and elegantly composed. In the centre is a rosace, with twisted ornamentation surrounding it. From this diverges a conventional forest with the forms of the lotus. Four antelopes at regular intervals stand out

Group XVII.

from the metal in *repoussé*. The animals are careful as to drawing and graceful in form. The Egypto-Assyrian design shows great skill in metal-work. The tripod on which it stands is of bronze, Assyrian in character. There is a twisted metal ornamentation introduced into the supports. The feet are those of a ruminant animal. Around the upper portion, a series of animals is designed. Its purpose might have been to hold a vase. The tripod itself is indicative of the worship of Apollo. To the right of the larger tripod is a smaller one with pendent ornamentations, certainly of more recent date. To the left are two candelabra of bronze; one is for holding a lamp, and the other is surmounted with a small figure, Græco-Egyptian in style. The three feet on which they stand are almost constantly found on candelabra, and seemed to have originated in Etruria. The ivy-leaf on the one to the left recalls the worship of Bacchus. These forms of candelabra are wonderfully persistent, and we have continued copying them up to to-day. Across the bottom of the engraving is a spear-head of bronze very much corroded.

In Group XVII. we have examples of three different kinds of bronze handles. The two to the right belong to the best period of Greek Art, such as might have been found in Italy. The one terminating in a vine-leaf shows excellence of design. It was first cast and then cut with a graving-tool. As Owen constructed the form of an animal from a single bone, from this handle the outline of the vase may be imagined. It was a bronze vessel with a single handle, perfectly modest in ornamentation, the decorative portion only existing in the handle. It has been mentioned before that it seems to be quite certain that there were manufacturers of handles who made nothing else. Other workmen fashioned the vases and applied the handles. The handle next to it, the twisted form of

which terminates in a rosace, is also Græco-Italian, though not quite so artistic. It was also the appendage to a single-handled vase. The third form is not difficult to establish as to origin. It is Assyrio-Egyptian, with its lions holding vases. At the bottom are the heads of oxen with long horns almost encircling the heads, the bottom one being reversed. On the right-hand side is the bronze handle to a dish.

Commencing with the object to the left of Group XVIII., we have a bronze lion's head used as a spout either for the decoration of a bath or a fountain. To study the forms of animals, especially of lions, in ancient work, is to embrace the whole history of Art. At first the old sculptors appear to have treated human forms more conventionally than those of animals. Men were endowed with mystic characteristics, while animals were designed as accurately as possible in a realistic sense. In early Assyrian work, man or woman's face in profile was made with the eye looking quite like that of a front-face view. This did not arise apparently from ignorance of Art, for when they wanted to draw or design the profile of an animal, such as of a dog, a horse, or a lion, the eye was properly conceived. There was stiffness of drawing in both man and animal, with an exaggeration of muscular life. In the Phidian era, Art approaches to Nature, while before that time it was an exaggeration. Later, after the period of Alexander the Great, Art especially adapted to ordinary objects became in a certain way conventional, more especially in such things as were adapted for common usage. This lion is Græco-Roman of a by no means good period. There is a candelabrum to the left, one of many belonging to the collection. This might have been used to hold a torch when put in position as in the picture, or the top might have been reversed and the candelabrum or socket would have stood on that end. The use of the small bronze objects suspended on the ribbon is not easily determined. They may be ornamental bosses, used for personal decoration. Equally enigmatical is the bronze object hanging in the middle of the ribbon. The two bronze disks to the right, looking like large buttons, are bronze bosses, and might have been the terminations of a belt. To the right is a bronze spear-head, with socket for the introduction of the wooden shaft. The bronze dish is remarkable for its excellent preservation, and the bosses which surround it are not only ornamental, but add to the strength of the piece. The handles are well made, and show the skill of the workman.

The study of ancient arms of offence finds in Group XIX. a very thorough illustration. Most of the tangs of the old spears and arrow-heads are bent, as may be seen in the javelin-head on the left. With very few exceptions, the shapes of arrow-heads have changed but little from those fashioned out of flint by prehistoric man. The wants of human beings suggested almost at their birth arms for hunting and war. We enter here on this very difficult metallurgical question, How did the people of the bronze age succeed in combining tin and copper in such proportions as to give the new compound a cutting-edge? The most careful analysis fails to find any great difference in the proportions of metals used

Group XVIII.

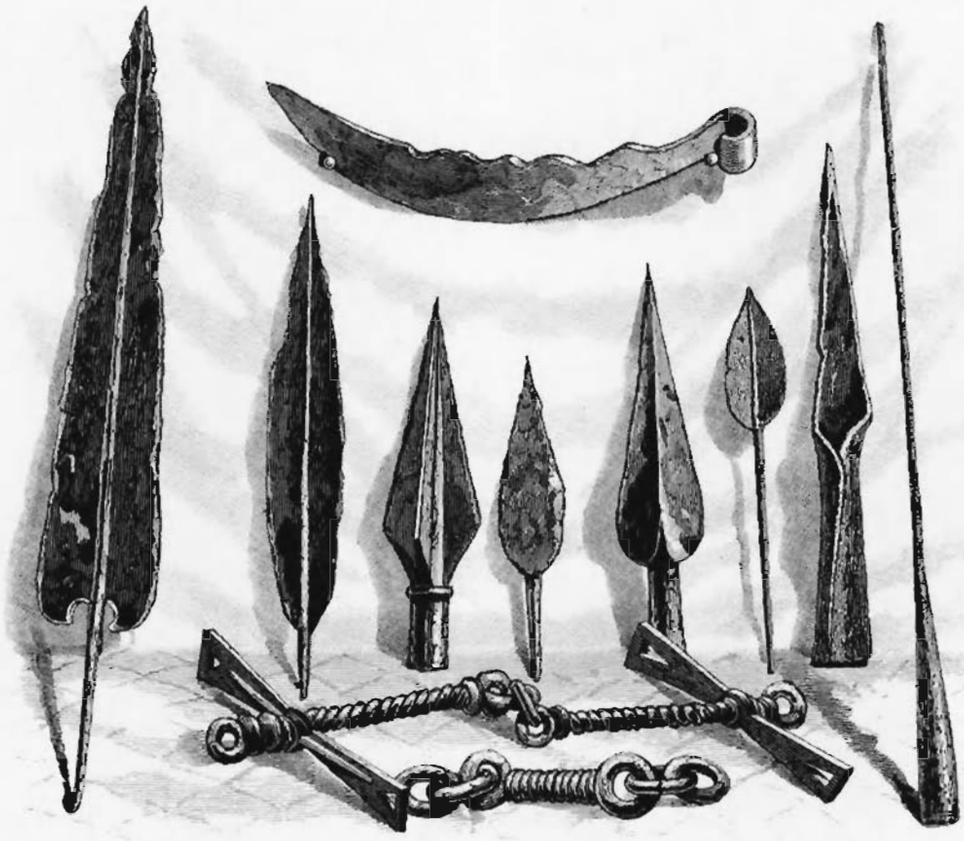
in early bronze-making. Bronze spear-heads of prehistoric times, taken from the Swiss lakes, when divided into their elements by the chemist, if compared with those of early Greek periods, show precisely the same composition.

Knives, scissors, and chisels, of phosphor-bronze, possess some of the best qualities of steel. But though traces of phosphates may be found in the analysis of old bronze, its presence is certainly accidental, and arose from imperfect preparation of the metal. It seems so very certain that bronze was used in early periods for cutting processes that an explanation of the process of making it has been long sought for. It is known that when bronze is cast under peculiar circumstances, and then worked afterwards, it does possess a certain hardness—sufficient to allow it to be converted into a cutting instrument. Quite a long time ago, moulds in bronze, in which bronze hatchets or celts had been cast, were discovered. To-day, to cast bronze in bronze would almost defy the skill of the most expert bronze-worker. But still it is evident that the old workmen did this under certain special circumstances, but only when cutting implements were wanted. It seems that, when bronze is poured into a bronze mould, it acquires a certain temper. We might repeat this experiment, but the difficulty exists that the cast would stick in the mould. Again, a considerable temper can

be given to bronze when it is hammered. It is possible that the old makers of bronze armour and spear-heads made their metal tough and tenacious in this way. Length of time since these weapons were made, with the change of molecules, accounts for the present softness of the bronze weapons of ancient times.

