THE CHILDHOOD OF ART

THE
CHILDHOOD OF ART

OR

THE ASCENT OF MAN

A SKETCH OF THE VICISSITUDES OF HIS UPWARD STRUGGLE, BASED CHIEFLY ON THE RELICS OF HIS ARTISTIC WORK IN PRE-HISTORIC TIMES

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TO

MY FRIENDS

WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

IN RECOGNITION OF THE INFLUENCE OF THEIR LIVES

UPON THE WORKS AND THOUGHTS

OF OTHER MEN

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INTRODUCTION

SOME years ago, when the plan of this book was first being sketched out, it seemed as if there would be little else to do than to make selections from the reports of the various exploration societies and from the works of modern archæologists who have dealt with the periods included in its scope. Of course but little help could be expected from the old-fashioned antiquaries, for they looked upon art much in the same way as the Greeks regarded language; everything that was not Greek was barbarous and hardly worth considering.

In this present century, owing to the better facilities for travel and the greater security of life in foreign countries, many very important discoveries have been made. As the investigations have been carried out more scientifically than heretofore, the explorers have preserved or described many relics of artistic work which the "collectors" of a few years ago would have thrown aside as worthless.

Apparently, then, all that an author had to do when dealing with this subject was to fit the new details into the sketches which previous writers had given of the progress of art in various ancient periods. Unfortunately two serious difficulties were encountered

in trying to follow this simple plan. All recent archæologists, although devoting a good deal of attention to art, have had such an immense amount of material to deal with that they had not time to take a comprehensive survey, but were obliged to confine themselves to a comparatively small portion of their field. Sometimes the accounts of the results achieved by these various workers left great gaps untouched; sometimes they overlapped, but being treated from different standpoints and on different scales, they did not always present a harmonious picture.

As regards the books dealing with entire periods or districts, they were found to be so vague, or so incomplete in their treatment of the earlier manifestations of artistic skill, that it was impossible to fit the new details into those old outlines.

In trying to devise some practicable method of giving a comprehensive account of the progress of mankind, it seemed at first as if a bird's-eye view would be desirable, but such a view cannot be well rendered even by a painter, still less by a historian. A writer's work must give consecutive, not instantaneous impressions, and his pages represent a passing through rather than a hovering over the varied scenes he would describe.

Travellers who have climbed a lofty hill, rising by many broken steps and ridges from the level plain, have noticed that each ridge may have its own special points of view, its own charms, its own difficulties, and before it was surmounted it may have appeared

to be the highest point attainable. Such climbing seems to me to be symbolic of the history of the human race; therefore, instead of attempting to describe all the art fields occupied by various nations, I determined to write only a connected story of the early stages of the upward wanderings by which mankind has reached its present level. This plan excluded all decadent art and all artistic strivings of races which seem not to have attained any higher level than had been reached by those who lived in earlier times.

In tracing the history of the pioneers of art, it is neither possible nor desirable to refrain from noticing the companions of their journey and the circumstances that determined the direction in which they should turn their steps. I know that my mental picture of these men, and of the conditions of their travel, is sadly lacking both in colour and in form. My reproduction of it may perhaps be deemed a vain digression; I only offer it as a rough outline to be filled up and corrected by more capable workers possessed of better opportunities.

I have omitted architecture from my survey, because it is so dependent on material conditions, and is therefore not a very sensitive indicator of the waves of thought and feeling that affect mankind. And in truth, there have been but two really distinct styles of architecture in the whole history of the world: first, the style dependent on the use of a few massive units relying on their weight for their stability;

secondly, the style evolved by designing constructions to be built with numerous little blocks bonded together by some material of a different nature. Experiments in the first style were made by the dolmen builders, were improved upon by the Egyptians, and were perfected by the Greeks. The second style seems to have been adopted by the Chaldeans and their successors in the Babylonian plains; but, although they accumulated vast quantities of material and were well acquainted with the principle of the arch, they never seem to have been able to co-ordinate the substance and the form into one harmonious whole. Not until Gothic times did men realise that grace and dignity might be embodied by combinations of many units, each individually insignificant. Is it possible that in the future still smaller units may be the factors of a third style in architecture? May concrete buildings some day succeed in satisfying mankind's desire for harmony and beauty as well as for mere utility? Such buildings are now as much despised as were those early wooden structures, the forerunners of the classic style, and the crude brick forerunners of the Gothic, but who can foresee the results of honest evolution?

These architectural evidences of man's aspirations suggest a strange reflection. In early days stability could only be obtained by nations whose rulers had individual power and grandeur; in later times the structure of good government was built up by numerous responsible administrators; what forecast

can we make of the result of using a material that to our forefathers seemed no better than vile mud fit to be trodden underfoot?

In compiling this book, one of my greatest difficulties has been to decide how much importance should be given to the various branches of art. To critics who would complain that some have received too much attention while others have remained almost unnoticed, I can only answer that I have tried to do my best with the material at my disposal. Some periods are rich in sculptured work, others in painting or in pottery. Some regions are still almost unknown, others have been well explored, but all the results of those explorations are not equally accessible. The historian has to gather the crumbs that fall from the explorer's table, and the food he gets is sometimes not easily digestible. Occasionally the law of copyright about illustrations prevents him from even picking up the crumbs.

But as a rule the original workers in these arduous fields are most generous in allowing others to utilise the results of their investigations, and I have to thank many of them, not only for their kind permission to make extracts from their publications but also for the readiness with which they have assisted me in my work and sent explanations of doubtful points. My grateful thanks are especially due to Professor Henri Breuil (Institut de paléontologie humaine, Paris); Miss M. A. Murray, lecturer on Egyptian Archæology, University College, London; Monsieur J. de Morgan,

Director of the French explorations in Persia; Professor R. C. Bosanquet, of Liverpool; and Professor E. A. Gardner, of London, for much kindly advice and assistance during the progress of the work, and for reading the proofs of the chapters referring to the periods of which they have made a special study. MM. Ed. Pottier and Salomon Reinach and Professor Flinders Petrie have constantly allowed me to refer to them for information, and many other well-known workers have been equally ready to respond to my numerous inquiries about various details.

For facilities in consulting books and examining specimens I am deeply indebted to the authorities and the officials of many libraries and museums, but chiefly to those of the Ashmolean, Oxford; of University College, London; of the South Kensington Museum; of the Greco-Roman Department, and of the British Antiquities Department in the British Museum.

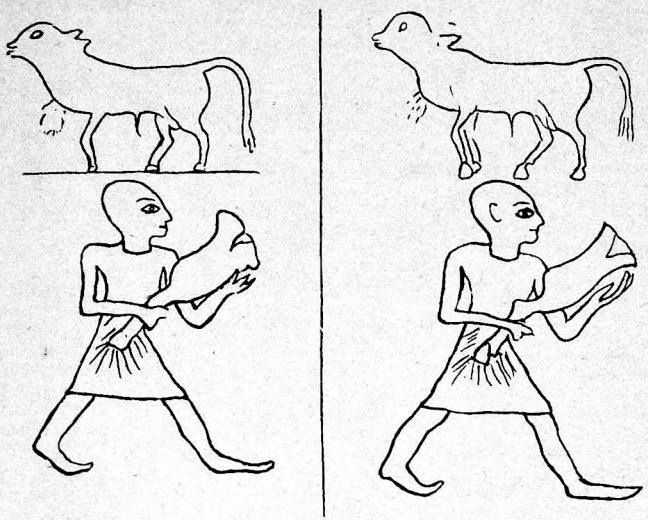
Many thanks are also due to those who have assisted me in obtaining illustrations, especially to Sir Arthur Evans, the President, and to the Council of the Hellenic Society and of the British School at Athens; also to Professor Flinders Petrie, of the British School of Archæology in Egypt, for having allowed me to make such a large selection from the accurate and handsome illustrations in their reports and journals. As there are over five hundred separate figures in my collection I cannot mention here the

names of all my kind contributors, they will be found in the list on page ix., where I have also tried to give the original source from which the drawings or photographs have been taken.

It is unfortunate that such information is very often omitted, so that it is difficult or impossible to verify points of detail. The necessity for verifying such points before basing any argument upon them will be realised by noticing the strangely un-Egyptian attitude of the calf (Fig. *b*) on the next page. It is taken from a facsimile exhibited in the British Museum, but the draughtsman who copied the original papyrus, not understanding why the calf had only three legs, added, apparently on his own responsibility, another bent foreleg. Far be it from me to infringe on the domain of specialists by suggesting any reason why the Egyptian artist should have given only three legs to the poor beast, but the original papyrus, still safely preserved in the portfolios of the Museum, shows that he certainly did not give any more. As blood is spurting from the breast of the animal, and an amputated leg is being carried by a man depicted just below the calf, it might be possible for learned Egyptologists to solve the problem.

This instance would not have been worth mentioning if it had only been a case of ordinary lithographic work, for it is very difficult to ensure accuracy in such renderings. I have to acknowledge that some of the lithographic illustrations in this book are faulty both in drawing and in colour, especially

Fig. 389, pl. xvi. The peculiar tint of Greek pottery is so seldom accurately rendered that I sent up a fragment of an Attic vase as a pattern, but the result is rather more unsatisfactory than usual. The three-colour photographic process employed for Figs. 385



a *b*

Rough tracings taken from facsimiles of the Papyrus of Ani (No. 6) published by the Trustees of the British Museum—(*a*) in 1890, (*b*) in 1894. The two editions vary considerably in points of detail. I have only compared No. 6 with the original papyrus, but I am told that all the other plates in the 1890 edition are more accurate than those in the 1894 edition.

and 386 gives a much better approximation to the variable tint of Greek vases.

Copyists in all ages have made deviations from the originals and have exaggerated their defects, especially when they had to hurry over their work. Mistakes will creep in even when photographic renderings are used; therefore the only safe plan is

to consult the actual specimens. It may, perhaps, not be out of place to remark that the illustrations in this book are to be taken merely as illustrations of my statements, not as proofs of their accuracy. Examples sufficient to prove any general statement would be too numerous, and often too fragmentary, to be interesting to the general reader. Such proofs must be sought in the works of specialists, although indeed some specialists are quite as much inclined as any ordinary member of the public to accept insufficient proof and to proclaim the coming of the summer as soon as they find a single swallow.

In a book of this sort it would also be impracticable to give much documentary evidence for every statement or conclusion. There is no finality in art or in history, all conclusions and theories are really but working hypotheses, liable to be modified by fresh discoveries. Mankind too long has pinned its faith on fundamental doctrines, and has accepted assertions of immutability quite as unfounded as the claim made by the lawyers of the Medes and Persians. Our so-called certainty is merely a degree of probability; it is not certain that the sun will rise to-morrow, but the probability is so great that we are quite justified in acting as if it were absolutely true. And on a varying scale this is the case with all other human calculations; our conclusions and actions are reasonable enough when the balance of probability is in their favour. The great difficulty is to hold the balance fairly. I have therefore tried to give the sources of my

information, and to indicate whether there are a few or many examples of the facts quoted in support of the theories, but I am painfully aware how hard it is to reach the original sources, and how easy it is to distort or disregard the facts that have been ascertained.

In the technical details of my work I have had many willing helpers and much able criticism and advice as to its literary form from my friends Mr. T. W. Gould, Dr. F. W. Mann, and Mr. J. R. Stainer. My sister has very kindly relieved me of the irksome task of making the index.

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THE CHILDHOOD OF ART

CHAPTER I

PALÆOLITHIC CAVE PAINTINGS

WHAT is Art? To discuss it is easier than to define it. Many definitions have been given, none of them altogether satisfying. Let us discuss its origins; perhaps they will help to show what it is.

Time was when men talked of golden ages, of wonderful periods during which special forms of human energy had manifested themselves in such perfection that it was useless for the existing degenerate race to do anything but admire and, if possible, to copy the results then obtained. To men in this frame of mind primitive forms of government, of religion, of literature, or of art had no interest and no significance. They looked back to imaginary good old times, to the ages of faith, of the classic authors, or of the old masters, with a reverence which is now perhaps not sufficiently paid to periods of high achievement; but beneath their reverence there seems to have been a feeling of helplessness and despondency which must have

impeded them in their attempts at copying and reviving the lost glories.

On the other hand, to those who have become imbued with the ideas of evolution, of gradual progress from early forms and origins, there is a special fascination in the study of these origins; and such study seems to me to be likely to produce a feeling of hopefulness and a vitality of work which must surely tend to the production of far better results in the future.

In the domain of art such an immense amount of good work has been done during the last twenty years, by the systematic well-regulated labours of trained explorers and excavators in many different parts of the globe, that our conceptions of the origin and progress of artistic strivings and achievements have had to be greatly modified. We find that the origins of art are much more remote than they were formerly supposed to be; and even in the remotest periods we find traces of varying phases, of spasmodic development, of stagnation, and also of retrogression. Obeying some mysterious impulse, and starting from an unknown centre or possibly from various centres, these waves have swept slowly over the whole world, running up to great heights in certain favoured localities, and leaving others untouched by their influence, often forming queer cross currents and confusions, and even occasionally rolling in contrary directions at the same time.

Their progress is like a rising tide; some waves gain a little ground, while others, not reaching so high as their predecessors, relapse, leaving only a shallow film wherein wriggle and crawl queer exponents of the movements they think they dominate and lead.

The wonderful discoveries that have been made, during the last few decades, have shown conclusively that there have been several of these waves, each consisting of a period of gradual improvement, a short culminating period, and a third period of more or less rapid debasement. It is rash to generalise, and still more rash to prophesy; but as the highest waves in very ancient lands have been surpassed in other countries at a later period, is it not possible, and even probable, that future waves will reach to even higher grades of perfection?

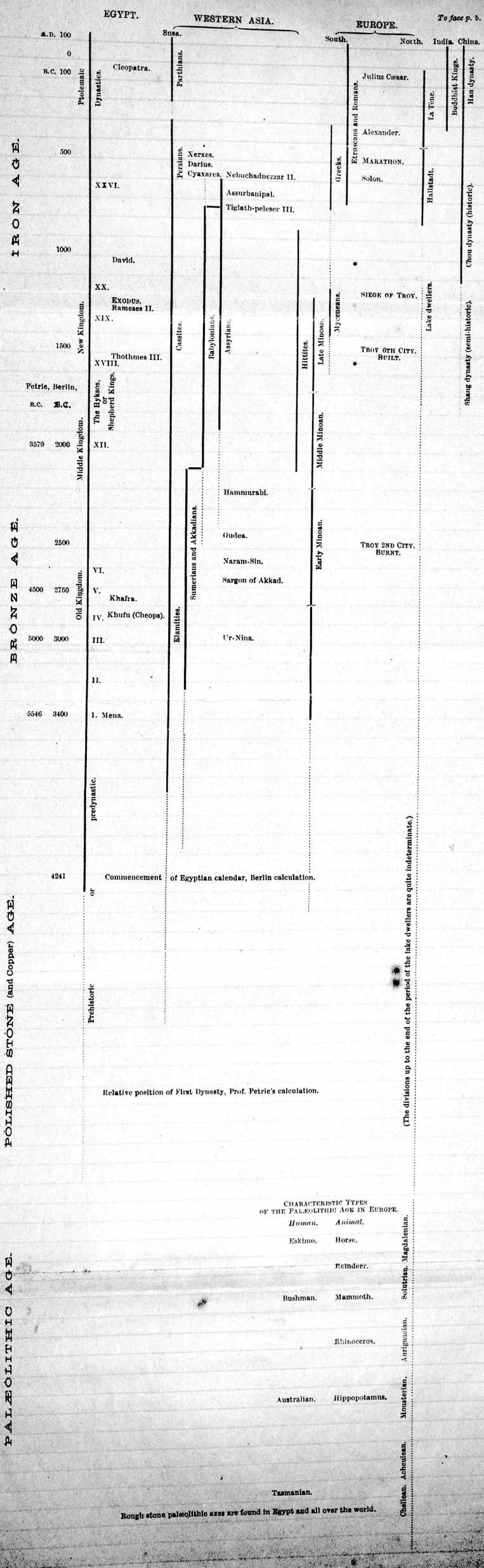
Professor Flinders Petrie, in his interesting book, *Revolutions of Civilisation* (1911), has tried to give these waves a mathematical form. Whether his results are accepted or not the book brings into relief the rather neglected fact that no country has two apogees in art. Could it be expected? Do we find in history that any country ever comes to the front again after it has once lost its pre-eminence? A sad reflection for decadent nations, for it is true, not only in art but also in all other spheres of excellence. Men may talk hopefully of regeneration, but what instances are there of really great revivals in art or in literature, in political or in intellectual power?

It almost seems as if such power were due in some mysterious way to soil and not to race, for no invading race has ever reared a higher edifice on fallen ruins. An apogee once reached, no farther soaring flight seems possible, a blossom once matured, then the exhausted land brings forth no more.

Even Egypt, reputed so unchangeable, so inexhaustible, renovated each year by fresh layers of soil from distant climes, and invaded by many a conquering race, has shared the universal fate. Her revivals were more vigorous than those of other lands, but the successive waves never reached the former heights, and the decline was regular, though slow.

Waves imply the existence of a force or forces to produce them and to determine their size and direction. What are the factors of the forces that impel men to concentrate their energies on various forms of activity; why are certain periods characterised by artistic advance, others by intellectual progress or by materialistic improvements?[1]

Here we embark on a sea of troubles, and we have to call in a number of expert assistants to help us in navigating these stormy waters. Work has been done in this domain by archæologists, ethnologists, anthropologists, geologists, physiologists, psychologists, and even philologists; therefore the art historian is liable to be "brought up with a round turn," as they say at sea, by some of the members of this heterogeneous and learned crew


EGYPT.
WESTERN ASIA.
EUROPE.
Susa.
South.
North.
India.
China.
A.D. 100
0
B.C. 100
500
1000
1500
Petrie, Berlin,
B.C.
B.C.
3579
2000
2500
4500
2750
5000
3000
5546
3400
4241
IRON AGE.
BRONZE AGE.
POLISHED STONE (and Copper) AGE.
PALÆOLITHIC AGE.
Ptolemaic
Dynasties.
Cleopatra.
XXVI.
David.
XX.
Exodus.
Rameses II.
XIX.
New Kingdom.
Thothmes III.
XVIII.
The Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings.
Middle Kingdom.
XII.
VI.
V.
Khafra.
IV.
Khufu (Cheops).
III.
II.
I. Mena.
Old Kingdom.
predynastic.
Prehistoric
or
Parthians.
Persians.
Xerxes.
Darius.
Cyaxares.
Nebuchadnezzar II.
Assurbanipal.
Tiglath-peleser III.
Cassites.
Babylonians.
Assyrians.
Hittites.
Late Minoan.
Middle Minoan.
Early Minoan.
Sumerians and Akkadians.
Hammurabi.
Gudea.
Naram-Sin.
Sargon of Akkad.
Elamites.
Ur-Nina.
Julius Cæsar.
Alexander.
Marathon.
Solon.
Greeks.
Etruscans and Romans.
Mycenæans.
Siege of Troy.
Troy 6th City. Built.
Troy 2nd City. Burnt.
La Tène.
Hallstadt.
Lake dwellers.
Buddhist Kings.
Han dynasty.
Chou dynasty (historic).
Shang dynasty (semi-historic).
Commencement of Egyptian calendar, Berlin calculation.
Relative position of First Dynasty, Prof. Petrie's calculation.
(The divisions up to the end of the period of the lake dwellers are quite indeterminate.)
Characteristic Types of the Palæolithic Age in Europe.
Human.
Animal.
Eskimo.
Horse.
Reindeer.
Bushman.
Mammoth.
Rhinoceros.
Australian.
Hippopotamus.
Tasmanian.
Magdalenian.
Solutrian.
Aurignacian.
Mousterian.
Acheulean.
Chellean.
Rough stone palæolithic axes are found in Egypt and all over the world.

whenever, instead of merely describing results, he attempts to trace their causes or even to give a comprehensive view of their chronological sequence.

It is therefore with some diffidence that I have drawn up the accompanying set of tables. They are only to be taken as rough guides, not as representing any settled decision as to the merits of conflicting theories about dates. Those previous to the second millennium are more a matter of conjecture than of calculation.

The first thing that is apparent in such a list is the small area that it covers. America is not included, because it was cut off from the rest of the world for so many centuries or millenniums that its artistic development seems to have been quite independent of the old world civilisations; at any rate, it is impossible at present to correlate them satisfactorily, although many attempts have been made and many rash theories formulated.[2]

Of Africa and Asia only a very small part has been scientifically studied; judging from the archæological treasures that have been discovered by comparatively few workers in Egypt and the regions round Babylonia, we may hope for wonderful additions to our knowledge when the desert places of North Africa, Central Asia, and China have been more thoroughly explored by competent observers.

It may perhaps seem odd to talk about looking for art relics in desert places, but the reason for searching for them in such regions is that, in districts which

are cultivated the record has generally been systematically destroyed, or allowed to perish by neglect, even when their inhabitants claim to be civilised. We have not to go very far afield for examples of such destruction, and we need not reproach other nations for their vandalism when London, the richest city in the world, frequently allows the destruction or removal of the relics of its past life, because it grudges the expense of preserving them.

There is a certain element of sadness in the reflection that it is in the poorest districts that investigators may hope to gain the richest treasures, for it means that our gains are due to the losses of our predecessors. Between the lines of the record of our successes may be read the unwritten record of their disasters and catastrophes. Thus in one place we may see how the ruthless barbarian has swept away an effete civilisation, and in the very violence of his destroying zeal has covered up and preserved evidence that otherwise would have decayed and crumbled into dust. In another place volcanic ashes have suffocated an entire population, but have preserved for us specimens even of the food they ate and of the clothes they wore. Or instead of sudden disaster there may have been the long-drawn agony of a gradual change of climate, drying up the water-courses, and thus starving the inhabitants, or by the persistence of cruel winds covering up their fields and dwellings with relentless waves of all-devouring sand.

Then, after many centuries, the archæologist comes

with spade and pickaxe, uncovers the scene of desolation, gloats over his rich finds, and rejoices the hearts of museum authorities, adding fresh treasures to those already heaped up in their great glass cases. But not much sympathy is felt for the unfortunate losers of these treasures, or for those who perished at their burial. Perhaps it is well that it should be so. The general stock of human sympathy is not too large; we have not such a superabundant amount of it for those living around us that we can afford to waste any on those who died thousands of years ago.

Let us return to our list of periods. At the bottom is that indefinite period called the palæolithic, which lasted much longer in some countries than in others not very far removed from them. It was characterised by the absence of any implements of metal or even of stone, except such as could be fashioned into shape by mere chipping. Certainly the chipping was often beautifully done, especially towards the end of the period, when the art of chipping flints reached a point higher than it ever attained again until the times of the early Egyptian dynasties.[3]

Palæolithic men do not seem to have had any houses or any domestic animals; it is still a matter of dispute whether they had even the rudest sort of pottery. At first sight it does not seem likely that in such a stage of civilisation there would be any art at all—as we now understand the term. But explorers in uncivilised lands have found fairly good drawings (Fig. 60) and even sculptures, done by modern races

of men when they were still quite ignorant of the use of metals, therefore we have no good reason for assuming that art is necessarily dependent on material civilisation. Still these discoveries of the artistic productions of modern savages did not render it probable that we should find traces of the art of men who passed the palæolithic stage so many thousands of years ago, that even the climate of their country has changed, and the beasts they fought with have become extinct.

Until quite recently there were no such traces beyond a few carved horns (Fig. 1), and a number of simple but spirited sketches of animals scratched on fragments of bone or stone (Fig. 2). Then came some astonishing discoveries—so astonishing that for many years archæologists refused to acknowledge them as genuine.

In 1879 Señor Marcelino Sautuola was exploring a large cave in his estate at Altamira, near Santander, in Spain, to see if he could find there any stone axes, arrow-heads, or other prehistoric remains similar to those which had attracted his attention at the Paris Exhibition of 1878. The mouth of this cavern had been hermetically sealed up in prehistoric times by masses of rock fallen from the roof, and cemented with a stalagmitic deposit. A few years previously some blasting operations in the vicinity had caused fresh falls, and had revealed a small fissure through which access was again obtainable.

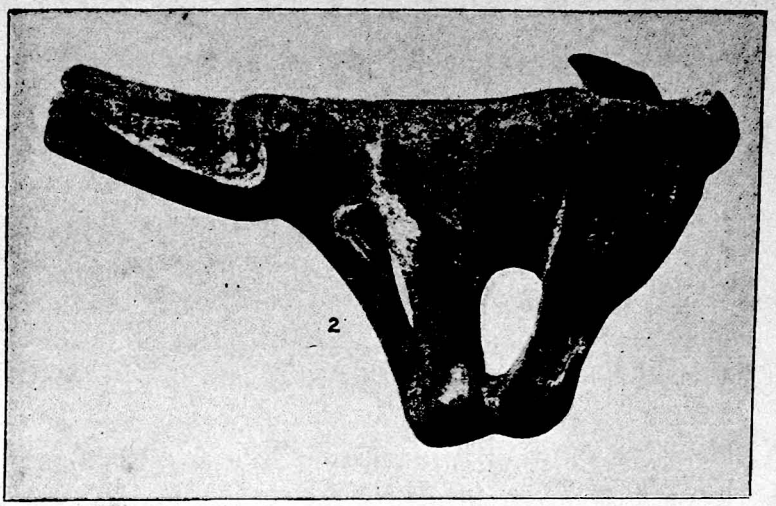


FIG. 1.—Mammoth carved out of reindeer horn; found in the soil under a rock shelter near Bruniquel (Tarn et Garonne) during the excavations made by M. Peccadeau de l'Isle in 1866. Inferior work, done in the Magdalenian period by a carver who probably had never seen a mammoth. It used to be regarded as the handle of a dagger. British Museum. Actual size.

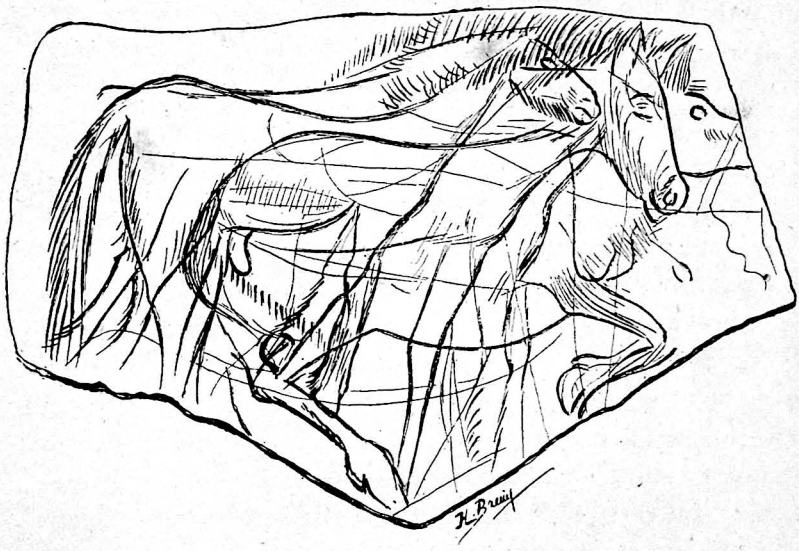


FIG. 2.—Sketches scratched on a piece of limestone found at Bruniquel. British Museum. Two-thirds actual size.

Señor Sautuola in his earlier visits to the cave had noticed curious markings on its sides, but he had not paid much attention to them until one day when he brought his little daughter with him. In some places the roof of the cavern is very low, and grown-up people have to move about cautiously for fear of hitting their heads against it. The little girl had no such difficulty. With the eager and restless inquisitiveness of childhood, her young eyes pierced the gloomy recesses, scantily illuminated by a few candles. Then looking up at the flat, threatening roof just above her head she saw what no human being had seen for many thousands of years. A painting of a great wild beast loomed through the darkness, and her startled cries quickly brought the rest of the party together to gaze upon the strange animal she had discovered. One by one other paintings revealed themselves to their astonished eyes. Some were black, others red; some were complete animals, others only heads or unfinished sketches, altogether a score or more (Fig. 3).

There seemed to be no attempt at grouping them to form what we should now call a picture. That could hardly be expected, for the art of grouping does not appear to have been developed even among races of much higher culture until thousands of years later. Among the herd could be distinguished deer, horses, and wild boars, but the majority were bison, a species long extinct in all Europe except in the great forests of Lithuania.

Now that paintings by palæolithic man have been

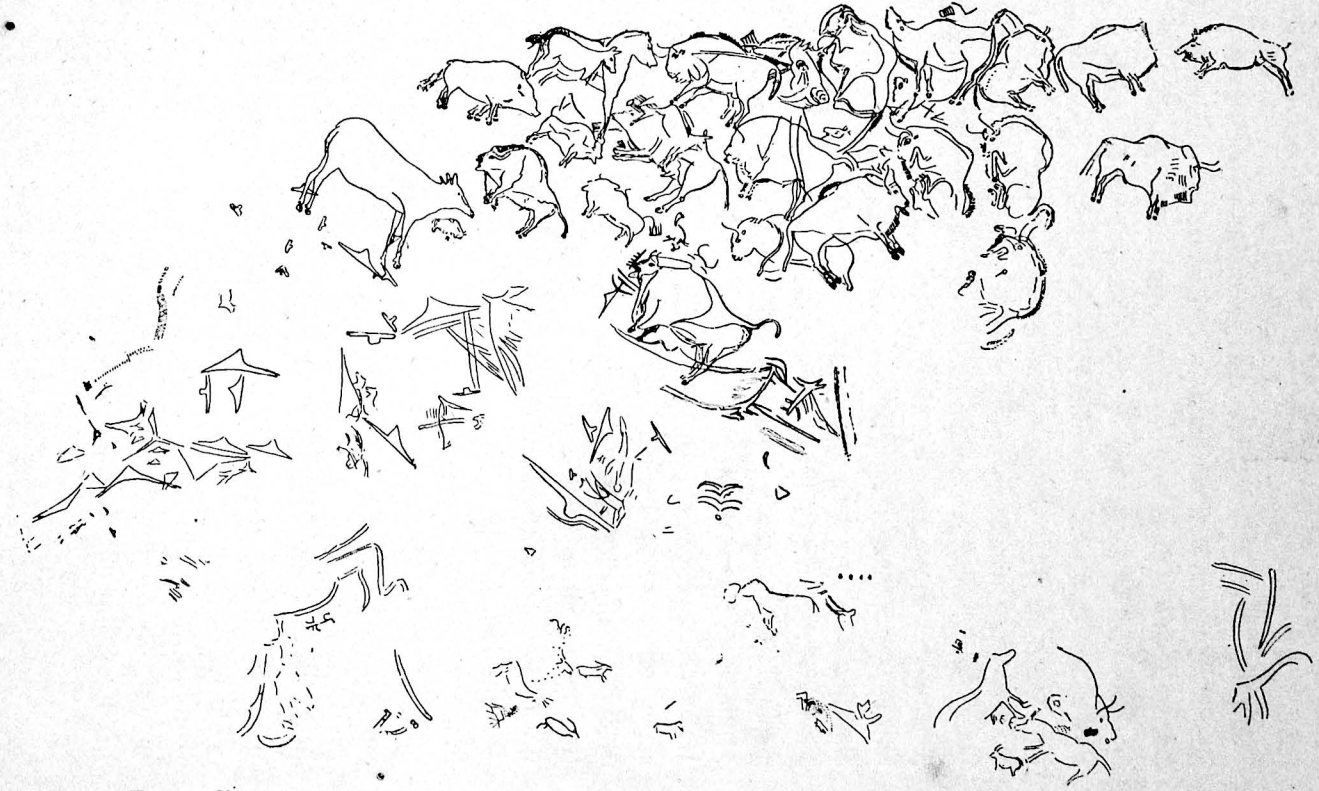


FIG. 3.—Sketch by the Abbé Breuil of the conglomeration of figures painted and incised on the low flat roof of a wide part of the cavern at Altamira. The larger animals are more than six feet in length.

found in many other caves,[4] it seems strange that Señor Sautuola's careful and scientific account of his discovery should have at first been received with incredulity, even by the most eminent archæologists. Some of them visited the cave and went away convinced that the paintings were forgeries, or at the best an idle freak of some eccentric modern artist. For nearly thirty years the chief experts steadfastly refused to accept them as genuine. Before they had repented and acknowledged their mistake Señor Sautuola died.

Now that he is dead his memory is honoured in a magnificent monograph for which the Prince of Monaco has generously provided the necessary funds. It is a large quarto volume containing a detailed report by MM. Emile Cartailhac and the Abbé Breuil of all the various drawings and paintings in the cave, with photographs, sketches or coloured illustrations of most of them.

These learned and careful workers have proved that the pictures belong to several distinct periods, and show a gradual progression from comparatively rude attempts up to a bold and definite style which, in their judgment, "places the old painters of the glyptic ages far above the animal painters of all the civilisations of the classic East and of Greece." This is a sweeping assertion; experts are generally inclined to overestimate the merits of work to which they have devoted special attention. It is a fault in the right direction, and is an encouraging sign

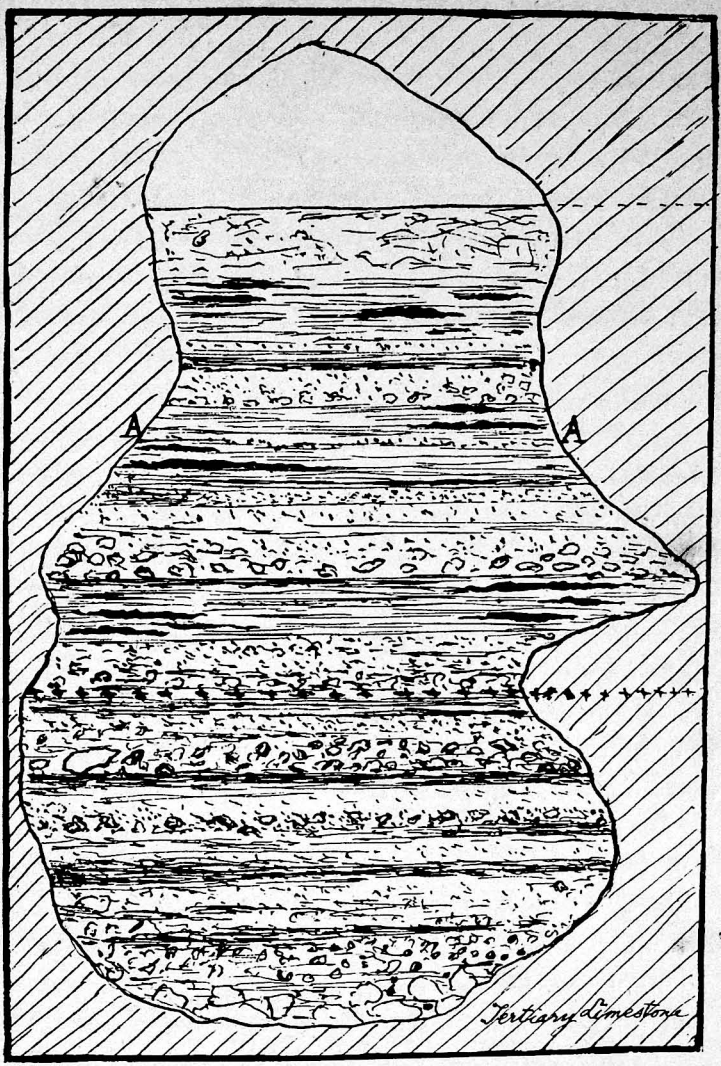


FIG. 4.—Section through the twelve feet of stratified deposits of sand, mud and gravel formed during the palæolithic period in the cave at Pair non Pair (Gironde). Explored by M. Daleau 1881–1896. The thick black streaks represent layers of charcoal and ashes, the sites of the ancient hearths of the troglodytes (cave men). The incised drawings are found on the level A A. From a sketch given to the author by M. Daleau. See page 15.

that hidden beauties may be discovered by those who will search for them diligently. There are too many critics who seem to think that their proper function is merely to point out defects.

Before discussing the methods and results of these palæolithic artists it may be as well to give an account of the other discoveries which led up to the recognition of the Altamira paintings as genuine relics of the prehistoric ages.

In 1881 M. F. Daleau, an experienced archæologist living in the Gironde department, began to explore a cave at Pair non Pair. In order to avoid any possibility of mistakes being made through the carelessness or dishonesty of the workmen, he allowed no work to be done there except in his presence. Therefore, although it is not a very large cave (about 50 feet long by 10 feet broad and 14 feet deep), it took him fifteen years to remove and examine all the deposits with which it was filled almost up to the roof. He thus dug through the débris and relics of seven different periods of occupation, each covered with a fairly thick layer of stones or mud which contained no relics at all. These barren layers were accumulated in the long intervals when the cave was not occupied by human beings. In this way each previous record was sealed up and a new sheet provided on which the inhabitants unconsciously wrote the history of their times.

They wrote it in characters which are difficult to read, and now archæologists have given difficult

FIG. 5.—B. Figure incised on the side of the cave at Pair non Pair.
From a photograph by Amtmann presented by M. Daleau.

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names as headings to the chapters. M. Daleau has kindly sent me a plan (Fig. 4) of the various layers, from which it will be seen that only two chapters, the Mousterian and the Aurignacian, are represented at Pair non Pair. There are four others in the palæolithic series, two of which, the Chellean and the Acheulean, are previous to the Mousterian. They do not come into my story, for they have not as yet yielded any evidence that the men of those times had any artistic perceptions beyond the recognition of symmetry when fashioning the stone weapons used in those periods. The other two, the Solutrian and the Magdalenian, are subsequent to the Aurignacian, and will, later on, provide us with many subjects for discussion.

The chief thing which concerns us now is that, when the cavern had been emptied of this accumulated mass of clay and stone, M. Daleau discovered faint signs of the figure of a horse engraved upon the rock. He at once set men to clear away the earth still sticking to the sides of the cave, and he had the whole surface washed with a strong jet of water. Then gradually emerged from their multi-millennial tomb strange records of the ability of hand and brain of the earlier artists of a long vanished race (Fig. 5).

The style is quite rudimentary, but not childish. There is no attempt at representing any animal in movement. The art standards of the period made that impossible. These artists had not yet got

beyond drawing in absolute profile—that is to say, they only drew one fore and one hind leg, omitting or concealing the other two (Fig. 5-*a*). However, they were bold enough to tackle one difficult problem, one that baffled also many a later race, the problem of representing an animal turning its head round to look backwards (Fig. 6).

FIG. 5-*a*.—By comparing this outline sketch (made to illustrate an article written by M. Daleau in 1897) with the photograph, the reader will be able to form a better idea of the actual appearance of the incised drawings described and figured in the following pages.

In the previous year, on the sides of a cave at La Mouthe, another archæologist, M. Emile Rivière, had found several drawings similar in style to some of the simpler ones in the Altamira collection, though the subjects were different, for in this case reindeer and mammoth were among the animals represented (Figs. 7 and 8).[5]

This discovery had made the sceptics confess that Señor Sautuola might have been right after all, but M. Daleau's incontestable proof left no doubt in the matter. Men's eyes were opened, they examined the walls of other well-known caves, and within the last few years some thirty palæolithic picture galleries have been discovered and described.

The Spanish school seems to have been the best, or perhaps one should say, it is in Spain that the

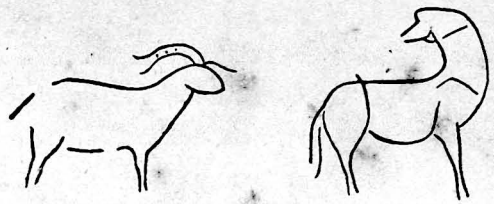

FIG. 6.—Incised outlines of animals "in absolute profile." Pair non Pair. One has its head turned as if looking at the other. *Actes de la Société Archéologique de Bordeaux*, 1897.

FIG. 7.—Reindeer incised on the sides of a cave at La Mouthe (aux Eyzies, Dordogne). The entrance to this part had been blocked up by mud and gravel in palæolithic times. It was discovered by a peasant when levelling the outer cave to make a store-house.

FIG. 8.—Incised mammoth. La Mouthe.

best specimens have been found. I use the word school advisedly, for there are many indications that gifted young troglodytes gathered there to be taught by those who had proved themselves masters of their art.

It does not seem, however, that the young cave people had much respect for the old masters. Previous work was often scratched out, painted over, or even mutilated and utilised for parts of some new picture (Fig. 9).

This custom of erasing or painting over previous work has rendered it possible to determine the order in which the various styles succeeded one another. By carefully noting and tabulating the numerous instances of superposition, MM. Cartailhac and Breuil have cleverly unravelled those strangely tangled threads. They have succeeded not only in ascertaining the order in which the different styles were evolved, but also in deciding to what particular chapters of palæolithic history each style should be assigned. Thus the gradual development of the Spanish school has been clearly traced. It affords a good basis of comparison for determining the relative dates of the pictures in other caves.

At Altamira the oldest drawings of all are a series of apparently quite meaningless black and red marks, painted with a brush. The strokes are firm and definite, but no one has yet been able to make even a reasonable guess at their signification. Some of the designs have the ladder form seen on early Egyptian

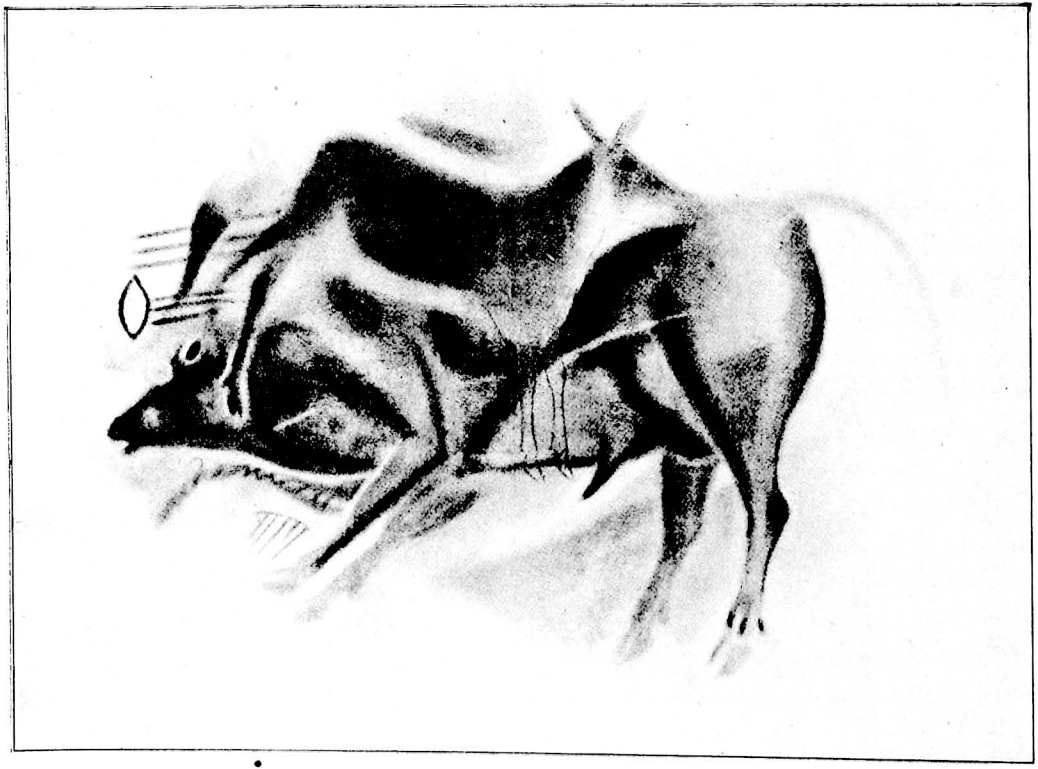

FIG. 9.—An example of the palæolithic "palimpsests" of Altamira, by means of which the comparative ages of the various styles were determined. It shows a doe superimposed on a bison. The bison had been painted over a reindeer which had previously almost obliterated an earlier painting of a bison.

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and Chaldean pottery (Fig. 209), or of rock engravings of a much later period in Italy.

Equally old are some very crude outline paintings,

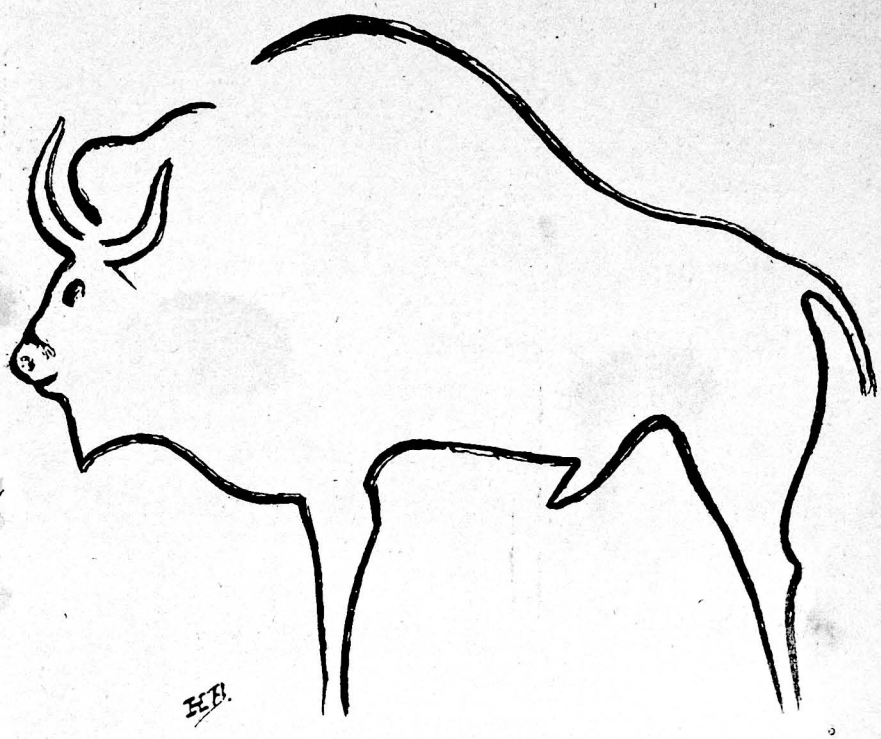


FIG. 10.—Bison drawn in absolute profile, although its horns are shown "full face." Deeply incised. La Grèze (Dordogne). From a sketch by Abbé Breuil.

occasionally red, but generally black, and a few "graffiti" or incised drawings, the lines of which are cut to a depth of more than two inches. Their style is similar to that of those drawings at Pair non

Pair, which were covered up entirely by Aurignacian deposits, and therefore cannot be later than the very earliest part of that period.