In looking at these arrow, spear, and javelin heads, we see great diversity of form. The second one to the left has a leaf-like form, but the one next to it is probably more modern, being four-sided. This especial form of arrow-head was long retained, and English archers used arrows tipped in this way, and the longest survival of this shape was employed by the cross-bowman. On top is a curiously-formed, curved, bronze implement, somewhat sickle-shaped, the use of which is not known. Similar objects have been discovered in the Lacustrine finds. Beneath the arrow-heads is a bronze bit, jointed in the middle precisely as are the most approved bits of to-day. Its exceeding width somewhat surprises us. We have no reason to suppose that the horses of twenty-four hundred years ago were so large as those of to-day. The horses of the Parthenon are gamy little fellows, with saucy heads, fine crests, and fairish necks, but are not big horses. A warm climate, though it may make an elephant of the largest proportions, will not produce a big horse. Quite possibly the Greek horse, or the Cyprus horse, had his blood renewed from Egypt and the African coast, for the Numidians must have had capital mounts. These huge bits are therefore very puzzling. We can only suppose that they extended very much beyond the sides of the horse's mouth, as the joint in the middle allowed of this. At the best, they must have been cruel bits. So perfect is the preservation of one of these bits that a horseman of to-day might attach it to the bridle of his horse.

In Group XX. are forms of vases, and utensils of quite different dates. On the left is a small bowl, supported on three feet, made of some stone resembling basalt. It is possibly of great antiquity, from the simplicity of its form. There are two smaller objects next to it that we cannot explain. The round one, with the cup-like form, may possibly have been used as a weight in spinning; the other, shaped like a cork, for crushing purposes. The largest



Group XIX.

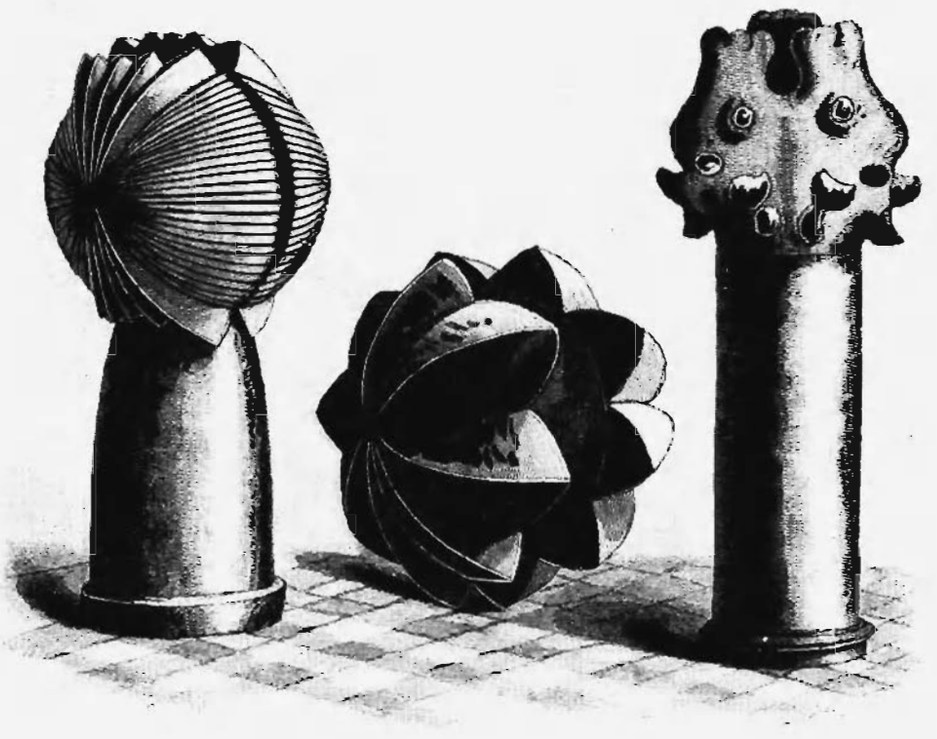
object in the middle is of basalt or serpentine, as it is not so old as the first object designated. The line ornamentation, which follows perpendicularly the outline of the object, belongs to a more recent date. The use of the small double-curved object we cannot determine. The vase to the right is of the same material as the larger vase. The cover is made of a different material. The chain of beads is very curious, not only as to form but ornamentation. The double cone is a favorite form with primeval people, and the simple ornamentation, a circle with a dot in the middle of it, belongs to the remotest antiquity. This necklace recalls in many ways the form of similar objects used for personal adornment, worn by our Indians. The reason why races in many different parts of the world adopt the same simple forms, and decorate these objects in an almost identical manner, is because such shapes were the easiest to make with such rough tools as were first originated in man's brain.

Under the beads hang two very cleverly-imagined masks or heads. One is so much like a negro that its distinguishing traits are at once visible. This small head is valuable in an anthropological sense, as it shows how immutable is this type of race. These objects are in case No. 7.

Group XXI. represents a group of objects, the use of which it is again difficult to determine. The supposition is that they were mace-heads, used as insignia of dignity. The two forms to the left and centre are of bronze, and are wonderfully true as to geometrical design. The one which stands in a socket is apparently derived, as to shape, from the middle one. An object in agate, found in the Curium treasure-chamber, which may be rightly called a mace-head, may indicate the use of all three objects which make up our illustration. The Rev. C. W. King, of Cambridge, England, who for wonderful archæological acquaintance has no rival, mentions that maces somewhat following these shapes are often seen on sculptures of the Assyrian period. Quite possibly they might have been used as insignia of office. In the carvings of Persepolis, Mr. King says there is designed "a Persian usher introducing each deputation of the subject nations into the

Group XX.

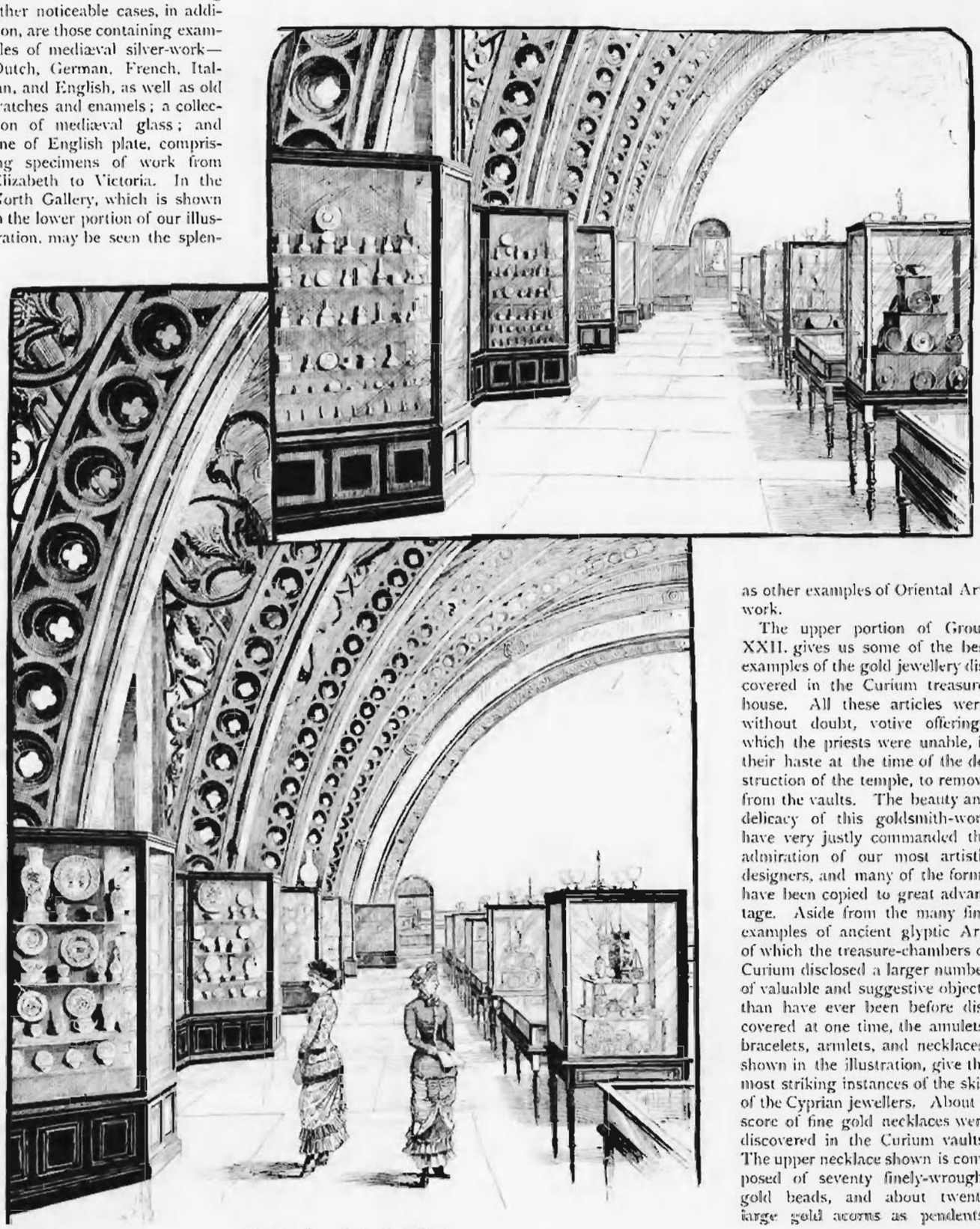
royal presence, and who carries a staff of office, headed by a ball, doubtless of precious material." The body-guard of Xerxes, to designate their particular service, carried on the butt-end of their spears a golden apple or pomegranate. The object to the right, terminating in cows' heads, is of bronze, and is also from the treasure-chamber of Curium. Whether this indicates the worship of Hathor, the Aphrodite of the Egyptians, we leave to others to solve. Such cow-heads, as terminations to ornaments, are very common in Phœnician trinkets. Ornaments in gold, such as have come down to us from the Phœnicians and Cypriotes, were never very massive. Fineness of execution took the place of weight of the metal. There are, however, notable exceptions, as, for instance, two gold armlets weighing over two pounds apiece and several massive gold bracelets in the Curium treasure.



Group XXI.

V.

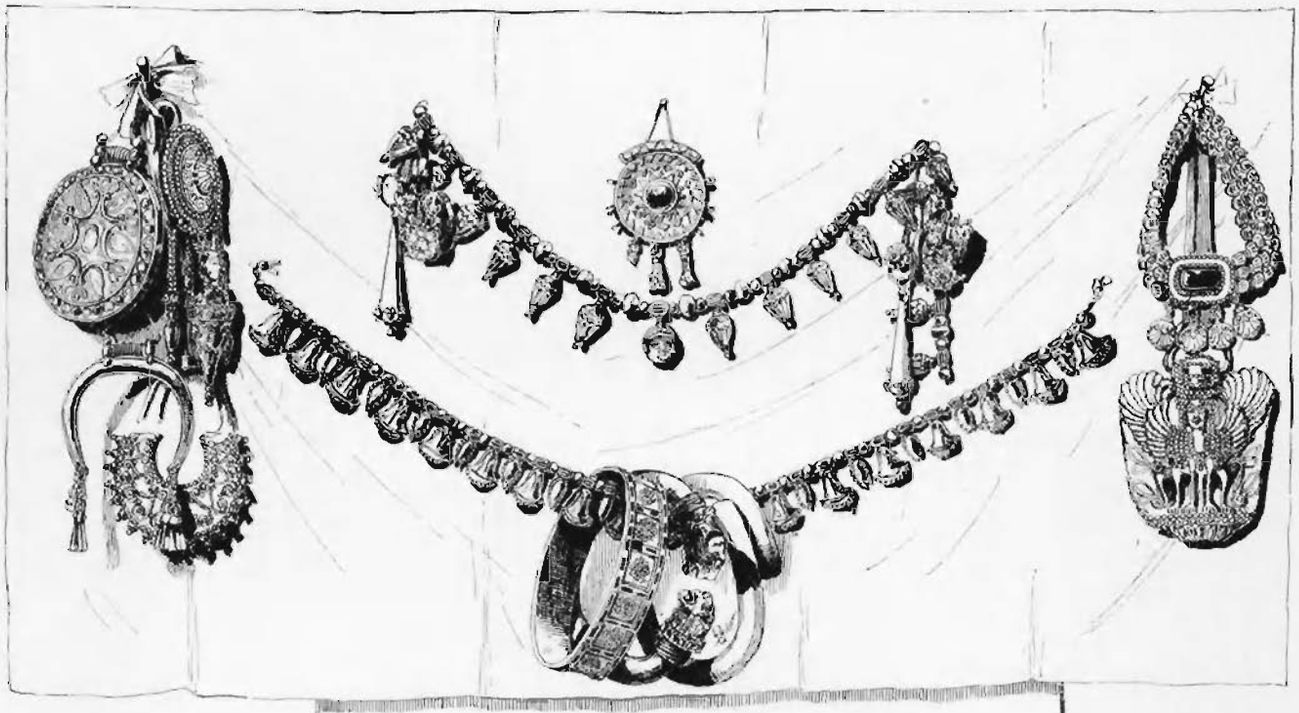
THE South Gallery of the Metropolitan Museum is most interesting for its exhibition of Cyprian glass and the unique specimens of ancient jewellery and gems found in the treasure-chamber of Curium. Among other noticeable cases, in addition, are those containing examples of mediæval silver-work—Dutch, German, French, Italian, and English, as well as old watches and enamels; a collection of mediæval glass; and one of English plate, comprising specimens of work from Elizabeth to Victoria. In the North Gallery, which is shown in the lower portion of our illustration, may be seen the splendid Avery collection of Oriental porcelain—Chinese and Japanese—the Pruyn collection of Oriental ivories and lacquer-work, some of the gold lacquers from the Phœnix donation, as well as other examples of Oriental Art-work.



The North and South Galleries.

The upper portion of Group XXII. gives us some of the best examples of the gold jewellery discovered in the Curium treasure-house. All these articles were, without doubt, votive offerings, which the priests were unable, in their haste at the time of the destruction of the temple, to remove from the vaults. The beauty and delicacy of this goldsmith-work have very justly commanded the admiration of our most artistic designers, and many of the forms have been copied to great advantage. Aside from the many fine examples of ancient glyptic Art, of which the treasure-chambers of Curium disclosed a larger number of valuable and suggestive objects than have ever been before discovered at one time, the amulets, bracelets, armlets, and necklaces, shown in the illustration, give the most striking instances of the skill of the Cyprian jewellers. About a score of fine gold necklaces were discovered in the Curium vaults. The upper necklace shown is composed of seventy finely-wrought gold beads, and about twenty large gold acorns as pendents,

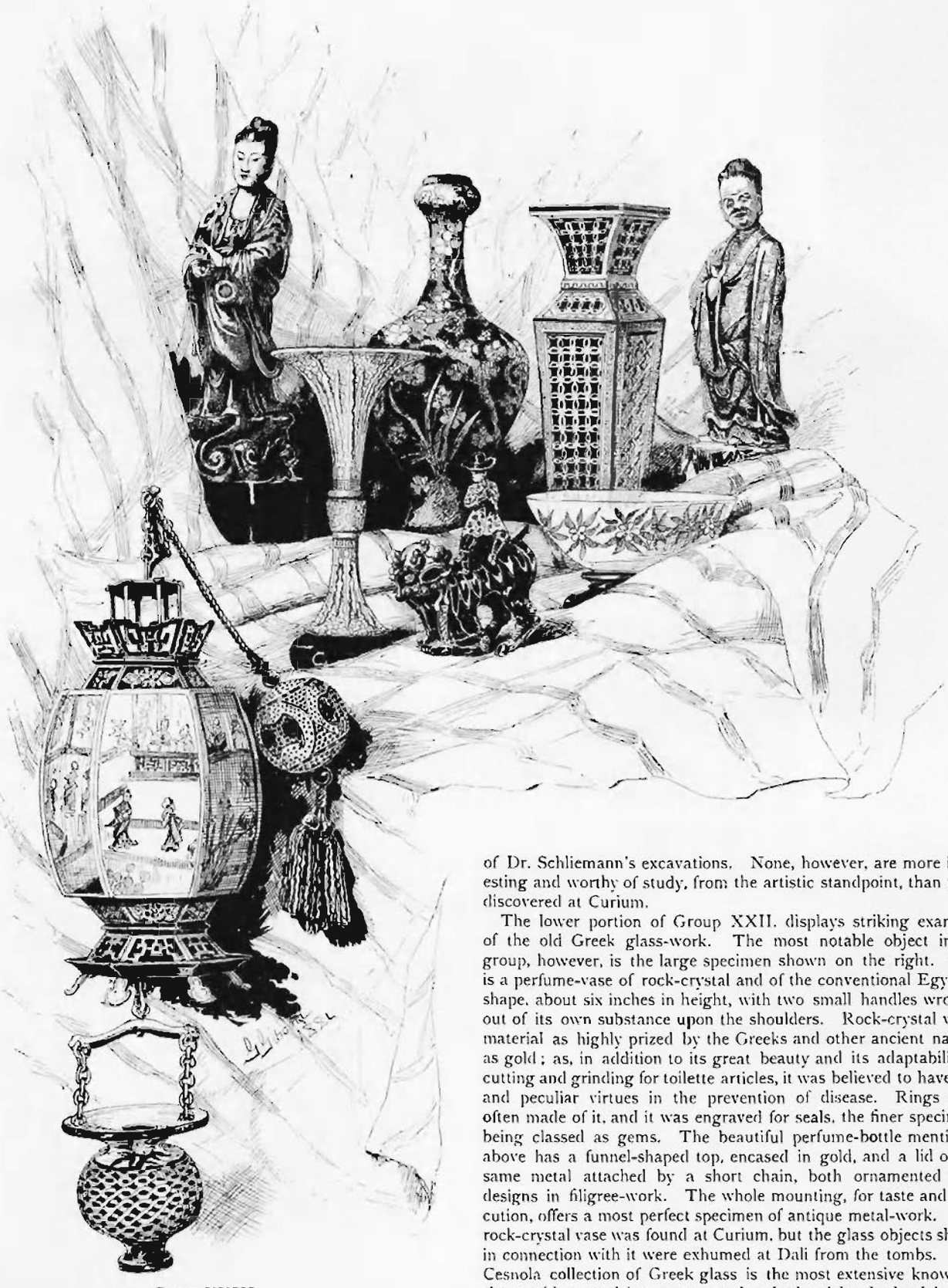
the head of Medusa in the center. The Gorgon head was a favourite object of treatment with the old Greek artists, and perhaps no one subject recurs more frequently in their *cameï* and *intagli*, as well as in their gold-work, when they departed from the purely decorative treatment. The significance of the myth, as well as the adaptability of it for the graver's tool, will easily account for this.