In 1904 drawings of the same age and style were found on the sides of a cave at La Grèze, when M. Ampoulange had removed the numerous layers which completely filled it, thus the correctness of MM. Cartailhac and Breuil's classification was amply confirmed. It is rather curious to note that the La Grèze artist gave two horns to his bison (Fig. 10), although the rest of it is in absolute profile. This hesitation as to how much should be represented and how much should not, is common among primitive artists of all ages.

It is impossible to express in terms of years the duration of this Aurignacian stage of development, or indeed of any other stage until we come much closer to historic times. In the latter half of last century, after that men had begun to recognise the futility of that ill-founded system of chronology which confidently placed the creation of the world at about six thousand years ago, scientists went to the other extreme and ran riot in millenniums. The antiquity of this globe having been admitted, and the ideas of evolution having penetrated every branch of study, vast claims were put forward for sufficient allowance of time for all the wonderful changes that were known to have taken place upon this planet. If geologists asked for millions, why should the archæologists be content with paltry centuries? The glacial epoch was

the archæological starting-point, accordingly that was dated at a few hundred thousand years B.C.

The pendulum has now swung back. Professor de Geer of Upsala, after years of careful observation and innumerable measurements of the glacial deposits of southern Sweden, proposes to date the last glacial epoch at only ten thousand years ago. His results are not yet published, but if he means that *homo sapiens* has only existed for that short period, it is a startling blow to the dealers in millenniums.

This new dating would afford great encouragement to optimistic sociologists. If man could raise himself so quickly from the condition of a naked speechless grubber of wild roots to that position of material and intellectual power which he occupies at present, what gigantic strides may he not make now that he has the forces of the universe within his grasp. We rule as kings over forces that were unknown to the most mighty emperors of former ages: we have access to the accumulated wisdom of past æons; shall we be content merely to enjoy the privileges of great rulers without accepting any of the responsibilities?

We boast, and justly boast, of the immense progress made in one short century, of the enormous changes in the material conditions and limitations of our lives, changes far greater than those of any ten or twenty previous centuries. Who has had the benefit of those changes?

Physicists say that unequal expansion in a body will set up unstable equilibrium, that ill-balanced

strains will relieve themselves by fracture. Has there been equality of expansion throughout the body politic? Whose strains have been relieved?

Unless correspondingly immense changes be made in our social and political conditions will not all bonds be burst, and the complicated fabric of our civilisation perish miserably, shattered by the enormous and ill-balanced forces generated within its own boundaries?

This is a long digression, but when trying to trace the windings of the road by which mankind has travelled, it is impossible to avoid casting one's eyes occasionally along the still untrodden part, wistfully wondering whither it may lead.

CHAPTER II

PALÆOLITHIC SCULPTURE

BEFORE going on to describe the various other styles of painting in these French and Spanish caves it will be as well to give a short account of a theory as to the origin and development of drawing first formulated by Ed. Piette, one of the most brilliant of that numerous band of French archæologists who have rendered such distinguished services to science.

As early as 1873 he had published in the *Bulletin de la Société d'Anthropologie* (Paris, 18th April) an article maintaining that "man had to make a great effort of genius when creating pictorial art. To represent solid objects by lines on a flat surface is not the idea which would naturally first come into his head. The art of sculpture led him in Solutrian times to bas-relief, and that led him on to making incised lines, and thus in the succeeding period he learned to draw."

Unfortunately the materials for consolidating his theory, although fairly abundant, were not then sufficiently well classified. Unexpected discoveries were constantly being made, and they did not always agree with Piette's conception of the simplicity and regularity of this development.

He had noticed that art relics were not found indiscriminately in all the different levels. Certain varieties occurred only in certain deposits, and these deposits belonged to well-defined periods, which were often separated from each other by a great lapse of time. Gradually he succeeded in establishing a veritable sequence both of style and material, which came as a surprise to many archæologists, but is now generally recognised as conforming to the usual course of artistic development.

The conclusions he came to were that in the layers below the Solutrian there were no incised drawings but only sculptures, mostly in the round (Figs. 11 to 14), that the succeeding layers contained flatter specimens, carved on both sides but in poor relief, occasionally assisted by incised lines,

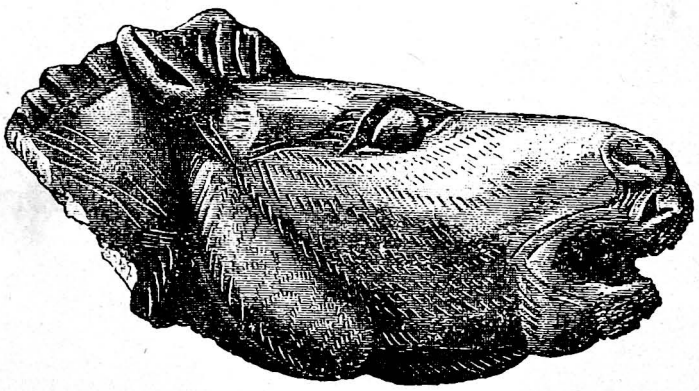


FIG. 13.—Horse's head carved in reindeer horn. Found at Mas d'Azil. Half actual size. Now at St. Germain. From a drawing in *L'art pendant l'âge du Renne*, by permission of Masson et Cie., Paris.

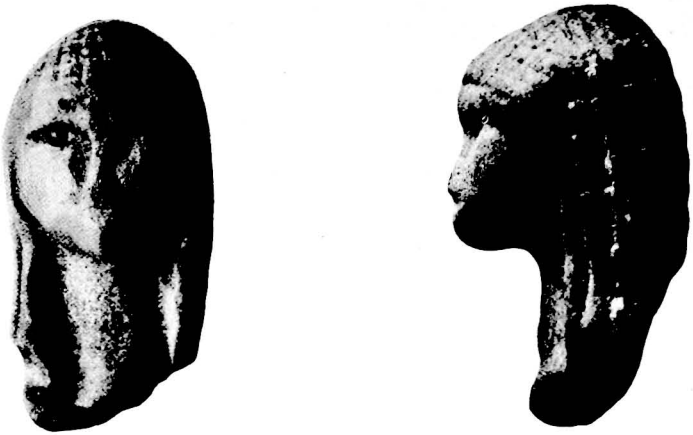


FIG. 11.—Girl's head carved in ivory. Found in the soil at the entrance to the Grotte du Pape, Brassempouy. A slight roughness of the ivory under the right eyebrow gives the impression that an eyeball and pupil had been drawn there, but it is probably quite fortuitous. The rendering of the hair resembles Egyptian work (Figs. 163 and 170); no sound conclusions can be made from similarities in such simple and obvious methods of representation. The mouth is not indicated in any way, a common omission in the early work of many races (Figs. 105 and 279). About one-third larger than actual size. Now in the Museum at St. Germain.

FIG. 12.—Female torso, ivory, found at Brassempouy in 1896. Actual size. Collection, St. Cric. From *l'Anthropologie*, by permission of Masson et Cie.

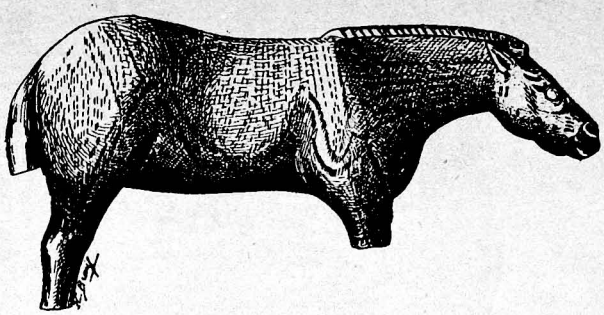
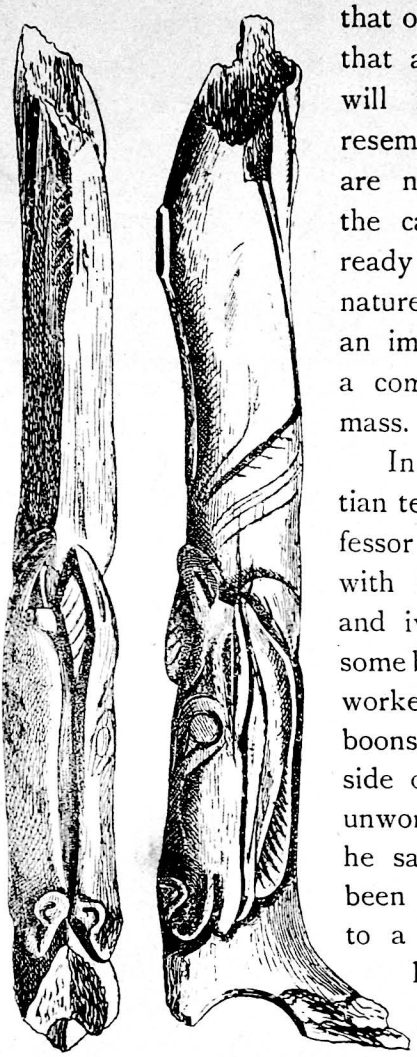


FIG. 14.—Horse carved in ivory, probably from a mammoth tusk. Now in M. Nelli's collection. Found in the Grotte des Espelugues at Lourdes. Early Magdalenian period. Actual size. From *Revue Archéologique*, 1909, p. 388.

that in subsequent deposits the objects were no longer free standing, but had a background which prevented the sculptor from representing both sides of his subject; in fact they were bas-reliefs on a small scale (Fig. 15). In the latest deposits of the palæolithic period even these bas-reliefs were unknown, but there were a great number of engraved pictures, many of them of a very high order of merit.

Piette maintained that this sequence of development was due to two causes, or rather to one primary cause, which was accelerated in its action by a secondary cause. In art, as in all other work, man generally follows what physicists call the line of least resistance; when he has a choice of methods he chooses the easiest. Desiring to possess representations or memorials of familiar objects the uncultured savage treasures up any piece of wood or stone which seems to have some resemblance to



that object. He soon finds that a little artificial help will much improve that resemblance, then the steps are not very great from the carving of blocks already partly shaped by nature to the carving of an imagined figure out of a comparatively shapeless mass.

In a prehistoric Egyptian temple at Abydos Professor Petrie found, along with numerous terra-cotta and ivory figures of apes, some blocks of stone roughly worked to represent baboons (Fig. 16). By the side of them was a large, unworked flint, which, as he says, "seems to have been kept for its likeness to a baboon. No other large flints were found in the whole temple area, and these must

FIG. 15.—Reindeer horn bâton or magic wand, carved with heads in low relief. Found in a cave at Mas d'Azil, Ariège, near the ashes of a hearth of the Magdalenian period. Now in the local museum. Two-thirds actual size. From *Revue Archéologique*, 1909, p. 398.

have been brought a mile or more from the desert. As they were placed with the rudest figures of baboons that we know, it seems that we have here the primitive fetish stones picked up because of their likeness to sacred animals, and perhaps venerated before any artificial images were attempted."

a *b*

FIG. 16.—*a*. Baboons roughly carved ; *b*. Large flint resembling a baboon. From *Abydos*, Vol. II., Plate 9.

M. Salomon Reinach, in his *Sculpture en Europe avant les influences gréco-romaines*, has followed rather the same line of thought as Piette, but with this difference. He does not attribute the modification always to an original desire to attain any definitely conceived result. He thinks that the fortuitous resemblance of certain geometrical shapes—either of natural or artificial objects—to the human form, gradually by force of suggestion led to these shapes

being modified into actual representations of human figures. He says, "la forme géometrique a suggéré la forme anthropomorphique," and he gives some curious examples of this evolution. They are taken from much later periods, and were made by a race which did not show sound natural capacity for portraying the human form.

When the primitive artist had obtained sufficient mastery over his ideas of form to be able to create natural objects out of shapeless blocks, he began attempting to represent them by some easier method. The most natural device was to go on making the same sort of carvings, but to carve them less deeply. The resulting images certainly had a flatter effect, but they resembled the originals quite well enough for practical purposes, and were much more easily made. Piette called these flat carvings "contours découpés" (Fig. 17).

Then came into play that secondary cause which forced the palæolithic artist to move more quickly along this line of development. The material he had been in the habit of using became less easily obtainable. The noble mammoth with its great curving tusks of fine grained ivory had hitherto supplied him with a hard and homogeneous substance which well repaid all the care lavished on it. Gradually a cruel change of climate drove it from those regions, and its place was taken by the horse and by the reindeer.

Instead of precious ivory, our artists had to use rough horns and bones.

Now neither of these have the same texture all through. They both discourage deep cutting, for then the sponge-like inner substance is reached. Thus man's natural inclination towards shallow carving was

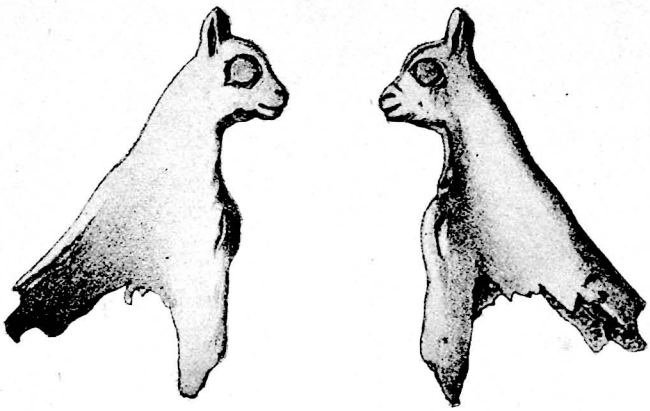


FIG. 17.—Cat (?) carved from a flat piece of bone, the style called "contour découpé" by Piette. In M. Mascaraux's collection. Found at St. Michel d'Arudy. Magdalenian period. Actual size.

fostered, and to some extent justified. Therefore he gave up carving in the round and began to do work only in relief. Concurrently with this dearth of good material there seems to have been a great increase in the demand for small carved objects, or at all events there was a great increase in the supply. Artists had to work on the thinner portions of the reindeer horn

FIG. 18.—Bird carved in low relief on a broken "magic wand." Part of the perforation, which seems to have been a necessary feature in these wands, is still visible at the top of this specimen. It can be seen also in Figs. 15 and 29. Found at Raymonden (Dordogne). Now in the museum of Perigueux. Actual size. *Revue de l'École d'Anthropologie*, Feb. 1909.

and on the shoulder-blades of horses and other animals. These were not suitable even for bas-reliefs, so that it was not only easier but also continually more and more necessary to depend on obtaining effects by means of numerous shallow incised lines (Fig. 18). The consequence was that the carving gradually deteriorated, and in time was entirely superseded by drawing.

Piette's grand generalisation, the fruit of many years' patient investigation, has shared the fate of most sweeping statements and has not been found applicable to all cases, for, as we have seen (p. 15), discoveries have been made of drawings which are quite as old as the sculptures. As these drawings are not nearly so good as the carvings, the real conclusion seems to be that primitive man had been tentatively striving in various

ways to represent natural objects, and had made much more rapid progress in carving than in drawing.

In truth, drawing on the flat is not the most obvious and natural way of representing solid objects. Even in simple outline drawing we have to come to a common understanding or convention that certain lines mean certain things. Such an agreement is not easily arrived at, for solid objects are not as a rule bounded by hard and fast lines. Consequently the untutored eye is better pleased with an image or a model than with a picture.

The carved object makes less demands on the ordinary man's faculties of observation and memory; it appeals to the sense of touch as well as of sight; it can be tested in various ways, and its appearance can be examined from various points of view. The strange superiority of sculpture over drawing, which is evident in the middle division of the palæolithic period and is also traceable in many other subsequent periods, becomes intelligible if we regard representation on the flat as possible only for men whose perceptions have been strengthened by long use or who have developed a desire for expressing ideas which cannot conveniently be embodied in a carving.

In this early prevalence of sculpture over drawing I think we may see the beginning of that never-ending struggle between naturalism and conventionalism, between realistic and schematic systems. Looking back along the dim vista of past millenniums we can faintly trace the varying fortunes of the battle, and

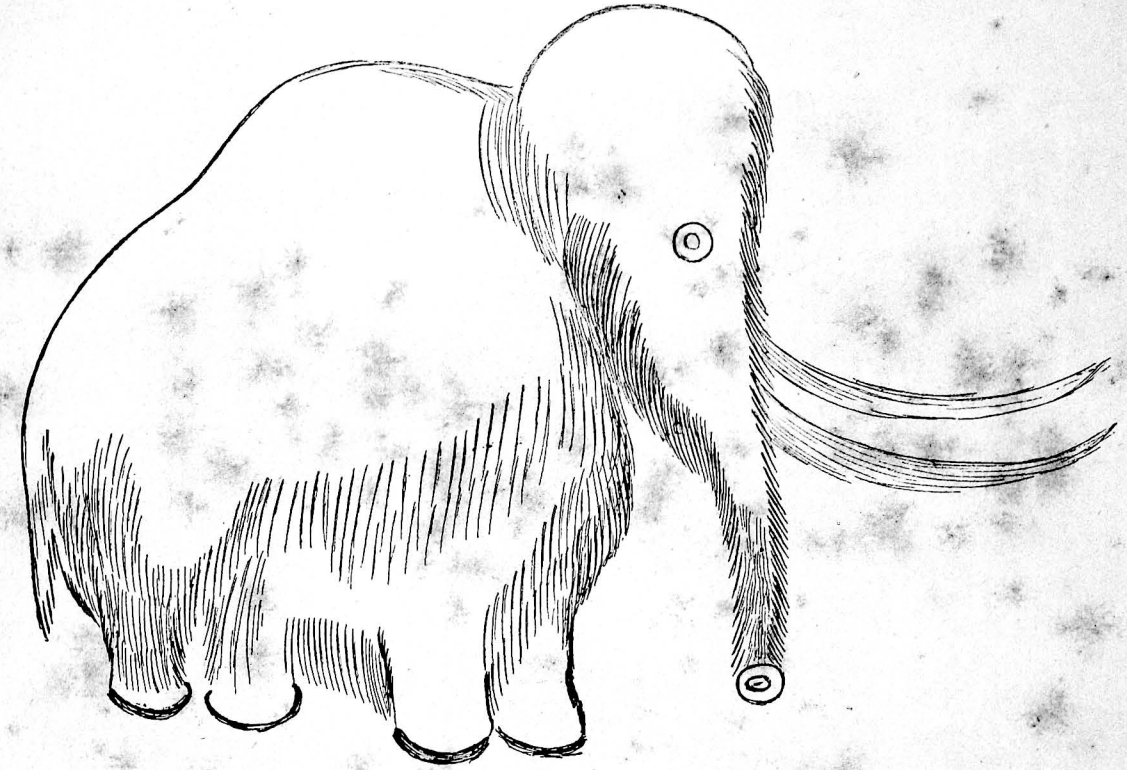


FIG. 19.—Small sketch of a mammoth, one of several very similar drawings made by scraping shallow lines on the surface of older pictures painted on the sides of a cave at Font de Gaume (see Fig. 21). The tusks resemble those of an elephant rather than of a mammoth, not being so strongly curved as usual in that species. All these sketches seem to have been made by one artist towards the end of the palæolithic period when the mammoth was nearly extinct. They may be merely reproductions of paintings he had seen and not remembered accurately. Size, two feet.

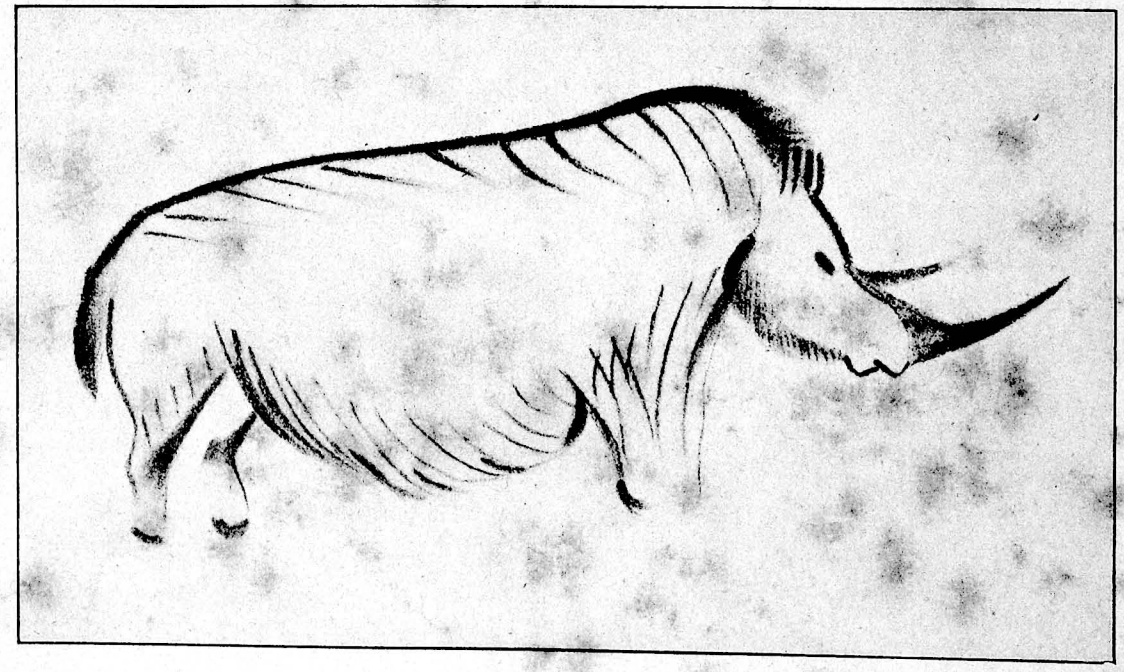


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FIG. 20.—Rhinoceros drawn with rough strokes of red paint on the side of a cave at Font de Gaume. It is very indistinct and difficult to decipher. The interpretation of it as *Rhinoceros tichorinus* is confirmed by its similarity to several other drawings of this species which have been found scratched on pieces of stone from palæolithic deposits in various parts of France. See also Fig. 57. Size, about two feet.

these glimpses of the past may help us to understand the war-cries of the present, for art is but the clothing of human ideals with material forms; and human nature, like the human body, has not changed greatly in all these ages.

We cannot expect to find much conventionalism in that strenuous Aurignacian period when the mammoth and rhinoceros (Figs. 19 and 20), the huge cave bear and stealthy lion flourished in the luxuriant forests of southern France. Man must have had a hard time fighting for his existence amongst such monsters. But for all that he managed to exercise his faculties of perception and of memory, and he created works of art that are far superior to those of any modern savages, although the material conditions of his life were not much better than theirs.

Some of his productions are most wonderful. Consider that girl's head (Fig. 11), or that female torso (Fig. 12). How came it that a wild race of hunters could produce results which, apparently, were never again achieved until men had climbed far higher up the ladder of material civilisation?

This phase of art was only revealed to us some twenty years ago. Its origin still remains a mystery, and its final disappearance is almost as mysterious. As the ages rolled on and climates changed, the herds of giant mammoth were succeeded by troops of diminutive horses, and the horses by great flocks of hardy reindeer. Yet our artists made no further progress in sculpture, and finally even the tradition

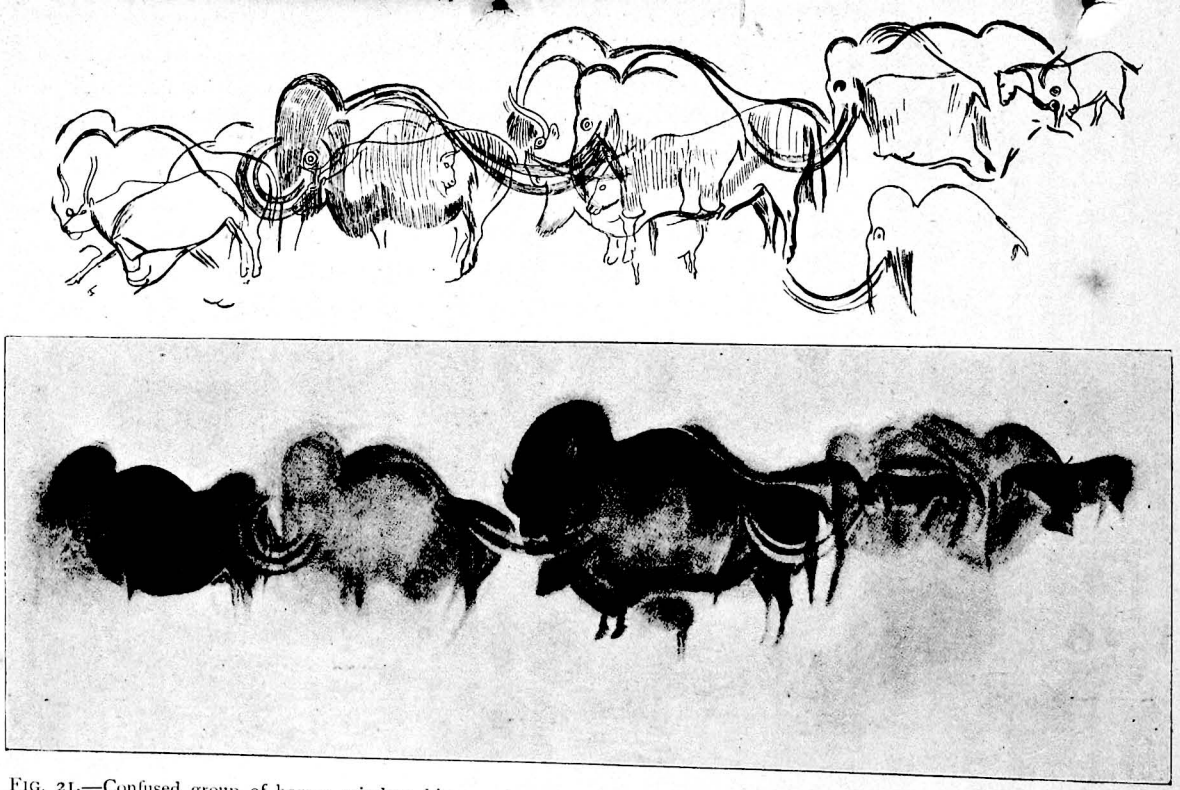

FIG. 21.—Confused group of horses, reindeer, bison and mammoth painted and incised at different periods. The lower drawing shows the general appearance of the group, the upper one gives only the lines that are incised. Some of the bison are polychrome, others are black. Total length about fifteen feet.

of it seems to have been lost. It dwindled away into mere surface decoration, and into forms which modern artists and archæologists used to consider as meaningless ornament, but which are now beginning to be looked upon as definite and even unavoidable steps in the evolution of decorative art. This point will have to be considered more fully later on.

It is rather strange that they should have begun by carving human figures, and that afterwards they chose only animal subjects. Perhaps this was due to the absence of clothing in the earlier periods. At the beginning of other waves of artistic expansion when clothing was commonly worn, men seem to have had much less success in modelling the human form, although they succeeded fairly well in making figures of animals. Of these palæolithic human figures there are unfortunately very few specimens, perhaps not more than a score, most of them too badly preserved to be easily appreciated.

Some are awkward and angular, others are grossly fat (Fig. 22). Three or four are really good, but their merits have been greatly exaggerated. Describing a torso, far inferior to the one shown in Fig. 12, G. and A. de Mortillet say in *La Préhistoire* that it is "a *chef-d'œuvre* of sculpture which, as regards its truth to nature, may well be compared to Greek art."

Until a greater number of better preserved and more complete specimens have been discovered we cannot form an accurate judgment of the results attained by these stone age sculptors. Great masses

of ivory, decomposed and pulpy, sometimes even liquid, have been dug up in palæolithic deposits. Much of it had probably been carved into forms of which we can now but faintly guess the meaning and the beauty. The few survivals, tokens of the first pulsations of human thought beating like restless waves against material limitations, convey to us only the merest ripples of those ancient storms that have convulsed mankind. Of these scattered relics, headless and armless, corroded and discoloured, pressed out of shape by successive deposits during countless ages, the merits can only be estimated by those who, in addition to a knowledge of sculptural work, have also had experience in dealing with similar objects from other periods. But battered and mutilated as they are, no one can look on them without wonderment and sorrow. Wonder that primitive man should have had eyes to see and hands to reproduce such a concept of human shapeliness. Sorrow that the vision once revealed should have afterwards been so blurred, distorted, and destroyed that for many succeeding ages the sculptor's work awakens but a feeling of pity or of shame.

It is unfortunate that the head of Fig. 12 is missing, for it might have shown what race was represented. The shape of the body indicates a better race than most of the other statuettes, some of which are so fat that they almost seem to represent a steatopygous race like the Bushmen or Hottentots. The question of the presence of two, if not three,[6] very different races

in Europe at that time belongs to the domain of ethnology rather than of art, but as these steatopygous figures are also found in many other places, and in deposits of many much later periods, they may, when they have been sufficiently studied and classified, throw a much-needed light on the development of the ideas underlying the glyptic representations of the human form.

The most complete specimen is a statuette that was dug up in the summer of 1909 in a railway cutting near Willendorf, a village lying between Krems and Grein, two small towns on the Danube, about fifty miles from Vienna. In the sandy marl of a formation, called loess by geologists, the workmen noticed several thin layers of charcoal with bone and flint implements scattered around these blackened streaks, which soon proved themselves to be the sites of long forgotten hearths and homes. I fear that in England such a find would have been forthwith carted away to form an embankment, but in Austria the ubiquitous professor soon made his appearance, and the deposits were carefully excavated under expert supervision. Few people realise how difficult it is to examine and record accurately the results of such excavations. Plans and sections have to be drawn, and the position of every important object has to be registered. There are unfortunately, even at the present day, many diggers who will not take this trouble, and are only anxious to obtain specimens for their museums, regardless of the fact that such

specimens are comparatively valueless unless full details are recorded of all the surrounding materials and objects. Tourists used to be blamed for encouraging the careless destruction of ancient deposits by greedy ransackers after saleable curiosities, but for many years the dealers have found it more profitable to manufacture forgeries of ancient relics for the unlearned in such matters. The chief temptation to professional curio hunters to turn topsy-turvy these priceless relics of the past now comes from experts, whose desire for the possession of rare specimens is sometimes greater than their desire for the advancement of knowledge. The existence of such bitter and senseless rivalries among those who are foremost in the ranks of time is sad evidence that we, although separated by the lapse of ages and a complicated civilisation, are not so very different in our desires and aspirations from those barbarians who hunted the mammoth and the rhinoceros on the banks of the ancient Danube—that ancient river which, in strange calm contrast to petty human struggles, has toiled on at its appointed task of excavating a highway through Europe ages before these savages lit their fires on its banks, and will continue its work long after we of this age of hurry and steam have ceased to light our fires upon its waters.

To return to our statuette. A full description has been published by the authorities of the Vienna Museum,[7] to whose courtesy I am indebted for permission to reproduce this photograph of it (Fig. 22). It is

carved in oolite limestone, and is about five inches high. It is not beautiful, but it is well modelled, although the arms are only in low relief. Apparently it had no feet; of course they may have been

FIG. 22.—Female figure carved in oolite limestone. Found at Willendorf (Austria) near a large charcoal hearth covered with six feet of loess. Late Aurignacian or perhaps Solutrian. Two-thirds actual size. Now in the Royal Museum of Natural History, Vienna. From a photograph given to the author by Prof. Szambothy.

broken off by accident, and the fractured surface smoothed away ages ago. It is curious to find the calves and knees so plainly indicated, for they are generally omitted in primitive carvings, even of

much later periods. The hair is treated in a more naturalistic manner than the hair of the young girl in Fig. 11, which is rather Egyptian in its style. The face has no features carved on it; possibly they were indicated by painting: there are some traces of colour on the body. Or, perhaps the artist intentionally avoided this difficulty by bending the head forward so that the face could hardly be noticed.

One small detail remains to be noticed. On the wrists of the Willendorf statuette are seen two ornaments that look like bracelets; similar ornaments are found on other palæolithic representations of nude females. Adornment was apparently more necessary than clothing even in those early times. All the statuettes of that period are female, except one very rough specimen found at Brunn, in Moravia; and they are all unclothed. Does this show that clothing was not yet invented, or that those ancient artists had the same difficulty with clothes that modern sculptors have?

If we may judge by the customs still existing among some modern savages, it may even be true that primitive man considered it more decent to be naked than to be clothed.[8] The climate was not rigorous in Aurignacian times, clothing would then have been a luxury rather than a necessity. No bone needles have yet been found in these deposits, although they occur in subsequent ones, when the climate was growing colder.

Some day, perhaps, we may discover larger statues,

or a series of statuettes of palæolithic and neolithic age, that will enable us to trace the rise and fall of that branch of ancient art. Now we have to pass over great distances both of time and space before we can find anything to compare with them.

Unfortunately there does not seem to be much hope of so many discoveries being made during this century, unless public interest is aroused, and funds provided to defray the great cost of systematic excavations. Many of the best finds of the nineteenth century were made by chance during the construction of roads or railways. Just as geology received a great impulse from the numerous opportunities of studying splendid sections in cuttings and tunnels, so the archæologist has to thank the utilitarian engineer for unsealing some of the books of revelation that have so long awaited the advent of reverent readers. This century, however, is likely to see much less activity in railway construction in Europe, and we shall no longer be able to rely upon that source of assistance. In archæological work, as in other spheres of human activity, progress will be made in future by definite planning, not by trusting to luck; by careful training of the workers, not by "muddling through somehow."

Although no life-size sculptures of the human form have yet been found in palæolithic deposits, we have a certain amount of encouragement as to the possibility of finding them afforded by Dr. Lalanne's great discovery in 1910 in the picturesque little

valley of the Beune, a sub-tributary of the Dordogne.[9] Along the sides of this valley are many small limestone cliffs, sometimes perpendicular, sometimes overhanging, and thus forming those rock shelters which were so often used by primitive man as dwelling-places, especially when facing southwards. He knew the value of a sun-warmed habitation; such spots must have been as eagerly sought after in those days as are the sunny nooks of the Riviera at the present time.

At the foot of these cliffs are large accumulations of stones and earth washed down from the wooded slopes above, so that the rock shelters are often nearly filled up and would not be noticed by inexperienced observers. For two years or more Dr. Lalanne had been engaged in excavating some of these shelters, but he had not discovered a single human bone nor any of those relics of prehistoric art which are so frequently found in other parts of that district. He therefore set to work to probe the talus at the foot of the cliffs, to see if he could find a cave or deeper shelter where a burial might have been made. At last at one likely spot the probing stick went down several yards.

We can imagine the excitement of the workers as they dug down through the accumulated soil and found a broad layer of charcoal with various bones, some charred by fire, some ornamented with the familiar drawings of ancient animals. Flint implements were also found, but of strange shapes—implements which did not seem likely to have been

of much use either as weapons or for domestic purposes.

It was, however, rather a disappointment to find that it was not a deep cave, but only a shallow rock shelter, and there were no human bones at all.

Then came another surprise. Behind that charcoal hearth, where ancient hunters had cooked their reindeer feasts and split the bones to reach the toothsome marrow, the diggers found a raised paved terrace. Then, as with pickaxe and with spade they scooped away the earth from off this strangely levelled floor, they perceived that the rock behind was sculptured. Out from their clayey tomb arose strange shapes of bison, of reindeer and of horse, carved large as life in the hard limestone rock by men of that vanished race which has already shown us what good work it could do on a much smaller scale.

These sculptures were no triflings of an idle hour to while away the time between gross feedings and long weary hunts. They were the result of careful study and of patient preparation. Even the tools used in their execution were as well adapted for that purpose as if they had been made of bronze or steel. For those strange implements we noticed as so puzzling were soon proved to be hammers and picks, chisels and scrapers, very similar in form and size to those of a modern sculptor, although the material is but ordinary flint.

It is impossible to estimate the artistic merit of the sculptures from these photographs (Figs. 23 and

FIG. 23.—Part of a long frieze representing horses and other animals carved in high relief on the limestone of a rock shelter at Laussel (Dordogne), This horse is seven feet in length and stands out about nine inches. Discovered in 1910 by Dr. Lalanne.

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24), which of course have not been retouched. In all such cases no just judgment can be formed without seeing the originals, or, at least, good casts of them. Their present condition, too, renders it difficult to appreciate the skill of that ancient artist. The horse's legs were broken off so long ago that not even fragments of them were found in any of the supervening layers of clay and stones. Erosion has pitted the surfaces and has obliterated many of the contours, but still enough remains to show that the sculptor was not only experienced enough to render anatomical details with considerable accuracy, but was also able to execute well-proportioned work on a large scale. He seems to have planned a sort of frieze containing more than a dozen animals. Most of them are horses, but it is difficult to distinguish all the figures. The end of the frieze cannot be examined as it runs into the property of a Dr. Rudelle, and he will not allow it to be excavated.

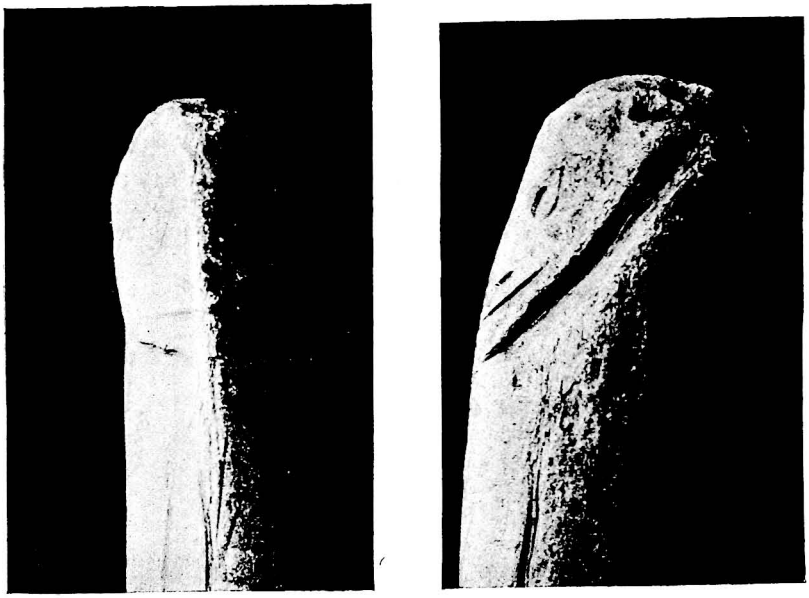
Palæolithic man seems to have resembled the Egyptians and the Greeks in not being content with plain uncoloured sculpture, for a small portion of the horse's neck has the paint still remaining on it. It is of a curious violet colour, and is said to be some compound of manganese. Another indication of the carvings having probably been painted was found on an oblong stone palette measuring about eleven inches by six. It was covered with red ochre ready mixed for use. The paint lies there, still thick on the ancient palette, one more addition to that long list of un-

fulfilled intentions. Would it be any consolation to that artist if he knew that some of his work has endured far, far longer than the grander works of ambitious tyrants and conquerors, who vainly have crushed down their fellow-creatures in order that they might perchance raise themselves above the dreaded mists of oblivion.

We must not linger too long in this rock shelter, fascinating as it is for those who like to let their imaginations roam freely over the possibilities of the past. We may, however, notice that the occupier of this shelter seems, in choosing this situation, to have had an eye for landscape beauty, a beauty which does not necessarily appeal to all artists, and which has never been well rendered by them until comparatively modern times.

Although large sculptures are so rare and large drawings have only been found in certain favoured localities, many hundreds of small carvings and drawings have recently been discovered in different parts of Europe. It is difficult to make a comprehensive study of their artistic merits. They are scattered about in various towns in France. Even the Paris specimens are not all in one museum. The St. Germains Museum has by far the best collection, and has also casts of all the important specimens. Museum authorities are naturally very chary of giving permission to handle the original objects. They are too rare—I was going to say, too precious, but when applied to art I hate that word, containing as it does

FIG. 24.—Horse, six feet long, projecting nearly twelve inches from the surface of the rock. Its back was at first not quite buried by the accumulated earth and was coated with a stalagmitic deposit dropping from the rock above.



a *b*

FIG. 25.—Human face roughly carved on the end of a piece of reindeer horn about eight inches long, found in the Grotte de Rocheberthier, Charente. Nearly actual size. École d'Anthropologie, Paris.

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the idea of price, and reminding one of the sordid question that used to be considered characteristic of American tourists, "What did it cost?" As if price and value were necessarily connected! And yet they are so in most people's eyes. Beauty and rarity are to them only valuable because they are precious, or, as economists would say, because they have a "high ratio of exchange." Make a test question of it with some of your friends, those for instance who profess to admire the beauty of real diamonds and to despise paste. If diamonds became so common as to be as cheap as glass, would they still be used as ornaments because of their intrinsic beauty? Is it not possible that people would then boast of possessing "real paste jewels, none of your cheap natural diamonds." I am afraid it is not the idea of beauty which causes them to be valued. They are worn, not really for adornment, but for ostentation, and too frequently it is only the suggestion of possessing wealth that gives pleasure to the wearer.

This may seem a digression, and perhaps such a discussion would be more appropriate later on, when, I think, we shall see many instances of the results of this confusion of ideas of cost and beauty. The position is not untenable, and may perhaps be proved by some future historian that great wealth by encouraging ostentation has debased art instead of elevating it.

But to return to our rare old specimens. The mammoth ivory and reindeer horn on which they

are carved is often decayed and frail, so that one is generally requested not to handle them more than is absolutely necessary, but to use the casts for studying details. It is impossible to make such studies from drawings, and photographs are not much more satisfactory. How useless it is to trust to drawings may be seen by comparing this photograph (Fig. 25-A) of a human face carved in ivory with this copy of an engraving (Fig. 26) of it given by Woermann in his *Geschichte der Kunst* (1900).

FIG. 26.—Drawing given in Woermann's *Geschichte der Kunst aller Zeiten und aller Völker*, p. 10 (1900) of the roughly carved head shown in Figs. 25-A and 25-B.

Even in Piette's great work, *L'art pendant l'âge du Renne* (1907), the publication of which he did not live to see, we find that when two drawings of the same object are given on different scales the details often differ considerably. Still it is a wonderful work, with its hundred pages of coloured plates, giving many enlargements of the bone drawings and several views of the carvings from various sides.

One of Piette's best specimens is the well-known wild goat (Fig. 27), which, with the rest of his collection, has now found a permanent home in the St. Germains Museum. It shows one of the transition stages between a perfectly free-standing image, such as that of the horse (Fig. 14), and a decorative

carving in low relief (Fig. 15), intended to be looked at from one side only. It is a fine vigorous bit of workmanship, and yet it was only the adornment of a throwing-stick with which perhaps some palæolithic princeling was wont to hurl his lance against his foes. But I ought not to suggest this use of it, for, strangely enough, we do not find any signs of human warfare in those early days. In later times we find skeletons of men with the bronze weapon that killed them still embedded in their bones, and we often find examples of skulls plainly showing the great gashes of the death stroke. The only instance I know of such a gash made in palæolithic times is one on the skull of an old woman, and even she did not die from it, but lived long enough afterwards to let the bone grow together again.

A good deal has been said about war as a stimulant of art, but palæolithic artists seem to have got on very well without it. Of course there is no

FIG. 27-*a*.—Throwing-stick carved out of reindeer horn. Found in a cave at Mas d'Azil (Ariège). Early Magdalenian. Half actual size. Now in Piette's collection in the museum of St. Germain en Laye, near Paris. Similar sticks are used for throwing darts by savage tribes in the north-west of America and in Australia.

proof that there were no wars in those days—you never can prove a negative; but it is strange that none of the palæolithic pictures yet discovered represent men fighting, although that is such a favourite subject in later times. Of the chase we have a few primitive pictures. The well-known drawing on bone of a bison hunter (Fig. 28) and these recently discovered open-air paintings in Spain (Fig. 73) are examples of their treatment of this subject.

The hunter is figured in Girod and Massenat's large work, *Stations de l'âge du Renne* (1906), describing the archæological specimens in M. Massenat's collection which is now exhibited in the Musée de St. Germain en Laye, near Paris. In their description of this drawing the authors say, "the physiognomy has a certain expression of joy, which is very striking," but in their illustrations the expression of the man as given in the small drawing is different from his expression in the enlargement of it. This seems to show that the joy cannot have been very evident to the draughtsman who made the illustrations. Another writer when describing the bison says that it is grazing quietly, unconscious of danger, while a third archæologist considers that the ancient artist succeeded wonderfully in representing the terror of the great beast alarmed by the presence of its insidious foe.

M. Massenat's Collection contains some interesting specimens of magic staffs (or *bâtons de commandement*) ornamented with duplicated bulls' heads (Fig. 29),

FIG. 27 *bis*.—Photograph of the throwing-stick, Fig. 27*a*.

FIG. 28.—Bison and hunter incised on reindeer horn, found at Laugerie Basse. About half actual size. St. Germain.

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phalli, or other objects. This duplication is a curious instance of the desire for rhythm or symmetry which is strongly felt by some people, while others are as strongly opposed to it. In later times we find many examples of duplicated animals, but chiefly in drawings or else in low reliefs, and

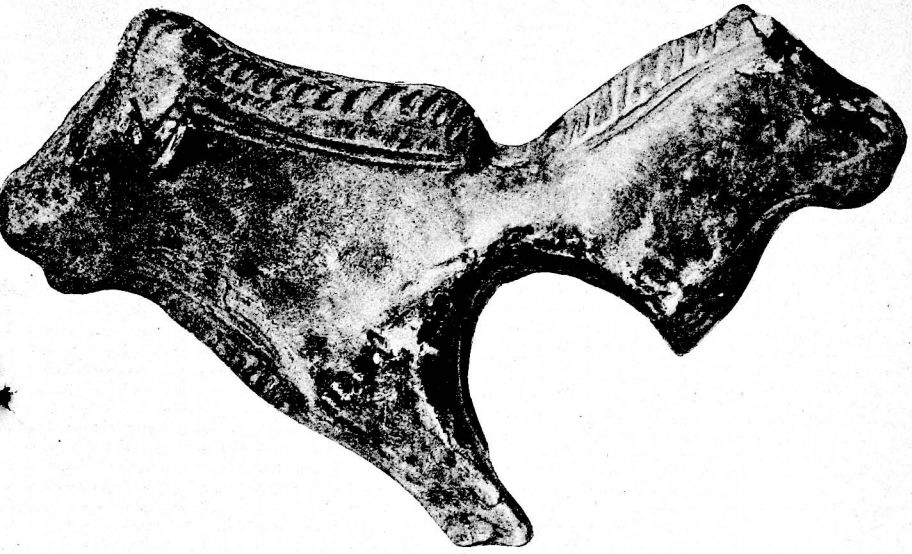

FIG. 29.—Upper part of a "magic wand" roughly carved to represent two bulls' heads. Found at Laugerie basse. Now in the Massenat collection in the museum of St. Germain en Laye, near Paris. Actual size. From a facsimile made at the museum for the author.

they are almost invariably "heraldically opposed" —that is to say, facing towards one another, not away from one another as these bulls do. A good deal has been written about this heraldic position. When it occurs in drawings many writers are now inclined to attribute its origin, not so much to a desire

for symmetry as to a desire to represent on the flat both sides of a solid object. In the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* for 1881, Mr. G. Murray had an interesting article on this subject to which I shall have to refer later on, merely noting now that in early work animals sculptured in the round face outwards, while in bas-reliefs and drawings they face inwards or towards one another. One of the rare instances to the contrary is a very remarkable duplicated cow (Fig. 145), dating probably from one of the first Egyptian dynasties. It is in low relief, but its two heads face away from one another and present a most curious effect. The only explanation I have been able to obtain of it is that it may represent the constellation of the twins. That does not seem altogether satisfactory. It may possibly be the "image of an image," and be intended to represent an amulet. If so it would be in accordance with the general rule that animals in the round faced outwards.

The British Museum has many excellent specimens of carved bones, but owing to lack of space they are hidden away in a corner of the little iron gallery that runs round the British antiquities room. We do not care much for such things in England; they have no money value, and they are not pleasing to the eye. The study of them is so lightly esteemed that I have even heard that section called "the rag and bone department." Many educated men seem to think that any hole or corner is good enough to put such rubbish in.

Among the British Museum specimens are two reindeer carved in the round, which used to be considered as the handles of two daggers. A few years ago the Abbé Breuil, when examining the collection, noticed that the broken end of one of them corresponded exactly with the broken end of the other. He fitted them together, and thus reconstituted the only example yet known of palæolithic carving in the round in which the figures have any relation to one another (Fig. 30). It is the first instance of an attempt at grouping, and is a remarkable advance in the progress of art. Such attempts seem seldom to have been made, even in much later civilisations, until a certain degree of maturity had been attained.

FIG. 30.—Male and female reindeer carved out of mammoth ivory. Found by M. Peccadeau de l'Isle in the soil of a rock shelter near Bruniquel. Magdalenian. About ten inches in length. Now in the British Museum.

These reindeer are carved in a fairly good and unconventional style; they have none of those incised lines with which so many other

carvings have been disfigured. Instead of disfigured perhaps we ought to say ornamented, for doubtless the sculptor thought he improved his work by incising those lines upon it.

That ivory carving of a horse (Fig. 14) seems as if it would have been better without such additions, but the pattern on it is so carefully done that the artist may have had some definite intention. An almost identical pattern has been found on the body of a large horse incised on the rock in a cave at Combarelles. It has been supposed that these markings were intended to represent the colour patches of the horse's coat, but rather similar zigzag marks are found on early Egyptian drawings of elephants, where they could have hardly been meant to indicate patches of colour.

In other specimens the lines were considered to indicate harness, but that idea has been given up, as there is no evidence that the horse had been broken to the service of man until a very much later period. If palæolithic man had learned to make the horse his friend and helper, it seems unlikely that the news of such a discovery should not have spread eastwards to other countries where horses were quite as plentiful. But there are no indications of the horse, or even of the wild ass, being used in any other way than for food until about 3000 B.C., when we find an early Chaldean king represented as driving a war chariot. (*Découvertes en Chaldée*, Pl. 3bis.)

Those zigzag patterns are found on the primitive

drawings of many other races; they may be due to mere fantasy, but from what we know of the mentality of modern savages, it is more likely that they were meant to express something. Savages, however, like children, are not always consistent in their work, and they will use the same design or symbol to represent very different things (see Lumholtz, *Symbolism of the Huichol Indians*, New York, 1900). Therefore it is rash to dogmatise about these patterns, for perhaps the artists themselves could hardly have told us what they meant.

CHAPTER III

THE ORIGINS OF DRAWING

We have in modern times so much knowledge of what other artists have done, how they have failed and how they have achieved success, that it is difficult for us to realise how entirely tentative and experimental was all palæolithic art. In those days man had no previous experience to guide him, no other sculptures or drawings to copy or improve upon except those of his own race and period. Like an explorer in a virgin land he had all sorts of possibilities before him; but there was always the doubt whether the line he was pursuing would lead to fruitful fields where art could flourish and expand, or whether it would end in sterile wastes where art would surely degenerate and die. Let us not laugh at the crude results and pitiful failures of those early pioneers. Do we not make failures too? I hope so, for when we cease to make any failures our art will cease to live.

Let us try to put ourselves in the position of these pioneers. How were they to know that a certain arrangement of lines would represent an animal or a man to other men? In fact, it is extremely unlikely that these lines did succeed at first in conveying any

impression to their less gifted fellow-men. It was only by slow transitions from the actual carved model to flatter and still flatter carvings that ordinary men came to see that a thin flat form might have some resemblance to a real solid animal. They had to learn to look at it only from one point of view. It is quite likely that at first they always wanted to turn the strange thing round and look at the other side, and that is why we get those *contours decoupés* or silhouette carvings with the details fully worked out on both sides.

A friend tells me that a very small girl, for whom he had drawn the picture of a bird in profile, immediately asked why it had only one eye. He tried to explain, but he could not satisfy her. Finally she seized the pencil, turned the paper round and gave the bird its other eye on the back of the drawing.[10]

This is in accordance with the general tendency of children. They do not try to draw what they can actually see, but what they remember. In drawing a cube, for instance, children will often show four of its sides. Sometimes they will give five sides arranged in the form of a cross (Fig. 31). I have also known of a child drawing this curious form in order to show the sixth side, because he "knew it was there" (Fig. 32).

FIG. 31.

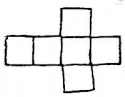

FIG. 32.

When the first low relief carvings were made they probably met with very hostile criticism as being

quite unnatural. But the *contours découpés*, or silhouette carvings had somewhat accustomed men's eyes to the one-sided view, and the reliefs were so much more durable and convenient that they soon found general acceptance. The word soon must here be taken to mean "in the course of a few centuries," for evolution moves very slowly in its early days.

In all ages there is a tendency for reliefs to become less bold as time goes on. The palæolithic age was probably no exception to this rule. The outline of a flat relief differs very little from that of an incised drawing, therefore men accustomed to the one would soon learn to recognise the other. On the strange fragment here depicted (Fig. 33) both systems are seen; the reindeer is in low relief, part of the figure of the woman is drawn with incised lines, but her back is carved in slight relief.

The same process of development would take place with regard to the forms of details such as eyes or nostrils, and men would soon cease expecting them to be represented in relief. Thus the necessity for working in relief would die away proportionately as men's comprehension of drawing improved.

But between the crude outline forms of those definite details and the delicate tone variations produced by light and shade on rounded contours there was a great gulf to be crossed. Shall we wonder at primitive artists using strange devices when trying to cross it? Are we sure that we ourselves have crossed it? We talk glibly of a picture being life-like,

FIG. 33.—Two fragments of a thin piece of bone (probably a shoulder-blade) carved on both sides with figures incised or in slight relief. The hoofs of the deer are drawn, as in Fig. 53, not in profile but *en face*.

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but what do we mean by life-like? Do we mean that it is so true to life that it would immediately convey to any beholder the impression that he had a real object before him? Or do we mean that it awakens recollection and recalls an impression previously made by a similar object? The latter explanation seems the right one, yet if it is true, it puts the life-like picture on the same level as the life-like verbal description: they both recall impressions. Unless the mind of the beholder has been trained by having frequently had his impressions recalled in a similar manner, neither pictures nor words will convey any meaning to it.

Is it not then a question of the association of ideas by long practice? Put up a notice, "Beware of the dog." Will that scare away the man who cannot read, who is not accustomed to the idea that certain lines mean certain things? Or if you put up a painted sign of a fiercely barking dog, would that scare away even the most timid cat? Cats have not been accustomed to the idea that certain streaks of paint can represent their ancient enemy. Their world of impressions is filled more with sounds and smells than with things seen and remembered. It is the remembrance of things seen which constitutes the ability to read a picture. Students of wild races say that the untutored savage cannot read a picture any better than a cat can. Perhaps the impressionists will say that the average Englishman is, as regards art, not much better than the untutored savage.

If then it is so hard to read a picture, how much more difficult must it be for an artist to devise a way of painting one that will express his ideas to others or even to himself! If it is only by association of ideas, by repeated efforts of memory and imagination that a flat surface can be understood to represent a solid object, how much stronger must the memory and imagination be that can seize the salient and essential aspects of things, and reproduce them so that others can see them too.

I suppose we all flatter ourselves that we can see things pretty clearly and remember them fairly well, but how often do we test the truth of this supposition? Here is a simple design (Fig. 34). It does not seem as if it would be difficult to remember such an easy pattern. Put away the book and try to draw it. If you find that you are not able to reproduce it, you will perhaps better appreciate the difficulties of those ancient men who could not reproduce the impression made upon their brain by solid objects with outlines far less definite.

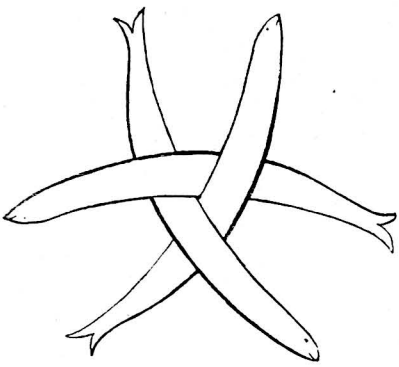

FIG. 34.

Here then we have palæolithic man face to face with that great difficulty, how to represent on the flat things that really exist in the round. It was a much

more intricate problem than the one he had had to solve when dealing with his blocks of stone or ivory, which indeed had often shown some slight resemblance to the desired shape, and awaited but the master touch to transform them into things of life which some of his fellow-men would at once recognise and admire.

Children and savages will often say that the vague lines they scribble do really represent certain definite things. Are we justified in accepting their assertions? No. Unless the meaning they attribute to their scribblings can be recognised independently by some other people these marks cannot be said to have any meaning at all. Recognition, therefore, would seem to be the test of their art value. For how can any art —plastic, pictorial, dramatic, literary or musical—be said to give expression if it makes no impression? It is not indeed necessary that the impression should be produced immediately; centuries may elapse before the meaning is appreciated. Meanwhile such a form of art may be compared to those waves of light which pass through the deep darkness of intersolar space and yet remain perfectly invisible until they meet with some responsive element. In the absence of such an element it would be useless for us to discuss the nature of those waves. It is equally useless to discuss any form of art that has not yet succeeded in conveying any impressions to mankind.

There is some difficulty in determining how far each art should be expected to convey impressions

independently of external aid. We laugh at the child artist who writes "this is a house," "this is a man" over his drawings, although similar devices were common enough in primitive periods, even among the Egyptians and the Greeks. Authors, however, do not always disdain seeking external aid to render their literary work more expressive, and musicians sometimes give strange names to compositions whose subtle influence would be perhaps better appreciated without such clumsy explanations.

These considerations lead us to suppose that the primitive artist, when first working on the flat, had to learn how to obtain from other men the recognition of the meaning of his work. It must have been a slow and painful process. The crude outlines that have been found engraved on the sides of caves at Pair non Pair and other places were probably but little understood by the art critics and the art patrons of those early Aurignacian times (see p. 15). And even the painter of that noble bison must have sadly confessed to himself that something was wrong in his representation of it with full-faced double horns and but a single leg in front and a single leg behind. Perchance the rude remarks of his neighbours about the beast having only one eye rankled in his mind, and although he felt quite sure that they were wrong he did not feel so sure that he was right in showing both its horns (Fig. 10).

There is no wonder then that all through the long ages of Aurignacian and early Solutrian times drawing

made such little progress. Lack of appreciation must have had a very deterrent effect, for environment is one of the chief determining factors in art as in all other growth. The technical side of the question must also have presented many difficulties to primitive man; all his devices were experiments, the results of which still remained uncertain. With streaks of paint and with incising tools he had produced results which are now becoming familiar to us; but he had also tried other processes. Recent discoveries have given strange proofs of his having adopted one method of drawing, which, although natural enough, gave such temporary and generally evanescent results that it could hardly have been expected to leave any evidence of its existence.

Perhaps some of my readers will think I am referring to that use of a bit of burnt stick which still figures in popular explanations of the origin of drawing. The burnt stick is supposed to have been used by some young girl to draw the profile of her lover's face by following the outline of its shadow cast upon a rock (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, xxxv. p. 153). There is every probability that a burnt stick was one of the earliest tools ever used by artists, although I believe no evidence has yet been found of its use. And at first sight there seems equal probability that cast shadows were utilised as the basis or ground plan of drawings; though here again there is no evidence to prove it. But when we see that among all the thousands of palæolithic drawings that have lately

been discovered and described there is not a single realistic drawing of a human profile face, nor is there a single instance of any other drawing that can be taken as the outline of a shadow, I think we may reasonably conclude that shadows had no power to awaken the artistic faculty in man.

The story was started in days when theorists had not yet learned that "what has been" is much more important than "what might have been," and that the best way of ascertaining what will probably happen under certain circumstances is to find out what has happened or what does happen under similar ones. I am afraid that method of dealing with questions is still far from popular even among educated men. Professor Sayce, who, as an Oxford classical tutor and as an Egyptian explorer, has been brought into contact with many different types of mind, says, "Nothing is more common than to come across literary critics who cannot be made to understand the nature of inductive proof." Therefore the burnt stick and shadow theory will probably be popular for many generations, and if charcoal drawings should be discovered in palæolithic caves they will be quoted as affording conclusive evidence of its truth.

The method of drawing which I have alluded to as giving such temporary and generally evanescent results is the extremely simple one of using a finger to draw lines upon a bed of mud. In a cavern called "La Grotte de Gargas," at the foot of the Pyrenees, and not far from Bagnères de Luchon, large expanses

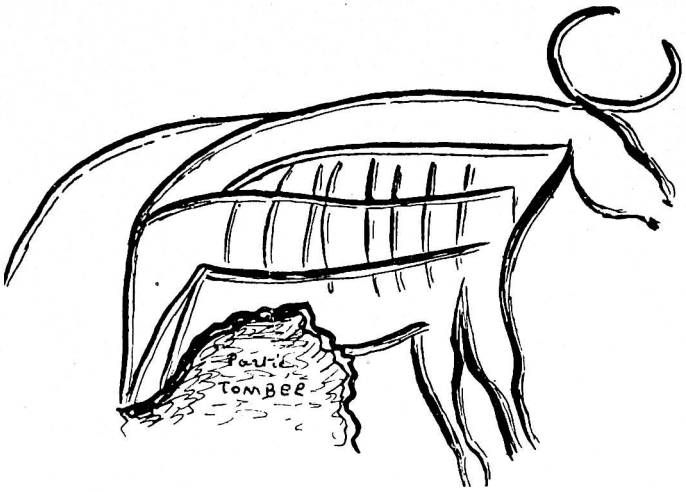

FIG. 35.—Ox drawn with the tip of a finger on the clay covering the side of a cave at Santa Isabel, near Santander, Spain. From an unpublished sketch given to the author by Professor Breuil.

Photo *Lasalle, Toulouse*

FIG. 36.—Bison drawn with the tip of a finger on the clay-covered floor of a cave at Niaux. Discovered accidentally by the sculptor Rivière placing a lamp on the floor. Magdalenian period.

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of the sticky yellowish clay which adheres to the sides of the cave have been found to be ornamented over large areas with designs traced in it by human finger tips—the finger tips of men who died ten, twenty, perhaps thirty thousand years ago; so long ago that the difference of a few millenniums more or less is a matter of little importance.

Most of the designs are what we should commonly call scribblings, though possibly some meaning or reason for them may be discovered when the root motives of human actions have been more fully and more scientifically studied. Amid the intricacies of these lines (wavy lines not unlike those one may often see scribbled with chalk on blank walls and doors in English towns) are figures of horse, of bison, and of lion traced in a style even more crude than that of the incisions at Pair non Pair and La Grèze.

Since this discovery was made many other mud drawings have been found in Spanish caves. They have not yet been published, but M. Breuil has kindly allowed me to reproduce one of them (Fig. 35). There is no necessity for discussing here the proofs of their antiquity. Those who are not expert archæologists should be very cautious in dealing with the comparative ages of freshly discovered objects. I have so often seen newspaper paragraphs headed "the oldest drawings in the world," although the drawings referred to may not be more than a few thousand years old, that I am rather shy of using that expression; but in this case I think it is justified.

We may safely class these finger-tip sketches as some of the very earliest manifestations of a perception of the possibility of representing solid objects by lines drawn upon a flat surface.

At a much later period, *i.e.* in Magdalenian times, even the advanced artists did not disdain to draw pictures with their finger-tips upon the muddy walls or floors of those vast rambling caves. A happy chance has preserved some wonderful examples of their work (Fig. 36).

A curious modern parallel to the artistic habits and capabilities of these earlier cave men is afforded by some of the natives of Central Africa, although indeed, as regards material civilisation, these natives have had greater advantages than their palæolithic brethren. They can make pottery, they know how to cultivate the soil, and they have learned the use of iron. Mr. Herbert Ward, who had many opportunities of noting their ways of life when he was making studies for his bronze figures of Congo savages, tells me that they have a very good sense of decorative outline form, and are clever at carving wooden images, but have very little capacity for representing natural objects on a flat surface. One day, however, he noticed a man drawing on the sand by the side of a river. The subject of his sketch was the outline of a fish, and his forefinger served him as a pencil. This incident furnished the motive for Mr. Ward's statue "A Congo Artist," which took the gold medal in the Paris Salon of 1910. He has kindly allowed me to

FIG. 37.—A Congo native drawing on the sand with his forefinger. Bronze statue by Mr. Herbert Ward.

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FIG. 38.—Imprint made on the side of the cave at Altamira by a hand smeared with red paint. The outlines were apparently touched up afterwards with a brush. From *Altamira*, Pl. IV. Australian natives frequently leave the imprint of their hands in the same way on the sides of caves or cliffs.

FIG. 39.—Shape of a cave man's hand left on the wall of the cave at Font de Gaume by colouring the surrounding surface with black paint. Probably of the Aurignacian period.

reproduce this illustration of it (Fig. 37) taken from his book *The Voice of the Congo* (Heinemann, 1910). Unfortunately, he was unable to ascertain the object of the man in making that drawing.

In these old world caves of France and Spain are also found evidences of two other methods, not indeed of drawing, but of the reproduction of designs. And it might almost be said that there we have the first origins both of printing and of stencilling. For in the Altamira cave there is the imprint made by a hand previously smeared with red paint (Fig. 38), while at Gargas and at Font de Gaume we have also the shapes of hands and other objects left blank as uncoloured patterns upon a coloured surface (Fig. 39). This effect was produced by placing the object against the rock, previously moistened or otherwise prepared for retaining the paint; and then some finely powdered substance of the desired colour, red, black, or white, was thrown or scattered over it.

The imprints appear to have been almost always made by the right hand, although the left hand was generally used as a stencil plate. This seems to show that these cave men were not ambidextrous, but chiefly right-handed.

We might have thought that when the idea of reproducing several impressions had been conceived it would have soon progressed and expanded. But here again comes in the question of environment. The communities were so small that many repetitions of the same subject would not have been welcomed.

Also they had no suitable substance to print them on, such as parchment or paper.

The earliest example of the use of stamping blocks other than the hands is to be found in the "pintaderas" of neolithic times. They were small seals made of clay or stone which were extensively used

FIG. 40-A.

FIG. 40-B.

40-A.—Pintadera, or stamping block.

40-B.—Fragment of a terra-cotta figure from Mexico, showing the chest ornamented with a very similar pattern, probably made by one of these stamping blocks. Now in the Ethnographic Museum of the Trocadero, Paris.

for making ornamental designs on the human face and body; specimens have been discovered in Liguria, in Crete, in the Canary Islands, and even in Mexico (Fig. 40). Possibly some day we may find that they were used in China, and thus were the direct ancestors of the earliest known blocks for printing on paper.

The subject is perhaps more interesting to archæologists than to artists, but it is curious to see that our mechanical processes for reproducing designs are of such hoary antiquity.

Of more interest is the question, why did they wish to depict their hands on the cavern roof and walls? That, unfortunately, is still a moot point, and we have but little help from similar stampings and stencillings in Australia. In neither country does there seem to be any connection with the idea of averting the evil eye, that superstition which had, and still has, such pernicious power in Eastern lands, and in those parts of Europe which have come strongly under Eastern influence.

Now, having traced the origin of drawing from sculpture in the round through flattened carvings, where the boundary outline was the most important feature, to low relief and line incising on rock or bone, let us examine in more detail some of the results and products of this development.

The effect on man's mental and spiritual growth must have been permanent and far reaching. The mental standpoint of a man who is simply chipping and cutting away bits from a misshapen block in which he has already seen some likeness to the form he wishes to produce, is quite different from that of a man who has a blank surface before him, on which, if he has imagination, memory, and manual skill, he can portray almost any form he chooses.

The field of the sculptor is severely limited by

the nature of his material. He cannot well express swift action nor great numbers; time and space come not within his ken, for sculptors in the round cannot represent varieties of season nor of distance. Winter and summer, night and day, broad plains and lofty mountains, rushing water and waving trees are quite outside the province of his art, but the painter can range over a whole world of glorious possibilities.

At first, of course, but little advantage was taken of this new found liberty. The artist could not develop much faster than the race, but it was his privilege to be in the forefront of the struggle to emerge from mere animalism to a perception of higher things. To convey to his fellow-men the impressions of hitherto unnoticed beauty of shape or colour that had come to him as a revelation was an impelling duty. His great reward was the satisfying joy of creation experienced when his results attained some appearance of success.

How slowly and painfully this success was obtained may be realised by examining Abbé Breuil's reproductions of the drawings and paintings in the French and Spanish caverns. They are now available for students in those monographs on Altamira and Font de Gaume which are the first two volumes of a series dealing exhaustively with the whole subject. I have to thank the authors for their permission to reproduce so many of their illustrations, and I must also acknowledge the liberality of the Prince of Monaco and his chief librarian in allowing me

FIG. 42.—Bear drawn with broad strokes of red paint. It shows a spirited attempt to give the impression of action and to indicate both hind legs. It was painted in a side passage of the cave at Font de Gaume close to Fig. 41. Size, twenty inches.

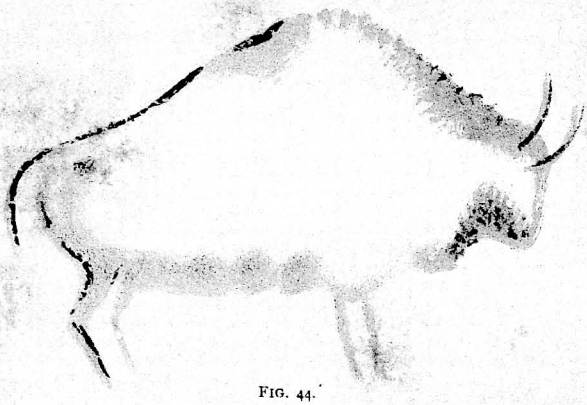

FIG. 44.

PLATE I.

FIG. 44.—The form of this bison is expressed partly by outline, partly by broad patches of colour which seem intended to make the figure stand out in relief. It is on the roof of the cavern of Altamira. Size, about 20 inches long.

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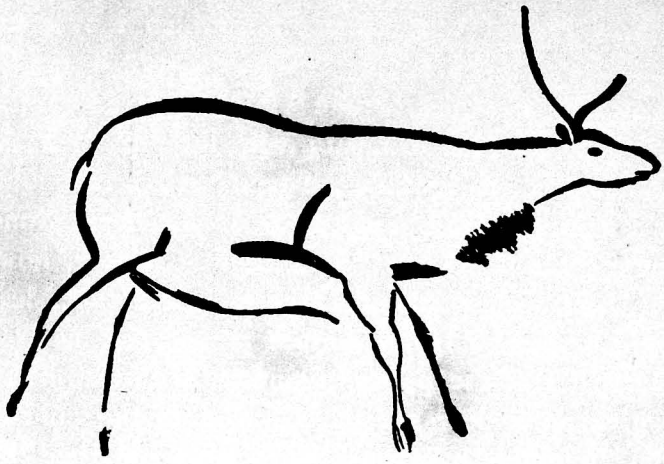

FIG. 41.—Deer drawn with strokes of black paint varying in width. It is of a primitive style but no longer in absolute profile.

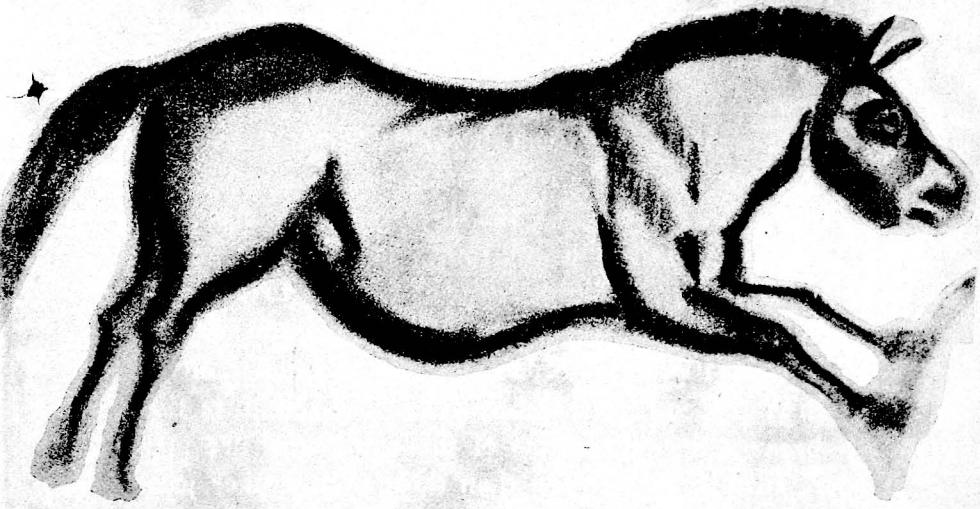

FIG. 43.—The broad black strokes have here been toned down in places. The legs are well articulated with the body, but the hoofs are scarcely suggested. The fore legs are touching the hind quarters of another horse, the pose and form of which were apparently determined by a stalactitic formation rather resembling a standing horse. Nearly four feet in length.

the free use of the blocks from which they were printed.

After the earliest crude attempts made in the Aurignacian period, comparatively little progress in drawing was achieved in the next period, the Solutrian, during which sculpture was developing and changing its character. The engraved work, however, became less laboured, the incised outlines less deep. Occasionally the surface around the head or other parts of the painted figures was scraped so as to give an appearance of bas-relief to the animal. Sometimes the manes and tails were indicated by numerous fine lines representing hairs. In time the painted outlines show an inclination to broaden out in places, and after a while the artist ventures to give four legs to his animals, at first in stiff symmetrical pairs (Fig. 41), then in a more natural pose (Fig. 42). One would hardly have expected the hoofs or the paws to present much difficulty, but they were always omitted in the earlier drawings, and were not really well drawn until the apparently much more troublesome question how to articulate the limbs with the body had been attacked and solved (Fig. 43). Modern artists still find difficulty in representing the hoofs of animals in motion, because the movements of the extremities are more rapid and complicated than those of the other parts.

Then the dead even surface of these broad outlines was modified; it was made lighter in some places and darker in others (Fig. 44). Gradually the paint-

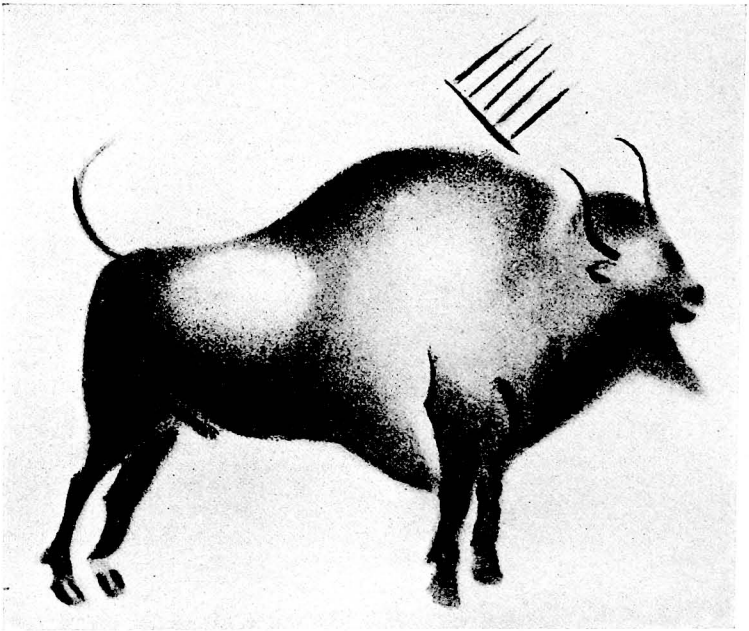

FIG. 45.—Black bison painted on the roof of the Altamira cave. Crude outline strokes have been nearly dispensed with. The pigment covers the whole surface and is toned to give the effect of relief, thus excelling all the known work of the Egyptians, of the Cretans, and even of the Greeks until about 400 B.C. The perspective is more accurate and the hoofs are rendered better than in Fig. 43. About three feet in length.

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FIG. 46.—Stag (*Cervus elaphus*) drawn on the roof of the Altamira cave with lines so finely incised that it can only be seen at a small distance. About two feet in length.

ing extended over the whole body, and was so well toned that it gives almost the effect of a good charcoal stump drawing (Fig. 45).

Towards the end of this period the

FIG. 47.—Sketch incised on the side of the cave at Font de Gaume, apparently intended to represent a human profile face. It is the only drawing of that sort hitherto discovered (1912). One-third actual size.

FIG. 48.—Drawing scratched on the roof of the Altamira cave, possibly representing a man with an animal mask like those in Fig. 49. About two feet in length.

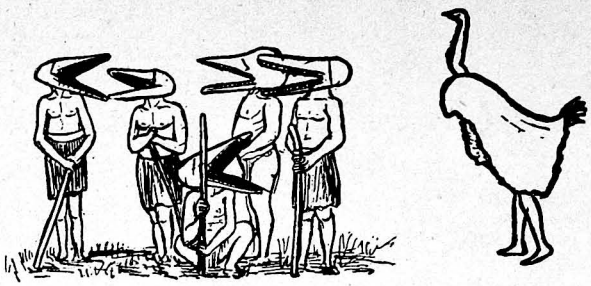

FIG. 49.—Animal masks and disguise used by the natives of North Queensland. From *Journal of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science*, 1902, p. 488.

engraved designs are very numerous. They vary very much in size; some are not more than a few inches in length, others measure two or three feet, but whatever their size the drawing is almost always bold and good (Fig. 46). Horses, goats, bisons, and various sorts of deer are represented; sometimes the whole body is drawn, but more often only the head is given. Scarcely any drawings of human faces (Fig. 47) have been found, but there are a few sketches of figures that seem to be meant for human beings with animal heads (Fig. 48), possibly masks for performing incantations or dances like those formerly in vogue among the North American Indians (Figs. 49 and 50). It is very disappointing

FIG. 50.—Native of Central Australia disguised as an Emu for performing incantations to secure an abundance of those birds. From *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, Fig. 73, by Spencer and Gillen. By permission of Messrs. Macmillan

that the human form should have been drawn so seldom and so badly by palæolithic man, but all primitive workers on the flat seem to have preferred animal subjects.

The next phase is a curious one, for it seems to show a retrogression. The old idea of drawing

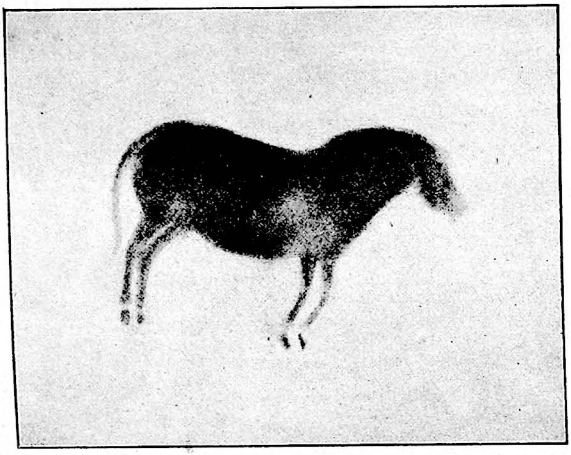

FIG. 51.—This horse was drawn with black pigment spread evenly over the surface, without any attempt at toning. Having quite abandoned the use of dark outlines, the troglodyte artist was unable to show the articulation of the limbs with the body as in the preceding figures. The same system of painting was employed for the red horse in Fig. 52. One-tenth actual size.

merely the outline having been entirely abandoned, various experiments were made in an attempt to satisfy the new desire for representing solidity. Different colours were tried, but were impasted thickly and evenly without any variety of tone (Figs. 51 and 52). In one cave, Marsoulas, small red or black wafer-like spots were stuck all over the body

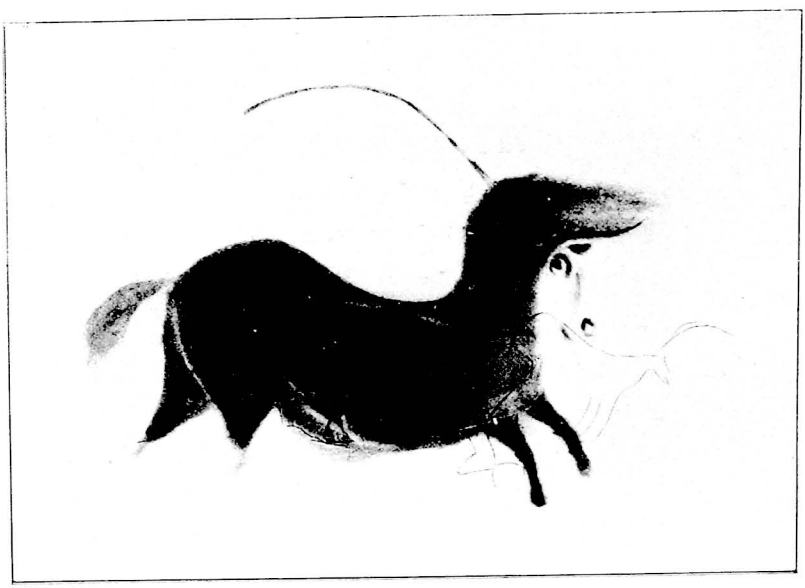

FIG. 52.—Carelessly drawn horse covered with a red pigment impasted flatly over the whole surface without any toning. On the horse's head are traces of a later drawing of a bison, the eye, horn, and contour of its back are just visible. Altamira roof. Size about three feet from rump to chest.

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of the animal. They have a peculiar effect; like the spotted china dogs of modern times they must have appeared pleasing to a certain number of people, although it is difficult for us to sympathise with such strange tastes. The drawing of the untoned and of the spotted paintings is often very poor.

Among the incised pictures too we also find considerable differences of execution. Some might almost be called masterpieces, others are merely feeble sketches. They are all very faintly cut, and can hardly be seen at any little distance. Why they were made is one of the many puzzles that tantalise us with their secrets half revealed. Were there two rival schools, one of them devoted to mere splashes of bold colour, harmonies in red and visions in pale grey? Then was it ousted by prehistoric pre-Raffaelites, teaching their pupils to practise accuracy in the minutest details, quite regardless of general effect?

Some day this problem may be solved, but it will only open out fresh vistas of unexpected possibilities. To the delight of added knowledge will be given the sharp and wholesome contrast of increased conviction that, after all our researches, we are still like little children rambling along the borders of a vast unfathomed sea.

Towards the end of the Solutrian period great changes had begun to take place in Europe. The conditions of life were altering, the climate was becoming colder, until eventually, in the Magdalenian

period, it was more like that of the steppes of Tartary. The reindeer and the bison began to displace the horse, but the reindeer never seems to have succeeded in crossing the Pyrenees, and we do not find his picture in the Spanish caves.

Driven by the pressure of untoward circumstances, man had to exert more skill to get a living. He had to learn how to fashion better weapons with which to kill his prey, and better implements for his more complicated requirements of food, clothing, and shelter. The exertion must have improved his other faculties, for he certainly made wonderful progress in painting. After he had carelessly revelled for some time in the joys of dense unshaded blacks and crude unnatural reds; after he had made those innumerable studies in mere outline, he began to realise the possibilities and the value of polychrome painting.

The stages leading up to this phase are not very well represented, but fortunately we have more than a score of examples of the final triumphs achieved during the golden age of palæolithic art. They are nearly all to be found in the great herd of animals discovered by Señor Sautuola's little daughter on the roof of the comparatively small chamber near the entrance of the cavern. Specimens of the art of previous periods are also to be found in this chamber, but they are more numerous in the great halls and passages which extend much farther in.

The technique of this polychrome work is interesting. It was begun by incising the important parts of

FIG. 53.

PLATE II.

FIG. 53.—Of all the animals painted on the roof of the Altamira cavern this bison is one of the best preserved and most complete, although the drawing is not so good as in some of the other figures. The fore legs are awkward and the hoofs are twisted round to face the spectator, a not uncommon mistake. (See also Fig. 33). Size, nearly five feet long. Magdalenian period.

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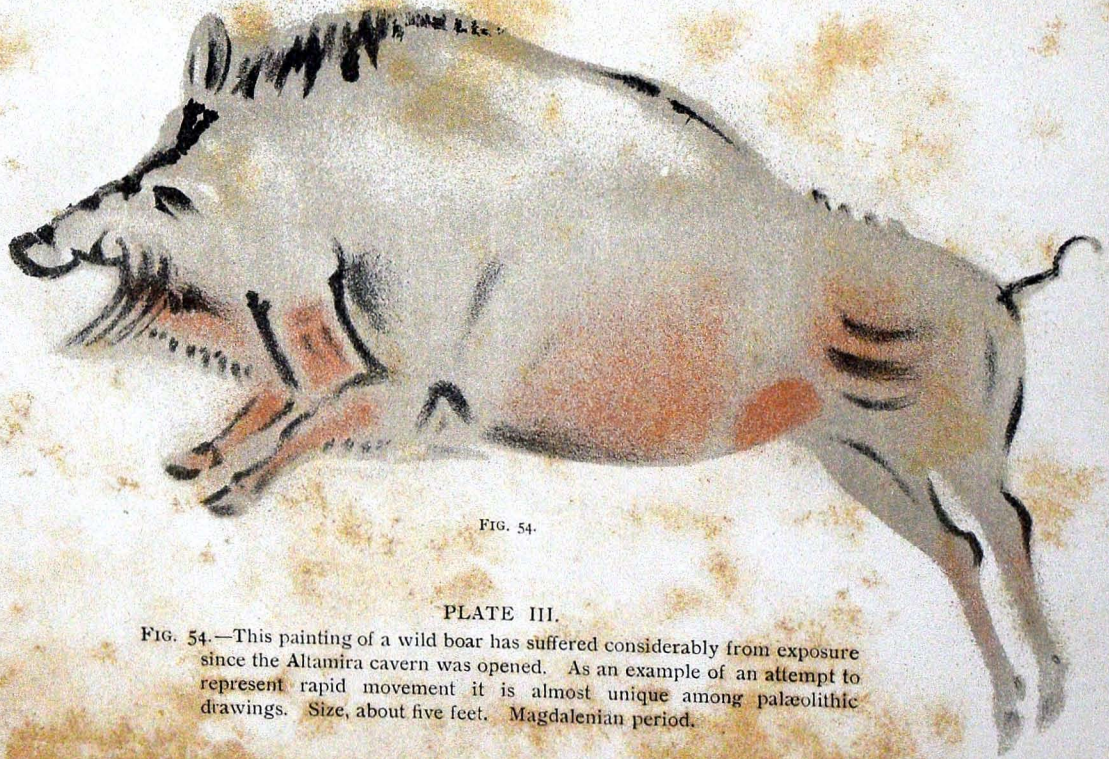

FIG. 54.

PLATE III.

FIG. 54.—This painting of a wild boar has suffered considerably from exposure since the Altamira cavern was opened. As an example of an attempt to represent rapid movement it is almost unique among palæolithic drawings. Size, about five feet. Magdalenian period.

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FIG. 55.

PLATE IV.

FIG. 55.—The process followed here is rather peculiar. The whole background was first coloured red and the wolf was drawn on it in black and toned by careful scraping. It is on the side of a passage in the cave of Font de Gaume. One tenth of the actual size. Magdalenian period.

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FIG. 56.

PLATE V.

FIG. 56.—Reindeer kneeling down to graze. Another reindeer stands facing it. This is one of the few instances of an attempt at composition. Font de Gaume. One eighth of the actual size. Magdalenian period.

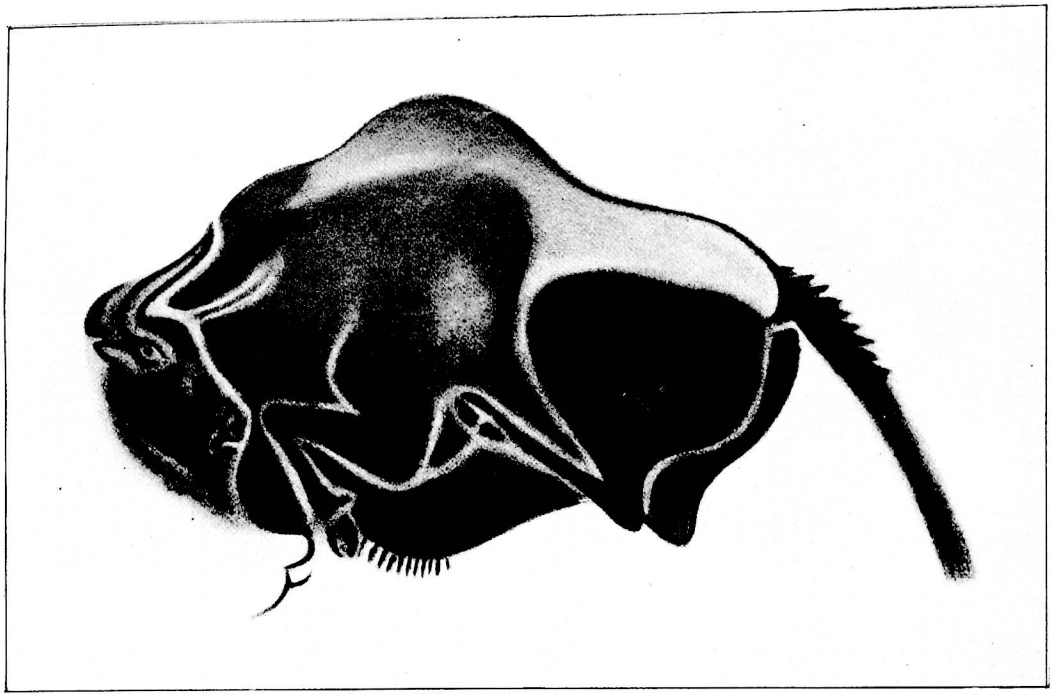

FIG. 57.—There is a certain mannerism in this and in several of the later paintings, as if the artist had chiefly desired to show his ability in overcoming difficulties. The head and rump are cleverly placed on protuberances of the rock, and thus enhance the appearance of relief which he could not successfully achieve by his toning of the rather brilliant red pigment employed in its execution. About five feet. Altamira.

the outline. The whole extent thus mapped out was well scraped so as to expose a clean smooth surface of limestone rock. Then the red, yellow, and brown pigment was laid on, sometimes as a paste, sometimes as a liquid. These crude, even layers of colour were then toned down by scraping and washing, to give the effect of light and shade. Finally the hoofs, horns, and some of the contours were touched up with black (Fig. 53).

Only a few are represented in rapid movement (Fig. 54). The wolf seems to be half concealed, as if lurking in ambush for his prey (Fig. 55), but that effect is due to a stalactitic coating which has blurred his hind quarters. The reindeer (Fig. 56) and several of the bisons, both male and female, are depicted in recumbent positions that would tax the powers of the most skilful painters (Fig. 57). The general result is marvellous, and would do credit to an artist working under the favourable conditions of the present day. It seems almost incredible that primitive man should have been able to paint such good pictures in such a difficult position, in such a dim light, and with such simple tools and materials.

In the soil that forms the floor of these painted caves were found abundant relics of the daily life of those who lived and worked therein, and also of the dangers they had to face. There are not many of us who, even when armed with modern weapons, would care to attack a grizzly bear at bay. But these men, returning from their frequent and lengthy

expeditions must have often found their caves occupied by tenants much more formidable than a grizzly bear. With their feeble weapons of wood and stone they had to attack and kill those deadly foes, or else abandon the result of all their labours.

In the Museum at Monaco may be seen the skeleton of a huge bear (*Ursus spelæus*) which in bygone days had entered one of the Mentone caves and had slipped or crawled down into a hollow roughly walled off from the habitable part. A few years ago when it was being dug out the workmen found that the skull was crushed in by stones which had apparently been hurled at it from above, and were still lying on and around the head of the great beast. Its flesh had probably given a welcome meal to those brave troglodytes who dared to run the risk of fatal retaliation from their formidable visitor.

There is another striking bit of evidence of the entrance of such animals into these caves even during their fairly constant occupation by man, for not only are numerous imprints of their paws to be seen in the soft clay, but on some of the pictures are found the scratches made by their claws.

Of more immediate interest to us are the remains of the implements used in painting. Although evidence of brush work can be plainly seen on many of the pictures, yet hitherto no brushes have been unearthed. It is possible that one day some very observant and very lucky digger may discover a prehistoric brush, but such good fortune is hardly to be

expected. Of the pigments used we have abundant specimens, and also of the mortars and pestles used for grinding them.