Group XXII.

The lower necklace consists of a quantity of alternate lotus flowers and buds in gold, with an Egyptian head as centre-piece, the latter concealed in the engraving by the bracelets and armlets thrown over it in the grouping. The decorative motives in all the necklaces found refer themselves, like all the other objects of Art discovered, to a number of different periods, and to the various peoples who at different times dominated Cyprus. Egyptian and Phœnician as well as Greek influences are clearly shown, though the fineness and neatness of manipulation in their various specimens of jewellery would indicate that they were executed when Greek Art and handicraft were at their best. The two bracelets shown are remarkably interesting specimens, about a dozen having been discovered at Curium. One has at each extremity a fine lion's head, and is of hollow gold, while another consists of a heavy gold band, about an inch in breadth, with rosettes, flowers, and other designs, in high-relief, on which are still visible in places remains of blue enamel. Some of the Curium bracelets found are of solid gold, weighing from seven to nine ounces each. Still more interesting, from the standpoint of the archæologist, is the gold armlet grouped with the bracelets, which weighs about two pounds, being one of two precisely similar to one another, discovered at the same time. This armlet is specially significant from the inscription in the Cypriote character, beautifully engraved on the inner side. The inscription consists of thirteen letters or characters, divided by a perpendicular line into two groups, of which the first is the name of a king of Paphos, who probably offered these armlets to the temple divinity. It is as follows: "E-te-a-do-ro to-pa-po-ba-si-le-o-s," which, being transformed into the more classic Greek, reads, "Ετεάνδρου Τοῦ Παφου Βασιλεως," or in English, "(the armlet) of Eteandros, King of Paphos." The Cypriote dialect, like that of all the Ionian islands, was considerably different from that of Attica, and the characters themselves were different, partaking of the cuneiform shape of the Assyrian letters. A very remarkable bracelet, shown at the upper right-hand corner, has a large gold medallion in the centre, containing an onyx, the band consisting of a great number of large-ribbed, gold beads, soldered together in threes. Four gold amulets are hooked to the bottom of the medallion, ornamented in like fashion to the decoration found on a large sarcophagus discovered at Amathus. Similar bracelets are seen worn by kings on the bas-reliefs, from Nineveh, at the British Museum. Another large gold medallion, which was originally the centre-piece of a bracelet, is shown at the top of the group. This has beautiful

granulated work, with an onyx in the centre, probably representing the pupil of the human eye. All this goldsmith-work is most noticeable for beauty of design and perfect finish of treatment, showing the remarkable skill of the craftsmen of that day. The other gold and silver objects shown are of various character, most of them probably having been worn as amulets. That on the right, suspended from the bracelet, is a sphynx ornament, all of the decorative treatment being essentially Egyptian in motive. All people of wealth among the nations bordering on the Eastern Mediterranean wore costly amulets, and the manufacture of these objects occupied the best thought and skill of the ancient jeweller and goldsmith. Many of these supposed safeguards against harm, wrought with a beauty which has survived the rust of time, have been found in Egyptian tombs, and also at Mycenæ, at the time



Group XXIII.

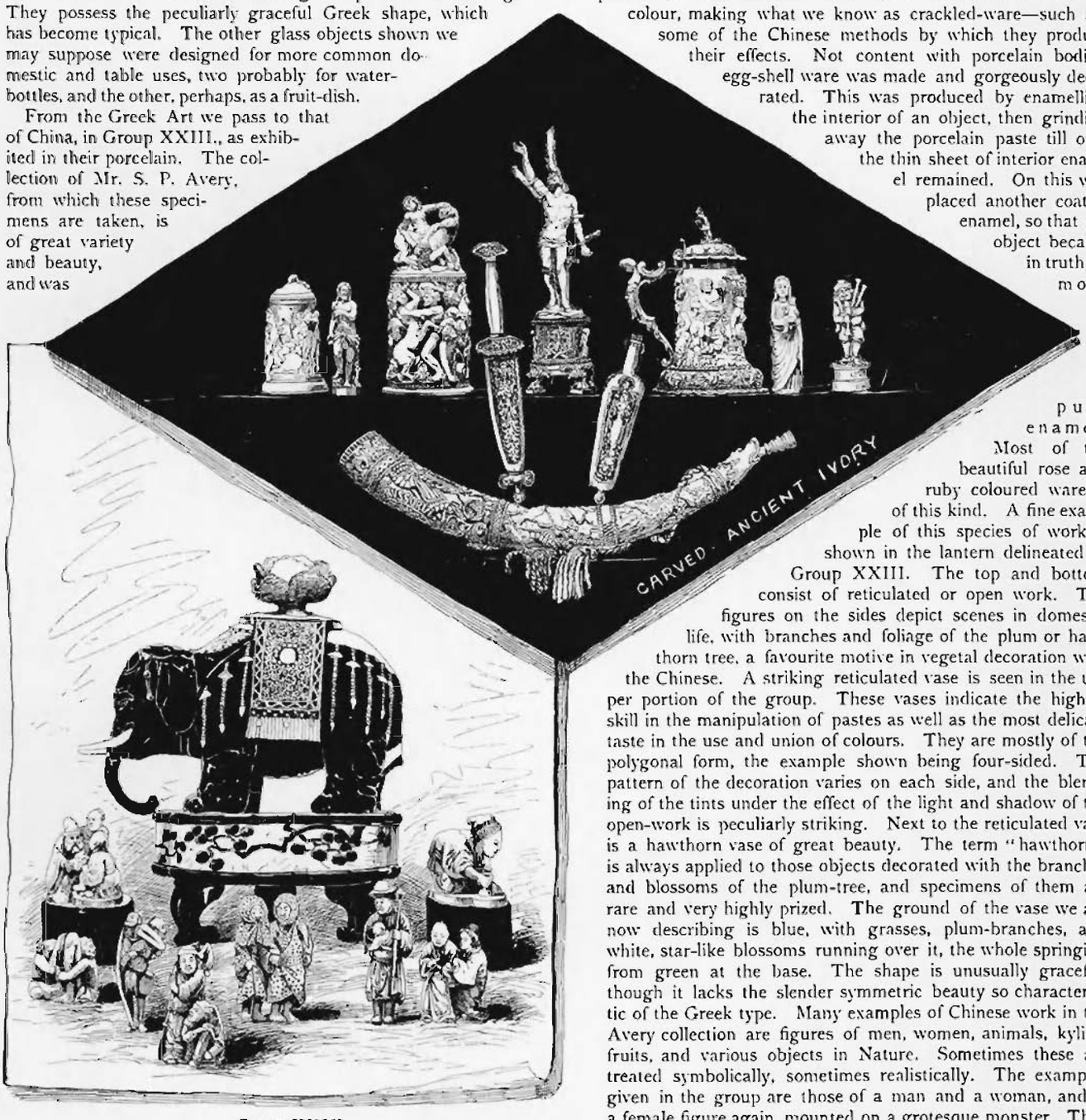
of Dr. Schliemann's excavations. None, however, are more interesting and worthy of study, from the artistic standpoint, than those discovered at Curium.