The palettes on which they were set have also been found, and many of them even have traces of paint still adhering to them. To say that the paint was kept in tubes sounds almost too modern, but these tubes were made of bone. Many of them have been discovered containing the finely-powdered ochre or else brown iron ore all ready for mixing. Occasionally solid bits of such substances are found sharpened to a point, so that they could be used as pencils.

One of these rare pencils, now in the Museum at Toulouse, had a hole bored through it so that it could be suspended by a string. The string does not seem to have preserved the pencil from being lost, and this museum treasure has probably been gained at the cost of many tears. It may seem an exaggeration to talk of a man weeping for the loss of a pencil, but primitive races, like children, are easily moved to tears. And probably it was not such a trivial loss to him, for it might take many days' searching before the right substance could be found to make another.

We who are not accustomed to make things for ourselves, but just send out and buy new ones when we lose small articles, can hardly realise the trouble caused to primitive man by such small losses. Those of us who have camped out are perhaps better able to

appreciate it. In such surroundings we soon learn how much the artificial comfort of our ordinary town life depends on the humble workers of whose existence we are hardly aware, although they really form the basis of our civilisation, for without their assistance we should soon relapse into barbarism.

The scarcity of material and the simplicity of their appliances were not the only difficulties with which these ancient artists had to contend. In their caverns they had to work by artificial light. Comparatively few examples have been found of paintings on surfaces that were exposed to daylight, even of that dim sort which penetrates for a short distance into certain caves. It is quite likely that many paintings were made on the rocks outside, but most of them must have crumbled away long ago. Indeed, such decay is even now taking place at Altamira and other caves, where their preservation seems to have been only due to their having been hermetically sealed up and thus kept free from atmospheric influences.

What sort of artificial light they used we have no means of knowing, though hollowed stones have been found, one of which M. Breuil believes to be a lamp, embellished with a goat's head engraved in the style of the period. Some writers have even asserted that the work was done in absolute darkness, because they have found no trace of soot on the roof. It has, however, been shown that soot from the flame produced by animal oils does not last a very long time. It has also been pointed out that lamps like those

used by the Eskimos give off no smoke or soot when properly trimmed.

The awkward position chosen for the pictures must also have been a source of great difficulty. They were often executed in almost inaccessible nooks or narrow passages. Some of the paintings are found on surfaces that seem to have attracted these artists by their apparent unsuitableness. Take Altamira for instance. Imagine having to draw pictures by lamplight on the ceiling of a room in which you could hardly stand upright. Imagine the ceiling as being uneven and the floor covered with irregular masses of rock, then some idea may be had of the task these artists set themselves to accomplish when they started to paint that great herd of wild animals.

And here comes in that strange underlying note of sadness that seems to penetrate so many human melodies. They did not accomplish their task. Many of the best paintings were left unfinished; some indeed had only just been begun.

What was the cause of this sudden cessation? Was it some general catastrophe, a plague, a war, an earthquake? Some day, perhaps, we may find the answer to this question, but hitherto nothing has been found that will throw any light upon this mystery. No later paintings or incisions appear to have been made in the cavern. Then great masses of rock falling from the roof blocked the entrance so completely that not even foxes could resort there. Finally nature put her own great seal upon this

treasure house of art, filling up all the interstices of the rocky barrier with a slow deposit of stalagmite and clay. Thus through all the succeeding ages and through all the changes that have convulsed the world these strange forms of long forgotten life have been preserved in that mysterious tomb as faithful witnesses for the struggling nations of to-day, that art is not the submissive handmaid of accumulated wealth, but can flourish under conditions that would seem hopeless and miserable to the sordid worshippers of mere material luxury.

CHAPTER IV

WHY DID THE CAVE MEN DRAW?

WHAT was the object of the cave men in making all those drawings? I think we may at once dismiss as untenable the idea that they were merely meaningless diversions, helping to pass away the unoccupied hours of a race of nomadic hunters. For those who take that standpoint there will be no interest in trying to ascertain the motives which actuated those palæolithic artists. But such an investigation will be necessary as well as interesting to those who believe that art impulses are not independent manifestations, but can be correlated with other forms of mental and spiritual activity.

Of course the first step in such an investigation is to find out whether any existing races make similar pictures, and what are the motives that influence them. Recent publications by the late Mr. G. W. Stow, Dr. O. Moszeit, and Miss Tongue have shown that the cave paintings and rock engravings executed by the diminutive race of Bushmen of South Africa have a very great resemblance to palæolithic work, but unfortunately not one of these authors has been able to give any satisfactory account of the motives influencing the artists, for the race has been

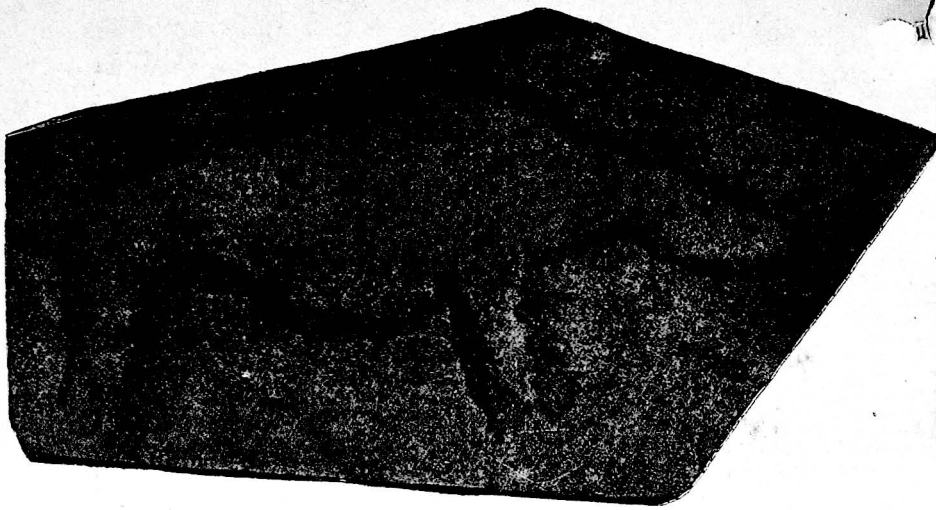

FIG. 58.—Outline of rhinoceros chipped out on stone by South African Bushmen. It is assigned by Dr. Holub to their most primitive stage.

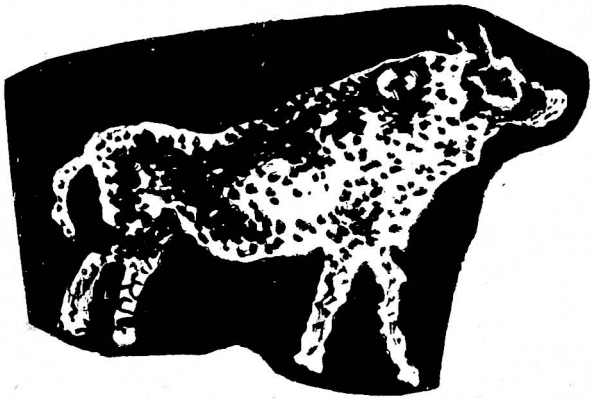

FIG. 59.—Hyæna drawn on hard rock by hammering the surface. Being no longer in outline it is ascribed by Dr. Holub to a secondary stage in the development of Bushman art.

almost exterminated. The miserable remnant, driven from its hunting grounds by the Kaffirs and the Boers, seems to be unable either to make new pictures or to explain the old ones.

In our European caves the lines were cut in the soft limestone by some continuous movement more like drawing, but in Africa the engravings are on very hard rocks, and have been pecked out by a series of repeated blows. The Bushmen, instead of depicting only the head, generally gave the whole body of the animal (Fig. 58), and this was sometimes chiselled all over, not left merely in outline (Fig. 59).

Although the rock is very hard, some of the engravings have been so deeply corroded by weathering that Mr. Stow considered them to have been made at least two thousand years ago. Others seem quite new and fresh. Dr. Holub of Vienna, who studied the subject for many years, and copied a large number of the pictures for the Austrian museums, but published very little about them,[11] thought that he had discovered evidence that the Bushmen art passed through the usual phases of evolution, ending with debasement after reaching a certain culminating point.

Of the paintings some are simple sketches in black, others are polychromes, almost as good as those of Altamira. They differ from the cave pictures in one important particular, for the figures are generally grouped to represent some incident (Fig. 60).

It is rather strange that the habits of the Bushmen should be so similar to those of the cave artists of

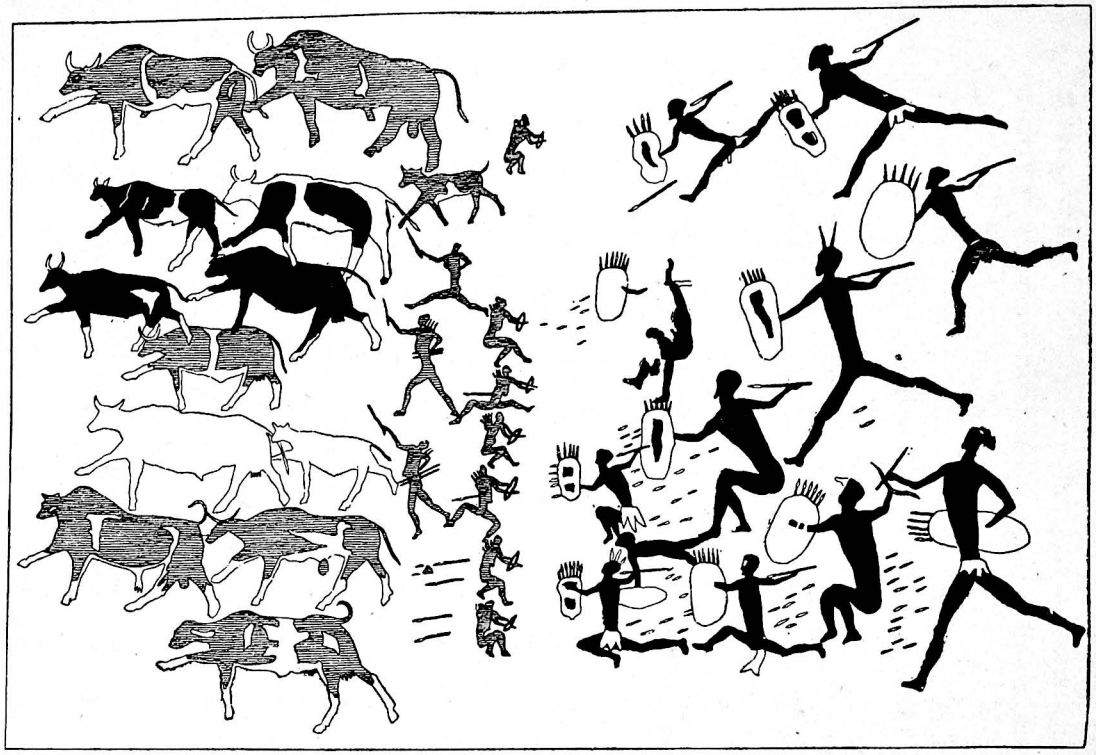

FIG. 60.—Rock drawing executed by Bushmen in four colours (black, white, yellow and red), depicting a cattle raid made by them against the Kaffirs who had invaded their country and spoiled their hunting grounds. One-fifth actual size.

France and Spain. This similarity has given rise to many curious speculations. Mr. Stow thought he could trace their migrations from the north of Africa down to the Cape. Professor Sollas, in his *Ancient Hunters and their Modern Representatives* (1911), has discussed the whole subject from a scientific point of view.

This small example of similarity of the two races is perhaps worth mentioning. During one of the last raids of the Boers against the Bushmen, one of the victims was an artist. On his dead body were found a number of little tubes containing paint. They were made of hollowed bones, just like the tubes of the palæolithic men.

In tracing the history of art we shall find many other instances of an artistic race being overwhelmed and dispersed by invaders, who were physically stronger or possessed of better weapons; but is there a single instance of an artistic race going forth to conquer? Strange paradox of fate. The bearers of the light are doomed to death. Dense cruel darkness is constantly triumphant. And yet the light survives and grows.

It is sad that the Bushmen should have left no record of the meaning of their work; perhaps some day we may discover it. Meanwhile we may gain some insight into their motives by studying the habits of Australian natives, or of the Indians of the Arizona desert.

The Australians draw on the ground pictures of

the animals they use for food. Squatting around these pictures they perform incantations which they believe will ensure a plentiful supply. The American Indians carve images of animals, and also draw designs representing rain.[12] In the presence of these emblems they perform several religious ceremonies, and they devoutly believe that thus they can secure an abundant harvest and success in their hunting expeditions.

Perhaps it is hardly right to apply the term religious to such observances, for they arise from a desire to avoid the torments of hunger, not from a fear of the torments of hell. This is only what might be expected from races in the undeveloped stage. They are like children whose chief desire is to obtain food and other pleasant things. The older races are like older men, and their desire is chiefly to avoid unpleasant things and pain.

The images and pictures are an essential feature in these ceremonies; therefore many ethnologists and writers on comparative religion have studied them. The general opinion now seems to be that they are used because they are supposed to give their possessors some mysterious power over the objects represented.

The subject has been well worked out by Mr. J. G. Frazer in *The Golden Bough* (1911), and by M. Salomon Reinach in his chapter on "L'art et la magie apropos des peintures et des gravures de l'âge du renne" (*Cultes, Mythes, et Religions*, 1905).

Magic is one of the earliest forms of religion, and is also a sort of natural philosophy. In a rough way savages attempt to generalise about natural phenomena, and to find out and take advantage of the connection between cause and effect. They notice that if a man's reflection, or picture, as they would call it, is seen on the surface of a pool or river, the man himself must be there to cause it. They notice also that sometimes they can see the reflection although the man may be hidden from their sight. Such reflections are the best and almost the only pictures that they usually have any chance of seeing.

A shadow also is to them a mysterious sort of picture, and they know that it cannot exist without the presence of the object causing it. Reflections and shadows of persons and animals are therefore considered as emanations from them. When they see some other picture having rather the same appearance as the reflection or shadow, is it wonderful that they should consider such a picture as being also an emanation? And is it not almost a natural induction to assume that this emanation can only be caused by the presence of the original subject of the picture? It agrees well enough with all the facts known to them, and it never enters their head to test their induction by experiments or to ascertain any other facts about it. They are quite content to rely on their own very limited experience. Do not many civilised and even well-educated people argue much in the same way, and have just as little foundation for their firm beliefs?

When the belief is firmly held that a picture of a man is an emanation from him and necessitates his presence, it is quite easy to believe that a possessor of that picture must have some power over the man whose presence is thus mysteriously conjured up. We all know how common that belief was, even a few centuries ago, and how learned judges condemned men and women to death on evidence of their having possessed images or pictures of the people they were accused of bewitching. I think that to-day you could find witches in Naples or Sicily who would undertake to kill anybody for you by sticking pins into a waxen image, or by melting it before a slow fire.

Is it any wonder, then, that Australian natives and Arizona Indians should make and prize such valuable aids in obtaining their desires? Of course it is not certain that in ancient days the same beliefs and practices prevailed, but it is a good working hypothesis, and far better than considering their art as mere aimless decoration. This latter explanation is only worthy of those who never trouble to find out "what has been," but only indulge in vague surmises as to "what might be."

Judging by analogy we may fairly assume that the cave men had a firm belief in that form of magic which is now called "imitative," to distinguish it from sympathetic magic. Sympathetic magic requires the presence of something that has touched the person who is to be bewitched. A belief in imitative magic would certainly have incited palæolithic men to make

FIG. 61.—Bison and other animals drawn with black pigment on the side of a cave at Niaux (Ariège). They are very well preserved, being half a mile from the entrance and not exposed to air currents. An arrow is painted on the body of the upper bison, and three are to be seen on the body of the lower one. Size of the largest, about six feet.

To face p. 95

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good images or pictures of the animals they desired to have power over. Some confirmation of the theory that they are magic pictures is found in the numerous representations of animals having spears or arrows drawn on them (Fig. 61). If the rock had been soft enough perhaps real arrows would have been thrust into their bodies, just as the mediæval sorcerers

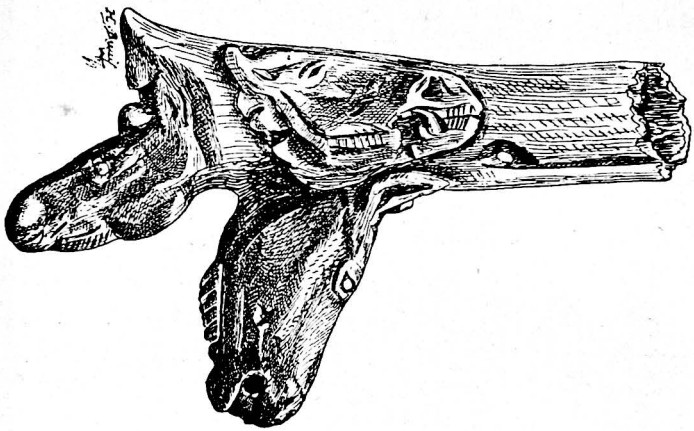

FIG. 62.—Two horses' heads carved in the round on the tines of a reindeer horn. The head carved in relief was at one time supposed to prove that the cave artists studied anatomy. Found in a cave at Mas d'Azil. Early Magdalenian. Now in Piette's collection at St. Germain. Size, six inches. From *Revue Archéologique* (1909), p. 396.

thrust pins or nails into the images of their victims. Further support is given to the theory by the fact that nearly all the pictures represent animals which are good to eat; bears and lions are very rare. It was only natural that most of the men should prefer to leave the fiercer animals alone. They were quite satisfied with pictures which gave them good hopes

of success when pursuing the deer, the bison, or the horse.

Besides believing that pictures give their possessors power over the subjects represented, the modern savage also thinks that they compel those subjects to present themselves in greater numbers. This gives a good explanation of those curious carvings of flayed heads (Fig. 62) which were at one time supposed to prove that primitive artists studied anatomy. It is much more likely that they carved them in that way in order to ensure a plentiful supply of animals, not roaming freely past the caves, but ready skinned for cooking.[13] This may seem a conception too far fetched to be reached by such men, but each single step is fairly logical, and we know to what strange extremes these logical steps, starting from some unproved assumption, may lead even civilised religions.

Admitting that palæolithic man thought that by painting their pictures he obtained power over these animals, yet that hardly accounts for the conglomeration of them in one spot at Altamira, still less for the very numerous sketches of mere heads scattered freely about over the sides of that cave, and of many others too. On the other hand, the theory that they were merely art schools does not account for the rarity of those fiercer animals which are certainly quite as handsome as the others, and might be expected to appeal to an æsthetic taste evidently so highly developed.

I know that it is very rash to offer explanations of a subject so complicated as this, but is it not possible that these art centres of the palæolithic age were very similar to the various schools of art in Italy before the Renaissance? They were not merely schools for the encouragement of art, they were also workshops for the manufacture of pictures for those who wanted copies of known works.

In his *Evolution in Art* (1908), Grant Allen says: "The artist received a commission from his patron for such and such definite work—a Madonna and Child, a St. Sebastian, a Transfiguration—and he produced a panel which resembled in all its principal features similar pictures of the same subject by earlier painters." In the Middle Ages people who gave orders for pictures generally had a religious object in view. They were not merely anxious to possess a work of art as an evidence of wealth, or as a satisfaction of a strong craving for beauty of colour and of form. Of course they were influenced more or less by such motives, but on the whole their patronage of art had a very practical side; they thought it helped them to obtain what they most desired—escape from hell or purgatory. Each age fosters the production of the art most adapted to satisfying its own special cravings. In the days of the Pharaohs an ardent desire for material comfort in a future life led to the construction of durable and elaborate tombs. In modern times the blatant and aggressive individualism which mostly desires the commemoration and glorifica-

tion of itself has led to that development of portraiture so characteristic of the art of the present day.

If, then, each manifestation of art has its special cause or set of causes, it is possible that one of the causes of the development of palæolithic art was a widespread desire for the possession of something that would act as a talisman, and thus assist in the capture of animals good for food. A copy of one of those big pictures in the mysterious recesses of the caverns would appeal to the impressionable minds of such simple folk, especially if the purchase was accompanied with incantations and magic rites performed in front of the life-like original. The copy might be made on the walls of the cave, just as in later times images and pictures were placed on the walls of the temples; or the copy might be drawn on a separate piece of bone or stone which the purchaser could then take away with him as an amulet.

Such amulets were common enough in Egypt in neolithic times; they generally had holes bored through them for convenience of suspension. A few specimens with similar holes have been found in palæolithic deposits, but the earlier drawings were probably too large to be carried about, and were therefore kept at home.

There would be a large market for such talismans, for the whole population was occupied in hunting or fishing. Agriculture was unknown, and it does not seem as if the reindeer or any other animal had then been sufficiently domesticated to ensure a regular

supply of milk. Success in the chase was a matter of life or death; is it any wonder that men should adopt such an apparently reasonable method of securing it? Charms and spells and mascots are not unknown among the civilised people of to-day.

Possibly the same explanation may be given of those curious bone pendants inscribed with strange marks suggesting written characters rather than mere ornamental designs. It is well known that many letters of our own and of other alphabets are simply degenerate or stylised drawings of natural objects, therefore it is just possible that palæolithic man did use some sort of picture writing. This line of research is still comparatively new, and much careful collating will have to be done before any definite opinion can be given about the meaning of those puzzling signs. We shall see later on that some of them have been proved to be degenerate modifications of animal figures.

It would certainly have been very convenient for a hunter to have a small pendant with marks on it that to him would represent some animal, such as a bison for instance, although to us they might have no more resemblance to a bison than the letters B.I.S.O.N. would have had to him. Such a pendant would have been much less trouble to carry about than a real drawing on a piece of bone or stone. It would also have been quite as efficacious.

We may laugh at these strange devices for ensuring success, but, after all, there was something in them.

For what is a talisman but a sort of embodied hope, causing that state of mind which psychologists call "expectant attention," and which physiologists now allow to be such a help in curing bodily ailments? Would not this state of hopeful expectancy often lead to real success either in hunting or in any other human pursuit? It is not to the despondent that fortune sends the prize.

There is another point which we have not yet considered; it is one which is difficult to prove conclusively, but everything seems to show that in those early days men did not draw from life nor from models, but from memory. Still life subjects seem to have had no charm for them. At any rate we find no attempts to draw trees or flowers, nor even the shells with which they were so fond of adorning themselves, although it might have been expected that such easy subjects would appeal to beginners. On the contrary, they generally choose animals in motion or standing in an attitude of attentive expectation which one feels was preceded and will soon be followed by some rapid movement. One is almost led to believe that objects not in motion made very little impression on their brain. This phase seems to be passed through by the modern baby, and certainly even grown-up people have much more difficulty in distinguishing an object when at rest than when in motion; why that should be is a question for psychologists rather than for artists.

A still more difficult question is the influence of the female on the evolution of primitive art; was the

work ever done to please her? Did she ever do any herself? The influence of the female in art is a difficult and thorny question; I shall have to touch upon it occasionally, but it is a subject that has been little worked at. It would make a good monograph.[14]

Some writers are inclined to look upon art as an effeminate pursuit. According to that view art should flourish more in an effeminate age, and also in ages when women had more leisure and freedom to pursue such a vocation. Whistler even went so far as to represent the first artist as an effeminate man who preferred to stay at home and draw pictures on gourds instead of encountering the perils of the chase.[15] I doubt it. In this instance Whistler seems to have adopted that system of accounting for things by evolving "what might have happened" out of his inner consciousness, instead of troubling to find out what has happened in the past or what does happen in the present. Among modern savages it is not the females nor the effeminate males who do the artistic work of the tribe.

In ancient times the primitive artist was evidently a mighty hunter as well as a close observer of wild animals. He had watched the mammoth trampling through the forest and he had seen the bison stand at bay. He had faced the wild boar's frenzied rush and the onslaught of the wounded stag. And what he saw he remembered, noting the curve of the back and the poise of the head, the firm planting of the

massive hoof, or the twinkling motion of the legs of graceful deer.

M. Salomon Reinach in his *Apollo* (1906) says that the palæolithic artists succeeded in giving their animals a vivid appearance of being in motion by drawing their limbs in positions which did not appeal to any of their successors until quite modern times, although photographic experiments have now shown them to be correct. This last expression might lead some people to believe that M. Reinach thinks photographic representations to be good standards of artistic accuracy, but that certainly is not the case. He was referring to photographs showing hundreds of positions among which certain ones are similar to those selected by the reindeer men. Now selection is one of the most characteristic faculties of the artist; indeed one might almost say "art is selection," the selection and fixation of phases not seen or not appreciated by inartistic men. Therefore, though a photograph lens may be in one sense an accurate worker, it is not artistically accurate. It does not select. It records a series of positions, some of which give an idea of motion, and some do not.

For we never see objects in motion quite distinctly. A revolving spark gives us the impression, not of a single point of light, but of a continuous circle; the spokes of a rapidly revolving wheel are not visible at all. But an instantaneous photograph would not show that circle of light, and it would show each spoke distinctly. Could it be maintained that the photo-

graph of the revolving spark or of the wheel is really an accurate representation of what is seen by the human eye?

It may seem paradoxical, but the impression of an animal being in motion is really given by reproducing the appearance of those limbs that are almost stationary, the others are not so important. Consider the movement of a pendulum. If you wanted to depict it in motion would you draw it in the position

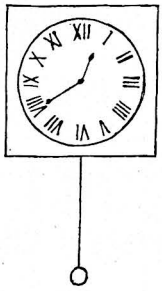

FIG. 63.

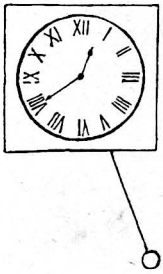

FIG. 64.

of Fig. 63, the position to which it is really moving swiftly, or in the position shown in Fig. 64, when it has stopped moving upwards and has not yet begun to swing down?

Each leg of an animal has a sort of pendulum movement, and, like the pendulum, apparently comes to a momentary stop when the extremity of its stride is reached. The appearance of the leg which has reached this point is fairly easily seized by the human eye. It would closely resemble a picture of it taken

at that particular moment by a snapshot, although two or even three other legs, being in full swing, might have an unnatural appearance. They, however, are not so important to the artist, as they leave a less distinct impression on the human eye.

It is these positions that M. Reinach means, and it was the ability to select and to record such positions that enabled the palæolithic artists to produce such expressive drawings. Look at the legs of this stag, which by-the-bye is erroneously described in some books as a reindeer (Fig. 65). Do they not give an almost perfect representation of the delicate ambling movement so characteristic of the deer tribe?

This excellent but unfortunately fragmentary drawing has another noteworthy feature—it contains one of the few examples of an attempt at foreshortening. The artist has not shirked the difficulty of drawing an animal turning its head to look backwards; considering that he could not use shading to heighten the effect, he has succeeded wonderfully well.

It is not very clear why he filled in the blank spaces with fish. It may have been the "horror vacui," but that explanation reminds one too much of the old phrase, "Nature abhors a vacuum," which used to be given as the reason for water rising in a pump. It is a poor way of accounting for that tendency to fill up blank spaces which is so common in all early forms of art.

In this case it seems probable that the artist intended to represent the animals as crossing or

FIG. 65.—Deer and fish incised on a cylindrical piece of horn. Found in the Caverne de Lorthet. Lourdes. Now in Piette's Collection at St. Germain. Length eight and a half inches. From an extended facsimile supplied by the Museum.

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passing near a river or lake. That accentuation of the presence of water by scattering fish all over it was a common practice with Egyptian, Assyrian, and even later artists. It does not seem unnatural to those who are accustomed to see clear uncontaminated streams filled visibly with an abundance of fish. Those who have only seen the exhausted streams of Europe can hardly believe that any river should be so full of fish that one's mental picture would be as incomplete without them as it would be without the trees or rocks or grass upon its banks.

It is exasperating that such a fine sketch should be in such a mutilated condition; what would we not give for a perfect specimen of palæolithic art! Perhaps some day we may find a carefully preserved hoard of such treasures, well selected and undamaged. A marvellous collection it would be, if we may judge by the broken specimens that apparently were thrown away as useless, or abandoned to decay when their owners migrated to other districts.

For the reindeer hunting race seems to have ranged over a large extent of country, and the various tribes must have had frequent intercourse, otherwise we should not find such a uniform art style all over countries so widely separated as Spain and Switzerland. One small specimen has even been found in England, in the Derbyshire Cresswell cave, but it may have been imported. I am afraid there is not much chance of many more specimens being found in this country, for there have been too many of those

greedy relic hunters ransacking our ancient deposits. They would not have noticed scratched bones, nor have considered them worthy of a place in their collections of "curiosities," but would have left them to decay in the rubbish from their excavations.

In the Kesslerloch cavern at Thayngen, near Schaffhausen, was found this beautiful sketch of a grazing reindeer (Fig. 66). Like so many others, it is engraved, not on a flat surface, but around a short length of bone, which seems to have served as a wand or staff for ceremonial purposes. Several of these staffs have been found in France; they are of various shapes, and have had various uses attributed to them; they have been called sceptres, arrow straighteners, bridles for horses, and even fibulæ for garments. The drawings being on an irregular cylindrical surface, it is very difficult to make an accurate reproduction of them that will really give the effect of the originals. This photograph of the grazing reindeer was made by taking two negatives and joining them together. The "extended" drawing of it (Fig. 67) was made by Dr. Heim.

How careful one has to be to guard against forgeries was well shown when the first discoveries of engraved bones were made at Thayngen in 1874. One of the workmen, with perhaps an innocent desire to please, or perhaps with a hope of reward, obtained some strangely engraved bones and pretended to extract them from the floor of the cave. In those days the peculiar style of the palæolithic old masters was not

FIG. 66.—Like so many other palæolithic drawings, this sketch of a grazing reindeer was incised on a cylindrical piece of bone, so that it was impossible to take it all in at a glance. The observer must have turned it slowly round in the same way that the old rolls of manuscript were turned when being read. Found in the Kesslerloch cave, Thayngen, Switzerland. Probably Solutrian. Now in the Stossgarten Museum. Constance. Illustration taken from "Die Umschau." October 1904.

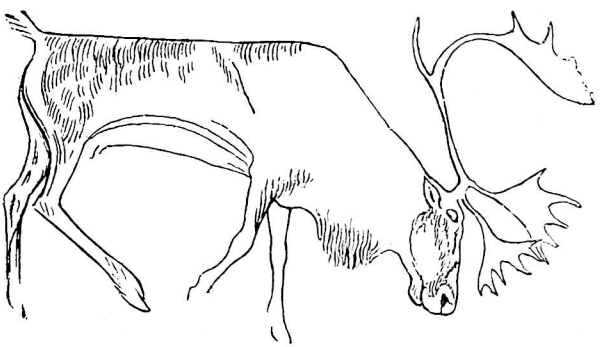

FIG. 67.—Extended drawing of Fig. 66 made by Dr. Heim. In some of the older publications the engravers drew imaginary tufts of grass beneath this reindeer. Primitive artists of all ages and all countries gave their figures no visible means of support.

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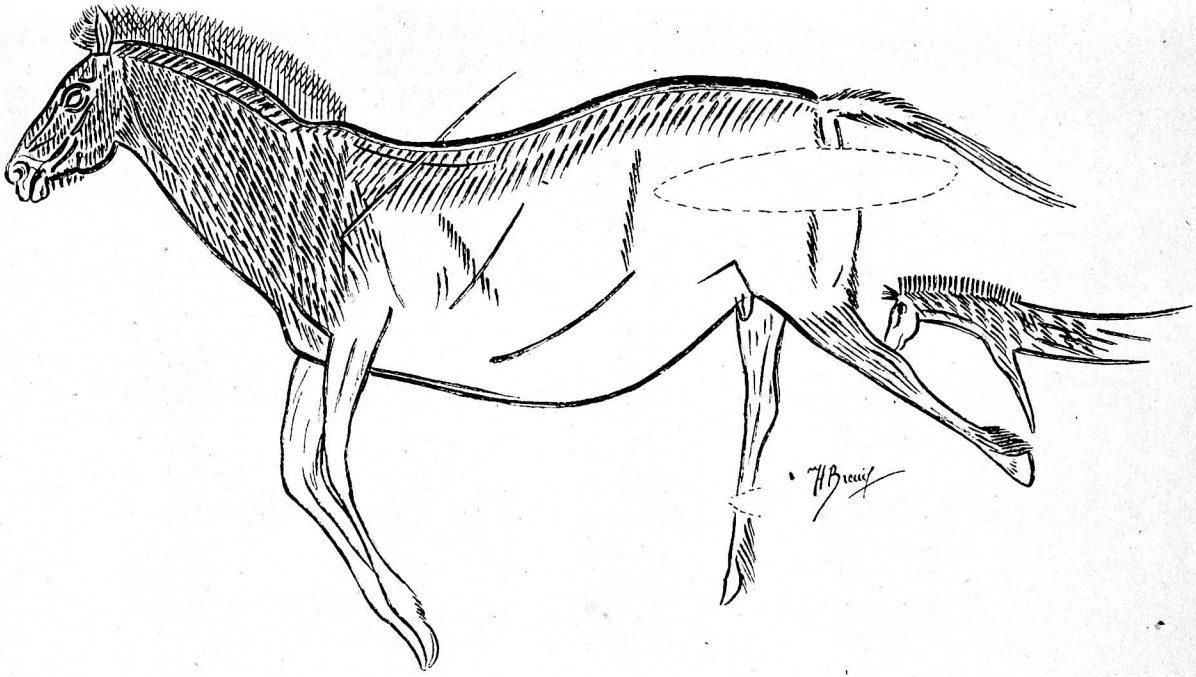

FIG. 68.—Extended drawing of one of numerous figures incised on a carefully polished piece of stag's horn. The dotted line shows one of the perforations usual in these magic wands. The fore legs are bent like those of the horse in Fig. 51. The small incomplete figure has been supposed to represent the spirit or "emanation" of the horse, beginning to come under the magic influence. Truly a difficult subject to express, even in the most advanced art. From the *Revue de l'Ecole d'Anthropologie*, Feb. 1909.

so well known, and the sketches were not recognised as forgeries until Dr. Lindenschmidt discovered that they were copies of the pictures of a bear and a fox given in a child's book about animals. At the present time such forgeries are easily detected, and also it is known that if new lines are cut on an old piece of reindeer bone they have a jagged edge; it was only on the fresh bone that the palæolithic artists could make those clean, firm, unhesitating strokes which are so distinctive of their work.

One of the most perfect of these sceptres, or *bâtons de commandement*, as the French call them, was dug up in 1908 in a rock shelter near Teyjat, Dordogne. It was made from a piece of stag's horn very carefully scraped and polished. The drawings on it—swans, deer, semi-human figures, and horses—are of very good workmanship, but the attitude of the galloping horse (shown in this extended drawing by the Abbé Breuil, Fig. 68) is not so convincing as usual. There is something unsatisfactory about it. M. Breuil thinks that although the fore legs could assume that position in galloping, they could not assume it at the precise moment when the hind legs were in the position given them by the artist—that is to say, he has not synchronised the two pairs. Is it, however, not possible that he wished to represent a wounded horse just beginning to fall? The three long strokes on the body are supposed to represent arrows, similar to those depicted more clearly on the bison in Fig. 61.

FIG. 70

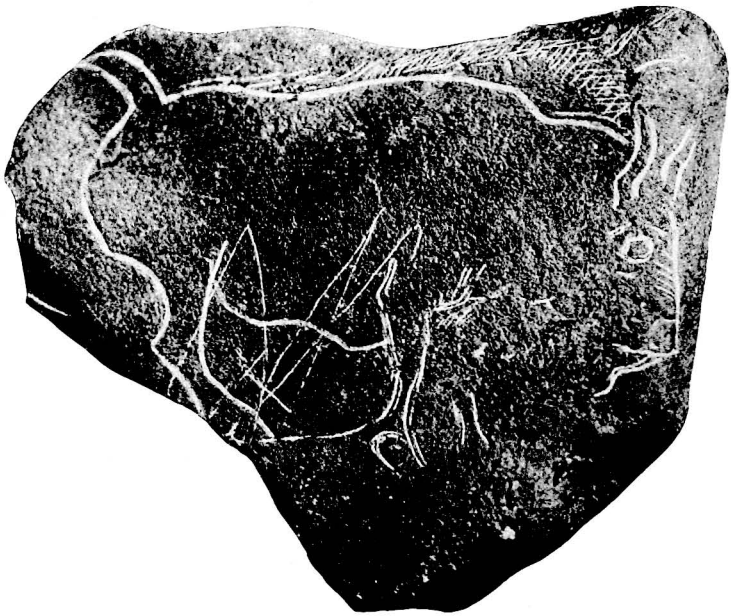

FIG. 71

FIGS. 70 and 71.—Engraved stones from Bruniquel (Tarn et Garonne). Magdalenian period. British Museum.

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Sometimes we get quite a false impression by studying only these extended drawings. In a drawing of this sort (Fig. 69), made from an engraved pebble and published in that excellent Guide to the Antiquities of the Stone Age in the British Museum, it looks as if the original artist had made a mistake. The fore legs are depicted as if viewed from the front, and the hind legs as if viewed from the rear. Such mistakes are occasionally found, but not in drawings of so good a style as this one. I have had this photograph (Fig. 70) taken of it to show that the whole animal never could be seen from one point of view only. As you turn the pebble round to look at the hind quarters, you naturally get a rear view of the animal.

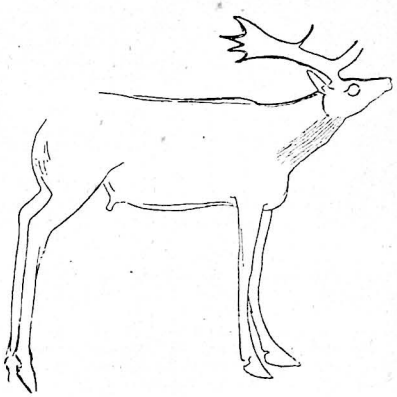

FIG. 69.—Extended drawing of the deer incised on a pebble.

These drawings on rounded or uneven surfaces instead of perfectly flat ones are, I think, sometimes due to the desire to get rid of the flat result of unshaded outline engravings. In this sketch of a bison (Fig. 71) the head seems purposely to have been drawn on the rounded edge of the stone, in order to give it the appearance of solidity. In the cave pictures the artists often took advantage of a pro-

truding boss or a natural curve of the rock to give the effect of relief.

Another source of difficulty in studying these drawings is the habit these cave men had of making fresh sketches over the old ones. We have seen that this superimposing was very useful to archæologists in determining the relative ages of the pictures painted or engraved on the walls of the caverns, but on these small fragments of rock or bone it is puzzling or even irritating. Why did they not take a fresh piece for a fresh sketch? There were plenty of bones and stones around. Some writers have imagined that the artists were so thoughtless or careless that, having finished one part of their picture, they drew the next part without thinking about what they had already drawn, and without troubling to keep the figures from overlapping one another. It has also been suggested that it was a rudimentary system of perspective, or of grouping figures together to represent some incident. The Marquis de Vibraye, whose discoveries in the early sixties of last century were so unwelcome to the orthodox disbelievers in the antiquity of man, called one of his specimens a "combat de rennes" (Fig. 72). Those who have seen deer fighting would hardly be inclined to accept that description, but the name still survives in many text-books.

In truth, the old artists seldom attempted to draw groups, or to depict any but the most simple incidents; their work chiefly consisted in making independent pictures of single animals. Grouping, besides being

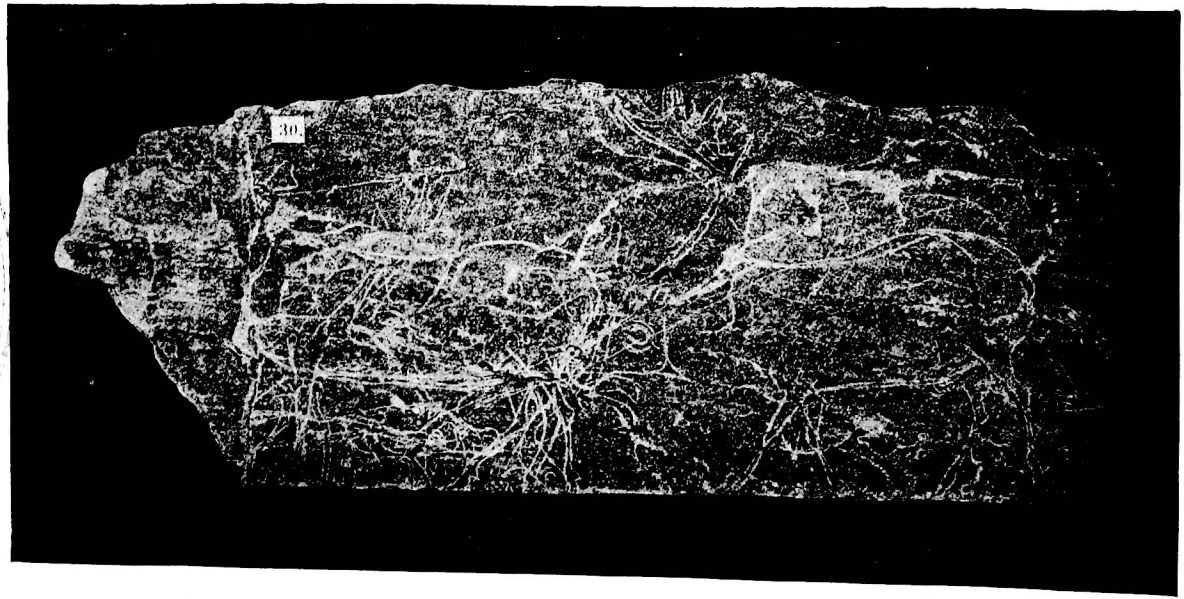

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FIG. 72.—Drawing scratched on a thin piece of schist found at Langerie Basse. It represents a male reindeer following its mate, a favourite subject with the cave artists. Another reindeer is depicted apparently with its legs in the air, but probably the stone was turned the other way round when this animal was being drawn. On the back of the fragment is a very rough sketch of a bison. Natural History Museum, Paris. (From *L'Anthropologie*, 1907, by permission of MM. Masson et Cie.)

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technically more difficult, was not so desirable in those early times, when a picture or a carving was chiefly regarded as a charm or fetish. It would not often be attempted, until the desire was commonly felt for pictures recording some incident or conveying some definite information. This opens up the question of the origin of picture writing, when art sent out a new branch which afterwards developed into the stately growth of literature, a growth that has now overshadowed the fine arts, and seems as if it might in time almost supplant them.

CHAPTER V

SCHEMATISM AND STYLISATION

In a series of open-air paintings recently discovered in a rock shelter at Cogul in Spain there is a curious example which shows one of those attempts at composition (Fig. 73). The subject seems to be a sort of ceremonial dance or procession of clothed females round a man who is perfectly naked, except for some strings tied above his calves. It has been compared with those dances described by Stow[16] in which the principle of fertility or the creative power of Kaang is celebrated. If this should prove to be a true comparison, it would afford another curious commentary on that inversion of ideas which has led people to consider nakedness as indecent.

Several Magdalenian stations and flint implements have been found not far from these paintings, but nothing else to corroborate the evidence afforded by their style that they belong to the palæolithic period. As might be expected from their exposed position most of them are very indistinct; it requires a trained observer to decipher and trace the patches of colour and engraved outlines still faintly visible.

They had always been known to the inhabitants of that remote village, but they were first revealed to

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FIG. 73A.

FIG. 73.

PLATE VI.

FIG. 73.—Paintings in a rock shelter at Cogul, Spain, sketched by Prof. H. Breuil and published in the "Butlleti del Centre Excursionista de Lleyda," Oct., 1908. By permission of the Committee their reproduction has been used as the basis of this Plate. Several corrections have been made in it from M. Breuil's own drawings, but the figures of the group of women are still too small in comparison with the others, they should be half as large again. The whole drawing is on the scale of 1 : 8. Fig. 73A has been shifted slightly to the right in order to bring it completely into the picture.

the outside world by an article written in March 1908, by Señor Ceferi Rocafort, in the *Bulletti del Centre Excursionista de Lleyda*, a Catalonian society for encouraging the exploration of that province.

MM. Cartailhac and Breuil soon heard the news, and the indefatigable Abbé made an expedition that same autumn to examine them and some others at Cretas in Aragon. One evening as he was riding back, after a long day spent in copying the pictures, he descried on a rock lit up by the setting sun faint traces of a red figure of a stag, hitherto unnoticed by the inhabitants. Jumping off his mule, he climbed up the slope at the foot of the small cliff, and found not only the red stag, but also a better preserved black one and three small wild goats. Encouraged by this discovery, M. Breuil and his Catalonian friends have made researches far and wide all over the district, and they have succeeded in finding a great number of other painted and inscribed rocks, which will form the subject of an important memoir soon to be published. The Abbé hopes in time to find traces of palæolithic art right through Spain and Portugal down to Gibraltar, and perhaps even into Morocco, thus providing material to decide the question whether European primitive art has any relationship with the African art exemplified by the still insufficiently studied rock engravings at Sus (Morocco) and in various parts of Algeria.[17]

Considerable prudence has to be exercised in making these researches, so as not to awaken the

suspicions or fears of the ignorant and superstitious inhabitants. The frescoes of Cretas had to be bodily removed from the rock to save them from being destroyed by the shepherds, who were annoyed or alarmed by the appearance of strangers in their

IG. 74.—Stag painted in untoned red in a rock shelter at Cretas, Aragon. Magdalenian period. About twelve inches long. From *l'Anthropologie*, by permission of Masson et Cie.

wilderness, hitherto free from such visitors. The position of these paintings rendered them peculiarly liable to destruction, for they were not, like so many of the cave pictures, hidden away in inaccessible nooks and corners. They were painted as a sort of frieze about eight feet from the floor of a shallow rock shelter hollowed in the side of a small ravine.

The colouring is flat, and no attempt appears to have been made to show by varied toning the articulation of the limbs with the body, but the very uncommon arrangement of the legs, as of an animal just about to rise to its feet, betokens a draughtsman of no mean ability. And yet, like many other artists of much later times, he could not recall a mental picture of horns in profile, he has represented them as if the deer were facing him (Fig. 74).

The technique of these open-air pictures is similar to that of the red and the black unshaded paintings in the Altamira cave, and there are many evidences of their having been executed in successive but widely separated periods. They seem also to have been frequently restored, sometimes even with a different colour; thus they have rather the appearance of real polychrome paintings.

Some of the figures (Fig. 73) are diagrammatic, or to use the newer phrase, schematic, and of such a crude character that they might be assigned to any period—palæolithic, neolithic, bronze, or even iron—for schematism is no sign of age, but only of a certain stage of development. Indeed, it is possible that this system of representing solid objects by a sort of geometrical plan may in time be proved to be always a stage of degeneration from fairly good naturalistic drawing. It is perhaps premature to make generalisations on this subject, as we have not yet sufficient examples properly classified chronologically, to found a good argument upon. It seems,

however, as if one might say that when animals are treated schematically their limbs are represented by a single line, more or less thick, but seldom doubled to form a real outline. We have already seen that real outline drawings are found in the earliest stages, with very little tendency to represent any limbs by single lines, much less by straight ones.

It may be that both systems are inherent in human nature, and that they are only phases of that struggle for predominance between the straight line and the curved, the geometric and the naturalistic, between conventionalism and realism, which has lasted through untold generations, and which perhaps dates from the very beginning of all art.

The schematic drawing of a stag in Fig. 73 is, I believe, the earliest example of that treatment applied to animals. It is strange to see on the same rock, painted in the same colour and with the same technique, a bison drawn realistically, although the man attacking it is treated rather schematically.

There is also a small sketch in black of a man and a bull showing the same contrast of treatment. This sketch and another schematic man below are apparently relics of an earlier picture partly destroyed to make way for the group of large oxen. All this tends to prove that schematic drawing was practised before naturalistic drawing had begun to decay, and even before it had reached its highest point, but that does not invalidate the argument that schematism is a stage of degeneration from naturalism. Symptoms of decay

may be visible in a tree even when it is still flourishing and is producing good fruit.

If the art of drawing was encouraged and developed by the habit of paying greater attention to the main outlines of things (a habit fostered by the things being carved more frequently in "silhouette"), in the same way schematic drawing may have been developed by attention being distracted from outlines. Outlines filled up with colour lose their importance. Correctness of outline form ceases to be the chief aim. General effect is the keynote of the work, and so long as it gives the desired impression, no regret is felt at its shape being more or less unlike that of the object represented. It may gradually become merely decorative, or it may lead to a sort of impressionist art.

In both cases we suppose that the artist worked from memory, and had in his mind's eye only a previous representation of the object, not the object itself. If he had strictly confined himself to copying what was actually before his eyes he might have attained greater accuracy, but his art would not have developed in so many various directions.

If this explanation of its origin is correct, schematic drawing must have begun later than naturalistic. It continued to grow along with it like a parasitic canker until favourable circumstances enabled it to spread rapidly and to supplant its rival.

Reactions have often occurred; schematism has had to retire defeated and naturalism has flourished again for a while, but the contest still goes on.

Why the one should at certain periods drive out and supplant the other is part of that great problem of the psychology of various races in their attitude towards art, a problem which is still far from being solved.

This subject of schematism is closely allied with that of stylisation, which is now generally admitted to be a sort of degeneration, though some consider it only as a stage in the evolution of art to a higher plane.

We have seen that there are many indications, if not definite proofs, that the glyptic arts originated not from a desire for the possession of beautiful or decorative objects, but from a desire for objects which would give their possessor power. You may call them fetiches, talismans, magic wands, sceptres, anything you like, the underlying idea was still the same. That idea survived long after carving had developed into drawing and drawing into writing. Have we not heard of phylacteries, of magic scrolls, of words of power, even in modern times?

The origins of ideas, however, are often wonderfully different from their results, just as the roots of a tree are different from its fruit. The higher the organism the more does the product differ from the original germ. Art and literature may have had their origin in mean and poor desires, but their true function is to ennoble the desires that gave them birth and to lead the world on to the perception and conception of still higher things.

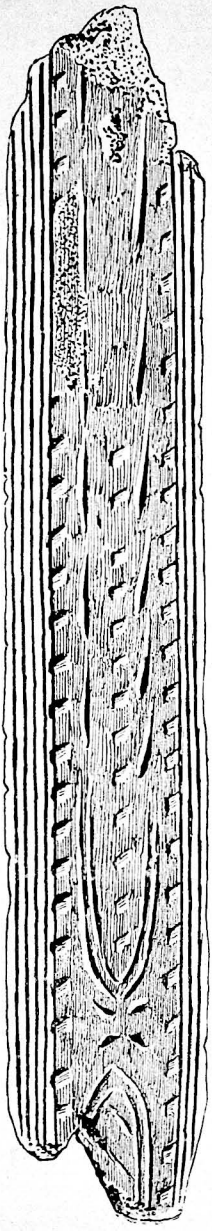
The palæolithic artist certainly fulfilled his duty in this respect. He was not content with the rough fetich that would give its possessor power to satisfy merely sordid physical desires. He gradually improved and idealised it until in the hands of his successors it became one of the most potent instruments for elevating the human race.

This progress was not continuous. There were many sad lapses from the path of duty, many weary years of enslavement to cruel tyrants, many voluntary prostitutions in the temples of false gods.

To trace these vicissitudes would be a task worthy of a great historian. I cannot dare to attempt more than a mere sketch of some of them.

Stylisation seems to herald the downfall of palæolithic art. How it fell we know not. Like other golden ages it may have passed through various decadent phases, but of these as yet no traces have been discovered. In Europe it seems to have been swept away at one fell stroke, leaving no inheritors of its traditions, no scattered devotees to mourn its loss, vainly striving to rekindle the quenched fire.

Symptoms of decay had appeared long before the final catastrophe. Among the successive generations of artists some few had not been faithful. Whilst the great masters still strove to advance along that endless road that leads towards perfection, these traitors only strove to increase their output, regardless of its quality and truth. That pernicious custom of copying



a copy was ignorantly and carelessly followed until the copies lost all resemblance to the original.

Look at this piece of carved work from the Kesslerloch cave (Fig. 75). Technically it is good; as a decorative design it might pass muster, yet who would think that heads of oxen were represented there? The horns and ears are all that are left, generations of copyists have gradually discarded all the rest. The original was probably a fairly naturalistic drawing, but some copyist, hurrying over his work and ignorant, perhaps, of the meaning of many of the lines he saw before him, omitted some of them and misplaced others. It was less trouble to do that than to refer to the actual object it was meant to represent.

The word copyist must not be taken as implying that the artist always had a drawing before him when making his new copy. Judging by what we know of other

FIG. 75.—Split piece of reindeer horn ornamented with three rows of rhombs in relief and an incised decoration derived from bulls' horns and ears. Kesslerloch Cave. Thayngen.

times and of other races, there is every probability that he generally worked from memory, but it was the memory of what others had done, not of what he himself had observed. In time other artists, remembering the drawing he had produced, repeated his mistakes, exaggerating them after the manner of copyists in all ages. And so it went on. The final result was meaningless as a work of art, but tradition and convention still pronounced it to be a representation of oxen. The purchaser was satisfied, and the artist felt no shame.

That, I fear, is the key to the whole question, or at all events it points to one of the chief causes of decline. The artists were not working for love of art, but for gain. The more pictures they could turn out in a given time the greater would be their sordid recompense. Abbreviation became the guiding principle of their work. What did they care if in abbreviating it they made it quite unreal. Their patrons liked it. "The prophets prophesy falsely, and my people love to have it so" was as true then as in the days of Josiah or at the present time.

Of course the motives for making these abbreviations and alterations were not always bad. The desire for decorative effect was an innocent impulse, although it may not indicate lofty ideals. That this decorative effect was generally only obtained by modifying animal forms merely shows poverty of invention, a poverty so constantly manifested throughout succeeding ages that

Prof. O. Montelius felt impelled to say: "Is human freedom really so limited that we cannot make things in whatever shape we like? Are we obliged to pass from one shape to another, step by step, and with but little difference between each of them? Until the relations of one shape to another have been carefully studied one is inclined to reply 'No' to this question. But since people have more carefully studied the wonderful history of human handiwork they find that the answer must be 'Yes.' The evolution may take place slowly or rapidly, but mankind is obliged, when producing new shapes, to obey the same laws of evolution that govern the whole realm of nature" (*Svenska Forminnes foreningens Tidskrift*, Stockholm, 1900, p. 268).

There was also the desire to communicate news, which probably led to the use of abbreviated forms as a sort of picture writing. The evidence for such a practice in palæolithic times is not yet well established. Some authors have even imagined that picture language is older than spoken language. It is difficult to believe that any evidence could ever be found to prove this theory, although when a sufficient number of primitive skulls have been discovered, anatomists expect to be able to fix the period when man began to acquire the power of speech. The abbreviated forms used in picture-writing are often strangely distorted and defective. They have no relationship with those forms that are artistically correct, having been so

intelligently simplified that a life-like impression is given with a few strokes. The sketch of a herd of deer (Fig. 76) is a notable specimen of this art, and shows a remarkable power of seizing the really important features of a subject. It almost suggests that there must have been a sort of impressionist school in those days.

The study of these modifications of designs is quite a special one. It has been pursued by many patient and learned investigators, who have shown that this sort of evolution is to be traced in many other periods and in many other lands. In America some phases of the process were studied by Mr. W. H. Holmes, and the results were published in his *Ancient Art of the Province of Chiriqui, Colombia*. His illustrations

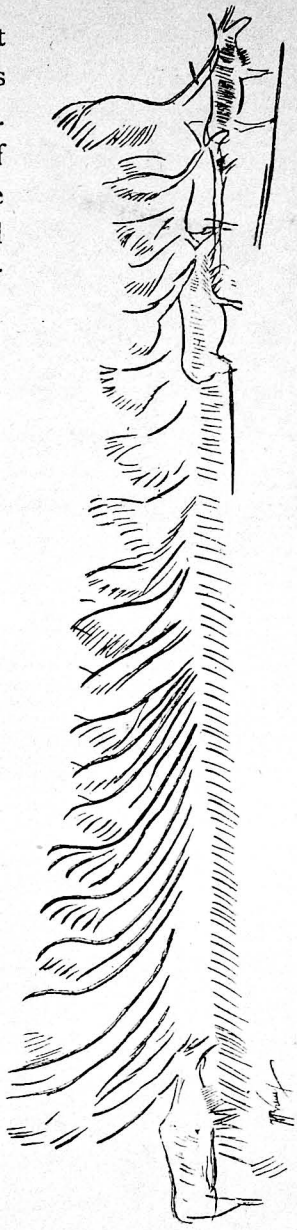


FIG. 76.—Sketch of a herd of reindeer incised on the wing bone of an eagle. Very few sketches of this sort have been found. Dug up in the Grotto de Teyjat (Dordogne).

of the transformations of the crocodile are very curious (Fig. 77). Since then many other American

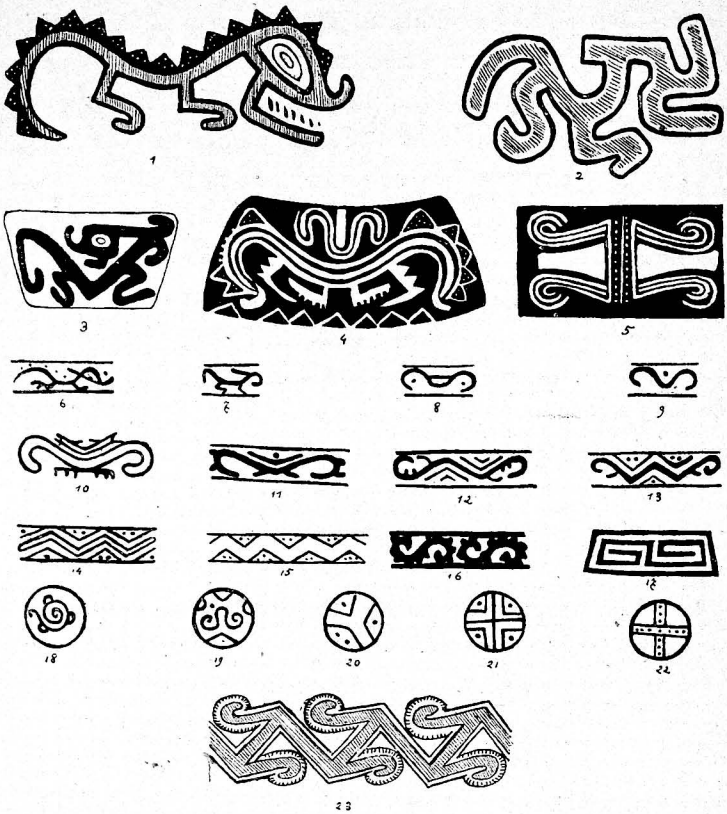


FIG. 77.—Figures taken from actual designs found on ancient Columbian pottery, showing how a schematic drawing of a crocodile became simplified and then modified into zigzags, spirals, meanders and other patterns. W. H. Holmes in *Sixth Annual Report*, Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, 1888.

writers have traced the evolution of various Mexican and Peruvian decorative or religious designs.

Dr. A. C. Haddon of Cambridge (England) in his *Evolution in Art* has given a most interesting account of the life history of designs, their birth, struggles, conquests, migrations and death. It is to be hoped that he will publish a new edition embodying the numerous contributions to this study that are now only to be found scattered in the pages of various scientific journals. Professor Goodyear in his *Grammar of the Lotus* has made a very elaborate study of certain special forms found chiefly in Egyptian, Assyrian, and Greek art.

A detailed study of the transformations of palæolithic designs is shortly to be published by Abbé Breuil. The following is a translation of the introductory paragraphs of an article, "Figures Dégénérées et Stylisées à l'époque du Renne," written by him for the 1906 Congress of Anthropology and Prehistoric Archæology :—

"The decorative art of the reindeer age had its origin in figures representing natural objects. This is becoming more and more generally admitted with regard to the primitive phases of art in all ages.

"By the side of works of art of a high order we find some drawings not so clear, in fact often unintelligible ; some of them are perhaps symbolical, others may be merely the private mark of the maker or the owner. These designs arranged in series explain one another, and form groups, showing that the principal agent of modification has been a linear reduction due to conomy of effort. This has condensed the original

realistic figure into a drawing made with a few strokes.

"The limitations of the space available, and a natural desire for symmetry and rhythm, have also frequently contributed to make an artist modify the design which he was copying or which he was reproducing from memory."

The most interesting of the modifications traced by M. Breuil are those which led up to the spiral pattern, that very important factor in the history of decorative designs (Fig. 78). It used to be credited to the Egyptians, as it had not been discovered on anything older than the scarabs of the fifth dynasty. But M. Piette's specimens are undoubtedly palæolithic.[18] It may be that the Egyptians inherited their spirals from races whose relics, when discovered, may show that they were connected with the cave-men of Europe. On the other hand it may be that they invented it independently. The idea of independent genesis at various times and in various localities, as opposed to the monogenesic theory, is gaining ground in art as well as in other subjects. Just as we have given up the belief in a common ancestor of the whole human race, we are being gradually forced to give up the belief that all art work had its origin in a single source. Dr. Haddon traces the spiral patterns seen in the carvings of the South Sea islanders to the guilloche, and the guilloche he traces to modified heads of frigate birds, the beak of one bird helping to form the head and eye of the

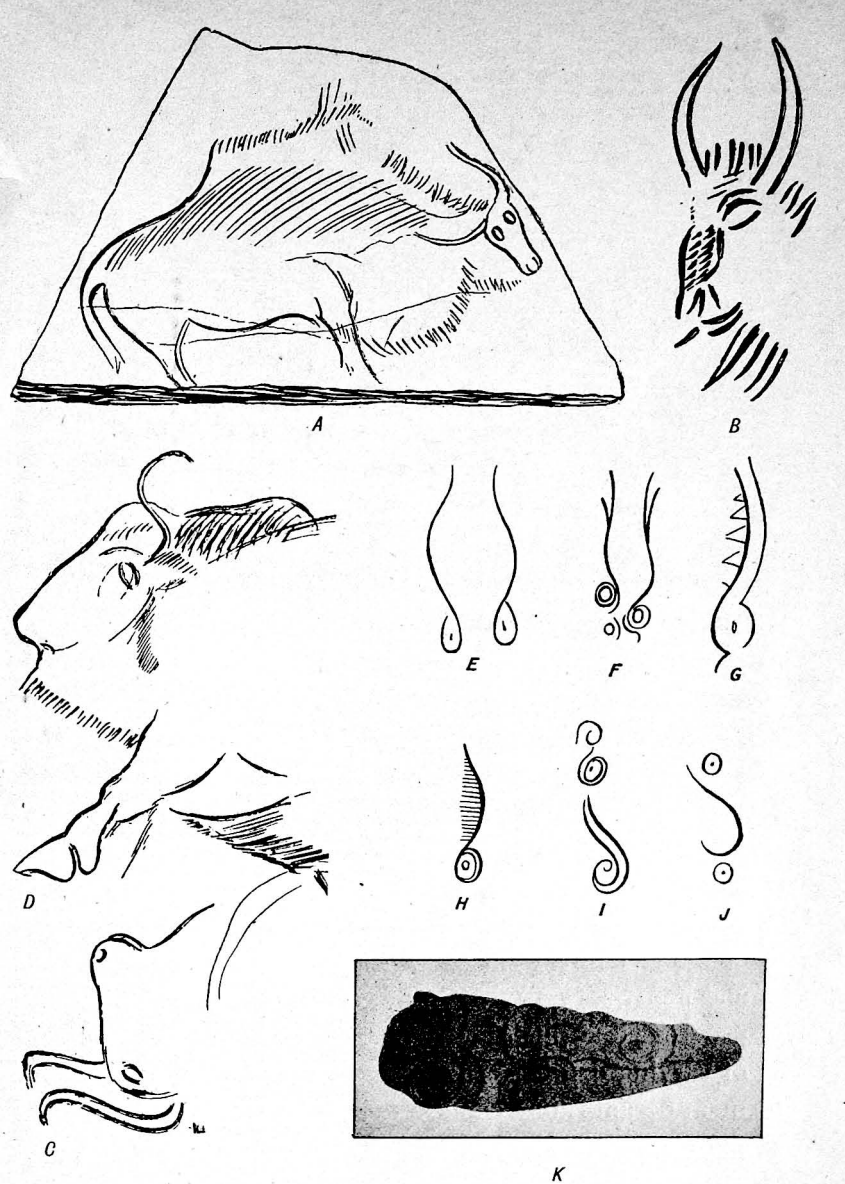


FIG. 78.—Evolution of the spiral from stylised pictures of bulls or bison, according to Prof. H. Breuil. Bucrania (representations of bull's head and horns, or in later times the skull and horns) have been considered as magical or sacred symbols for countless ages and in all parts of the world. See Note 19. *A*, *C*, *D*, drawings on schist, found at Bruniquel, now in British Museum. *B*, from Font de Gaume. *E*, Raymonden. *F* and *K*, Lourdes. *G*, Le Placard. *H*, Maszyckuttöhle. *I*, Laugerie Basse. *J*. Cambons.

next. Mr. Edge-Partington, however, believes that in a neighbouring district lizards' tails have given the original motive (Fig. 79).

We shall see many more instances of these modifications as we turn over the leaves of unwritten history. We shall come to times when life itself was not so simple

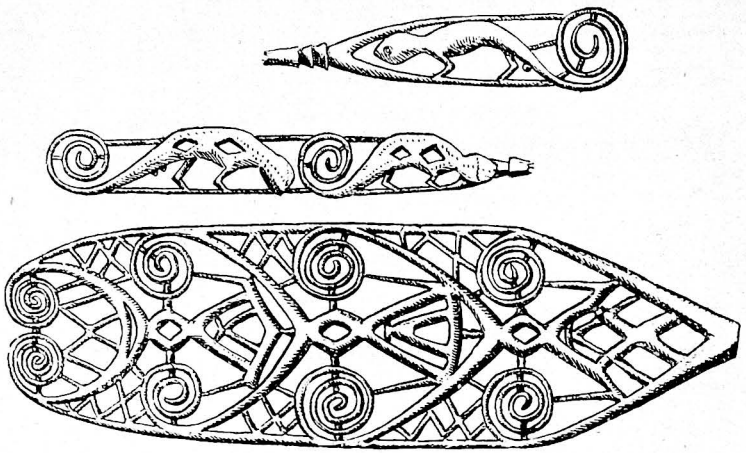


FIG. 79.—Handles of wooden spatulas carved by inhabitants of the Matty islands (western Pacific), showing another source of the spiral factor in ornamental designs. About one-third actual size. Now in Mr. Edge-Partington's collection.

and motives were more mixed. As different races progressed at different rates and formed schools of art of varying degrees of excellence, the lines of development became more complicated. Intercourse between nations at various stages of culture produced cross currents and strange reactions which influenced the growth of art, and render the study of it much more difficult.

It is fortunate that we have sufficient specimens of palæolithic work to be able to form some conclusions as to the evolutions of the art of a race free from contact with any outside world, and living in a period when the problems were comparatively simple.

One word more ere we leave this region where the shadows made by primitive men flit before us. Occasionally we find a certain class of people—quite clever people too, and fluent—who belittle the pioneers of knowledge and wonder why men did not find these things out before. Not comprehending the complexity of nature, they declare that these inventions and discoveries are very simple and very natural, and are only just what might have been expected.

For instance, when it comes to a question of the origins of art, they say that modern children can often draw fairly good pictures, why should not primitive man not draw equally good ones? People in this frame of mind miss the real result of the investigations and discoveries I have been trying to describe. They do not realise that the power of artistic expression possessed by some children is due to inheritance. We need not enter into the thorny question whether it is possible to inherit acquired faculties, such as skill in drawing, but it certainly is possible to inherit products of that skill and traditions of the methods invented by those who produced them.

If we could find children who had never seen a drawing and yet could draw fairly well, we might then be justified in saying that these palæolithic art pro-

ducts were merely what might have been expected. But those who have made a study of children's drawings say that all except the very crudest are the result of observing and remembering the drawings of other people. A child's skill consists in utilising the methods of drawing invented by his predecessors. His results do not prove independent invention, any more than wonderful results in mental arithmetic would prove that he had reinvented the multiplication table. One would not say that because many young children can read and write, therefore the invention of an alphabet was simple and natural and merely what might have been expected.

Dr. Kerchensteiner, who has made elaborate studies of the growth of the artistic faculty in children, and has classified more than three hundred thousand specimens of their drawings, believes that imitation is such an important factor in artistic development that if a Japanese child were brought up in Europe he would draw in the European style, and *vice versa* a European child brought up in Japan would draw in the Japanese style. In other words, evolution in art is conditioned by its environment; it is not personal but communal. This sounds rather like Socialism applied to art, and reminds one of that commonly ignored declaration, "Ye are all members of one body; if one member suffer the other members suffer with it."

Perhaps Dr. Kerchensteiner does not make enough allowance for inherited tendencies, but that is a question which is too complicated to be discussed

here. M. Salomon Reinach, referring to the persistence and tenacity of life of the celto-scythic or La Tène style, says: "If classic art were to fall into oblivion to-morrow, it is the style of La Tène which would take its place as a spontaneous product of the national temperament that does not change any more than the character of an individual changes" (*La Sculpture avant les influences gréco-romaines*, 1896).

When national tendencies are inartistic their development is simple and not very interesting except to archæologists. It is very different when we come to study the history of nations with artistic tendencies and try to trace their struggles to become articulate and give expression to their vague perceptions.

The belief that it is simple and natural to express mental conceptions pictorially is as ill founded as the even more prevalent idea that it is easy and natural to speak the truth. Both beliefs are a species of superstition due to ignorance, especially the ignorance of the inexperienced, of those who have seldom tested their capacity for doing things, but have been contented with merely talking about them. Perhaps if it were more generally recognised how hard it is to speak the exact truth either in words or pictures, there would be less readiness to circulate false accusations by well-meaning people, fewer harsh condemnations of rash attempts to strike out new lines in art.

Mankind usually takes the line of least resistance. It is so much easier to detect faults than to detect beauties that we are always more ready to blame

than to praise. If we would only make experiments for ourselves we should realise the difficulty of ascertaining and expressing the exact truth about even the simplest things. We should then be more ready to appreciate the difficulties of pioneers in any branch of human work, and instead of wondering why man has made so little progress we should be filled with astonishment that he has progressed so much.

Indeed, no growth or progress is simple and natural in that limited sense which is so often given to those words. It is all marvellous, and the greatest marvel of all is the upward progress of man. One of the weakest and most defenceless of animals, he has dominated all the rest. He has achieved this conquest by slowly but surely adapting material things to serve as his instruments. Man is the only tool-using animal. That adaptation of lifeless things to ease the toil of life for all mankind was a great step in advance. It was the decisive step which first placed him on the road to knowledge, a road which has, however, not often been traversed by great leaps and bounds. In fashioning tools for subduing his fiercer and stronger competitors he improved his faculties of observation and memory, besides adapting his limbs to execute strange and subtle movements, but at first the improvement was not rapid.

The more we study the history of the past the more deeply are we impressed by the painful slowness of his progress. What seems simple and easy to us, looking back along the road he travelled, was to him

most difficult and perplexing. We need not enter here into the question of the inheritance of manual dexterity. It is quite enough for us if we realise that in his mind there was but little light of past experiences, and he was faced on all sides by the darkness of the great unknown.

Can we wonder that his leaders felt their way with halting steps, painfully and slowly climbing upwards, cruelly struggling with their companions, blundering and sinning against all the rules that now we think self-evident?

Let us not underestimate their difficulties: considering their successes as natural, their failures as ridiculous. When it is our turn to be judged and future generations estimate our work, will they not wonder that we were so slow in solving the problems, artistic, social, religious, that still loom darkly ahead and seem so terribly insoluble although we have the light of millenniums of past experiences to help us? Will they have sympathy with our efforts, or will they find no words strong enough to condemn the cruelty, the blundering, the sinfulness of those who lead us now and cannot always lead us well?

CHAPTER VI

AFRICAN AND SIBERIAN ART

PALÆOLITHIC man, with his acute artistic perceptions and his simple manner of life, disappears from our ken. For a while all is darkness and uncertainty. We can imagine vast migrations, terrible invasions, fierce struggles and horrible slaughter. Or there may have been the silent death by pestilence or famine. But of these catastrophes we have no proofs; the pygmy race seems to have disappeared entirely from Europe, the others are more difficult to trace. The negroid element may have gone south while those of Eskimo type went north. At present we know nothing except that the whole region where these cave artists flourished became artistically a wilderness, a wilderness in which no great original art has ever blossomed forth again.

Of cataclysmic changes of the climate or the surface of Europe we have also no evidence; on the contrary, towards the end of the palæolithic period the European climate seems to have settled down, after several minor variations, into its present condition. It is quite certain that no very great geographical changes have taken place since a much more distant date.

With the exception of Great Britain the various countries of the world had long been separated from one another by the same mountain ranges, drained by the same rivers, and bounded by the same seas; in fact, the stage had been cleared and arranged for the unfolding of the great human drama, the drama of which I am trying to describe some episodes. A connected narrative is impossible, the record is

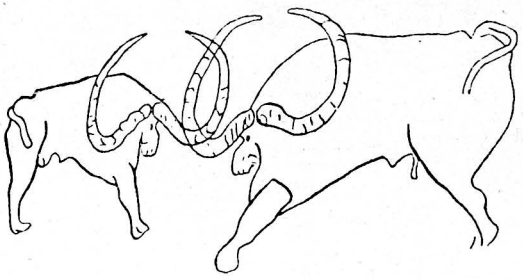


FIG. 80.—Very large figures of Bubalus, about six feet in height, incised on rock at Er Richa (Oran). The series of drawings extends for about a hundred yards. It contains elephants, horses, and faint traces of a man. They are not easily recognisable except in certain lights.

too scanty, and of that scanty record all too little has been read.

The centre of interest now shifts to Africa; the part my actors have played there will seem more of the nature of an interlude than a continuation of the original story.

The drying up of the great Sahara Sea had already improved the climate of Europe, producing dry warm winds, and thus driving back the long victorious ice from its outposts on the central moun-

tains and the Pyrenees to its original fastnesses in the north. Among the mountains on the edge of that receding sea of inland Africa wandered a nomad race of whom we know almost nothing. They hunted the now extinct bubalus (Fig. 80), a sort of buffalo, and left drawings of it and of other animals indelibly impressed upon the barren rocks that line the ancient water-courses or rise gaunt and jagged from the burning plain—a plain still scattered with shells of innumerable ostrich eggs, although the ostrich itself has now retreated to more hospitable climes.

Some of the pictures are painted; the colour is laid on evenly all over, without any variety of tone, in this respect resembling some of the cave pictures, but the material used as pigment is said to be very different. Capt. Maumené believes that instead of iron ochre and other minerals they used a vermilion and a reddish-brown vegetable stain which has sunk into the rock to a depth of several millimetres (*Bulletin archéologique du Comité des travaux historiques*, Paris, 1901).

If that is the case it does not seem likely that the paintings can be very ancient, for vegetable stains are not very permanent.

Most of them, however, are engraved with outlines of various depths, not more than five millimetres. Some are in slight relief, others were made by hammering the whole surface so as to form a contrast with the surrounding rock.

This latter process was also employed in Egypt

in prehistoric times, but that does not enable us to draw any conclusion as to the date of these African pictures. In fact, as Professor S. Gsell says in his *Monuments Antiques de l'Algérie* (1901), "the chrono-

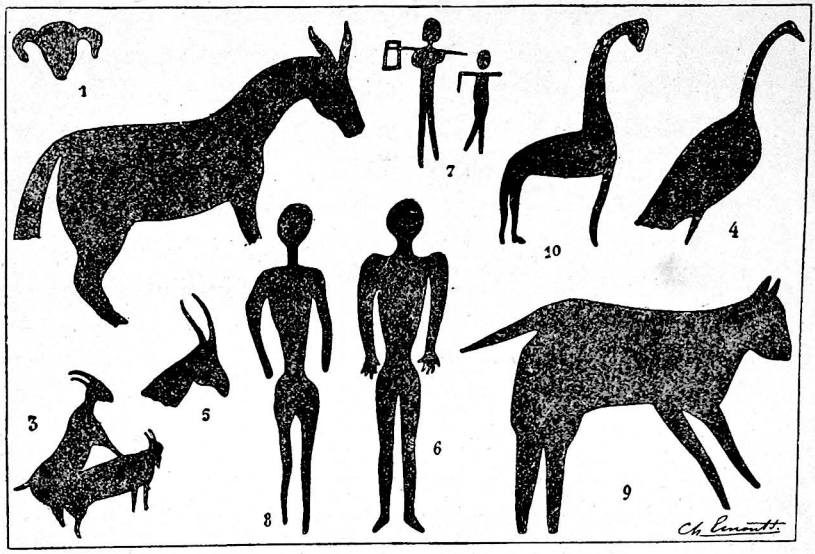


FIG. 81.—Figures found on the rocks at Oued Safsaf, Geryville (Algeria). There seems to be some uncertainty as to how they were executed. Capt. Maumené says that they were painted with the vermilion juice of a shrub. Prof. Breuil thinks the material was red ochre, and M. Flamand thinks the colour is due to the surface of the rock having been scraped to show the unaltered stone beneath. One-sixth actual size.

logy of the rock engravings of Algeria is still absolutely uncertain."

Vast caverns honeycomb those rugged mountains, but very little systematic exploration of them has been attempted. Some day, perhaps, caves or rock shelters

will be discovered similar to those French ones filled with well-defined layers and the relics of successive occupiers. Many specimens of neolithic weapons have been found, but chronological sequences cannot be proved from isolated specimens.

The picture of a man wielding an instrument which is supposed to be a neolithic axe (Fig. 81) would be more conclusive if we knew what stage of development Algeria had reached in early Egyptian, Mycenean, or Carthaginian times. All we can now say is that the pictures have every appearance of extreme age both in their condition and in their style. Schematic figures are found occasionally, but there is nothing to show whether they are older than the others or of more recent date.

The human figures are as crude as those drawn by the reindeer men, another proof perhaps that primitive artists drew from memory, not from models. For if they had been in the habit of sketching from life, would they not have drawn the human form more frequently and more correctly? Surely their fellow-men and women would have been more available as models than the mammoth or the bison, or even than the roaming deer.[19]

In a rock picture at Kef Messouier there is a striking example of the tendency to give a full face view of the head of an animal whose body is in profile (Fig. 82). It is a tendency which seems natural enough, but it is nevertheless absent from purely Egyptian art, though it is recognisable in palæolithic

work (Fig 78, *a*) and was common in the primitive art of Chaldea and of Greece. In their more advanced art the lion was often depicted in profile (see Fig. 256) by the Chaldeans, but in Greece the convention seems to have become established that the leopard should be represented with the face in full view (see Figs.

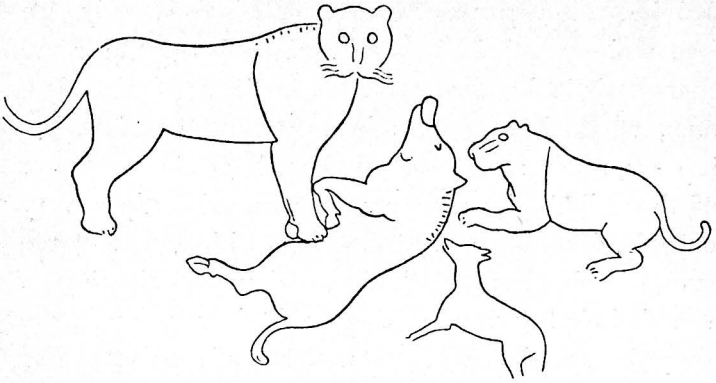


FIG. 82.—Part of a group of ten figures incised on rock at Kef Messouier (not far from the old Roman town Kalama, now called Guelma, Algeria). Size not stated by Prof. Gsell, but he tells me that M. Flamand will give all such details in a large work he is preparing on the rock engravings of North Africa.

384 and 387). The convention persisted through mediæval times and is still maintained in North Africa by the local potters. M. Ed. Pottier in an article ("Histoire d'une bête") in the *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*, 1910, p. 419, has traced the occurrence of the type in various periods. He gives illustrations of it taken from strange sources, a glazed Byzantine paving tile, the carved capital of a Gothic church, a

piece of Rhodian faience ware, and finally this modern bowl made recently in Tunis (Fig. 83). He does not include the animal in Fig. 82 among those in his list, though possibly that drawing is one of the remote ancestors of this strangely persistent type. Although the pose of all the animals in this rock picture is so remarkably good and the outlines so firm and definite, the African artist has given them only one fore and one hind leg each. We found the same characteristic in the earliest drawings of the cave men, where indeed we might have expected it, but it does seem strange to find such crude treatment of those limbs by a man who was evidently a very capable draughtsman. The composition, too, of the group is simple and effective, and in the slanting of the victim's body and of the panther's crouching mate there seems to be an attempt at perspective. Altogether it is an extraordinary picture.

The group of elephants attacked by a lion (Fig. 84) is perhaps not so well drawn, but it introduces a new element. The mother elephant stretching her trunk protectingly over her calf is a touch of nature which we have not yet seen. Among all the thousands of palæolithic drawings, I cannot remember even one showing a mother with her young. The mental picture formed in this Algerian artist's brain was no longer a mere crude imprint of the shapes of animals that were good for food. It was of a better type than those violent impressions of the forms of man and beast striving for the mastery. It was a perception of that nobler

FIG. 83.—Common earthenware vase made for local use at Tunis. The tradition that this sort of animal should be drawn with a full-faced head has perhaps been handed down in unbroken descent from neolithic times.

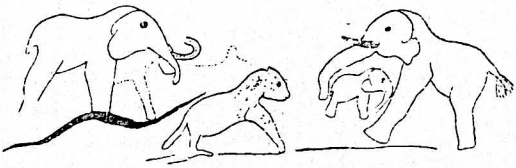


FIG. 84.—Group about twenty-five feet in length incised on a soft red sandstone cliff near Geryville, Eastern Algeria. The thick black mark is a natural fissure in the rock.

feeling which is developed only in the higher animals, and which has been such a potent lever in raising the whole human race from the dead level of instinctive selfishness to those higher planes where courage may be combined with self-sacrifice and love. First manifested in the female, is it a wonder that in the female mankind first saw personified the godlike virtues repugnant to its nature and yet compelling worship? Wherefore the old cave men fashioned their female images, and through all the ages and still in all the world adherents of that faith are found. A faith irrational, perhaps, and inexplicable, but none the less a living faith which still may lead to higher forms of life.

We must now pass from burning Africa to cold Siberia. There we shall witness another interlude giving us glimpses of a civilisation which is extremely difficult to correlate with others.

Near a place called Basaika, in the valley of the Jenesei, a Russian archæologist, M. Savenkov, found traces of a settlement occupied by stone implement users. Carefully following up these indications he discovered the skeletons of two full-grown persons. Reverent hands had laid them in their shallow graves, had carefully turned their heads towards the east, and had surrounded them with some of their worldly treasures, hoping possibly that thus those departed spirits might enjoy them in that future state concerning which barbarian men fancy they possess such detailed and such trustworthy information. Should we despise

these poor rude relics of an ancient belief in the certainty of a future life? They are perhaps the earliest records of mankind's awakening to the idea that all was not finished when his body had returned to the dust from which it came.

To acknowledge absolute ignorance is a hard and bitter confession for a man to make. It was not until the riper ages that anyone dared to frame, even in his inmost soul, that saddest sentence, "I do not know what happens after death." But as the confession of ignorance is the foundation of all learning, and to become as little children is the condition for entering into the kingdom of heaven, may not acknowledged uncertainty grow into a belief that our present interval of consciousness on this small earthly speck in the vast organisation of the universe cannot be our last? It is a belief which will be stronger and better by the absence of all fantastic details.

It is of course very difficult to be sure of the relative age of such isolated deposits. No news of any further discoveries in that district have yet reached the outside world, though it is twenty years since that first discovery was made. Things move slowly with the Russians; like the Spaniards they seem to have the desire to put everything off until to-morrow.[20] Perhaps that is not worse than our desire to crowd too much into our lives, striving to do to-morrow's work to-day.

As far as can be gathered from a rather meagre account of M. Savenkov's discovery, which was read before the Académie des Sciences of Paris in 1893 by

Baron de Baye, the general characteristics of the graves were neolithic. The bodies were buried in the contracted position, lying on their left sides with the knees drawn up; a position which was customary in many other countries during their neolithic stage of civilisation (see Fig. 125). The stone weapons buried with them were finely polished, not merely chipped into shape as in palæolithic times. Several figurines of stone or clay were found, but they are not described in the memoir, and I could not obtain any satisfactory information about them either from Moscow or from St. Petersburg.

Two interesting illustrations are given of carvings in horn of the female elk; one of them (Fig. 85) shows plainly her curious flat hoof adapted for traversing the snow. The makers of these carvings seem almost to have inherited the traditions of the old cave men of France; if that were so we ought in time to find traces of their migration across Europe.

An illustration is also given of a rude human figure. It is archæologically interesting because of a curious incision in the breast. Artistically it resembles the early attempts made by men in neolithic periods in many other regions, and is far inferior to most palæolithic work.

It may be as well to note here that the terms palæolithic and neolithic should, strictly speaking, only be used for stages of civilisation in each individual country, not for indicating successive periods of time. Some writers have unfortunately got into

the habit of using that expression, "the palæolithic period," to denote those centuries or millenniums during which the mammoth and reindeer flourished in south-eastern Europe, regardless of the fact that during those centuries some nations may have reached a yet higher stage, and others may have

FIG. 85.—Female elk carved in bone, found near Basaika, Eastern Siberia. About half actual size. The two straight lines on the body are only the strings by which the specimen is fastened to its support.

still been in a lower one. It is as misleading as if historians were to talk about "the republican period" without warning their readers that they only meant the republican period of the particular country in question.

Rough stone implements of palæolithic type have

been found all over the world, even in China and America. They are attributed to men who lived thousands of years ago, but there is nothing to show that they were made or used at the same period of time all over the world. It is unlikely that we shall ever be able to give even approximate dates for all those periods, but some day it may be possible to draw up a list showing their chronological sequence.

For instance, if in several places in Europe there were found palæolithic sketches upon bone of mammoth or of reindeer along with predynastic Egyptian relics, we could put down these two periods as contemporaneous. If similar relics were always found below the sketches (which is, however, extremely unlikely), the palæolithic civilisation of Europe might then be considered as being of later date than the predynastic.

In all these investigations the study of the characteristic developments of art will be most important. When we consider that only thirty years ago hardly any of these discoveries had been made in France and Spain which have lately provided so much material for such a study, there is reason for hoping that it will not be many years before signs of artistic life in palæolithic times will be found in many other countries.

Of the neolithic or polished stone implement stage much more is known, and it is now well recognised that certain nations were still in that stage at a date when other nations had long emerged from it. In

fact there are even now nations or tribes which are still living in that stage. I myself narrowly escaped dying in it when some savages armed with obsidian-tipped arrows killed off most of the other whites. They had also arrows tipped with small pieces of hoop iron, which had been imported from the outside world as valuable articles of barter.

The difficulties both of travellers and of archæologists would be much less if importations from nations of a higher degree of civilisation were unknown. It is unpleasant to find a savage aiming a repeating rifle at you. It is also unpleasant for an archæologist who has been contending that certain deposits belong to the stone age, to find that his adversary has discovered various bits of metal in those same deposits. It is all very well to say that they were imported; how is that to be proved? Finds of small pieces of copper in neolithic houses and graves have now become so frequent that some archæologists are almost beginning to doubt if there ever was a neolithic age—an age of polished stone-users absolutely ignorant of any metal.

There is a good deal to be said for that rather heretical view. A race of men who had the patience and skill to grind down and polish hard stones to such shapes both of weapons and of ornaments, as we find in many so-called neolithic deposits, could hardly have been unable to produce and to manipulate such an easily worked metal as copper.

This is rather an archæological than an art

question, still it has to be taken into account when trying to distinguish the various periods of artistic development. Also, as we have already seen in the case of the bone-carvers, the material upon which and with which men have to work has a great influence upon the style of work they can produce. We must know what materials were available if we want to judge them fairly. If the Greeks had not been able to obtain abundance of good marble would they have produced such noble statues? If the mediæval architects of northern France had not had such profusion of fine grained Caen stone, could they have constructed such beautiful cathedrals? With man, as with the rest of the organic world, it is largely a question of environment. And yet the best environment does not in every case produce the best results. Unless the seed is there the richest soil may still remain unfruitful. What hidden factors are there in the life of man that lead some races to contribute to the welfare of the world while other races seem to exercise no influence at all? Among these hidden factors the most potent are the ideals with which each nation is imbued. The ideals of old nations were often made articulate through the medium of their art. Many long-forgotten results of the struggle to become articulate are now being brought forth from their silent graves. Let us examine these results; perchance we may discover that they have a message for the nations of to-day.

CHAPTER VII

THE EARLIEST EGYPTIAN POTTERY

THE knell of early art in Europe had long been rung; the body had been buried, and the slow operations of nature had sealed the tomb. Shall we say those artists lived in vain?

A mere faint ghost of their delight in colour and in form seems to have hovered round their former haunts, taking expression in curious painted pebbles daubed with spots and streaks of red or brown. They were found in that cave at Mas d'Azil from which so many palæolithic carvings and drawings had been obtained. No satisfactory explanation of their purpose has yet been given. Of the men who painted them we know too little, their relics are so scanty.

Troops of shadowy migrants pass across the unilluminated stage, now dwelling for a while in favoured places, then wandering further on, ousted by other hordes; wave after wave pouring, it seems, from out the ruined East. For those very causes that led to the drying up of the Sahara sea and the melting of the great glacial covering of middle Europe, seem also to have burnt up the once fertile lands of central Asia. The great Tells of Persia, the innumerable Kurgans of Turkestan, the buried cities of Khotan,

all testify to successive periods of desolating drought which have transformed those once populous regions into the most terrible and lonely deserts in the world.

Unfortunately there are few who care to face the danger and expense of making excavations in such sterile and abandoned regions, but those few have reaped a rich reward. Not the rich reward of gold and diadems with which some forty years ago Schliemann dazzled the eyes of an incredulous world, and with which Egyptian explorers have roused the fatal cupidity of curiosity mongers. These brave adventurers of science have only discovered chipped flints and broken potsherds, mutilated statues and strangely engraved seals. Certainly they did every now and then come across a golden statuette or fragment of enamelled jewellery. It is chiefly these finds that are recorded in the daily papers and described as valuable relics of antiquity, although such rich ornaments do not necessarily appear valuable to students of history or of art.

The flints and potsherds of central Asia, however valueless they may be in the eyes of the ordinary collector, may prove to be the keys that will unlock some of the secrets of the sources of civilisation and the origins of various races.

There is no reason to assume that the supplanters of the reindeer men came direct from Asia, or even that their ancestors had come from Asia. They may have been the inhabitants of intermediate lands pushed

eastwards by encroaching Asiatics or by a people who used to be called the civilising Aryans.

Whoever they were that peopled middle Europe between the reindeer period and the Roman invasions, they have left comparatively few traces of their art, and the origins of those few traces are vehemently disputed by rival schools. One school seeks to uphold its pure and independent origin; another would consider it only as the bastard product of barbaric taste and Mediterranean influences. The subject has been treated at great length by Professor M. Hoernes in his *Geschichte der Bildenden Kunst in Europa* (1898); but even with the help of the many discoveries which have been made since that work was published, it does not as yet seem possible to arrive at any definite conclusions.

Interesting and instructive as these local developments may be, they do not help us much in trying to follow the general history of art. Either they do not begin early enough to be taken as original causes, or else they do not attain sufficient perfection to be taken as good examples of artistic results.

Apart from the art of the reindeer men, which stands alone apparently without forbears and without progeny, there are no traces of any art in Europe which may be considered as strong and early shoots of that great straggling tree of artistic knowledge which has blossomed in so many lands and produced its choicest fruit in Greece. We must therefore turn to other countries to see what artistic growth was

made when neolithic civilisation began to improve the material conditions of the human race.