The lower portion of Group XXII. displays striking examples of the old Greek glass-work. The most notable object in the group, however, is the large specimen shown on the right. This is a perfume-vase of rock-crystal and of the conventional Egyptian shape, about six inches in height, with two small handles wrought out of its own substance upon the shoulders. Rock-crystal was a material as highly prized by the Greeks and other ancient nations as gold; as, in addition to its great beauty and its adaptability to cutting and grinding for toilette articles, it was believed to have rare and peculiar virtues in the prevention of disease. Rings were often made of it, and it was engraved for seals, the finer specimens being classed as gems. The beautiful perfume-bottle mentioned above has a funnel-shaped top, encased in gold, and a lid of the same metal attached by a short chain, both ornamented with designs in filigree-work. The whole mounting, for taste and execution, offers a most perfect specimen of antique metal-work. The rock-crystal vase was found at Curium, but the glass objects shown in connection with it were exhumed at Dali from the tombs. The Cesnola collection of Greek glass is the most extensive known in the world, comprising seventeen hundred articles, both plain and

simple, various in form and color. Among them may be seen the greatest diversity of ornamental cups and vases, and bottles of all shapes and sizes, known to any people. Many of these glass objects glitter with a peculiarly beautiful iridescence, the result of the decay of animal and other matter. Among these objects are amphoræ, vases, lecythi, plates, bowls, rings, amulets, beads, &c. The two tall vases with double handles exhibited in the group are specimens of whorl-glass, the spiral form being introduced into the texture of the substance during the process of blowing. They possess the peculiarly graceful Greek shape, which has become typical. The other glass objects shown we may suppose were designed for more common domestic and table uses, two probably for water-bottles, and the other, perhaps, as a fruit-dish.

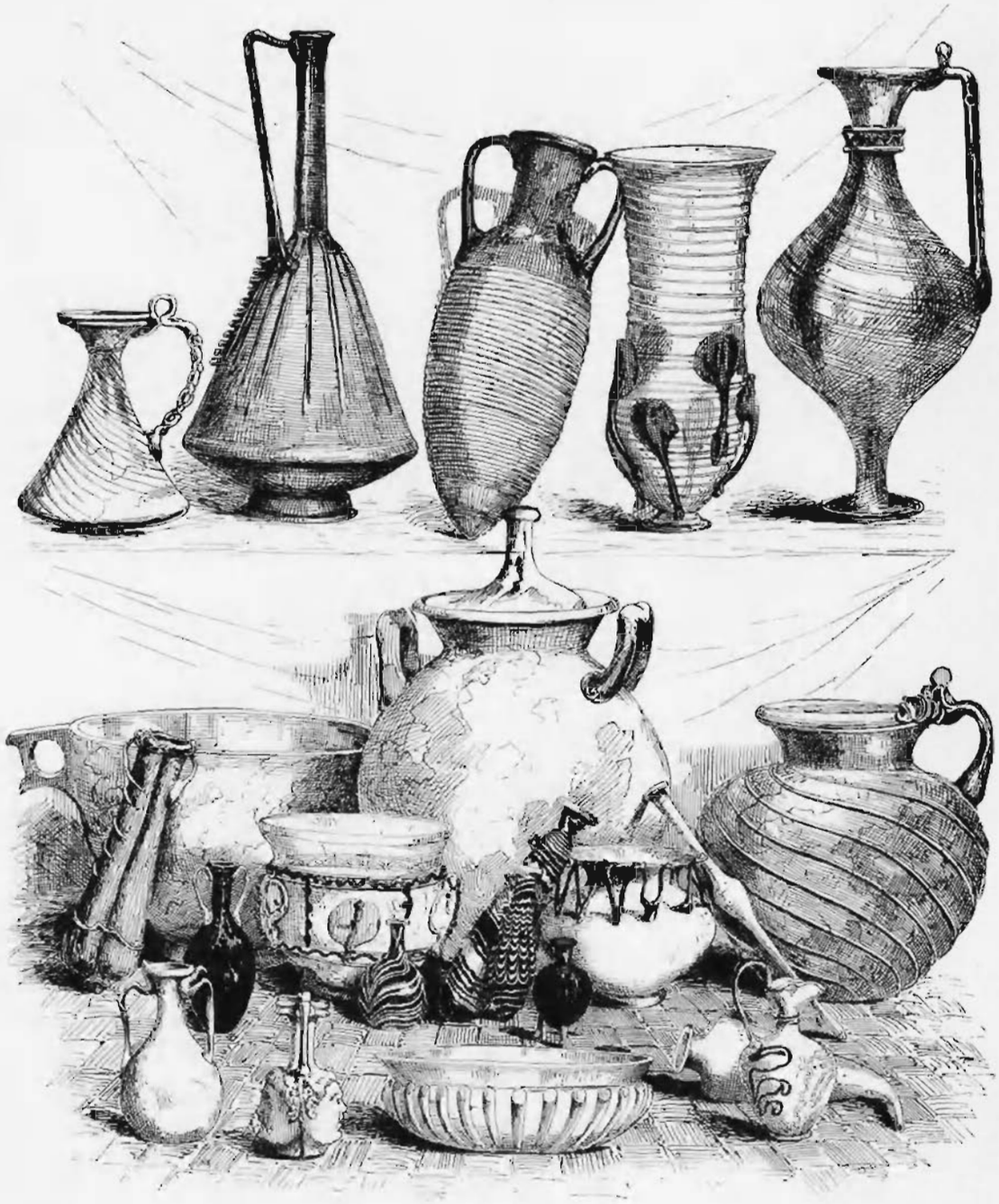
From the Greek Art we pass to that of China, in Group XXIII., as exhibited in their porcelain. The collection of Mr. S. P. Avery, from which these specimens are taken, is of great variety and beauty, and was recently purchased by the Museum. Of the wonderful skill of the Chinese in pottery and porcelain, so much has been written of late years that it would be vain repetition to enlarge much on the theme. The Chinese, unlike the Japanese, who display far more individuality and invention in treating lines, regard form as a mere vehicle for the reception and display of brilliant colour. In this kind of decoration they are without rivals. In variety of gem-like products, copies of the most brilliant colours in flowers, stones, serpent-skins and skins of fishes and wild animals, the green of plants, and the blue of the skies, in every shade, of every colour, and in the intermingling and mottling of these colours, as applied to porcelain, these Orientals may be considered unapproached, or, if approached, only by their Japanese cousins, to whom they communicated their art in the first century of the Christian era. Colours were applied in a great variety of ways. They were blown on through a tube with lace across the end, so as to fall in minute bubbles; they were subjected in the furnace to flashes of heat and sudden streams of cold water; gold was dusted on through lace patterns; the surface was cracked, and the cracks filled with colour, making what we know as crackled-ware—such are some of the Chinese methods by which they produce their effects. Not content with porcelain bodies, egg-shell ware was made and gorgeously decorated. This was produced by enamelling the interior of an object, then grinding away the porcelain paste till only the thin sheet of interior enamel remained. On this was placed another coat of enamel, so that the object became in truth almost pure enamel. Most of the beautiful rose and ruby coloured ware is of this kind. A fine example of this species of work is shown in the lantern delineated in Group XXIII. The top and bottom consist of reticulated or open work. The figures on the sides depict scenes in domestic life, with branches and foliage of the plum or hawthorn tree, a favourite motive in vegetal decoration with the Chinese. A striking reticulated vase is seen in the upper portion of the group. These vases indicate the highest skill in the manipulation of pastes as well as the most delicate taste in the use and union of colours. They are mostly of the polygonal form, the example shown being four-sided. The pattern of the decoration varies on each side, and the blending of the tints under the effect of the light and shadow of the open-work is peculiarly striking. Next to the reticulated vase is a hawthorn vase of great beauty. The term "hawthorn" is always applied to those objects decorated with the branches and blossoms of the plum-tree, and specimens of them are rare and very highly prized. The ground of the vase we are now describing is blue, with grasses, plum-branches, and white, star-like blossoms running over it, the whole springing from green at the base. The shape is unusually graceful, though it lacks the slender symmetric beauty so characteristic of the Greek type. Many examples of Chinese work in the Avery collection are figures of men, women, animals, kylins, fruits, and various objects in Nature. Sometimes these are treated symbolically, sometimes realistically. The examples given in the group are those of a man and a woman, and of a female figure again, mounted on a grotesque monster. They are rich in colour, and both the texture and ornamentation of the garments are admirably expressed. The vase with the broad, flaring top is a good example of raised work on a crackled surface. In all these subtleties of porcelain manipulation, the Chinese are masters, though, of course, the period of their best Art has long since passed. The Art of to-day confines itself to imitating that of two centuries ago. The lowest figure illustrates the meander design in decoration, which was a favourite one among all the Orientals during early times, even as far as the Mediterranean, where it was also evident in some examples of Greek work, when the latter was affected by Eastern influences.

Group XXIV. offers some typical examples of modern, mediæval,



Group XXIV.

and Japanese ivory-carving, an art which has flourished vigorously among all nations, and in every period of civilisation. It was not till the fourteenth century that ivory-carving assumed the definite Gothic form, which showed its emancipation from the early classic models, and the devotee spirit that followed in Byzantine Art. Since the sixteenth century the Art has declined, though many finely conceived and executed pieces have been produced from time to time. The centre figure of the upper part of Group XXIV. is a statue of the martyrdom of St. Sebastian. It is modelled with much freedom, and is a good expression of early Christian work. The tankard on the left is designed as a representation, both on its cover and the body, of the contest of the Greek goddess Artemis with the Amazons. Through the confusion of interlocked limbs there appears on close examination a well-ordered plan, which is clearly set forth in the execution, and which shows remarkable dexterity. It is believed that the mediæval artists had a means of softening ivory, which enabled them to model with far more spirit and accuracy. The other large tankard, which also be-



Group XXV.