Some of the earliest of these shoots were apparently put forth in favoured lands like Egypt, where climate and soil combined to give mankind a little respite from his constant struggle to keep himself alive. One is perhaps rather inclined to scoff at neolithic civilisation, to look upon it as a period of mechanical plodding, a stage of improvement in material prosperity but of stagnation as regards artistic development. Recent discoveries, however, have shown that this generalisation is by no means a correct one. It is true that no art products comparable with those of palæolithic times have yet been found, but there are many indications that some nations reached a fairly high level of skill both in carving and in drawing during their neolithic stage. In fact, that stage all over the world lasted for so many centuries or millenniums that there was time for art to bud, to blossom, and to decay in several different regions long before any bronze civilisation had appeared.

The causes of these outbursts of artistic activity are still most obscure, but probably they are due both to racial and to economic influences; it will be well, therefore, to consider the economic changes which must have taken place when the world began to pass out of the palæolithic stage.

Man had apparently made one great step in advance when he ceased to obtain his nourishment chiefly from vegetable food, and had learned to utilise the

forces stored up in the bodies of other animals. He thus escaped assisting at one of the slow processes in that marvellous series of transformations whereby lifeless inorganic material is changed first into plant life fixed to the soil, then into animal existence moving freely about the world, and finally into mental life, which has no bounds, but can penetrate the realms of time as well as those of space.

The advance could not, however, be maintained under the then existing conditions. The more he improved his methods of the chase the more he diminished the available supply of food. One branch of the human race therefore took to increasing the supply by domesticating animals, training and breeding them artificially; another branch trained and bred the useful plants. Both these pursuits required much more constant labour than hunting, and left but little time for artistic observation and execution.

Also as life became more complicated human energies became more specialised, men's interests more divergent and occasionally opposed to one another. The pastoral nomad had little knowledge of the life and labours of the more settled cultivator; he had no love for fields of waving corn, and probably he was jealous at being debarred from ranging freely over them. On the other hand the tiller of the soil knew little about animals, for they had not yet been trained to aid him in his work.

In Egypt this second branch found a most congenial home. The Nile had shrunk to a mere rivulet

compared with that enormous stream which in palæolithic times had filled the whole rocky gorge hundreds of miles in length from Nubia to the sea. Instead of continuing to deepen its narrow valley, it had begun to fill it up with those thin yearly films of mud which bear such abundant crops, and have thus made Egypt the wonder of the world.[21]

The pastoral branch also may have found good scope at first, but its importance must have diminished as the agricultural population absorbed the narrow strips of land along the river bank which alone would produce food for cattle and for men. At present it is impossible to distinguish the relics of the prehistoric period as definitely belonging to one or the other of these branches, or even to say when the agricultural branch became predominant. Neither have we any trustworthy evidence to show us when hunting ceased to be regarded as weary necessary toil for food or for defence, and became monopolised as one of the chief pleasures of the rich.

Those who have not travelled in Egypt find it hard to realise that, except at the Delta, the habitable part of the country is less than three miles wide, and that, although it is more than five hundred miles in length, it has not quite such a large area as Belgium. This peculiar conformation was of great advantage to the early agriculturists. There was no necessity for making roads, because the river formed a highway accessible to all. And yet that river brought no dangerous

foes upon its bosom, since it was closed by a great cataract at the south, and by difficult sea entrances at the north. Also they had little cause for fear on either flank, for the vast deserts on the east and west prevented any formidable enemy from reaching them. Thus the long narrow valley became filled with a peaceful and fairly homogeneous population, with similar habits, and few conflicting interests throughout its whole extent.

A great change must have come over their lives when they began to have fixed dwellings. Some of their villages have been discovered and excavated, models of the houses have been found in their tombs. We know the unvarying ground-plan of their rooms, and even the position and form of their hearths—round basins of burnt clay, placed in the middle of the principal chamber, the rim moulded to the form of a serpent, the agathodemon, whose head lapped over towards the embers, basking in the warmth and protecting the family that provided it for him.

The rim was also decorated with incised lines imitating plaited work, seemingly an incongruous form of decoration. Perhaps it had some meaning, or at all events some association with past habits or desires, although at present we have not been able to trace it. Plaited work must have been used for clothes, for baskets, and even for bottles for many generations, probably in palæolithic times too, though no clear traces of it have been found in any deposits of those periods. Such light ware was well adapted

for the few household utensils of a nomad race. In many parts of the world baskets are still used in a way that we should never dream of. I once bought from a Papago woman in Arizona a shallow circular basket, beautifully made and almost water-tight,

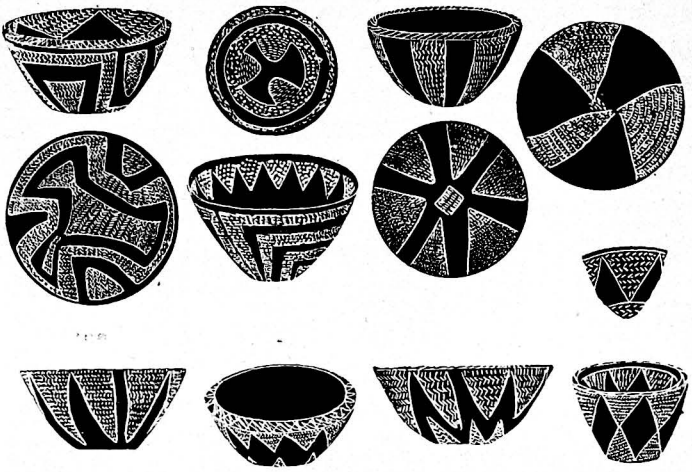


FIG. 86.—Black earthenware with incised designs derived from the patterns of plaited basket-work. This style of decoration has been found characteristic of the early neolithic stage in many countries, but it does not seem to have been used in Egypt. They appear, however, to have cherished the tradition of it, for one or two specimens were often placed in a grave. It is supposed that they were imported for that purpose. The larger ones are about four inches in diameter. Found at Naqada near Thebes. Now in the collection of Professor Flinders Petrie at University College, London.

decorated too with designs apparently derived from the shape of a stone-headed tomahawk. It had been used as a basin to mix her dough in.[22]

Those who, in various countries and at various epochs, gave up the nomadic habit, soon found that they could use heavier ware, and they began to coat

their baskets with clay to render them more water-tight. In time they discovered that a fire would harden this clay covering, and that they might even burn away the basket-work without spoiling the vessel. Then after many unsuccessful experiments they learned to build up these earthen pots without the basket core, but they continued for a while to make them in the same old basket shapes. When they decorated them it was with designs that were imitations of the patterns of the plaited basket-work (Fig. 86 and Pl. VII. Figs. 87 and 88), because however incongruous they might be, it was easier to copy such designs than to originate a totally new one.

Imitation is one of the most constant and active of all instincts in all animals; it is the basis of a large proportion of the human actions that are generally imagined to be spontaneous. It dominates all modes of work, in art, religion, trade or politics. An innovator may build upon that basis; but when he builds he must be prepared to work not only with the trowel but also with the sword. For if a man shall make any great variation from the normal type it is considered by the majority of his fellows as of the nature of a sin.

They are right from their point of view. Although the tyranny of custom is greater than the tyranny of law, what other control is there over vagaries and excesses in domains where laws are yet unknown? Changes are risky and dangerous, the instinct of self-preservation is strong in the ordinary multitude, and

it is as well that none but the strong should dare to pass beyond the limits of old experience. And they must suffer for their daring, even if they succeed before they die. Innovators, reformers, martyrs, all have to pass through fiery trials and to brave the execrations of those whom prudence or sloth or self-interest still keep within the trodden path of imitation.

What wonder then that progress is so slow? What wonder then that it is only after great shocks of material changes that art or any other form of mental activity can burst its bonds and make a forward leap? After great shocks, not during them. Therefore we cannot expect great progress in the early neolithic stage.

Possibly one of the great shocks to neolithic man was the advance of woman from her subjection as a mere drudge, with not much more initiative than a dog or a horse has nowadays, to a position of slight independence as a maker of important articles about which she could use her own judgment without his supervision. For the potter's craft was probably entirely relegated to women by the earliest Egyptians, just as at the present day in many savage tribes it is practised only by the females (Fig. 89).

With the making of pottery came also new ideas as to the rhythm of shape. Men's eyes were soon to be opened to the beauties of simple geometric forms, as expressed in vases moulded by the potter's hands—the potter's wheel was still an unimagined thing.

FIG. 89.—Native Kabyle woman of Algeria making earthenware without the aid of a potter's wheel. The vessel rests on a slab which she turns slowly round with her foot. Reproduced from the *Revue d'Ethnographie*, December 1911, by permission of M. A. Van Gennep.

FIG. 90.—Base of an ancient earthenware vessel found at Moussian, near Susa. It shows the structure of the mat on which it was built up. Similar impressions are often found in Egypt.

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The full appreciation of these beauties was not suddenly developed. Potters have to wrestle with many difficulties, to make many experiments with various kinds of clay and with various styles of levigating, of mixing, and of baking it. The history of our own potters is a chequered one of achievements and disappointments. What must it have been for those poor women with no previous experience to guide them, no foreign specimens to copy, no instruments but their own hands to collect and mix and shape the stubborn stuff?

Then when with patient care they had wound the long strip of plastic clay round the soft base spread on its plaited mat (Fig. 90) when the ascending spiral, pressed with deft fingers, had slowly formed the curving sides of cup, or bowl, or pitcher, when it had been dried by sun or wind, and had been covered with hot embers and exposed to fiercest flame, then, perchance by reason of injudicious cooling or from some undetected flaw or some bad quality of the material, behold a crack, a gap, a crumbling of the base! All their work has been in vain. The broken sherds go to swell the waste heap from which in after ages the archæologist will dig them up and try to frame the story of their makers.

It would be an interesting "control" experiment to turn over a waste heap from one of our own towns and see what idea it would give of our present stage of civilisation.

The early forms of pottery in Egypt were not

often beautiful, but they had that honesty of purpose which prevented them from being ugly (Pl. IX. Fig. 91). Have you ever seen the potter making pots? It seems so easy on that swift revolving wheel to build up anything you please. You have machinery and tools and everything prepared at hand to help you to express in soft, well-chosen clay the ideal shapes that float enticingly before your mental vision. It is worth while trying it, for you will surely fail. Then you will go forth with more sympathy in your heart and less censure on your tongue for the workers of all ages. Especially will you have a fellow-feeling for the failures of those who in the distant past had to try and try and try again ere with unpractised hands and without obedient tools they could produce any shape that might have any claim to beauty.

Professor Petrie has made a special study of these forms, and he has drawn outline figures of a great number of them in *Diospolis parva*, one of those large beautifully illustrated volumes published for the Egypt Exploration Fund. He estimates that there were more than a thousand different shapes given to vases in prehistoric times, and at least three thousand during the dynastic period.

There was certainly less temptation in those days to repeat the same forms. All the pottery being made by hand, and generally without moulds or templates, it was nearly as easy to invent a new form as to copy an old one. That is to say, the mechanical effort was not much greater, more mental effort was certainly

FIG. 92.—Earthenware vase of late predynastic type with red strokes of paint. It was bought in Egypt, but its origin cannot be traced. About half actual size. University College.

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required, but if the body is not overtaxed the mind takes pleasure in exercising its creative powers by making slight variations from the normal type. Nor was there any special inducement to make vases in those circular shapes which clay assumes so naturally upon the potter's wheel; unsymmetrical forms were just as easy to fashion as symmetrical. Accordingly we find vases taking the shapes of fishes, of quadrupeds, and of birds (Fig. 92). They often have the heads and legs so developed that they would be classed as figurines rather than as vases were they not furnished with a vase-like mouth and sometimes with a spout. Although they are very rare in the earlier periods, vases having some resemblance to a human form are sometimes found, as might naturally be expected. Do we not even now unconsciously think of human forms when speaking of the various parts of vases, conveniently describing such parts as their necks, their shoulders, or their feet?

The shapes of the best earthenware vessels may have been derived from those of the stone vases, of which such numerous specimens are found in the earliest graves of the neolithic period in Egypt. In fact it is probable that stone cups and vases were made soon after men learned to grind and polish their stone axes and other implements; possibly even before they learned how to make vessels of earthenware.

One indication of this being the case is the fact that the earliest earthenware vessels never have handles. Rather later ones are found to have slight

protuberances with a horizontal[23] passage for the string by which they were suspended (Figs. 128 and 129). This device was used in the earliest times for stone vessels, on which it would be difficult to carve a loop handle projecting freely from the body. For a vessel built up with ropes of clay such a loop would seem to be a simple enough contrivance, but it does not make its appearance until much later in the world's history, and even then it does not seem to have been accepted by the Egyptians. Being so conservative in their tastes they may have preferred the clumsy old stone handle forms.

The development of this art of making stone vases may have taken place in some other country, for apparently it was at a high point when the neolithic people first settled in Egypt. The early ones are chiefly in very hard stone, marble, basalt, and syenite (a sort of granite). They have fairly good geometric forms, though some are so ungainly and unpractical that it is difficult to say why they were made (Fig. 94). They range in size from a few inches to a foot or more in diameter. Their final shape seems to have been given by grinding them down with wet sand or emery and a small stone, much in the same way as hard stones are polished at the present time. Nearly the whole of the interior must have been hollowed out by the same method, for not much inside chipping could have been done with the poor implements at their disposal. Even gentle hammering would have been risky, since they worked even the

large vases down to a thickness of less than half an inch.

The pottery becomes more interesting when it is of sufficiently good quality to receive painted decora-

FIG. 94.—Stone vase, about three inches high, bought in Egypt. Now at University College, London. The face is of the same type as that in Fig. 105, with high dome-shaped head, not well seen in this illustration.

tion ; it then affords one of the best indications of the progress of pictorial art in those early times. In fact we have little else to judge by, as there are very few specimens of painting and drawing on any other material. We must, however, always bear in mind

that drawings on pottery do not necessarily represent the highest attainments of the art of the period.

When a nation has reached a certain stage, the potter is more of a craftsman than an artist; as regards his drawings, he becomes a copier of other men's work rather than an originator.[24] Also there are many limitations of his artistic instincts. Except on the terra-cotta boxes, the Egyptian potter had only a curved surface to work on, and a very small extent of surface too. His range of colour was very limited, and some of the substances he used changed considerably under the process of firing. Therefore it is not surprising that neither in Egypt nor in any other country do we find any polychrome painting on pottery until a comparatively well advanced stage has been reached. These considerations will have to be discussed at greater length when we come to deal with Greek vase painting (see pages 371 and 478).

Drawings of men and animals are not uncommon on the very early ware. They are painted crudely with coarse white lines on a red surface (Pl. VII.). Glazing had not yet been invented. The surface had to be smoothed down by polishing it with the open hand, a pebble, or a piece of wood, and wonderfully well they did it.

The style of the drawing on the white-line pottery is schematic. Animal figures predominate, rendered in a way that is beneath contempt (Figs. 98 and 99). Possibly they are poor copies of poor originals, degraded by frequent and careless repetition. The human

FIG. 95.

FIG. 96.

FIG. 97.

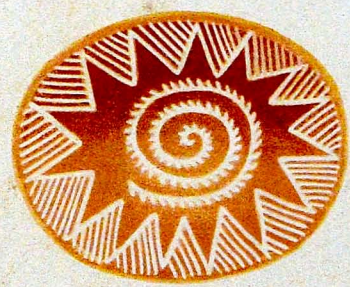

FIG. 87.

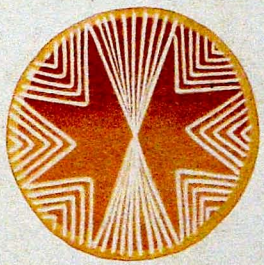

FIG. 88.

PLATE VII.

FIGS. 87 and 88.—Designs painted on the interior of earthenware bowls. Probably derived from patterns assumed by plaited work. Found at El Amrah.

FIGS. 95, 96, 97.—Figures painted with white slip in rectilinear style during the early prehistoric period. Sequence dates 30 to 40. Found at Gebelein.

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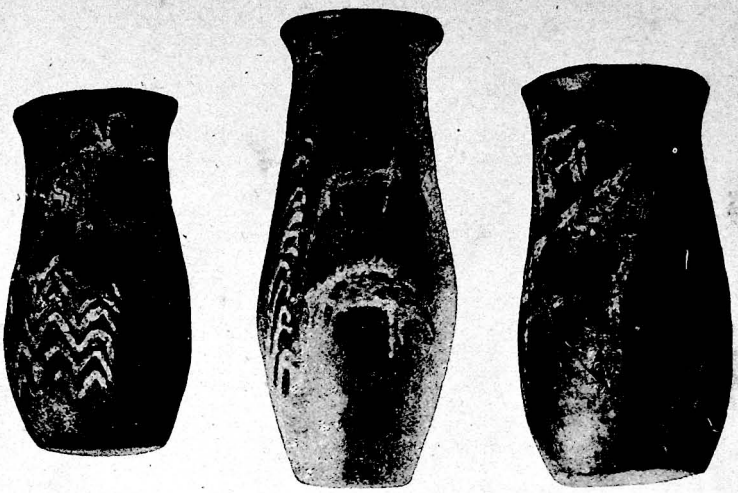

FIG. 98.—Coarse red pottery of the first predynastic period. The animals are so badly drawn that it is often impossible to say what they were intended for. Size of the largest, about nine inches high. Now at University College, London.

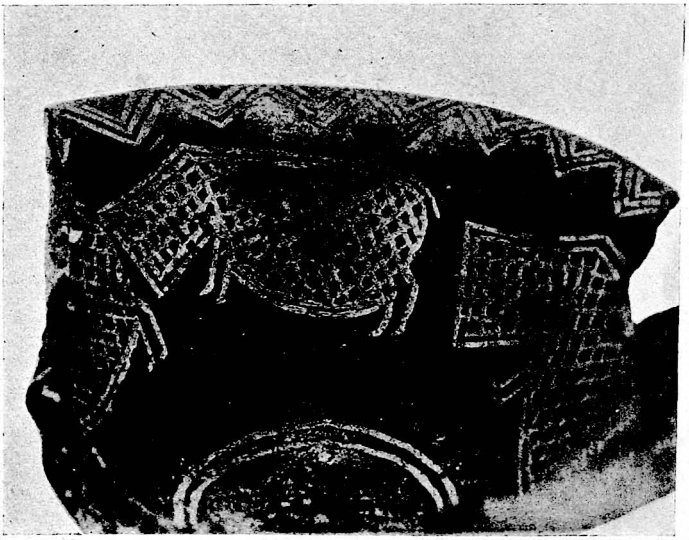

FIG. 99.—Part of a small red bowl, decorated on the inside with figures representing a hippopotamus. About half actual size. Now at University College, London.

figures are no better (Fig. 100). They show that dislike of curved lines, and that affection for triangular forms that is so characteristic of certain races or districts, or perhaps only of certain periods or stages of development. We have abundance of scattered evidence on this subject, but a more connected and comprehensive series of examples will have to be collected before any definite conclusions can be arrived at as to the underlying causes of this preference.

FIG. 100.—Coarse red vase (*sequence date* 40) with white slip designs well burnt in. The men are drawn in the "triangular style" adopted by many primitive races of ancient and of modern times. Now at University College, London. Height about twelve inches.

This vase offers us the earliest known picture of men fighting. For the first time we have a representation of those homicidal struggles for supremacy which fill so many pages in the written and in the unwritten history of the human race. At a later period the pictures of kings smiting their enemies, who seldom seem able to offer any resistance, occur with monotonous regularity.

If we had to judge the character of artists and historians only by the evidence of the works they have left us, we should imagine them to be a blood-thirsty race, glorifying greed and cruelty, or palliating it with smooth, smug euphemisms. But in times of barbarism—a barbarism which is still rampant beneath the thin cloak of modern civilisation—artists and historians have not much independence. We talk of liberty, but who is really free to tell the truth by picture or by word? Literature has partly freed itself from ignoble bonds. The artist who determines to be free from patronage of any sort finds himself in a queer position, not unlike that occupied in former times by the "masterless man."

Let us not blame the artists or historians who proclaim the glories of brute force. Their work is moulded by the social systems of their age; systems unwise perhaps, in that they give so much determinative influence to men rich in material wealth but poorly qualified to guide a nation's intellectual and artistic efforts. How can such faulty leadership be bettered? It is easy to abuse a system; it might be easy to destroy it, but it seems wellnigh impossible to introduce a new one. The social system of a race is like its art, the outcome of its aspirations and ideals. A nation's art can be destroyed by great catastrophes; it cannot be improved except by slow development; is this not also true of the more complex growth of social institutions?

It is difficult and often impossible to be sure of

the relative ages of the various specimens of neolithic pottery found in Egypt, for until quite recently the whole period previous to the early dynasties (about 3400 B.C. according to the Berlin reckoning[1]) had received very little attention, and its relics were quite unclassified. The style of treatment allotted to them may be judged by the arrangements still made in the British Museum, where a small number of important specimens are huddled together in Table Case L, labelled "Miscellaneous Antiquities, chiefly of the Archaic period."

We have seen that the various phases of the palæolithic age have been well determined, and definite names have been assigned to them and accepted by the majority of the students of that period. Professor Flinders Petrie has attempted to perform the same service for Egyptian archæologists by classifying the relics of the different ages previous to the historic period under a system of "sequence dates." Instead of naming these various ages after the names of the places where the relics were found, he has allotted numbers to them. Number eighty represents the age of the relics now proved to be most abundant

[1] I have adopted the Berlin (or short chronology) merely to avoid the appearance of unduly exaggerating the antiquity of the objects described in this book. Black letter type will be used for the B.C. of dates previous to 1600 B.C. in order to remind the reader that the system is quite different from that adopted in most of the older books about Egypt and Chaldea. In the works of recent writers the lack of unanimity and of any indication showing which of the many systems still in use they have chosen for their dating is sometimes very confusing to the ordinary student.

in the deposits of the beginning of the first dynasty; number thirty that of the relics found in the very earliest deposits yet discovered. The numbers one to thirty are kept in reserve for possible discoveries of still earlier remains. They are only sequence dates, and must not be taken as expressing regular intervals of time. The period thirty, for instance, might be as long as the periods thirty-one to thirty-five all put together, or it might be shorter than any one of them.

Unfortunately this system has not yet found general acceptance; indeed, Dr. Reisner in his very careful and elaborate work on *The Early Dynastic Cemeteries of Naga ed Der* (Leipzig, 1908) ignores it altogether. Until some agreement can be arrived at on the subject the ranks of the predynastic archæologists are like a mob attacking a citadel. Each one fighting for his own hand may succeed in gaining distinction for himself, or "valuable" specimens for his particular museum, but the advance into the unknown land will still be barred against such a disorganised band of independent explorers.

In the meantime any one taking up a special subject is at a great disadvantage, for he has no means of correlating and comparing the results obtained in different localities by the various workers. There are thousands of vases and hundreds of carved figures scattered about in public and private museums, but it is seldom possible to learn whether they come from the very earliest deposits or from those just preceding the first dynasties. In fact it is often impossible to

ascertain even the name of the locality where they were dug up, for collectors are frequently so anxious to possess unique or rare specimens that they will pay high prices to unauthorised diggers who dare not or will not divulge the name of the places where they were discovered. Such collectors are doing great injury to the cause of science, and it seems as if they were really little better than receivers of stolen goods.

Of course it is the rich and ignorant tourist who does the greatest harm. Experts must have some difficulty in deciding whether the conniving at the spoliation of precious deposits is any worse than allowing them to be lost to science by falling into the hands of mere curiosity collectors.[25]

Of late years the work has been entrusted much more frequently to properly equipped and organised expeditions which are not obsessed with the mad craze for "specimens," but are more intent on extending the world's knowledge of its own history. It is, however, not yet possible to draw many definite conclusions, because the subject is still so new. Even in 1895 Maspero, in his *Histoire Ancienne, Egypte et Chaldée*, p. 49, felt justified in saying, "the primitive generations have left us nothing, or almost nothing." He dismisses the whole stone age in one short sentence, ending up with "these (flint) objects may be less ancient than most of the hieroglyphic monuments." He even tries to emphasise the point by quoting a story told by

Mariette about a modern Arab who used to shave his head with a flint razor, but managed it so badly that he always had to apply cooling leaves to allay the subsequent inflammation.

The old Egyptologists were men of great literary attainments, and did very valuable work in deciphering the hieroglyphs, but too often they were without the scientific habit of carefully collecting many facts before forming any theories. Their attitude towards archæology was very similar to that of theologians in the nineteenth century towards geology. They had always been chiefly concerned with manuscripts and inscriptions, they were therefore only accustomed to base their judgments on the statements and opinions of other men. The observation and collation of material facts were a form of mental exercise in which the majority of them had no experience and but little skill. When the written word, their chief source of information, failed them they helplessly confessed their ignorance or lost themselves in vain conjectures, for they knew no other way of obtaining satisfactory evidence.

The oldest inscriptions were found on monuments and relics of the pyramid builders; tradition and the writings of later authors confirmed the belief that they were the work of the earliest dynasties. They showed that these kings ruled over a highly civilised and extremely well organised nation. The language was written in characters that were already stereotyped, and its art had also adopted definite formal

conventions which retained their power for more than three thousand years, producing a style that was almost as unchangeable as the hieroglyphic writing. Egyptologists were therefore faced with an impenetrable wall of mystery, over which some of them projected their minds in strange flights of fancy, but none seemed to think of burrowing underneath it.

The myths of the old cosmogonists still enthralled men's minds, evolution was unknown or regarded as a dangerous heresy, and there was a general tendency to represent all forms of life—human, religious, political or artistic—as appearing suddenly without passing through any previous stages of development. Their origin was popularly ascribed to some god, or at the least to some one superlatively gifted man. Egyptian civilisation was therefore regarded as a wonderful phenomenon, blossoming out suddenly and inexplicably, just in the same way as Minerva appeared springing fully armed from out the head of Jove. The few who were not content with this explanation avoided the difficulty by asserting that the Egyptians must have come from some other land bringing their civilisation with them.

About seventeen years ago large areas containing remains of a civilisation differing greatly from that of the pyramid builders were discovered and explored by Messrs. MacIver and Mace, Professor Petrie and M. J. de Morgan, who was then Director-General of the Department of Antiquities in Egypt. M. J. de Morgan, in his *Recherches sur les origines de l'Egypte*

(1896), pointed out that they must be ascribed to a race settled in Egypt long before the kings of the earliest dynasties had begun to rule over the land. This suggestion of a possible evolution was a great shock; but now it is generally accepted that the dynastic civilisation was mainly derived from the predynastic. The latter, however, was certainly affected, at some still undetermined period, by two invasions or infiltrations of foreign races or of new ideas. Its relics are seen to lose their neolithic character; small copper objects are found more frequently and the style of art undergoes two fundamental modifications.

This question of the sources and effect of foreign influences on native art and civilisation is always a puzzling one even when dealing with much more recent periods. It is therefore not surprising that the origin of this invasion is a subject for much controversy, some authorities holding that the invaders were Semitic and came across the Red Sea from Arabia, while others maintain that they were Semitised migrants from Mesopotamia and came by way of Palestine. A few writers deny that there was any invasion at all, or even any infiltration of an altogether different race. They base their belief on the measurements of the skulls taken from predynastic and early dynastic graves, and they assert that the foreign influence was exerted through the trade routes, which are now known to have been numerous and extensive at very early periods.[26]

These are questions that will have to be fought out by archæologists. They will necessitate the collection and consideration of a number of details which may not have any connection with our subject, but will provide a framework for the classification of our specimens according to their relative age. Until this has been done on a much larger scale than has hitherto been attempted it will be useless to try to make many deductions as to the rise and progress of predynastic art. At present we do not even know whether it was in Egypt or in Chaldea that men first began to use metal instead of stone for their ordinary implements and weapons.

CHAPTER VIII

PREDYNASTIC CARVING AND DRAWING

In some of the earliest deposits, considered by Professor Petrie to be about nine thousand years old,

FIG. 101.

FIG. 102.

Bone combs of the first prehistoric period. Rather similar combs are used by women of the Malacca tribes as a preservative against illness. The head of the animal in Fig. 102 may be taken as one of the series discussed on page 139, as it is not in the usual profile position.

there are curious examples of carved objects—combs ornamented with animals (Figs. 101 and 102) and

pendants with human faces (Figs. 103 and 104). The latter seem to show a definite race type, as they have such a high dome-shaped forehead. This is strongly marked in a specimen discovered by M. J. de Morgan in the prehistoric cemetery at Gebelein. The reports of his excavations there are not yet published, but

FIG. 103.

FIG. 104.

These amulets seem to have been suspended head downwards, possibly in order to give the wearers a better view of them. They vary in size from about one inch to several inches.

he has generously allowed me to reproduce a photograph of that specimen (Fig. 105) and also of a pendant (Fig. 106) and of a clay figurine from the same cemetery (Fig. 107). I do not think that on any of these specimens we can base any sound argument about the capabilities of the early Egyptian sculptors. Most of them are evidently hasty work

a *b*

FIG. 105.—Stone figure of better workmanship than is generally seen in these first predynastic period amulets, but of the same racial type. Found at Gebelein, near Thebes.

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turned out wholesale to supply some popular need. The bearded figure, although beautifully finished and showing a certain amount of character, probably had to conform to some generally accepted ideal. If it had been more realistic its owner might have considered it less efficacious; there is little likelihood of its having been made for mere ornament. Professor Maspero, in his *Egyptian Archæology*, p. 97, says: "The object of decoration was not merely to delight the eye. Applied to a piece of furniture, a coffin, a house, a temple, a decoration possessed a certain magical property of which the power and nature was determined by each being or action represented, by each word inscribed or spoken at the moment of consecration. Every object was therefore an amulet as well as an ornament." M. Maspero is referring to a later period, but his remarks would apply with equal force to prehistoric times.

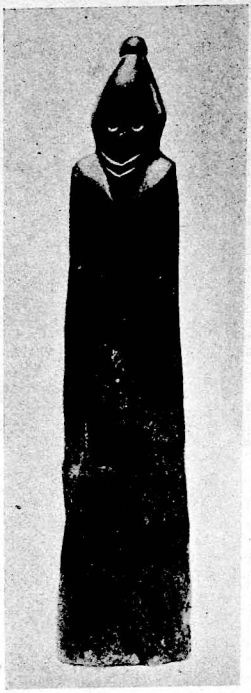

FIG. 106. — Stylised head (with curious knob) on stone amulet from a very extensive burial ground at Gebelein. Possibly it represents a veiled face.

The accepted ideal probably corresponded to the mental image those primitive men had formed of a being with supernatural protective power. It is by no means necessary that such a mental image shall have

any counterpart in real life, though it is usually based on a generalised remembrance of something actually seen. Analogous cases are found in mediæval pictures of the apostles, where they are often repre-

FIG. 107-*a*.

FIG. 107-*b*.

Terra-cotta figurine from a grave at Gebelein. The hair is painted black and the body brown. A rather similar figure is seen on the vase in Fig. 120.

sented as bishops in full canonicals, not because the painter or his patrons thought that the apostles really wore such vestments, but because that dress was associated in their minds with sacred actions, and therefore a

FIG. 108.—Figurine of light grey clay found at Toukh. The black designs painted on it are supposed to represent tattoo markings. Height about five inches. Now at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. (The band round the waist is only a strip of metal fastening the figure to its support.)

picture of a sacred person thus clothed was more suggestive and more conformable with their mental picture.

It is impossible to say whether there was in Egypt a development of the art of drawing similar to that

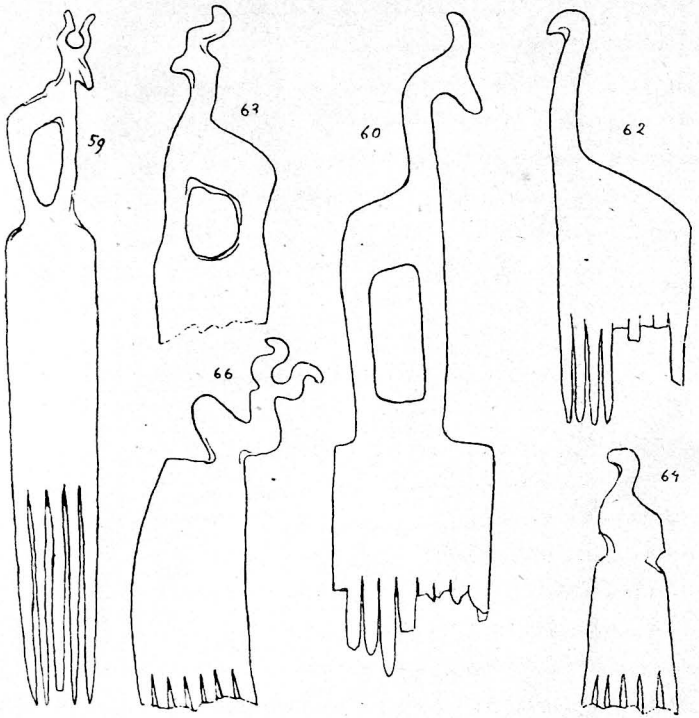

FIG. 109.—Animal figures rather resembling the *contours découpés* of palæolithic times (see page 29).

development from flat carvings which Piette traced so well in France, but it is rather significant that so few sketches of any sort can be assigned to the earlier divisions of the predynastic period. Objects corresponding to Piette's *contours découpés* are found

sometimes as ornaments on combs (Fig. 109), sometimes as palettes for grinding and mixing eye paint (Fig. 110). They occur in all the early deposits, but after sequence date 60 the combs are seldom found and the palettes become so conventionalised that they no longer have any resemblance to animals.

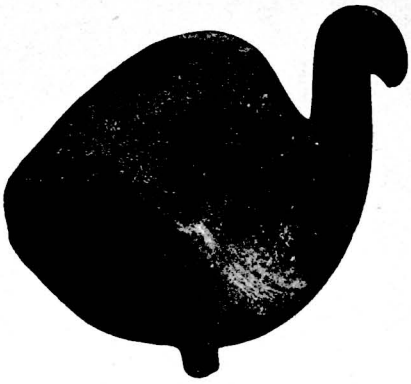

FIG. 110.—Slate palette in the form of a bird. Now in the Brussels Museum. Half actual size.

Occasionally they have traces of paint adhering to them. It is not likely that even in those early times this paint was used only for adornment. Primitive man is more practical and less fantastic than we generally believe him to be. It is well known that in later times a rim of green colour was painted round the eyes to moderate the glare of the sub-tropic sun, therefore we may suppose that during the polished stone period the old Egyptians considered those streaks of paint beneficial as well as beautiful. It also acted as a disinfectant. Those who have seen the fly-covered eyes of modern Egyptian children must regret that eye-painting has gone out of fashion there. Green malachite paint is still used as a disinfectant in Central Africa.

The neolithic Egyptian, like the palæolithic

European, attempted to make these flat carvings more life-like by adding incised lines (Fig. 111), and until his world had become well accustomed to the appearance of objects carved in low relief, he seems to have had the same lack of encouragement to practise the art of drawing on the flat. His rare early drawings of animals resemble those of the early palæolithic age in being always in absolute profile, but there are no signs of his even beginning to make that wonderful progress which, under more favourable circumstances, had brought the cave men's art to such strange excellence. On the contrary, it seems as if his art was in a stage, not merely of stagnation, but of degeneration. And in truth the Egyptian, first as an agriculturist and later as a town dweller, had but little opportunity of acquiring good mental pictures of wild animals. His brain was not saturated with impressions of the colour and the form, the habits and the movements of freely living creatures. Neither had he any stimulus to represent them well. He seems to have outgrown the religion based on imitative magic, which rewarded its votaries with an increased supply

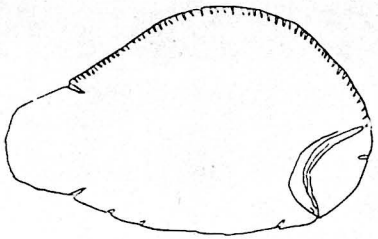

FIG. 111.—Flat slate palette having the outline form of a fish. The resemblance has been increased by a few incised lines. There are a great number of such palettes in Prof. Petrie's collection at University College, London.

of daily food. That is the only religion which appeals strongly to primitive human beings of all ages, just as all children in their earliest youth have little thought except for what concerns their daily sustenance. It is a religion which does not stimulate its art to create any visible expression of thankfulness or reverence, for such immature minds do not recognise any special agency and have no sense of gratitude. At a more advanced stage they become aware of adverse influences which then they seek to counteract or to avoid. Hence the desire for charms and prophylactics, the graven image or the pictured wall, but it is still chiefly against the evil that may befall them day by day that such art products are required. The future has as yet but few terrors for their unimaginative minds.

With increased experience the great mystery of death and of a future life becomes more and more insistent and also more and more mysterious by contrast with other mysteries which, though formerly impenetrable, have now become clearer to their stronger and wider powers of vision. Then there arises a desire to secure sustenance and comfort in that future life. In obedience to this craving the potter moulds figures (Fig. 107) to accompany the lonely dead, and funeral vases to contain the food with which these hungry souls may regale themselves and thus cease from troubling the living inhabitants of the upper world.

In a still more advanced stage the conception of adverse influences is extended beyond the grave, and

means are devised to secure protection against the evil spirits that may beset the defenceless soul during its perilous journey towards the distant dwellings of the immortal gods. In dealing with those shadowy regions the artist has not the sustaining and restraining influence of naturalism. His work cannot be compared with the works of nature as seen by other men. He is free to exercise his imagination unencumbered with any burdens of reality. Thus we might imagine that his flights of fancy would not be impeded by any forces attracting him downwards towards his mother earth. But human nature is often weakest when it is most free. Instead of soaring to greater heights and leading his fellow-men to nobler conceptions of the mysterious future and of the forces ruling man's destiny after his apparent death, the artist of those days stumbled amidst fantastic incongruities composed of ill-assorted elements, disjointed portions of the mental pictures impressed upon his brain by ordinary creatures having a natural existence in this material world. The sphinxes, the gryphons, the human-headed monsters and the animal-headed gods of human form, even the demons and the angels, all testify to the poverty of imagination of artists who lose contact with the firm ground of nature. It is dangerous to give way to the incitement of their fellow-men to make unsupported flights beyond the limitations imposed upon them by the conditions of their art, conditions that are determined by the capabilities of the human eye and the power of the

FIG. 112.—Armless figurine made of lead, a material very seldom used for this purpose.

FIG. 113.—Ivory figurine with knob on head rather similar to that in Fig. 106. Though the style is very archaic, Prof. Petrie thinks that this statuette and also the leaden figure belong to the latter part of the predynastic period.

human brain to read, in the shape and colour of material forms, the underlying meaning which is being so slowly revealed to an expectant world.

These changes in the ideals of men and in the demands made upon artists after such an expansion of their ideals are fairly well exemplified in the relics of Egyptian art. The early specimens are crude but sincere attempts to represent men and animals in a manner as true to nature as was possible for rather unskilled hands.

A great number of figurines which are evidently prehistoric have been discovered in Egypt. They used to be largely bought up for museums and private collections, by men who did not realise that such specimens, snatched by ignorant fossickers from unrecorded graves, are of as little value as isolated words or letters cut out from an ancient manuscript. There are many different varieties, mostly female; some are steatopygous. Until a well-authenticated series, classified according to age, can be obtained it is useless to frame any theories about their evolution or their bearing on the history of art during that long period. They were often summarised; that is to say, certain limbs or features were omitted if they appeared to the sculptor craftsman comparatively unimportant. These armless and legless statuettes (Figs. 112 and 113) are very puzzling. There is no evidence that they are the rudimentary forms from which the more complete figurines were developed. Their rigid symmetry and the occasional presence

of certain definite details, such as the veil and belt (Fig. 114), would rather seem to indicate that they are degenerate or perhaps highly conventionalised types. They may, however, merely be early instances of that uncertainty, which even in modern times is still felt, how far realism should be avoided or should be sought after. We can all agree about the extreme limits in either direction. We no longer consider that a sculptor is justified in omitting neck and arms and legs, leaving only a head upon a simply squared or rounded pillar to represent the human form. On the other hand, we do not expect him to carve each individual hair. When we discuss a painter's work there is still more divergence of opinion as to what amount of definiteness of form he should portray. What wonder then that the artists of seven or eight thousand years ago should tread with hesitation those strange new paths which even yet we have not thoroughly explored.

FIG. 114.—Figure moulded with vegetable paste on a reed core, and painted red and black. About two-thirds actual size. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Some of their experiments seem curiously childish, and for others it is difficult to assign a satisfactory reason. On a palette now in the Egyptian collection at University College, London, there is a drawing representing two animals in rather a strange position

(Fig. 115). It is the earliest known instance of what is now called "heraldic opposition." In order to bring the animals into better relief the artist has used cross hatching in the space between their bodies. Rough cross hatching on the bodies is common enough in Egyptian and all other primitive work, but this use of it is, as far as I know, unique. It seems to be a device for making the figures stand out in bold relief. Bearing in mind Mr. G. Murray's theory that this heraldic position is due to an attempt to represent both sides of an animal (see page 52 and note 67*a*), one may fancy that this artist made a bold experiment, and tried to give his drawing the appearance of a single animal carved upon the stone. This idea is rather confirmed by the same figures being repeated on the other side of the palette, and by their having inlaid ivory eyes similar to those frequently seen in the statuettes.

Drawings are rare on these palettes, and few of them are of any merit. On a specimen from Hu (Fig. 116) a giraffe and various other animals are sketched in a style that resembles that of the wretched figures painted on the early vases (see Fig. 98), or merely scratched on them as a sign perhaps of ownership. Figure 117 shows a number of these pottery marks collected from various sources by M. Jean Capart for his *Primitive Art in Egypt*. I have not been able to find any good classification of them according to relative age, but nearly all of them have the same character, and show no signs either of

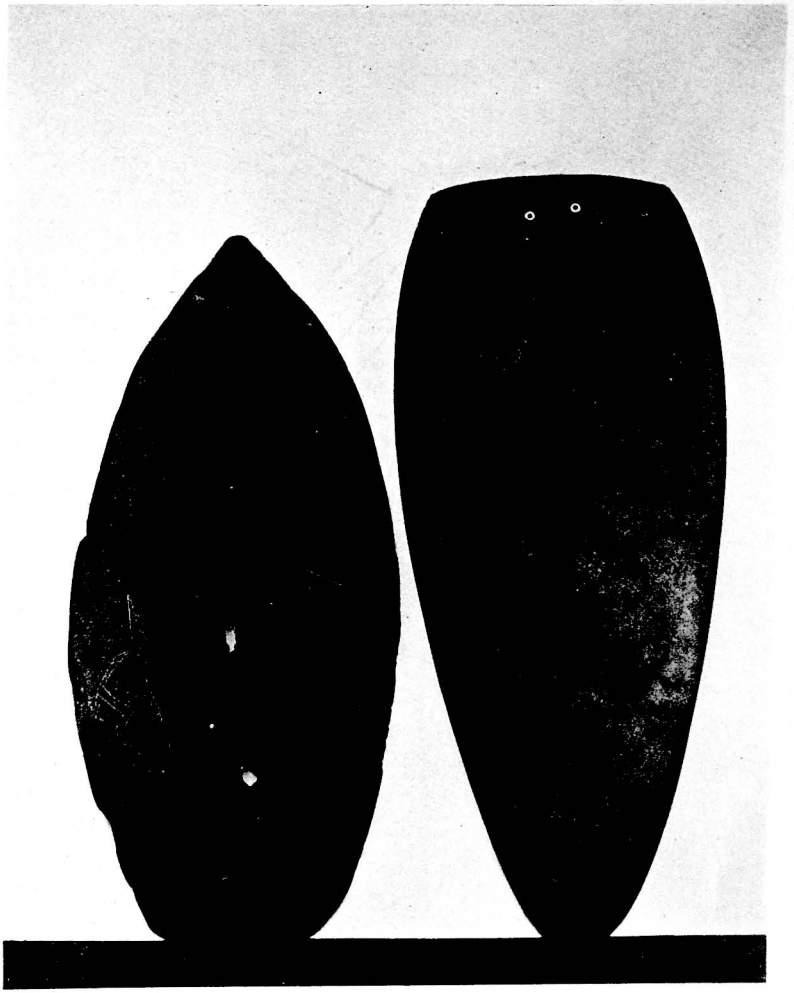

FIG. 116 FIG. 115

A common type of the slate palettes found in predynastic graves. They are usually about eight inches long and have little or no ornamentation. University College.