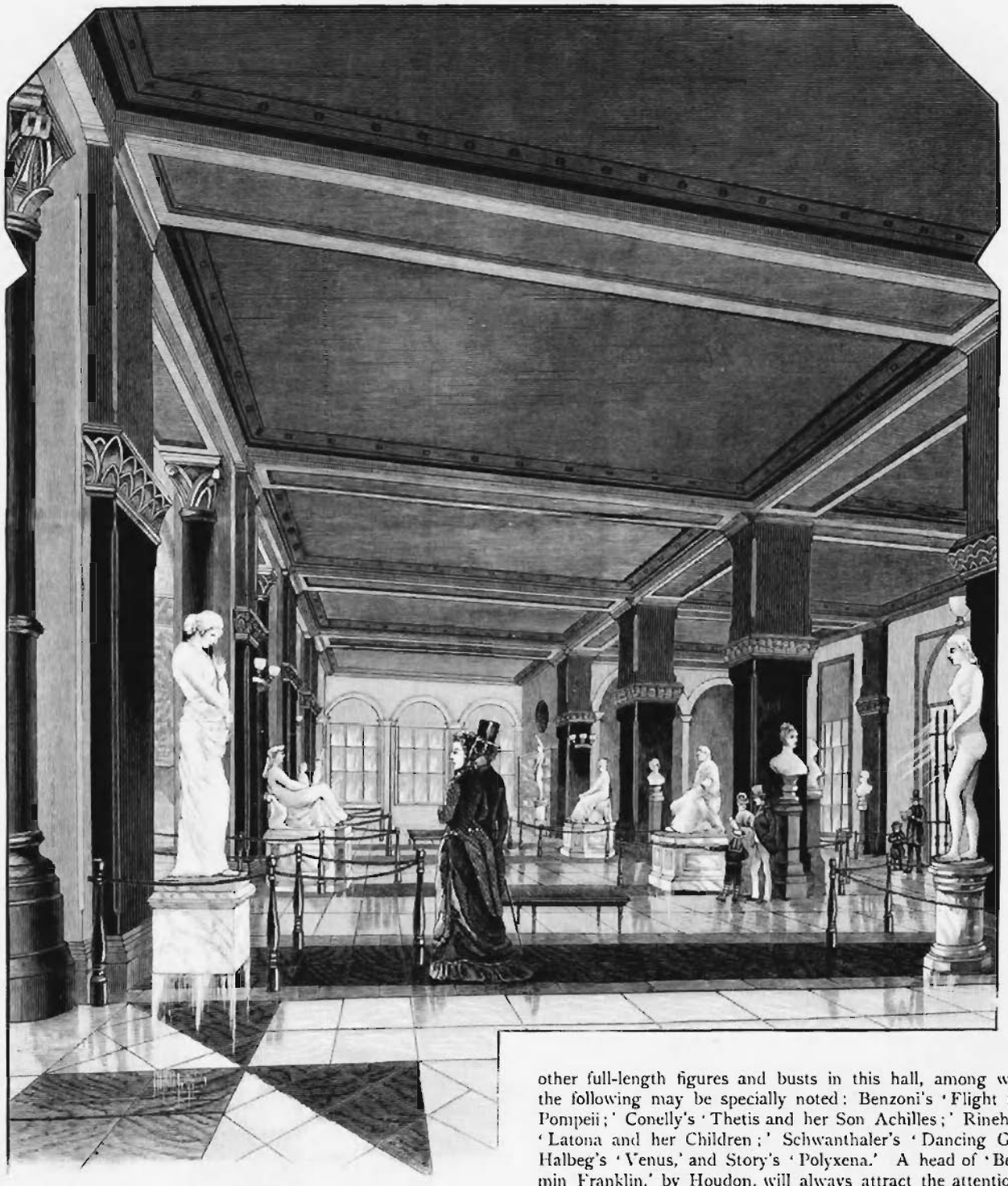
longs to the early part of the seventeenth century, produces a Bacchanalian scene with good effect. The other specimens on the upper line are also striking specimens of mediæval ivory-work. The sheath and handle of the large dagger are dexterously carved in decorative design, but the smaller weapon is the more remarkable of the two. It represents 'The Dance of Death,' and when studied in the original shows itself to be a very noticeable piece of Art-work. The hunting-horn is an example of Russian ivory-work, when the cutting of this fine material, owing to the fact, perhaps, that there was a larger supply of ivory in that country, reached a very high state of perfection after it had begun to decline in other parts of Europe. This hunting-horn, which is treated with remarkable fullness and variety of detail, has carved on it, in addition to purely decorative figures, the story of St. George and the Dragon, a review of Russian soldiery, and a medallion of Peter the Great. It may be considered as one of the finest pieces of European ivory-carving extant. When we glance at the Japanese carvings represented below, the great difference in

Group XXVI.

spirit and treatment between the Occident and Orient is immediately perceptible. The Japanese, in all the varieties of their Art, display a richness and sort of grotesque invention very striking. To much of the unrivalled dexterity and finish of detail, so characteristic of the Chinese artists, they added great force of humorous originality and vigour in expressing it. The minor pieces in the lower part of Group XXIV. are good examples of this, while the carving of the elephant may be regarded merely as an illustration of technical fineness of work.

The manufacture of glass, which belongs to both the useful and ornamental arts, is one of the oldest discoveries of human invention, and passes back into the morning of antiquity. Representations of glass-blowers have been found painted on Egyptian tombs, which date three thousand years before Christ. In a previous chapter something has been said of ancient Greek glass, and the perfection which it reached. Let us now take a brief glance at the Roman glass, as shown in the splendid Marquand collection, recently purchased by the Museum. These glass objects were exhumed in different portions of Europe, and bear witness of the old Roman occupation. Group XXV. offers many fine examples of Roman glass, showing the character of its forms and decoration. In many cases this glass, like that of the Greek period excavated at Cyprus, is coloured with a beautiful iridescence, the chemical effect of decay. Though the manufacture of glass was introduced into Rome in the time of Cicero, it was not till the latter years of the first century of our epoch that great skill was attained in making ornamental articles. At this time only articles of luxury were produced, such as vases, wine-jars, and cups for the tables of the wealthy, perfume and other vases for their toilette, and urns and lachrymatories for their tombs. It was not till the third century that articles of glass came into common use. The finest example of Roman glass is the Barberini or Portland vase, in the British Museum, on which is represented in raised figures the marriage of Peleus and Thetis. The specimens of Roman glass in Group XXV. show the forms most in vogue, and indicate that the Romans of the empire were in large measure masters of the subtleties of the glass-making art. Nearly every ornamental device practised by modern skill is here displayed, and even the best Venetian period of glass-blowing has little to offer in the treatment of form and decoration more essentially artistic.

The Jackson Jarves collection of Venetian glass, of which illustrations are given in Group XXVI., furnishes a good opportunity for comparison. The designs are more fragile and fantastic, more inventive and original, perhaps, but not better in form. The genius of the Venetian artist ran riot in a thousand quaint shapes, and we find in his work something of the same wonderful feeling for colour which made the canvasses of Titian, Tintoretto, and Giorgone, such masterpieces. Venetian glass-blowing reached its perfection in the thirteenth century at Murano, one of the islands adjacent to the city, and here for two or three centuries was produced that wonderful glass which is the marvel of modern times. The industry has recently been revived at Murano, but, though the products are beautiful, they do not equal the best results of the mediæval craft. The specimens delineated in Group XXVI. suggest the great variety and delicacy of treatment which the Murano glass-blower was enabled to obtain. Old Venetian glass of the best design is exceptionally rare, not merely on account of the long decadence of the manufacture, but from the excessive fragility of these precious objects.