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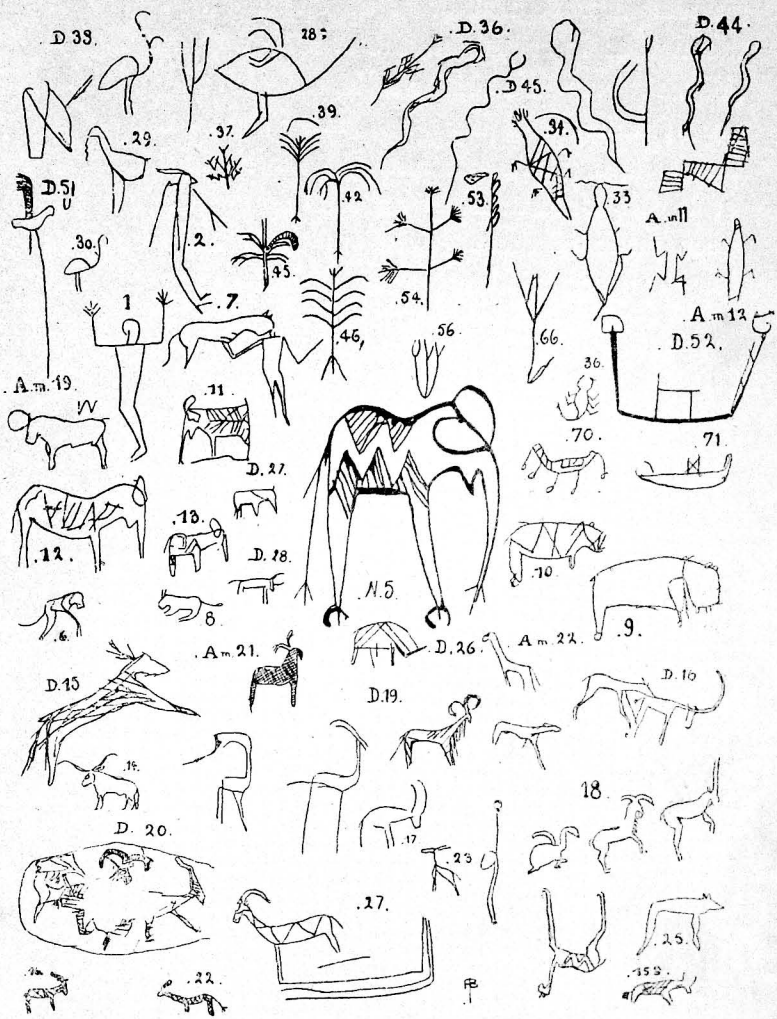

FIG. 117.—Figures scratched on predynastic pottery of various dates, and supposed to be special signs used by the makers or owners.

gradual improvement or of degeneration. A few of the figures inscribed on the rocks of Upper Egypt (Fig. 118) are in a similar style, though many of them are of rather a higher grade, the animals not being in absolute profile but having their rightful number of legs. Unfortunately no thorough study has yet been made of them. Some of them have been so long exposed to the weather that they are covered

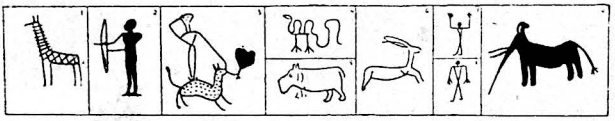

FIG. 118.—Eight figures incised on rock at Gibel-Cheikh-Raama (Upper Egypt), discovered and sketched by M. G. Legrain. The ninth figure is at Chatt-el-Rigal.

with a brownish coating like that on the original surface of the rock. Their age may be guessed at by comparing them with the inscriptions cut on the same rock during the fifth and sixth dynasties, which, although made about five thousand years ago look as fresh as if they had been cut yesterday.[27] Some day we may be able to trace the connection between these drawings and those of Libya, Algeria and Morocco. Perhaps we may even find that the descendants of the cave men of France and Spain migrated through these countries into Egypt, maintaining for a while their artistic traditions, but degenerating gradually when they ceased to do any original work. If they contented themselves with copying the copies of the drawings

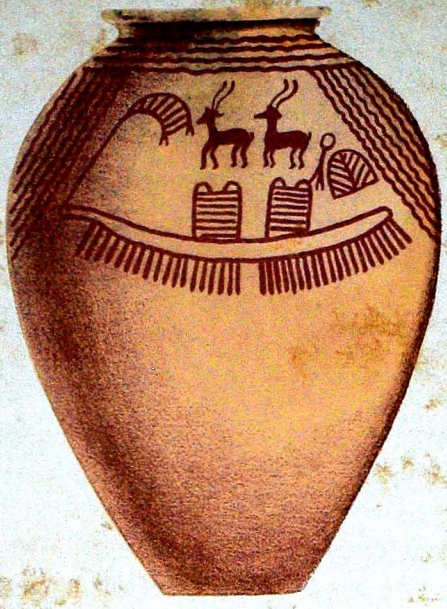

FIG. 119.

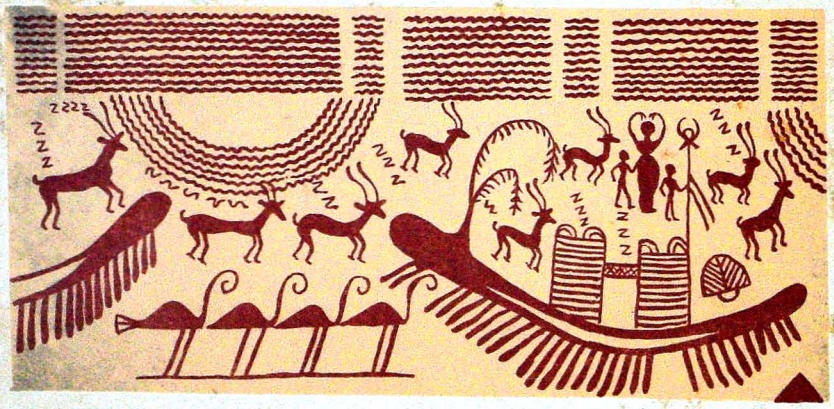

FIG. 120.

PLATE VIII.

FIG. 119.—Jar with designs of curvilinear type painted with red slip before the vase was fired.

FIG. 120.—Extended drawing of part of the design on a vase of the same type found at Abydos. These jars are generally about twelve to eighteen inches high. They belong to the second prehistoric period. Sequence dates 42 to 60.

of their forefathers, they would in time have easily arrived at the stage represented by the sketches on the palettes and the paintings on the early Egyptian pottery.

On pottery of a rather later period, after sequence date 42, there are signs of a change in the habits and ideas of these neolithic people. The vases assume different shapes (Pl. VIII. and IX.), one of which is not unlike that of some examples of the very early Chaldean pottery found at Susa (see Fig. 284). The rows of long-necked birds which now begin to appear on the Egyptian vases differ from the Chaldean chiefly in having their beaks curved instead of straight.

It is not prudent to lay too much stress on these analogies. The early steps of artists of all ages are very similar; character is not clearly shown until a certain amount of progress has been made. As an instance of this similarity we may note the curious triangular form given to the human body in the drawings on still earlier vases (Fig. 95). When the same form is found on early Chaldean (Fig. 214), on Ægean (Fig. 301), and on Greek vases (Fig. 373), it can hardly be taken as indicating any close relationship between them, for some modern children draw people with triangular bodies, and that form is adopted also by men of the hill tribes of India (Fig. 121), and by the red men of North America.

Another sign of the growth of new ideas, or of a fresh current coming into Egypt, is the frequency

with which boats begin to be depicted (Figs. 122 and 123). Some of them are so vague that it has

FIG. 121.—Drawing made with pencil and paper by a Chitral native, India.

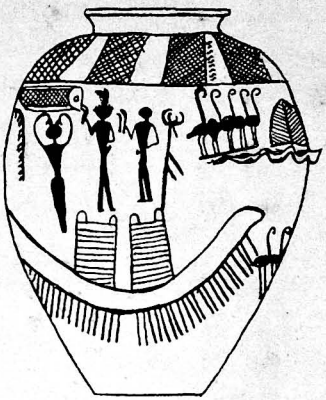

FIG. 122.—Vase of the second predynastic period, showing a boat with two huts or cabins on it.

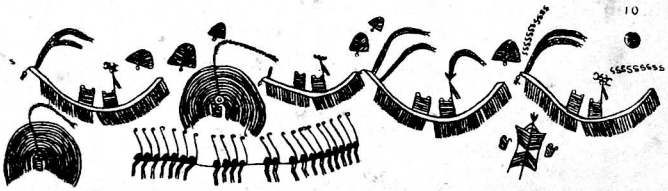

FIG. 123.—Drawings done with brown paint on vases of the second predynastic period. The concentric semicircles are said to represent aloes growing in pots. They are still cultivated in cemeteries in Egypt.

been doubted whether they are boats, but the series has now been traced from these rough sketches up

to well-drawn vessels with mast and sail, oars and steering-paddles (Fig. 124). Otherwise we might have been tempted to regard those strange slanting lines beneath the boat as an experiment in depicting its shadow or reflection, although indeed the value of

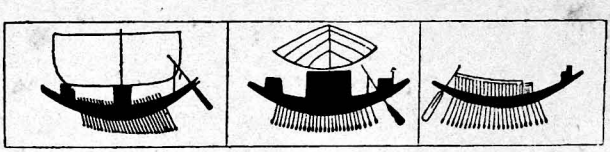

FIG. 124.—Figures of boats with oars, steering paddle and sail. Chatt-el-Rigal. Discovered and sketched by M. G. Legrain.

subsidiary shadows remained unnoticed or unrecorded until very late in the world's art history. Man's literary development was somewhat similar. We can hardly imagine an Egyptian or a Greek writing such a sentence as "Sweet are the uses of adversity."

There is also no attempt at indicating the water, either by wavy lines as in Babylonia, or by the zigzag lines which represented the Egyptian's mental picture of its surface.[28] Neither is there any indication of any land for the men and women to stand upon. Modern artists have been known to commit the error of drawing objects without any visible support; the mistake is only a survival of a failing which was once universal. As to the general style of the drawing we may remark that curved lines are becoming much more frequent; even the legs of the animals are bent, and not straight as in the older examples. The human bodies have lost their rigid triangular shape, and are regaining their more natural contours.

Most of these vases were found in graves of the

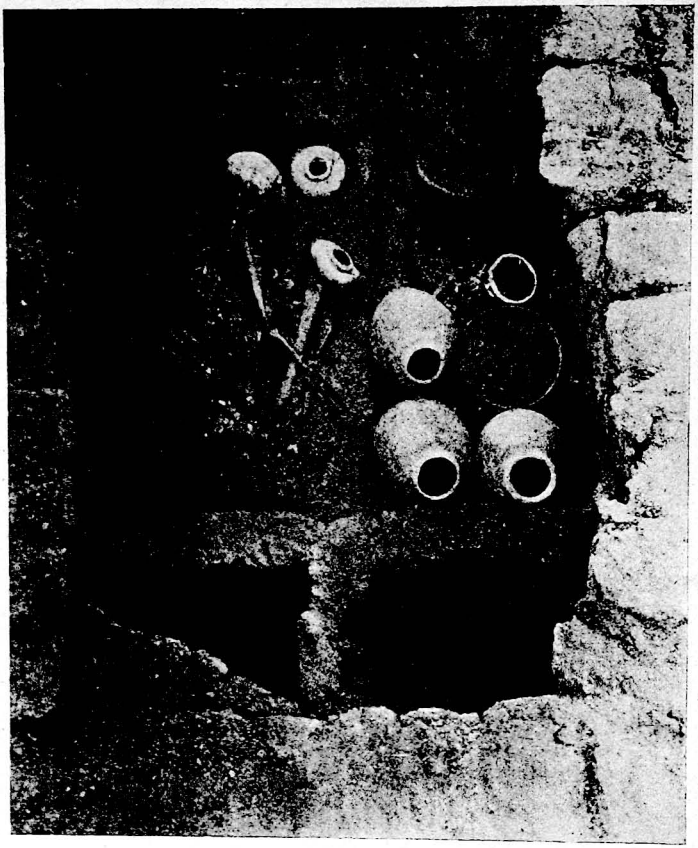

FIG. 125.—Skeleton in the contracted position characteristic of neolithic burials in many different countries and periods. View looking down into a grave at Naga-ed-Dêr. It dates from the first or second dynasty when full-length burial was only beginning to be practised in Egypt. From Dr. Reisner's *Early Dynastic Cemeteries of Naga-ed-Dêr* (1908), by permission of Messrs. Hinrichs, Leipzig.

usual neolithic type, the body lying on its left side

and in a contracted position, with the knees drawn up to the chin (Fig. 125). The men and women depicted on the vases are supposed to be mourners or relatives of the deceased, collected upon the river bank to bid him farewell as he starts for his long and lonely voyage on the waters of the underworld. The curious S or Z marks scattered about on these vases are like the conventionalised forms of the birds, which seem to be meant for wild ducks, that are found on early Chaldean pottery (see Fig. 205). There is one other slight detail that is worth noticing. We have here perhaps the earliest picture of a little child, a child stretching out a tiny hand to hold its mother by her dress (Fig. 120).

Vase painting, unfortunately for archæologists, never reached any great perfection in ancient Egypt. Already in the very earliest dynastic times, and long before any historical evidence is available, the ruling classes preferred the more costly ware of polished stone or perhaps of metal, while the rest of the population seem to have been unable to afford any decoration on their earthenware. We are thus deprived of one of the best means for deciding the relative age of the relics of those times. In many countries, by noting the special forms and decoration of the vases, experts can now determine the relative antiquity of other objects found along with them. In Egypt the absence of characteristic pottery has greatly contributed to the uncertainty which prevails concerning the progress of events in

that very interesting period just previous to the foundation of the earliest dynasties possessing a written record.

Towards the end of the prehistoric period when the early kings had apparently become well established, the technique, or craftsman's work, displayed in the stone vases was better than the art; much time was spent in triumphing over mechanical difficulties, but the purely æsthetic side suffered. Occasionally we get splendid bowls, magnificent in their stern simplicity (Fig. 126), but all too frequently fantastic shapes, quite unsuited to the material, were made at a vast expense of time and labour. They were curious, but seldom beautiful. One even has the shape of a leathern bottle, rather like those in use among the Spanish peasantry of to-day. Sometimes they are fluted (Fig. 127), probably in imitation of the forms of copper bowls, for copper was a rare and royal metal and sturdy stone must bow before that harsh metallic sway. It is also possible that they were coated with gold foil to simulate a bowl of solid gold, a custom not unknown to the Chaldeans and the Cretans (see page 381).

It would be interesting if we could find out for whom they were made. One cannot imagine any artist or craftsman deliberately setting to work to make such things on his own initiative. Were they produced to please some prehistoric millionaire? It almost seems as if ostentation had begun to have some guiding influence in art. How else can we

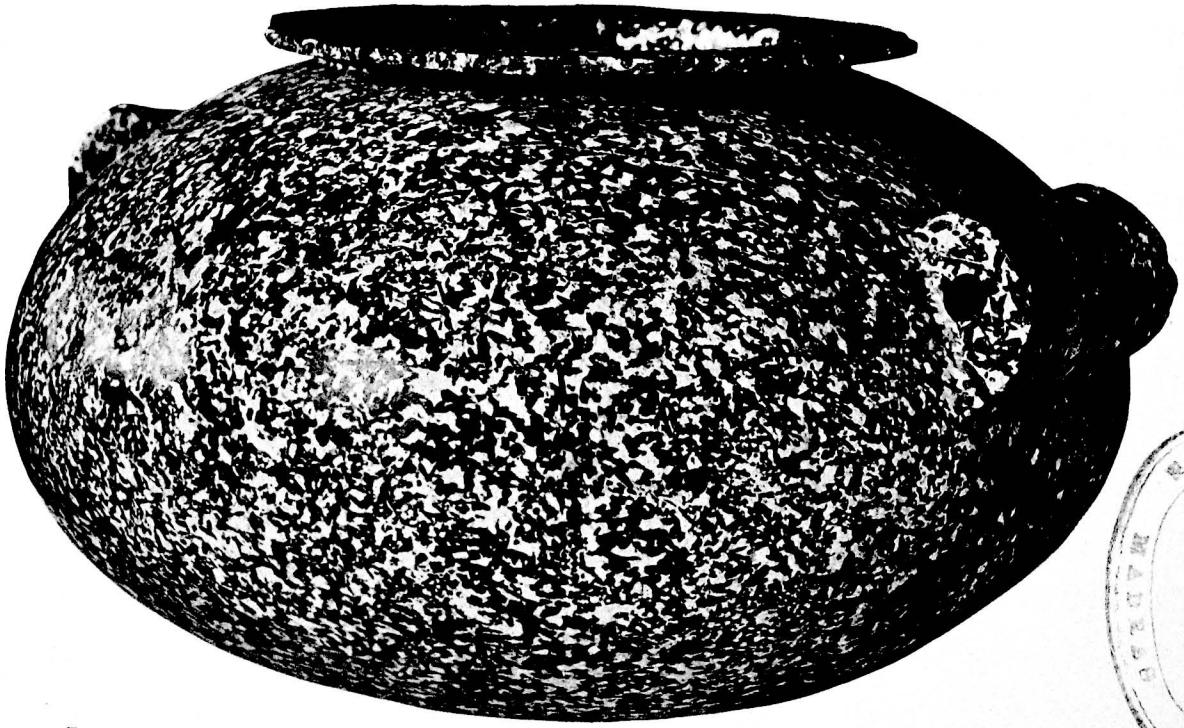

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FIG. 126.—Finely polished bowl, two feet in diameter, but not more than half an inch in thickness, hollowed out of a block of diorite. Found at Hierakonpolis. Owens College, Manchester.

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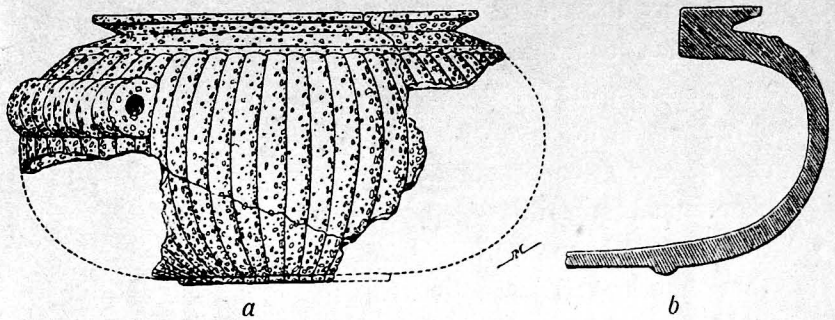

FIG. 127.—(*a*) Fluted bowl of hard porphyry about twelve inches in diameter found in the early dynastic royal tomb excavated by M. de Morgan at Nagada. Now in the Cairo Museum. (*b*) Section showing the thinness of the walls.

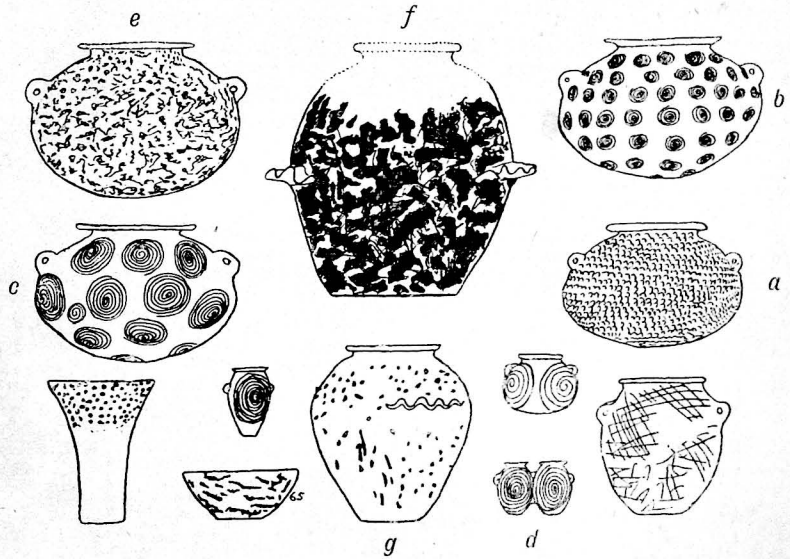

FIG. 128.—Painted earthenware vases of the later predynastic period. Some of them are imitations of diorite or other stone vases; *f* and *g* have the later type of handle—wavy, and not perforated.

account for those earthenware vases painted to imitate marble and other hard stone (Fig. 128 and Pl. IX.), and placed with other offerings in the tombs of later date? It is not likely that they were made for real use or even for ornament; they were probably an economical substitute deposited by the relatives of the deceased, comforting themselves with the belief that they looked just as well at the funeral, and that nobody would ever know the difference.

I remember a similar case of ostentatious trickery in England at a magnificent ball given in the depths of winter. The rooms were decorated with thousands of beautiful Maréchal Niel roses, but all those out of reach were artificial.

One of these imitations is thought by Schweinfurt to have given rise to a definite spiral pattern. According to him it began as a number of tiny spirals, imitating the appearance of the little fossil shells crowded together in the nummulite limestone so common in the rocks of Egypt. The copyist, not knowing or not caring what they were meant for, found it easier to make fewer and larger spirals, until at last two or three of them would cover a whole vase (Figs. 128 *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, and Pl. IX.), but they gave no suggestion of their original purpose. It seems more probable, however, that the larger ones were intended for serpents, which were certainly favourite subjects in early Egyptian carvings.

This sketch of the progress of the most primitive art of Egypt is necessarily very hazy and imperfect. Many

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FIG. 91.

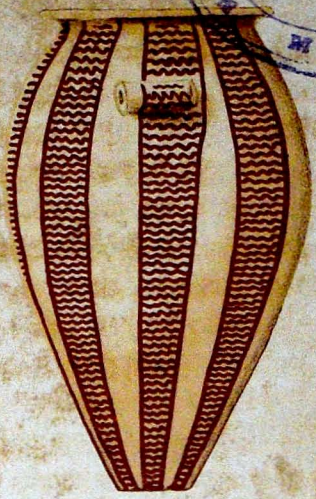

FIG. 129.

FIG. 130.

FIG. 131.

FIG. 132.

PLATE IX.

FIG. 91.—Black topped pottery of the first prehistoric period. The black rim is due to the vase being placed mouth downwards in the glowing ashes when it was fired.

FIGS. 129, 130, 131, 132.—Vases and bowls of the second prehistoric period with horizontally perforated handles. Compare the rows of animals with those on Chaldean pottery (Fig. 201). The spirals of Figure 132 were made by three brushes fixed on one handle. Figure 130 was painted to imitate hard porphyritic stone. The first three were found at El Amrah, the two lower ones at Abydos.

of the gaps will probably be filled up in a few years, and then we shall be able to trace the fortunes of this singular people who apparently lived for ages in that fertile valley without producing any large-sized works of art, although they seem to have arrived at a fairly high stage of civilisation and had good artistic capacity. No remains of palaces or great temples have as yet been discovered. If any such buildings had ever been constructed some relics would surely have survived, even if they had been built of unbaked brick. In that treeless country they would not have been built of wood. So few weapons have been found that we may imagine that they led a fairly peaceful life undisturbed by foreign invasions or any violent ambitions. If their wealth was evenly distributed and not concentrated in the hands of kings or priests, that would account for the absence of great palaces and temples, of large decorative objects and life-sized statues. All early art expression, although racial in its style, is personal and individualistic in its motives; therefore in a primitive community of undistinguished men there can be no grand works, for they have not yet discovered the power of willing co-operation. It is not until they have been welded into an organised body by religious leaders or by the fierce hammerings of ambitious men that they are sufficiently united to create large and noble expressions of their national ideals. That such a welding did take place in Egypt there is abundant evidence, but how or when it happened we do not know. From the remains that have recently been

unearthed at Abydos, El Amrah, and Hierakonpolis we see that a very great change began to come over the land before the first dynasties known to history were founded. It may have been due to the ambition of local rulers gradually absorbing and disposing of the resources of larger and still larger districts; or, as one ought rather to express it, longer and still longer stretches of the river banks. It would, however, be more in accordance with what happened in other countries if we suppose that the change was produced by the invasion of a fiercer or more pushful race. It is also likely that this race was better armed; certainly copper seems to have become more plentiful during the latter part of the prehistoric period, and it is now known that copper can be hardened sufficiently to furnish a very effective material for weapons. The agricultural population of Egypt with their flint spear-heads and stone maces would have had as little hope of success against such invaders as the Aztecs had against the Spaniards. But this foreign invasion, which, however, may not have been foreign or may not have been an invasion, differed from that conquest of the New World in one important feature. The Spaniards stole the stored up gold and silver of the natives and took it away to Spain, therewith causing a fatal congestion of their country's heart and brain. The invaders of Egypt, by introducing new industries such as wheat growing and sheep breeding, showed the natives how to produce more wealth. A different system of burial began to be practised; in some of

the better furnished graves the body is extended at full length, and occasionally shows signs of being partially embalmed. It is possible that the invasion was made by a small number of foreign traders organising and exploiting the resources of the country. At first the natives may have shared in the benefits of this organisation, but after a time the concentration of wealth and energy into a few hands seems to have made their lot harder than ever. Maspero, in his *Egypte et Chaldée* (1895), page 343, when describing the condition of the mass of the nation, says: "It was only by permission of the lord that he could use the land or the house of his fathers. If he added to them by his labour he merely increased the value of the landlord's property. What he possessed to-day, would the lord let him have it to-morrow? . . . The condition of the people never changed, the burden never grew less; whatever hand held the rod, they always suffered from its heavy strokes."

If art is the expression of a nation's feelings and aspirations, what form can we expect to be evolved by a people whose upper class were mainly actuated by a coarse desire for domination and for mere material luxuries while the rest had but a sense of utter carelessness, or perhaps of dumb despair? My work now is to trace the evolution of their art in its happier period. I do not envy the task of those who have to trace the prolonged monotonous course of its decline and fall.

CHAPTER IX

PHARAONIC ART

We have noticed (page 191) that at some indeterminate period far back in their national existence a certain change was manifest in the art of the Egyptians, and that then their drawing began to resemble in some respects that of the earliest Chaldeans. We have also remarked that another change came over the land at a later, but still undetermined period. In this second phase there are again signs of resemblance to Chaldean art and customs, but this time it is to the art of a later date, produced apparently under the influence of a Semitic people who had invaded Chaldea. Naturalism seems to have given way to idealism. The first sign we see is the appearance in Egyptian drawings and carvings of crude fantastic animals with long twisted necks (Figs. 140 and 141), or curious upward curving wings fastened incongruously upon their backs (Fig. 133). It may be that those ancient artists were struggling to express ideas which even now are merely aspirations. The Greeks, whose methods modern artists have imitated, gave equally impossible wings to some of their celestial beings; but, with their greater tendency towards naturalism, they gradually abandoned the

upward curl and adopted the straight, sweeping form which since then has generally been used to distinguish the wings of beneficent spirits from those of malignant or rapacious demons.

That this pictorial expression of ideas gave rise in Egypt and in other countries to picture writing, and then to hieroglyphics, and ultimately to abbreviated forms, some of which developed into the signs of our own alphabet, is now generally admitted, although the actual origin of many of the signs is still a matter of debate. The hieroglyphics of the Egyptians cannot be traced back beyond the first dynasty. Many of the signs were then already so conventionalised that their origin has baffled all research. No traces have yet been found of the tentative naturalistic figures which must have preceded them. These hieroglyphic conventional signs remained almost unchanged from the first dynasty until the Roman period—three thousand years or more. This immutability seems to render it probable that their evolution was also a slow process and might have taken place in some other country. Future discoveries may throw a long-sought-for light on this intricate question, then we shall be able to get a clearer perception of the influences controlling the evolution of that well-known conventional style of art which is commonly called Egyptian, but perhaps may prove to be partially Semitic.

Besides the winged and long-necked animals, the Egyptians of this period used several art motives

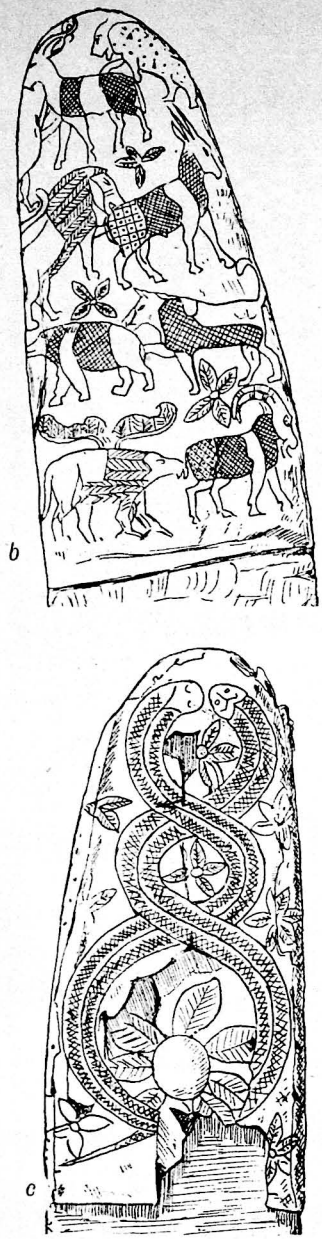

FIG. 133.—Flint knife of the commonest Egyptian shape in the later predynastic period. The flakes were always split off with wonderful regularity, sometimes one side was polished. The handle of this knife is covered with gold foil sewn on with gold thread ; *c* is a drawing of the rosettes and serpents engraved on the other side of the handle.

which were also in favour among the Semitised Chaldeans—entwined serpents (Figs. 133 and 134), rosettes, lions following their victims or attacking them in the rear. In a religious dance we see the hands folded in the Chaldean style (Fig. 135), and for a time engraved cylinders were used to impress designs upon the soft clay which served to seal their

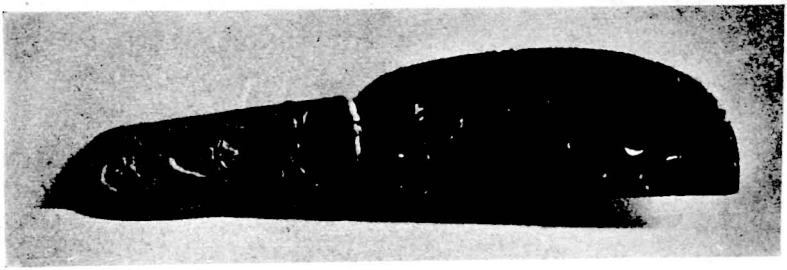

FIG. 134.—Small flint knife with ivory handle. University College, London. A few years ago M. H. de Morgan found three fine specimens of this class of knife in a grave near Thebes. As the skeleton was in the contracted position it helped to fix the period to which these handles should be assigned. In the temple at Hierakonpolis a flint knife was discovered measuring two and a half feet in length.

jars of oil or wine (Fig. 136).[29] This fashion is supposed to have been introduced into Chaldea by the Semites, and it remained popular there for two or three thousand years. In Egypt it died away after a few centuries, and was replaced by that form of seal which is stamped upon the clay or wax, instead of being rolled over it.

The palette on which those fantastic animals are carved seems to have been developed from the earlier

and simpler palettes, though no trace of paint was found on it nor on any of the other large specimens. Some of them measure nearly two feet; they were probably used for ceremonial purposes. Their decoration extends over the whole surface, except where a small circle is left blank as if to receive the pigment. Perhaps, however, they were never used for paint. The circle may be only due to a reminiscence of the depression made in the ancient palettes by the grinding pebble, but whatever was its origin it seems to be an important factor in the scheme of decoration. In the British Museum Catalogue (1909) they are called shields.

FIG. 135.—One of three men in the Chaldean attitude of reverence, carved on the great mace head of Nar-Mer, found when excavating the site of the temple at Hierakonpolis in 1899. Now in the Cairo Museum.

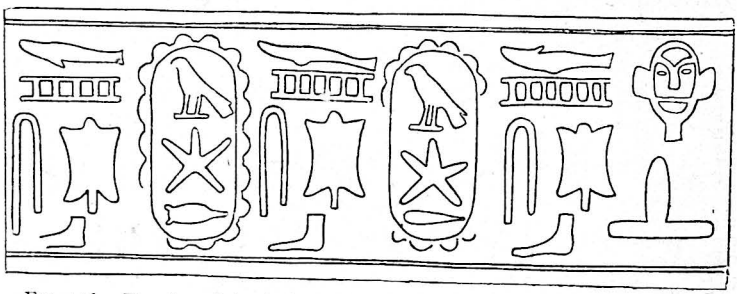

FIG. 136.—Drawing of the design on a first dynasty seal cylinder, reconstituted by Prof. Petrie from several fragments of impressions made by it and discovered in a royal tomb at Abydos. The ladder-like hieroglyph is intended to represent a channel of water. The hieroglyph above it is a fish. The foot hieroglyph became in after times stylised as a reversed **L**. The origin of the last hieroglyph on the right is not known.

a

b

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FIG. 137.—Fragment, nine inches long, of a slate palette now in the Louvre. The lion and the bird emblems are enclosed in walls, while the bull is in the open attacking the enemy.

Several other palettes have been discovered recently; they help to bridge over the gap which existed between the Chaldean style of art shown on the previously known palettes and the Pharaonic style that appears in all the work of the third dynasty, and remained unchanged for ages. These new specimens have settled some of the controversies which raged around the old ones, and now no one doubts that they belong to a period embracing the very earliest dynasty (about 3400 B.C.). M. Maspero had believed them to be Egyptian work, and thought he could attribute one of them to the twenty-second dynasty (945 to 745 B.C.). Dr. Budge, the Keeper of the Egyptian Department of the British Museum, considered them to be Mesopotamian works imported into Egypt as presents offered to the kings of the eighteenth dynasty (1580 to 1350 B.C.).

Mr. F. Legge, in an interesting and detailed account written for the *Proceedings of the Society for Biblical Archæology* (June and December 1909), has tried to arrange them in the order of their respective antiquity. He considers a fragment now at the Louvre (Fig. 137) to be the oldest, and certainly it is one of the least conventionalised. The subject is that glorification of the oppressor of the weak which from this time onwards is so frequently chosen by artists. Chosen, forsooth! that is not the right word to use. The artist had but little choice in those days; starvation or worse would have been his lot if he failed to please his master.

There is the king, symbolised as the Powerful Bull trampling down an unarmed and unresisting foe. In a lower panel five standards with emblems of the gods grasp with human and ungodly hands a rope wherewith to bind the victim of their rapacity. It is the sad old story of sordid ambition claiming the sanction of religion, and forcing art to pander to its pride of wealth and domination. Art flourishes for awhile in that rich forcing-house, the latent germs burst out and rapidly develop, ultimately, however, to be cramped by the protecting walls and stifled by that artificial atmosphere.

The bull is a vigorous piece of carving, but it is already conventionalised in some of the details, such as the veins on the legs and the lines around the eye. Its style is rather similar to that of the Assyrian sculptors, although they lived nearly three thousand years later. The figure of the man is good up to a little above the waist, the left shoulder is passable, but the right shoulder and arm presented a problem which was much too difficult. On the other side of the palette (Fig. 137-A) it appears at first sight as if the designer had solved it by adopting a more natural position for the victim, showing his chest instead of his back. This is an illusion, owing to the right shoulder being broken off. The upper hand shows the palm quite distinctly, and the position of the thumb proves that it is meant for a left hand. It is rather remarkable to find hands so well rendered at such an early period; they are

FIG. 138.—It is unfortunate that so little seems to be known about the origin and history of these two fragments of a palette, for it appears to represent almost the high-water mark of Egyptian bas-relief work, in composition if not in technical detail. The discovery of the missing portions might enable us to ascertain its exact age and perhaps to interpret its meaning.

To face p. 209 *and Fig.* 139

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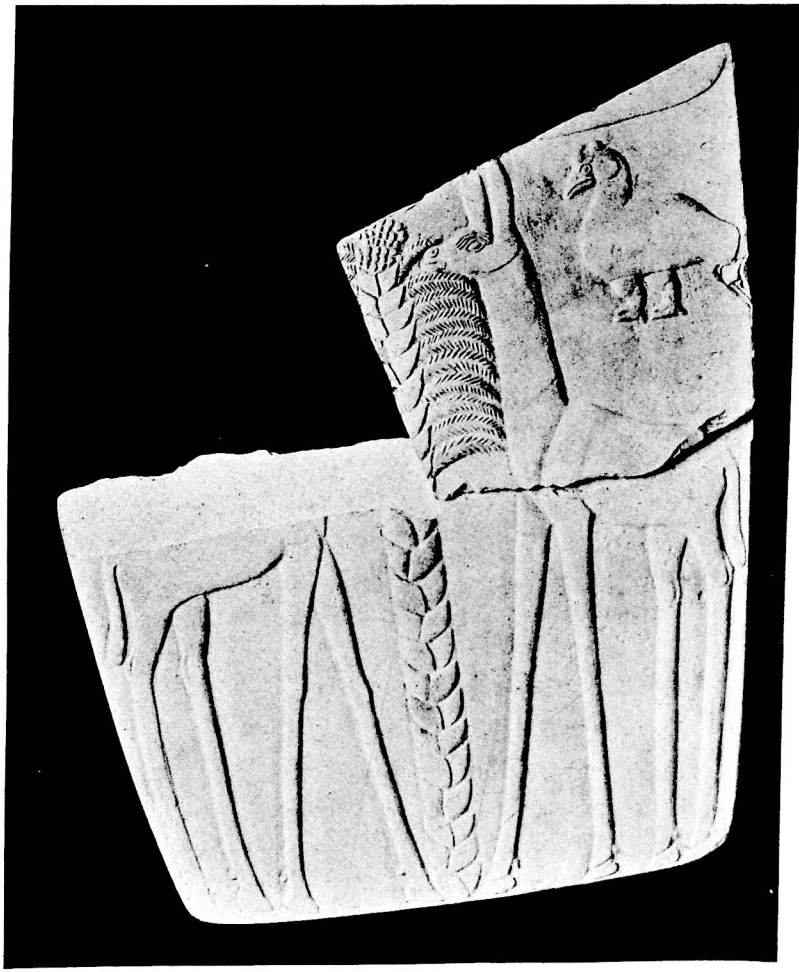

FIG. 139.—Mr. Legge considers that these animals are not giraffes, but gerunak gazelles, a species still living in Africa. The palm tree, although inaccurate and necessarily rather conventional, is one of the best renderings of tree life in ancient sculpture. Even in Greek times there seems to have been very little feeling for inanimate nature. Size eleven inches by thirteen inches.

To face p. 208 *and Fig.* 138.

much better than the hands in the other palettes, better indeed than in most reliefs until several thousand years later.

The eyes have the usual fault of all low reliefs and drawings up to Greek times; it seems very strange that artists should have been contented for so many ages to give full face eyes to profile heads. The eyebrows are only indicated by lines following the curve of the eyelids, while the eyes themselves are flush with the brow and cheek.

The palette which Mr. Legge considers as the next oldest offers a beautiful example of naturalistic work (Fig. 139). The whole slate might aptly be entitled "Peace and War," for to this peaceful picture of giraffes browsing on a palm we have on the other side the strong contrast of a lion and several birds of prey devouring the corpses of the captives of a king (Fig. 138). The general style and the execution of the figures on its lower part are so very different that it is difficult to believe them to be the work of the same hand. Notice the rough cuts to indicate the finger joints of the man whose arms are bound behind his back and the poor modelling of all the other hands. It may, however, only be another instance of the greater difficulty which all primitive artists experienced when dealing with human subjects. Perhaps some day more light may be thrown upon this specimen by the discovery of the missing portion. It may possibly be lying unrecognised in some local collection. The smaller piece, which so happily com-

pletes the figure of the giraffe, had lain some time unnoticed in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford until Professor J. L. Myres saw that it would fit on to the part preserved in the British Museum.

We have already discussed the strange animals on the third slate (Figs. 140 and 141). Their carver was evidently not inspired by his subject; the execution is flat, crude, and careless. It would almost seem as if he had not tried to express his own ideas, but had merely carried out the instructions given by some other person.

The fourth specimen is even worse. Its lack of naturalism is not counterbalanced by any flight of idealistic rendering (Figs. 142 and 143). The fifth is a simple pictograph of some real or imaginary incident (Fig. 144). Dr. Schurz, in his *Urgeschichte der Kultur* (Leipzig, 1900), calls it "an Assyrian hunting scene," although it is a couple of thousand years older than any known products of Assyrian art. Artist historians may fall into strange errors if they do not consult the latest reports of the archæologists. Unfortunately these reports are often very late indeed, and besides being voluminous and not very clear to the outsider, they give such hard knocks to the upholders of rival theories that non-combatants may emerge from the struggle with an aching head. In the dress of the men depicted on this fifth palette a notable change is to be observed. They are wearing a sort of kilt (Fig. 145), rather like the loin cloth which was the dress usually given in

FIG. 140.—Slate palette found at Hierakonpolis in 1900. Eighteen inches long. Ashmolean Museum. Notice the exaggerated length of the claws of the rapacious animals, even of the dogs.

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FIG. 141.—The wings of the bird-headed quadruped rather resemble those of the Chaldean bird (Fig. 204). The animal-headed human figure with a flute (?) is supposed to be a hunter in disguise.

To face Fig. 140 *and p.* 210

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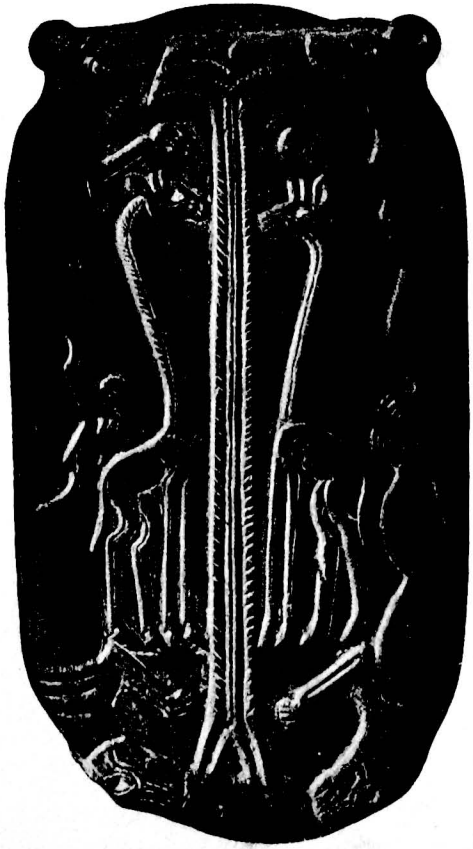

FIG. 142.

FIG. 143.

Palette bought in Egypt for the Louvre Museum by M. Bénédite. Being of inferior workmanship to Fig. 139 it has been thought to be older, but the treatment of the subject would seem to confirm Mr. Legge's classification of it as more recent. It is conventional and rhythmical, mere decoration apparently being the chief idea in the mind of the designer.

FIG. 144.—This large palette is not carved on the other side. The left-hand fragment is in the Louvre, the rest in the British Museum. Size about two feet. Mr. Legge surmises that it may depict a confederation of tribes (represented by their totems held by the standard-bearers) against a tribe which had a lion for its totem.

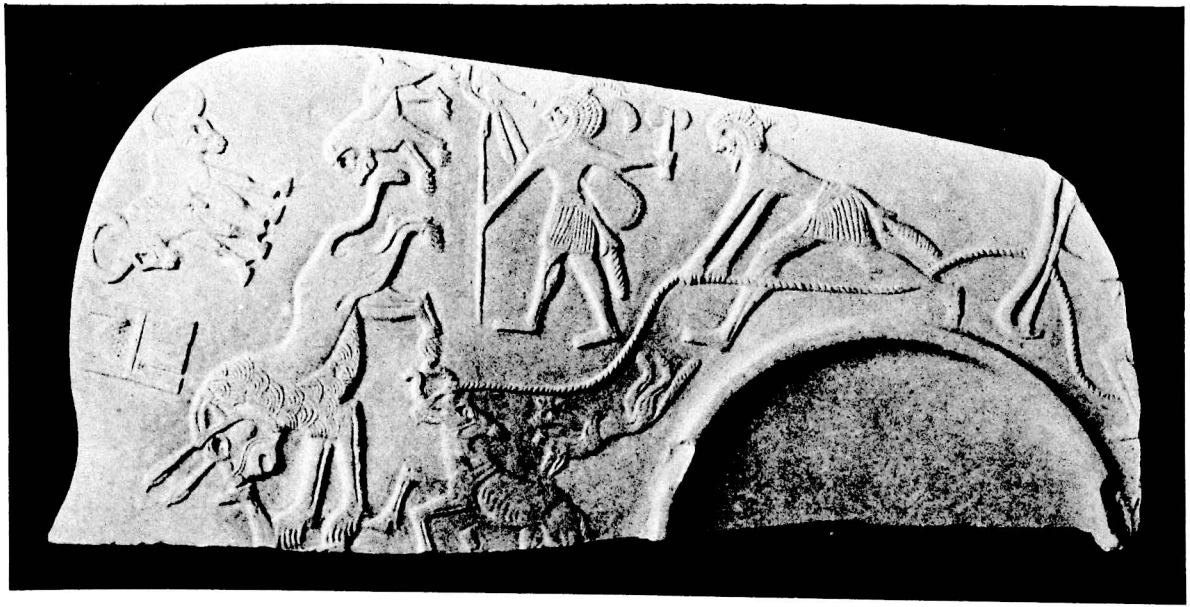

FIG. 145.—The object above the lion's head is supposed to be a temple. The small lion may be intended to represent a cub, though representations of young animals are very rare in ancient art. This lion and the one in Fig. 159 are good examples of the peculiar early-dynastic method of rendering the mane. In Chaldea and the Mediterranean district the locks of hair were pointed. See Figs. 246, 340-*b* and 411.

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Egyptian sculptures and paintings during many succeeding ages to all the men not of foreign nationality. They have the fox or panther's tail hanging from their girdle; but there is no sign of the karnata, which forms the clothing of the woolly-headed victim carved on the first palette. The karnata was a curious cylindrical sheath somewhat resembling an elongated form of the cod piece of the Middle Ages. It is seen on most of the male figurines of the preceding period (Fig. 146), and we shall find that it is a distinctive feature of the dress of the Cretans. It may be that the pre-dynastic Egyptians belonged to the great neolithic Mediterranean race which, as we shall see later on, had so keen artistic sense and so strong a tendency towards naturalism. Perhaps also the earliest Chaldeans belonged to the same race, but that is a generalisation which is at present equally impossible to prove or to disprove. They buried their dead in the same contracted position as the early Cretans and Egyptians, but no relics

FIG. 146.—Ivory figurine found in 1897–8 at Hierakonpolis. It shows the karnata commonly worn by the pre-dynastic Egyptians and by the Cretans (see Fig. 285). Size about seven inches.

FIG. 147.—Fragment of a palette now in the Cairo Museum. In all the animals represented on these palettes we see an avoidance of that full face aspect which was so commonly given in Chaldean carvings (see Fig. 225).

FIG. 148.—The captives have been beheaded, the long-necked lions have been lassoed, the powerful bull has broken down the walls of the abandoned cities, and the cow-faced goddess Hathor regards the scene of slaughter and destruction with the same complacency with which the gods of most nations regard those crimes that tend to bring increased revenues to the temples and the priests.

To face p. 215 *and Fig.* 149

FIG. 149.—Ancient artists seldom portrayed men running; I cannot recall any other example of this attitude. This palette was found at Hierakonpolis and is now in the Cairo Museum. It is twenty-six inches long.

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have as yet been found to show what sort of clothing they used to wear.

In the fragment which comes next in Mr. Legge's list (Fig. 147-*a*) we have apparently a pictographic account of the destruction of some walled towns by different leaders or tribes. Their emblems are perched above the ground-plan pictures of the towns, and are using the ordinary Egyptian hoe to break down the walls, which were probably only made with bricks of sun-dried mud. The animals arranged in rows on the reverse (Fig. 147-*b*) may represent the booty captured in the thickets near the towns. In this slate there is no pretence of artistic composition, it is a mere register of facts. The trees seem to give a touch of naturalism, but they are very similar to the hieroglyphic sign for a tree, and they may be only a reiteration of that sign, used without any artistic purpose.