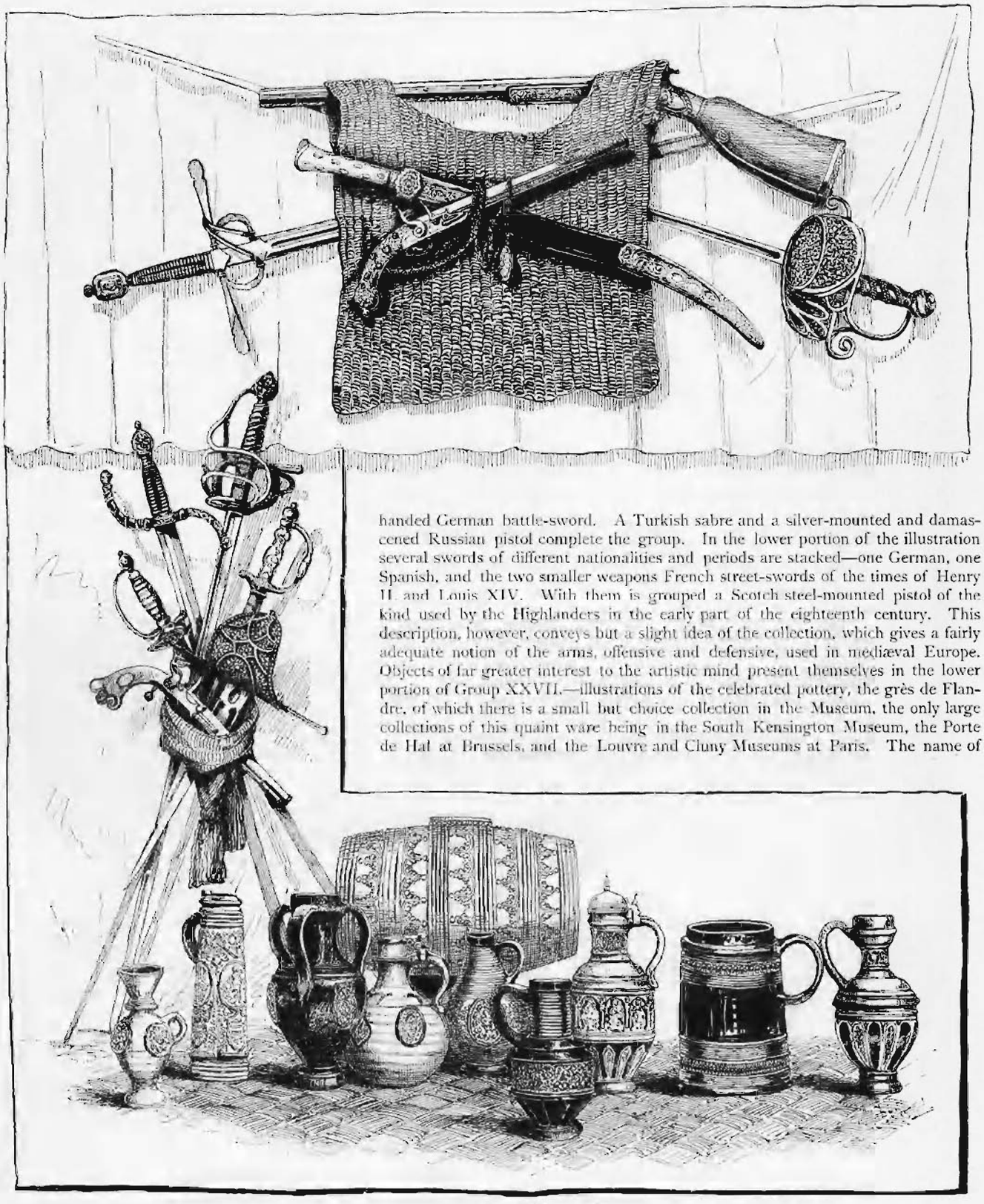


Hall of Statuary.

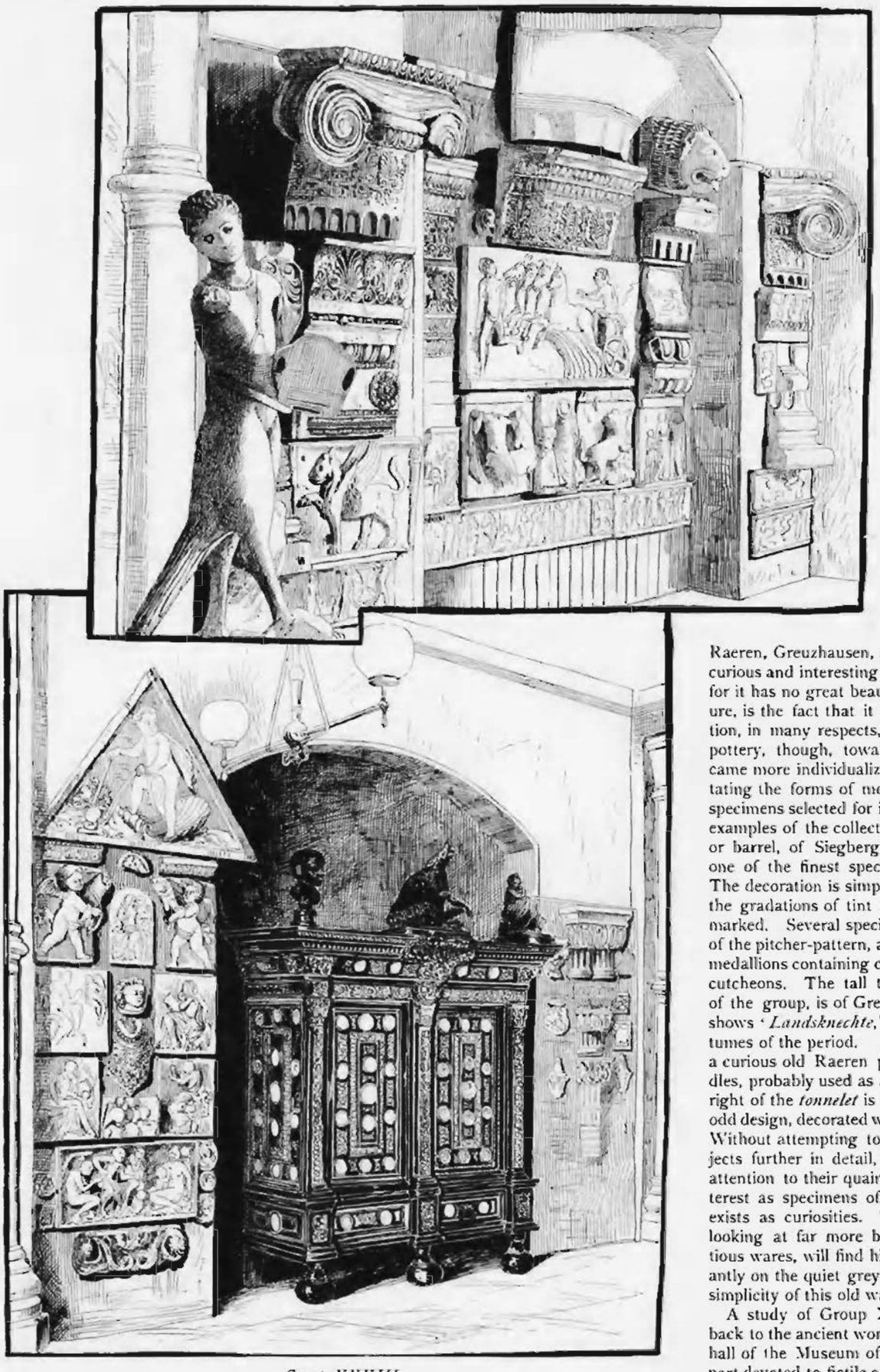
AS a fitting preface to the Museum and its collection, the west entrance-hall contains the modern statues. Our illustration gives a capital idea of the fine appearance of this hall. To the left is Story's 'Medea,' and, to the right, Powers's statue of 'California.' Back of the 'Medea' is a seated figure of 'Semiramis,' also by Story; and on the other side, somewhat lower down, a seated figure of 'Cleopatra,' by the same sculptor. There are numerous other full-length figures and busts in this hall, among which the following may be specially noted: Benzoni's 'Flight from Pompeii;' Conelly's 'Thetis and her Son Achilles;' Rinehart's 'Latona and her Children;' Schwanthaler's 'Dancing Girl;' Halbeg's 'Venus,' and Story's 'Polyxena.' A head of 'Benjamin Franklin,' by Houdon, will always attract the attention of visitors from its truthfulness and artistic excellence. This collection may be considered the nucleus around which other statues will be grouped in time, as the architectural plans allow of certain developments. In fact, the whole building now occupied by the Metropolitan Museum of Art forms but a fragment of that larger edifice which will assuredly be built around it at no distant date, The frontage on the Park devoted to statues will have a curved sweep affording further room for display. A great want in the museums devoted to Art in the United States is the absence of Greek statues. A cast of the 'Hermes' lately discovered at

Olympia, now gracing the entrance-hall, throws all the modern productions most decidedly in the shade. The difficulty of procuring original Greek statues, or even Roman ones, of undoubted authenticity, is very great. Still, if the Metropolitan Museum is to be considered that higher college of Art where students are to obtain a better acquaintance with what is really grand and classic, casts should be obtained when originals are not procurable.

The loan collection of arms and armour in the Metropolitan Museum, though, of course, far inferior to numerous collections in Europe, contains a notable variety of the mediæval battle equipment, some illustrations of which we give in Group XXVII. The lady's gun, at the top, is Italian; and from it depends a jacket of Milan chain-armour, a fabrication for which Milan became famous early in the twelfth century. The sword with the ornamented hilt, partly hidden by the mail-coat, is a Florentine sword of ceremony of the sixteenth century; while that which crosses it is a two-handed German battle-sword. A Turkish sabre and a silver-mounted and damascened Russian pistol complete the group. In the lower portion of the illustration several swords of different nationalities and periods are stacked—one German, one Spanish, and the two smaller weapons French street-swords of the times of Henry II. and Louis XIV. With them is grouped a Scotch steel-mounted pistol of the kind used by the Highlanders in the early part of the eighteenth century. This description, however, conveys but a slight idea of the collection, which gives a fairly adequate notion of the arms, offensive and defensive, used in mediæval Europe. Objects of far greater interest to the artistic mind present themselves in the lower portion of Group XXVII.—illustrations of the celebrated pottery, the grès de Flandre, of which there is a small but choice collection in the Museum, the only large collections of this quaint ware being in the South Kensington Museum, the Porte de Hal at Brussels, and the Louvre and Cluny Museums at Paris. The name of



Group XXVII.



Group XXVIII.

this pottery is a misnomer, for it was never made in Flanders, but at various places on the Rhine, near Cologne, and Aix-la-Chapelle. Probably the name is due to the fact that the largest demand for it was from Flanders, and that the inscriptions on the ware are in a language which is a mixture of both the German and of the Flemish (the latter predominating), which is spoken even to-day in the region where it was formerly manufactured. There is not now to be found a single factory of this ware, for about the middle of the seventeenth century the production ceased. The principal towns devoted to the industry were Siegberg, Raeren, Greuzhausen, and Frechen. The curious and interesting quality of this ware, for it has no great beauty of colour or texture, is the fact that it is a close reproduction, in many respects, of the old Roman pottery, though, towards the last, it became more individualized, specially in imitating the forms of modern objects. The specimens selected for illustration are good examples of the collection. The *tonnelet*, or barrel, of Siegberg make, is probably one of the finest specimens in existence. The decoration is simple but effective, and the gradations of tint in the grey are well marked. Several specimens from Raeren, of the pitcher-pattern, are ornamented with medallions containing coats of arms and escutcheons. The tall tankard, on the left of the group, is of Greuzhausen ware, and shows '*Landsknechte*,' with military costumes of the period. Next it may be seen a curious old Raeren pot with three handles, probably used as a beer-jug. On the right of the *tonnelet* is a Nassau pitcher of odd design, decorated with '*Landsknechte*.' Without attempting to describe these objects further in detail, it is enough to call attention to their quaintness, and their interest as specimens of a ware which only exists as curiosities. The observer, after looking at far more brilliant and pretentious wares, will find his eye resting pleasantly on the quiet grey tone and the solid simplicity of this old ware.

A study of Group XXVIII. carries us back to the ancient world. The basement-hall of the Museum of Art is for the most part devoted to fictile art, nearly everything being a cast from the original in some foreign museum. On the left of the upper part of the group is the figure of a Greek syren playing on the lyre—a tortoise-shell with inverted goat's horns (now broken off). The

wings and arms are gone, but the spirit and proportions of the figure are well preserved. This belongs to the Roman age in Egypt, and its purpose and significance were probably transmitted from the Greek period. Syrens weeping and tearing their hair often adorned Greek groves, in commemoration of the death of specially eloquent men or beautiful women. The architectural casts on the right of the syren are copies of fragments from the Erectheum, which are in the British Museum. The Erectheum, which almost rivalled the Parthenon in extent and beauty, is now in a greater state of dilapidation than the latter, but enough remains of it to give a correct idea of its outer form. This temple was erected for the joint worship of Neptune and Minerva, who were tutelary gods of Athens, and was one of the glories of the Acropolis. The form of the Erectheum was oblong, with a portico of six Ionic columns at the east end, and a kind of transept at the west; a portico of four columns on the north, and the portico of the Caryatides, standing on a basement eight feet high, on the south. At the western end there is a basement on which are four Ionic columns, half engaged in the wall and supporting a pediment. The fragments shown in this group indicate somewhat of the character of the architecture and decoration, though these are not essentially different from those of the Parthenon. While the friezes of the Erectheum were not so much crowded with detail as those of the more celebrated temple, their execution displays no less breadth and mastery. The mural sculpture of the lower portion of Group XXVIII. is Renaissance of the Cinq-Cento period, and, with its ele-

Group XXIX.

ments of prettiness and trivial motive, contrasts most unfavourably with the strong, broad handling shown in the Erectheum casts. The carved inlaid cabinet is a good piece of mediæval Italian work, and fairly represents the artistic wood-carving of its time.

The lower hall of the Metropolitan Museum of Art is highly interesting, and contains replicas of the best efforts in mediæval ivory and metal-work. In this way the student is enabled to trace the connecting links of Art development where the originals are unattainable. Ivory-carving among European peoples is now, and has long been, in its decadence; and, though gold and silver metal-work remains at a high degree of technical excellence, the models and methods closely follow those of the mediæval craftsmen. Some capital examples of early Art-work are shown in the reproductions arranged in Group XXIX. These are casts from objects in the Kensington Museum, London, and are English, Italian, German, and Russian. The large salver delineated in the lower part of the illustration is gilt-silver *repoussé*, and dates from the year 1597, its place of manufacture having been Norwich, England. It represents in its figure ornaments the triumph of Neptune and Amphitrite. In the centre is a medallion of Christ washing his disciples' feet, while all the other spaces are occupied with Cupids, grotesques, and curious decorative work. On its left is a silver-bronze stand supporting a nautilus-shell, a production of Italy during the sixteenth century. The work represents seated naiads and syrens, each sea-goddess holding a string of fish. The bronze ewer, on the other side of the salver, is also sixteenth-century Italian. It is richly chased with classical subjects and medallions, among which are Octavia, Hortensia, Emilia, Virginius and Virginia, Portia, Lucretia, and Marcus Curtius. The Art-work is of great beauty, and belongs to the very best Italian school. Par-

ticular attention may be called to the graceful oddity of the handle. The large tankard represented in Group XXIX. is one of the most striking pieces of its kind in the Museum. It is Augsburg (Germany) work of the late seventeenth century, and may be regarded as a superior example of the best ivory-carving of the post-Gothic or Renaissance period. The body of the tankard is wrought in high-relief, with the figures of a Bacchanalian procession, and the ivory-work of the cover consists of a Centaur and man engaged in combat. The freedom and delicacy with which the figures are modelled are most noticeable, and worthy of the highest admiration. The metal-work in which the ivory is mounted is also richly chased with conventional decoration. In the upper part of the group may be seen an oviform ewer of Norwich (England) work of the year 1597. It is silver *repoussé*, showing a festal procession of sea-deities in high-relief. Standing by it is a gold *repoussé* goblet (Russian) of the seventeenth century, worked in the shape of fish-scales, with an inscription around the top. On it are medallions of Spring, Summer, and Autumn. These few examples will serve to exemplify the fictile collection of the Museum, there being more than two hundred reproductions of ivories, and even more of the gold and silver Art-work of Europe—the first class dating back to the early years of the Christian era. The field of study gives ample material from which the Art-student may get a consecutive notion of the minor decorative sculpture of Europe, as expressed in ivory and the metals.

Group XXX. displays examples of Turkish inlaid cabinet-work.

Group XXX.

The two octagonal tables, one placed on the other, are specimens of the eating-tables used by the wealthy. They are superbly inlaid with mother-of-pearl, a kind of decoration in which the Turks and Arabs excel. The high three-cornered and three-legged table, also beautifully inlaid, is a Koran-holder, and the stool by its side a species of foot-rest, used by the Orientals in their change of position from their habitual cross-legged attitude. The brazen-metal bowl is very profusely decorated in chased-work, and is of the kind which, filled with water, is passed around by slaves, at an Oriental banquet, for lavatory purposes between the courses.

It goes without saying that in the foregoing illustrations and descriptions of the contents of the Metropolitan Museum only representative objects have been touched, a few specimens frequently serving as sufficient types of classes. But, in addition to those features of the Museum (the most important, it is true) which have thus been set forth by pen and pencil in their leading examples, the visitor will find many other striking and unique objects in archæological and decorative Art fully deserving of careful study, and well calculated to fascinate the attention. The Museum is growing rapidly by donation and purchase, and holds out promise of speedily becoming one of the great museums of the world, not only in the value and rarity of special features, but in completeness and symmetry. America has long waited for such a comprehensive collection, and the time seems to have come when the hopes of the lovers and students of the history of Art will be speedily fulfilled.