The seventh and most recent of all the palettes (Fig. 148) bears a name in ordinary Egyptian hieroglyphic characters, a name read sometimes as Nar Buzau, but generally as Nar-Mer. He is now identified with Mena or Menes, the first king of the first dynasty. At one time he was considered as a merely mythical personage, but archæologists are discovering that human nature is just as incapable of constructing an entirely unfounded story as of inventing an entirely new design. It seems as if both literary and artistic productions could only be evolved by gradual variations from some actual fact or object. For this reason

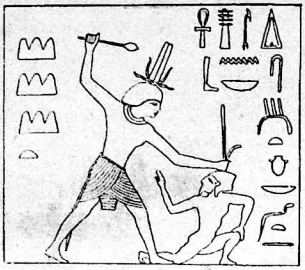

FIG. 150.—King Snefru, third dynasty (about 3000 B.C.).

FIG. 151.—King Sahu Ra, fifth dynasty.

Portions of inscriptions cut on the rocks at Wadi Magara, Sinai.

greater attention is now being paid to ancient myths. Thus the theory that the invaders of neolithic Egypt were a foreign and metal using race is strengthened by the legend that they were "Mesniu" or smiths, and came from the land of Punt.

Whoever they were and wherever they came from there is no doubt about the spirit that animated their leaders. There is one idea, and almost only one, that

FIG. 152.—Granite statue of Rameses VI. holding a captive, the conventional attitude of dignity for a king—though indeed this Rameses does not seem to have been very successful in keeping his own subjects in order. Twentieth dynasty. About 1150 B.C. Cairo Museum.

found constant expression in their art. That expression was so satisfying to their narrow souls that it was repeated without any essential variation for two thousand years or more (Figs. 150–1–2). The subjugation of the weak or the slaughter of an unresisting foe is the *leit motiv* of all their compositions, a motive which still stirs the heart-strings of Europeans with Asiatic minds. Recently there has been added a chorus of admiration for Egyptian work by some of the followers of Nietzsche. They take it and the crude products of the earlier Greek schools of sculpture to be convincing examples of the glories of "ruler art" (see Fig. 357). If that be glory, most of the world's great artists should be filled with shame.

This enormous palette which Nar-Mer dedicated at Hierakonpolis in a temple to his god gives no indication that any resistance had been experienced by the king. A brave antagonist was not the good gift he sought from heaven when he made this votive offering.[30] He was evidently not animated with

> "The fierce joy which warriors feel
> In foemen worthy of their steel."

It is highly probable that the carver of that slate was constrained to represent the victim as being powerless to ward off the royal blows, for the priests had invented or fostered the fiction that kings were gods, and that it was wicked to resist them. The unholy alliance between greed and religion had been consummated, and the fruit of their union was the

enslavement of one of the most artistic races the world has ever seen. Egyptian sculptors had

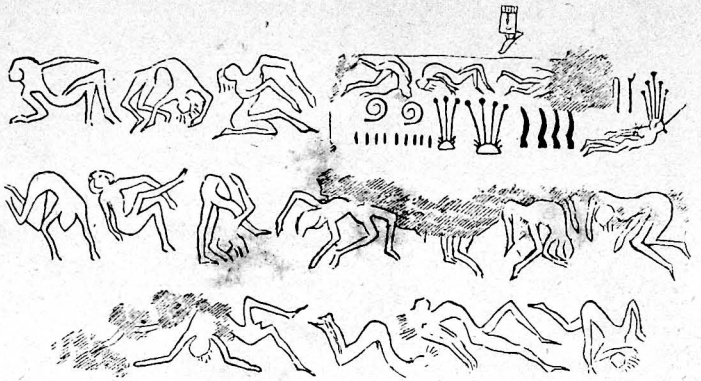

FIG. 153.—Outline figures of slaughtered enemies incised on the base of King Ka-Sekhem's statue. The spirals represent hundreds. The other signs are thousands and tens of thousands.[31]

evidently learned to put a certain amount of expression into their work, but there is no strong feeling in this rendering of a victorious king. He excels by mere size and by the length of his legs, which are out of all proportion to his body.

That conventional method of expressing dignity and power is very common in all immature art, though it is strangely at variance with the popular conception of the character of giants. Folk lore has many stories of their ignorance and stupidity,

FIG. 154.—Ivory statuette found at Hierakonpolis. The projection on the head is a square tenon for insertion, therefore the figure was probably a leg of a stool or some other piece of furniture. Size, five and a half inches.

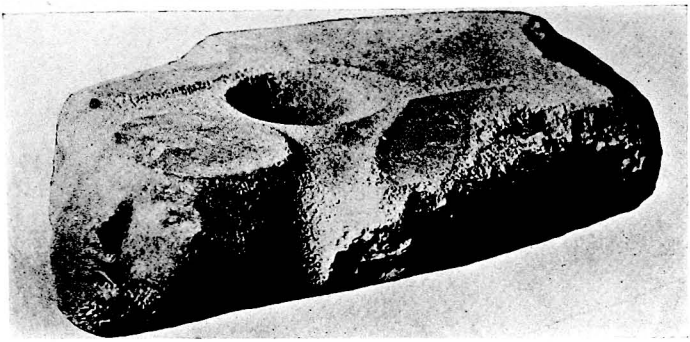

FIG. 155.—This stone with socket for the pivot of a door and ornamented with a human head, was found in position at Hierakonpolis having an upright jamb still on it. It is twenty-six inches long.

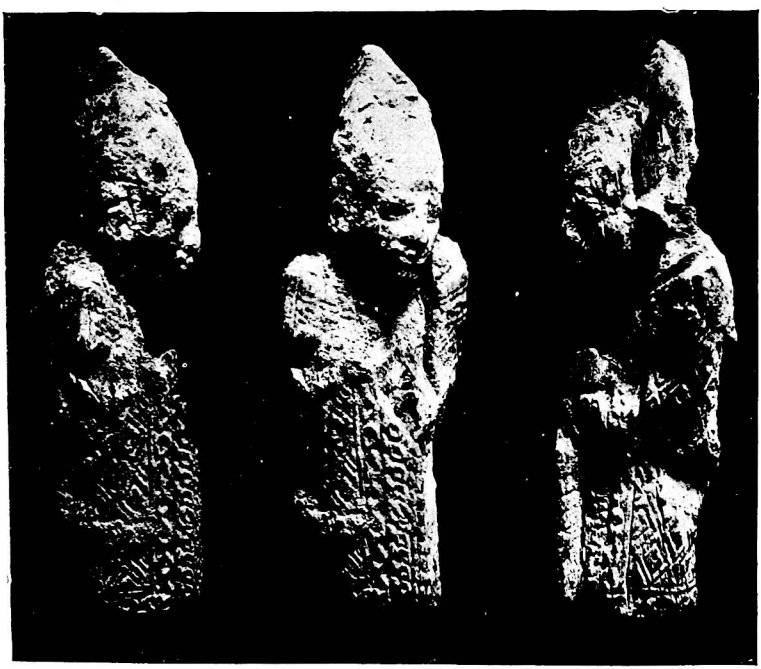

FIG. 156.—Ivory figure of a king wearing the crown of Upper (or South) Egypt. It was found at Abydos. Now in British Museum.

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telling how easy it is to get the better of them. Science now seems to confirm that popular view, and to hold that great size is not favourable to intellectual growth. What has become of the terrific monsters of geologic ages? They did not succeed in dominating all the world.

This desire for domination, this gloating over the misfortunes of their victims, is shown by the frequent delineation of contorted corpses on the royal monuments (Fig. 153); by the figures of bound and crouching captives carved for the furniture of their luxurious palaces (Fig. 154); by the heads of human beings sculptured on the stone thresholds (Fig. 155), stretched out as though their bodies were being crushed under the pivots of the massive doors. Even in minor details the delight taken by the ruling classes in treading down an unresisting victim is ludicrously evident. At one time it was fashionable to have human figures worked into the soles of their sandals in order that they might constantly have the pleasure of trampling them under foot (*Champollion Mon. de l'Egypte.* Pl. 155).

Thus the spirit of a demon had entered into and taken possession of the strong and youthful body of Egyptian art. For a while it resisted the baneful influence, and it produced some wonderfully good naturalistic work, though its ideals were not high. In the British Museum, lying among the "miscellaneous antiquities," there is a shrunken figure carved in ivory that shows a strange amount of sympathy

with the feebleness of age (Fig. 156). It would be difficult to find a counterpart of this for many a thousand years. Also there are some slight signs that artists had perceived the glory of unselfish devotion, and had endeavoured to express it in simple statuettes showing a mother and her child (Fig. 157).

FIG. 157.—Ivory statuette in the British Museum, of unknown provenance, but of predynastic style.

Animals are rendered with considerable fidelity though with but little life (Figs. 158 and 159). Probably the artists were townsmen, and seldom saw any animals that were not either captive or domesticated. These two lions differ so greatly in their style that it is difficult to believe that both of them belong to the same period, and that their variations may be only due to the difference in the materials they are formed from. The flat band running under the muzzle, from ear to ear, is a curious convention which recurs in Egypt and in other lands up to the fifth century B.C., when the Greeks gradually freed themselves from it.[32] The various stages of that change are well seen in the numerous lion statues in the British Museum. The mane of our ivory lion is rather naturalistic and closely resembles the manes of the lions on the

palettes. Both these systems of rendering a lion's mane were used in Chaldea (see Figs. 217 and 240), and in that country also no specimens have yet been found indicative that the elaborate method was later than the simpler one.

This lack of evidence is the great trouble in all the generalisations about the progress of art in distant ages. It is so tempting to form theories, and it is so hard to realise that our specimens may not be representative of the general state of art in their district at that time. Also it is very

FIG. 158.—Red pottery lion from Hierakonpolis. About twenty inches high. Ashmolean Museum. Early dynastic period.

a *b*

FIG. 159.—Ivory lion from an early dynastic royal tomb at Nagada. The tail was generally curled up on the back in these figures.

difficult to make allowances for all the conflicting causes that might have affected the quality and style of the few examples that some happy chances have permitted us to see. It has been surmised that there was a disastrous relapse after those forward strides made during the rise of the first known dynasty, but until many more well-dated specimens of the second and third dynasty are available it is safer to suspend our judgment.

The steps which led up to the maturity of Egyptian art in the fourth dynasty are not well exemplified by the comparatively few statues that can be accurately classified and dated. There seem to have been various schools or centres of art, probably connected with the different cults which still flourished in Egypt. Although the North and South were now united under one king, and he was believed to be the representative of a god, or even an actual god living upon earth, yet there were many other gods claiming allegiance. They were attended by priests, who were always struggling to obtain the mastery for their own especial god, and to secure for themselves the material luxuries and advantages which were considered the rightful reward of such mastery. Professor Petrie, in his *Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt* (1909), gives the outlines of a possible classification of the various schools of sculpture. He bases it on the different qualities of the materials they worked in, soft sandstone and limestone, or basalt, granite, and the other harder rocks.

The roughest and perhaps earliest large statues

FIG. 160.—Two limestone statues of the god Min found in 1893–4 when excavating the site of the temple at Koptos. They are said to show no traces of any metal tool having been used, nor even any stone chisel. They were apparently chipped out with a stone hammer. It would be interesting for an expert to compare this hammer work with the chisel work on the palæolithic relief of a horse (Fig. 23). A smooth round head was also found, but no features are visible. Ashmolean Museum. Size about six feet high.

are those discovered in 1893 at Koptos, about four

hundred miles south of Cairo (Fig. 160). They are supposed to represent the god Min, because they have his characteristic attitude. Although they appear to have been worked by mere hammering and not by any cutting tool, Professor Petrie assigns them to the early dynastic period, while Professor Steindorff considers them to be predynastic. On the side of one of these extremely crude statues (the third one, now in the Museum at Cairo) are carved in slight relief two animals (Fig. 161), which would surprise us by their excellence if we had not already seen that the ability to represent animal life is not necessarily accompanied by any power to depict or carve the human figure. Their feet are placed on small triangular mounds, a conventional method of indicating hilly or mountainous country. This convention was very popular among the Chaldeans, the Hittites, and the Cretans (see Figs. 242 and 316 *bis*), but it does not seem to have satisfied the Egyptians, for this is almost the only unmistakable instance of its use. In the valley of the Nile the hills and mountains are generally flat topped, the peaked form is very seldom seen. It thus appears as if the men who made these statues of their god Min must either have come from a country with peaked hills or must have inherited a convention which did not seem appropriate in their present home. It died a natural death, for art was then alive and could cast off old useless forms, and could pass on to other methods of expression.

At Hierakonpolis, about fifty miles south of

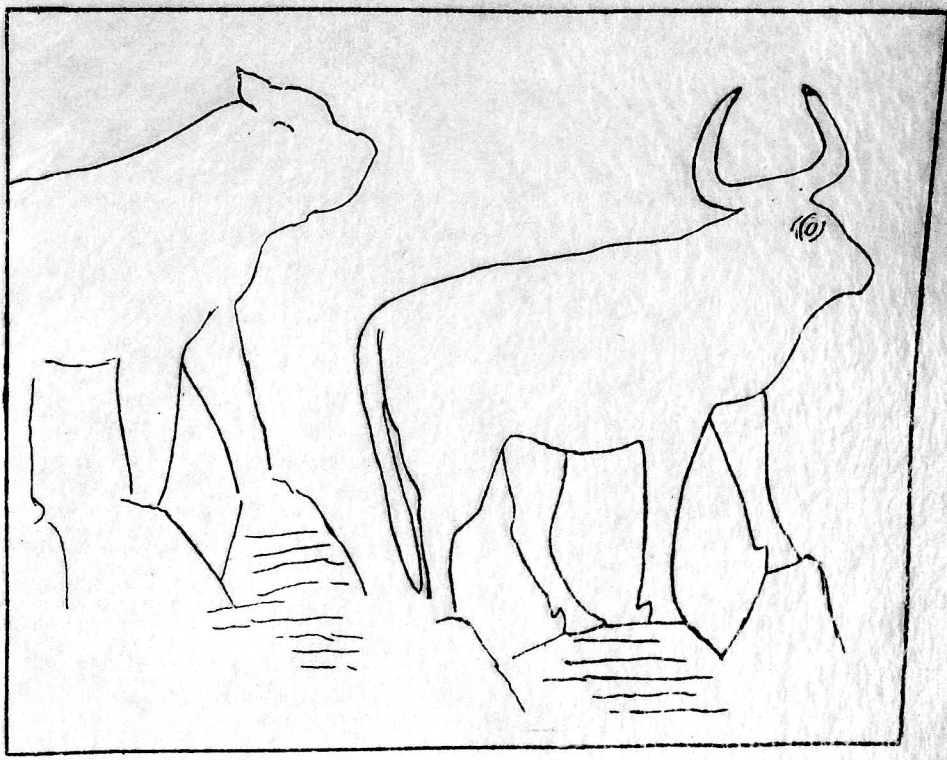

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FIG. 161.—It has been suggested that the lions, bulls, and birds so frequently represented in predynastic work are really the totem animals of the tribes which invaded Egypt. On this supposition the scenes depicted in the palettes would furnish a fairly connected story of the vicissitudes of the various factions. The lion's career does not seem to have been very glorious. It ends up with his total defeat and the triumph of the allied bull and hawk tribes. This style of interpretation might be extended to Chaldea, where not only the lion but also the bull suffered defeat and were subjugated by the eagle.

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FIG. 162.—Limestone statue found at Hierakonpolis. Now in the Cairo Museum.

FIG. 163.—Black granite statue. Second dynasty. Cairo.

FIG. 164.—Limestone statue, fourth or fifth dynasty. There are traces of paint on the hair and body. Cairo.

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FIG. 165.—Limestone statuette (about two feet high) of Kha-sekhem, reconstructed from fragments found at Hierakonpolis. Ashmolean Museum. A similar statuette made of slate was found at the same place and is now in the Cairo Museum.

To face Fig. 162 *and p.* 224

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Koptos, a kneeling statue was found (Fig. 162) showing a higher stage of development, but bearing no marks by which its date could be estimated. In the Cairo Museum there is a rather similar statue (Fig. 163) which used to be assigned to the third dynasty, but it bears the names of three kings who are now known to have been members of the second. That type of statue had several successors. Fig. 164 shows one which is attributed to the fifth dynasty, but many more discoveries will have to be made and much more study devoted to them before any certainty can be obtained concerning the age of all these isolated specimens.

A very different style is seen in a statuette of King Kha-sekemui (Fig. 165). It is better both in conception and in execution, but as he reigned in the second dynasty it cannot be much later than Fig. 163. It represents him as a young man with a quiet, almost melancholy expression, yet on its base are seen those pictographs of the writhing victims of his wars and the numerals 47209, apparently denoting the number of the slain (Fig. 153).

There is a strange and tantalising deficiency of good specimens of the sculptor's art subsequent to this statuette and previous to the small series of noble statues produced during the fourth dynasty. Our experience of the slow evolution of good work among other nations does not encourage the idea that these examples are to be considered merely as sporadic works of isolated men of genius. In the

history of the world lonely manifestations of incomparable excellence are few and far between. They are much less likely to occur in sculpture than in arts such as literature or music, which have fewer limitations, and are less dependent on custom, observation and mechanical skill.

Even if we could get a good series of examples, it is not certain that they would be as instructive as the tentative efforts of the early Greek sculptors. The Egyptian of the early dynasties began to show wonderful talent in his rendering of the human form (Fig. 166), but he did not progress. Later on he concentrated all his attention on the faces of his subjects, and took comparatively little trouble with the other parts of the body (Fig. 170). He seems to have had no inducement to make those careful studies and experiments which helped to build up the noble structure of Greek art. It may be said that this is mere day labourer's work, and that genius ought to be independent of all such petty detail, but in art, as in science, in literature, or even in music, great genius is not made manifest until such labourers have accumulated sufficient material. Then comes the inspiration to weld the scattered parts into one harmonious whole; the world wonders at the grand conception, and ignores the humble work that made it possible.

The genesis of these great flashes of inspiration may for ever remain incomprehensible. They are like the fire from heaven descending on the accumulated

FIG. 166.—Limestone statues of Prince Rahotep and his wife Nefert, found in his tomb (see Fig. 187) at Medum. He is painted red-brown, while she has a yellow tinge. Third or early fourth dynasty. Cairo.

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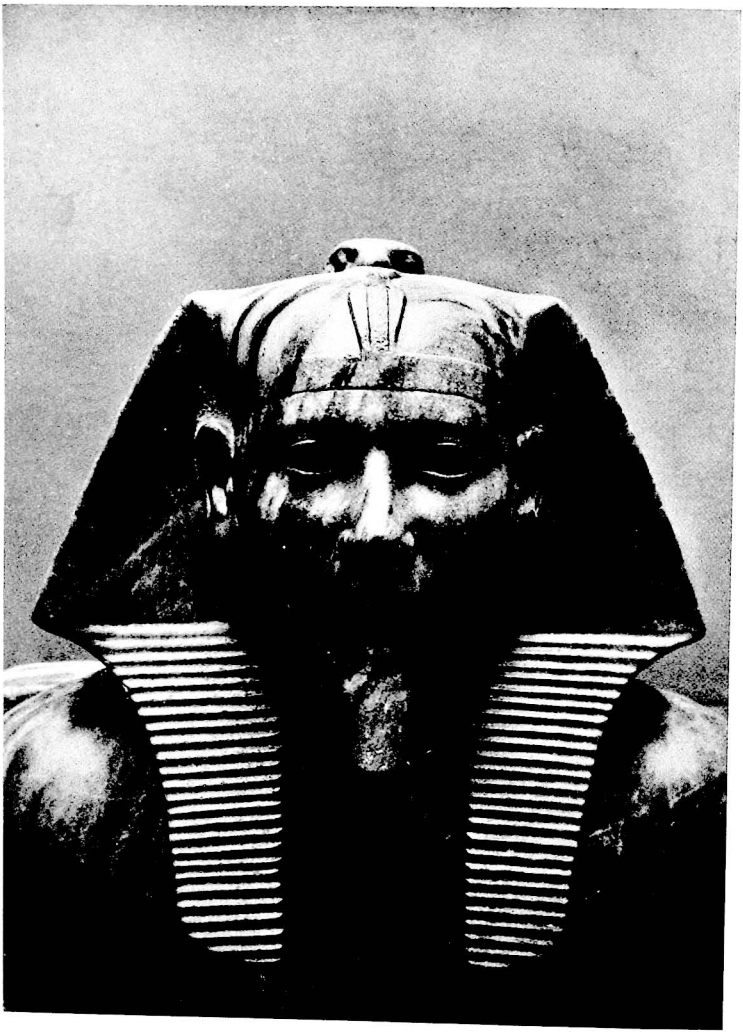

FIG. 167.—Head of the diorite statue of King Khafra (Chefren, the builder of the second pyramid), fourth dynasty, found by Mariette in the temple of the Sphinx. The black veins of hornblende rather enhance the effect of this very striking figure, but originally it was probably painted. (See *Pyramids and Temples of Gizeh*, Flinders Petrie, 1883, p. 172.) The profile is comparatively commonplace, few early statues look well in a side view. The British Museum has a cast of this statue, painted with a light buff colour. The original is at Cairo.

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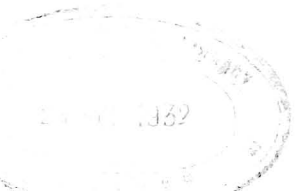

FIG. 168.—Limestone statue of Ranofer, a fourth-dynasty official, found at Saqqareh. A similar statue of him with a wig was also found there; both are now at Cairo.

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sacrifices offered by patient workers for the welfare of the world. Though we may not dare to scan with prying eyes the origins of such brilliant strokes of genius, yet we may well study, and perhaps may imitate the efforts of those who humbly did their best to furnish forth materials for the illuminating flame.

What then were the inducements which led men to attempt with brush or chisel to express ideas that had not hitherto found any concrete form? We must search for them in the general impulses which awakened the sympathy or compelled the obedience of the nation. At first the main impulse throughout the land was to organise and develop its material resources. Although the intentions of the leading organisers were perhaps unselfish, or at all events not worse than those of most untrammelled rulers, the results of their organisation were afterwards manipulated chiefly for the benefit of those who thought themselves entitled to any advantages they could acquire by cunning or by force. Thus when large-sized reliefs and statues were produced, their chief characteristics were a sense of calm superiority (Fig. 167) or of steadfast organising power (Fig. 168). Even in such a small figure as this ivory statuette of Khufu, the builder of the great pyramid, energy and determination are dominant notes in the expression of the face, and these qualities are reflected in most of the other sculptures of this period (Fig. 169).

It is difficult to form a fair judgment of these re-

markable works. If we compare them with the masterpieces of other nations which have succeeded to the inheritance of mental and spiritual experience bequeathed by all the pioneers of culture, we are struck by their poverty of ideas and the monotony of their execution. If, on the other hand, we approach them with the all too common prepossession that works of the far distant past must necessarily be crude and barbarous, or that people who have not reached a high degree of material civilisation cannot have high ideals, we are lost in admiration of these earliest examples of man's perception of purposes and forces underlying the ordinary routine of the daily struggle for existence. They are certainly far in advance of any hitherto discovered sculptures undoubtedly dating from such a remote period. They seem to mark a sudden and almost unaccountable blossoming of acute artistic faculties and fine conceptions which still awaken a sense of sympathy and admiration. At the same time, while paying all due honour to the deathless records of unnamed workers for dead kings who often left no record save a name, we must not forget that it may some day be proved that they are partly the products of ideas evolved previously by vanished nations dwelling in forgotten lands.

For with nations as with men, the individual perishes though the race is more and more. Who would have imagined fifty years ago that a barbarian tribe of mammoth hunters could have produced works so far surpassing those of later men

a

b

FIG. 169.—Ivory statuette (about two inches high) discovered at Abydos in 1902–3. At first it was headless, but as the fracture at the neck was quite fresh, Professor Petrie made the men sift the rubbish for three weeks until they found the head. It represents Khufu, the builder of the great pyramid. Cairo Museum.

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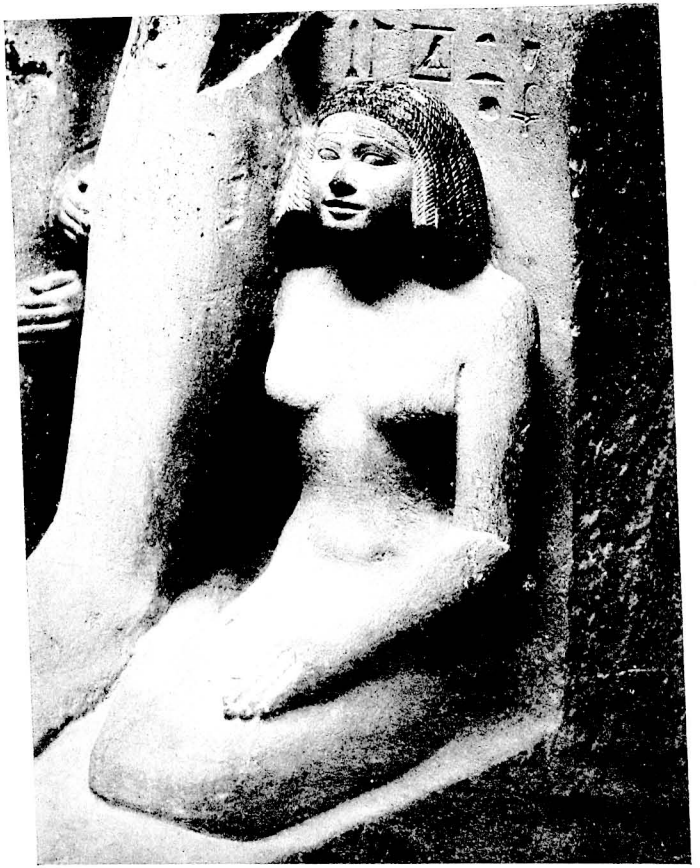

FIG. 170.—Small figure of the daughter of Jechi (or Khui). His wife also kneels by the feet of his statue. Fifth dynasty. Found at Saqqareh, Cairo.

FIG. 171. — This statuette is also attributed to the fifth dynasty, but it is a bought specimen and cannot be trusted, as its face may have been "worked over" by the Arabs with the hope of increasing its value, a common practice with them.

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who led a more refined existence in more favoured climes? We have as yet no evidence that their wondrous art did not die with their nation's death, but we know that ideas and bold inventions are stronger than the races which invent them. They survive and spread long after the nations that gave them birth have shrunk into insignificance or have vanished from the world. It may be that the traditions of palæolithic art were handed down through untold generations. Perhaps some day in the desert places of the earth we may find relics that will show how much the Egyptians owed to their predecessors, even as the Greeks were indebted to the Egyptians and to the Chaldeans, even as we ourselves are still indebted to the Greeks.

Whatever judgment we may form about the excellence of Pharaonic art in the fourth and fifth dynasties, there is no doubt that in after times it did not fulfil the brilliant promise of those early days. There were plenty of good workers in Egypt, men with true eyes and sure strong hands, men with ideals and gifted with good brains. Yet, after thousands of years of richly paid production, we find in the last stages of their art the same style, the same conventions, even the same falsities that had seemed right to the inexperienced artists of the early dynasties, bravely striving to become articulate.

The history of Egypt is still too fragmentary to allow us to trace with any accuracy the development of its politics, its religion or its art. Between the

sixth and twelfth dynasties there is a sad dearth of records, and the progress of events is shrouded in almost complete obscurity. The veil is lifted for a while during the twelfth dynasty, only to fall again and wrap the period of the shepherd kings in impenetrable mystery. Then in the eighteenth dynasty we find Egypt apparently emerging from her seclusion and entering the arena of the world as a gladiator fighting for the ignoble prizes of vain conquest, prizes which withered in her hand or merely helped to foster kingly pride and priestly greed, and to bind fresh chains on her downtrodden population. Freedom and originality were as unwelcome to the Pharaohs as to the Roman emperors or to any other autocratic rulers. How could art flourish under those conditions? The world was dazzled by their splendour and their luxury, and blindly sought for wealth instead of welfare, for artificiality instead of art. And even now some men with mediæval minds still sing the praises of such degeneration, and would have us worship the pretentious falsities which are evolved spontaneously in an atmosphere of cruelty and superstition.

The cramping influence of tyranny is plainly seen in the long course of that protracted death which occupies so many chapters in the history of Egyptian art. Sporadic efforts to improve continually recur, and the latent genius of the Egyptian bursts forth with evidence of his desire for truth (Figs. 172, 173, 174, and 175). But the rebel heretics seem to have always been successfully suppressed. Then the official style

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FIG. 172.—Ivory carving of a young boy carrying a calf. Found in a twelfth-dynasty tomb at Thebes. Two inches high.

FIG. 173.—Coloured fresco in a twelfth-dynasty tomb at Beni Hassan.

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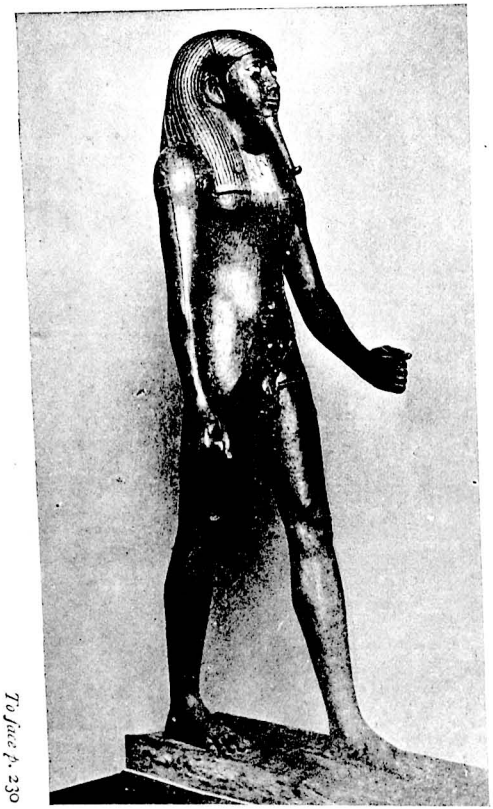

a *b*

FIG. 174.—Life-size wooden figure of King Hor-Aou-ab-Ra (see *Fouilles à Dachour*, J. de Morgan). It shows distinct traces of painting and gold-leaf decoration.

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FIG. 175.—Wooden statuette about three inches high, of unknown origin, but attributed to the twelfth or thirteenth dynasty. Eton College Museum.

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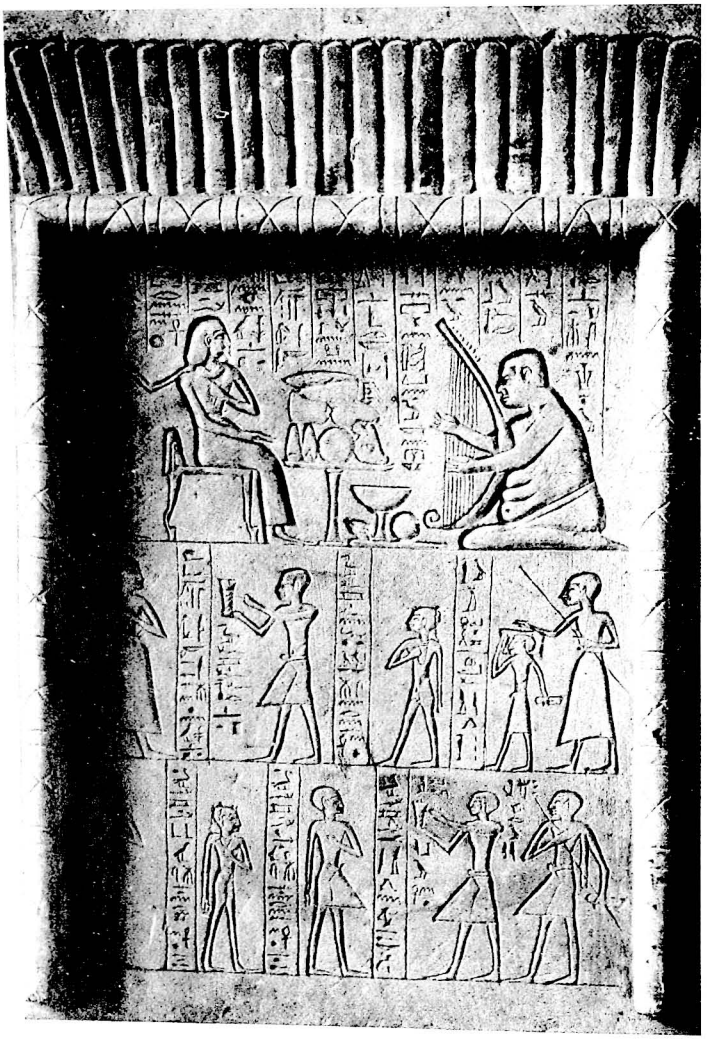

FIG. 176.—Thirteenth-dynasty grave stele, now in the Museum at Leyden. The figure of the harpist is a curious relic of naturalism struggling against the rigidity which official art considered dignified.

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FIG. 177.—Life-size black schist statue of Thothmes III. For security in a time of trouble or for some other reason it had been put with many others into a pit at Karnak and forgotten until Legrain discovered it in 190[illegible]. About 1530 B.C.

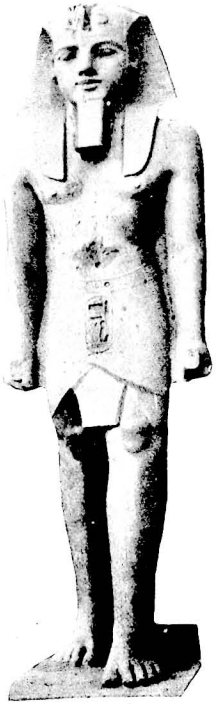

FIG. 178.—One of the numerous colossal granite statues of Rameses II., about twenty-five feet high, at Luxor. About 1330 B.C.

FIG. 180.—Life-size granite group of husband, wife, and daughter. The marks below his collar represent two amulet bags. Time of Amenhotep III. About 1430 B.C.

resumes its deadening sway (Fig. 176). The pose given to standing male statues during the fourth dynasty is repeated in every subsequent period; the hands clenched on a round object of unknown use; the left leg advanced, the head facing full to the front with but seldom any expression in the rigid features; the ears misplaced or far too large, with no pretence to shapeliness or truth (Figs. 177 and 178). The sitting figures have just as little variation in the arrangement of their limbs or the rendering of the muscles of the body. In certain periods, possibly of Cretan influence, they have unnaturally pinched-in waists (Fig. 179). At other times strange lines and folds are carved upon the trunk, apparently to indicate obesity (Fig. 180). In dealing with female statues and reliefs no attempt is made to utilise the folds of

FIG. 179.—Red granite statue, larger than life size, of Sekhem-uatch-tani-Ra, a king of whom nothing is known except that he reigned in the thirteenth or fourteenth dynasty when the Shepherd kings were giving so much trouble. In the slenderness of the waist and the exaggerated width of the hips it resembles the relief figure of Akhnaten (Fig. 193). Two lions in profile standing back to back are faintly incised on the throne.

drapery as factors in the composition of the figures. Their wigs and necklaces and other ornaments are rendered with great care, their hands have elongated fingers, fantastically curved, their uncouth feet have shapeless toes. Only one breast was given to men or to women in the figures in relief made in the earlier dynasties (Fig. 187), and that convention was maintained through all the other dynasties right down to Cleopatra's time, a poor result for thirty centuries of study (Figs. 181 and 182).

From such weak drawing as we saw upon the vases, from those crude colours smeared at Hierakonpolis upon the roughly plastered walls of a prehistoric tomb (Fig. 183), the Egyptians had advanced by careful work and bold experiment, until they had arrived at a high proficiency in simple outline and in elementary colouring, regarded chiefly as a decorative art (Fig. 187). Apparently they did not advance in colour work as far as the old cave men, and they seem to have never reached that point where painting emulates the qualities of sculpture and strives by various tones of colour to represent its figures in relief. But in composition they became far more skilful and also, although their animals were rather stilted and unnatural (Fig. 188), the outlines of their human forms had a keen sense of harmony, of dignity and grace (Fig. 189).

And then all progress ceases. Nature and truth are disregarded. The mental picture of the human form—face, chest, and limbs remembered separately

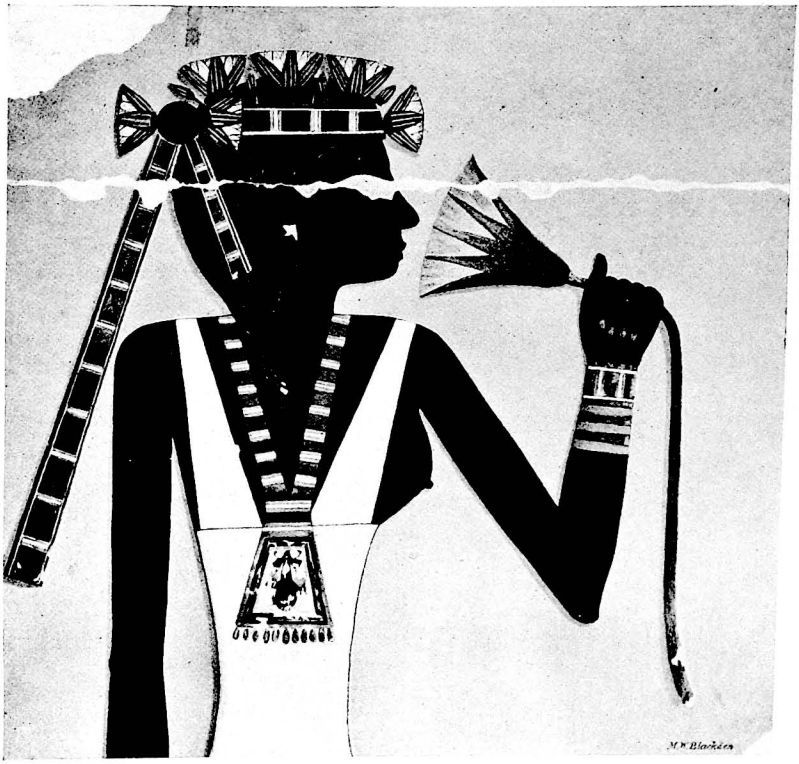

FIG. 181.—One of the daughters of Tehuti-hetep, a high official of the XII dynasty. When his tomb at El-Bershah was first opened, the walls were covered with great numbers of fresco paintings, representing scenes in the daily life of the Egyptians four thousand years ago. Most of them have now been destroyed or carried away piecemeal by curiosity-mongers. Sketches and coloured plates of the remaining portions are given in El-Bershah I and II, published for the Egyptian Exploration Fund. Contrary to the usual rule of Egyptian painting, the women in these pictures are red-brown. The lotus head-dress is green, with light blue petals. About quarter actual size. Some archæologists have supposed that when only one breast was shown, that part of the figure was imagined as being in profile. The shoulder-straps in this and several other drawings show that the whole body from waist to neck was depicted in front view. To draw both breasts correctly would have required a knowledge of foreshortening, but even its most elementary principles were not discovered until nearly two thousand years later, therefore they drew the outline of that breast which was most evident and omitted the other altogether. The general effect corresponded fairly well with the memory-picture from which the earlier artists made their drawings, and their successors never dared to depart from the established convention. I only know of one drawing in which the nipple of the other breast is indicated.

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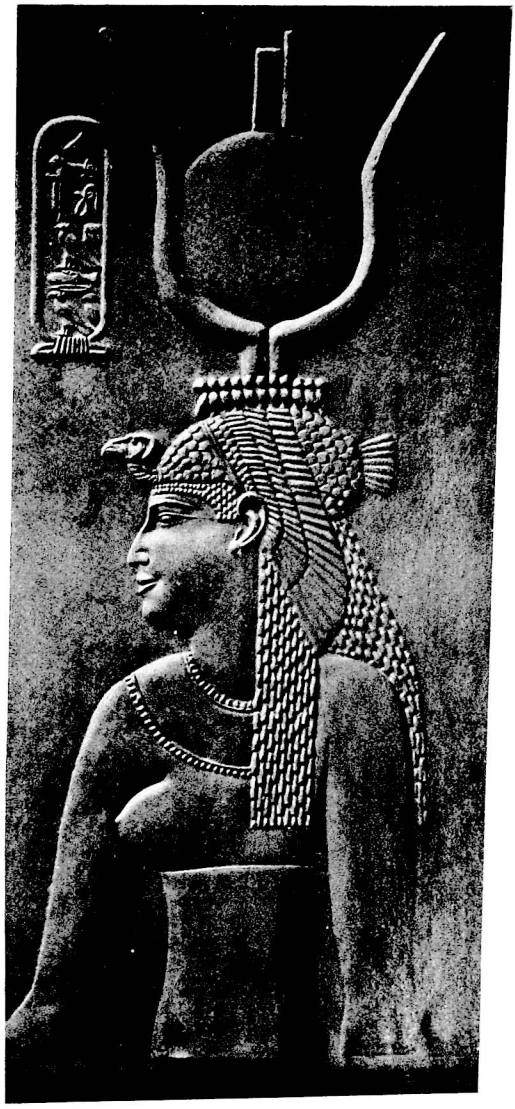

FIG. 182.—Low-relief figure of Cleopatra in the Ptolemaic Temple at Denderah. The misplacing of the ear is a very ancient convention for which there seems to be no good reason.

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and pieced together clumsily—remains the standard for succeeding ages, a standard which no artist dares surpass. The full-face eye still stares from the profile head, the chest presents its greatest breadth as though the body were approaching the beholder, while the legs march past another way, and two disjointed arms are twisted round to do their work in equally impossible positions. It is useless to say that these are mere conventions, and should not affect our judgment of Egyptian drawing. A convention is but a step. It represents the highest level of its day, and when surpassed it loses all its value. It becomes interesting merely as a detail in the history of art. The Egyptian artists had well absorbed these separate mental pictures, and had accustomed their fellowmen to see them too. The next step should have been a process of selection, a choosing of the forms that could be suitably combined; but this step was not made in Egypt.

Nigh upon two thousand years before the Cretans, three thousand years before the Greeks, some visions of the meaning and the beauty of God's world appeared to the Egyptians, and they endeavoured to interpret and express it for the enlightenment of other men. But as by an evil spell cast by a great magician, the living, palpitating art is seen to be arrested in its growth, the swift current of its life becomes stagnated; imprisoned in its gilded tomb it stares forth upon mankind rigid and useless and unmeaning.

The reason for this strange stagnation is to be

found in the character of the two main impulses which stirred the Egyptian patron to seek an artist's help. The desire for domination we have already discussed; it cannot lead to variations, for its chief idea is to extinguish rivalry. The other impulse was religious, a word of vague and often much distorted

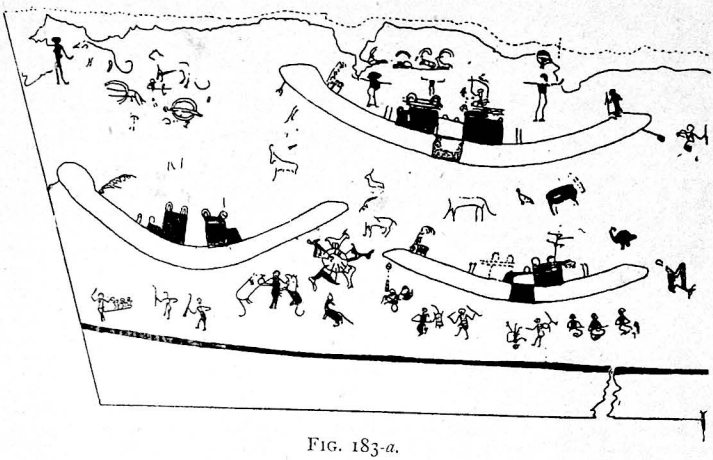

FIG. 183-*a*.

Sketch of a painting found on the wall of an early predynastic tomb (sequence date 63) at Hierakonpolis. The figures are red-brown on a light buff ground. Five of the boats are of a dead white colour; the same colour is

meaning; but it may serve here, since the impulse was chiefly directed by the priests. The strong desire for assurance of existence in a future life has in all ages exposed mankind to the machinations of the unscrupulous. In Egypt, self-centred and sequestered from outside shocks, the contemplative mystic had a grand field for his speculative imagination. Rulers and princes listened gladly to his words, and

from the flimsy substance of his unworldly dreams a small clique of cunning priestly seekers after worldly wealth and luxury fashioned a most potent instrument for forcing contributions from their allies, the ruling and the wealthy classes. Property and priestcraft have always been allied, for what would be the

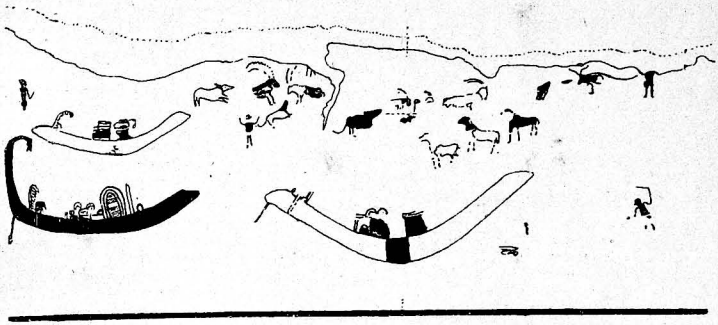

FIG. 183-*b*.

used for the clothing of the men and women, and for the bodies of some of the animals. A few black touches are added here and there. A coloured plate of this painting was published in *Hierakonpolis*, vol. ii., by the Egyptian Exploration Fund.

use of craft if no material advantage could be obtained? Barren honour does not appeal to ignoble minds. What a purging there would be in all professions if material rewards went out of date!

Besides the ordinary, easy-going, hereditary priests and others who entered the profession merely to gain their daily bread, there must have been many good and saintly men among the priests, and also many

literary or studious recluses; but such folk are as wax in the hands of those astute and clever organisers who hold the reins and guide the destinies of all religious bodies. It is not possible to invent a new religion—that would be as hard a task as the invention of a new language; but religion may be moulded and wielded as a lever wherewith to raise or to oppress the world. The speculative belief in a vital force had been crystallised by these organisers into a hard and fast doctrine, the doctrine of the Ka—sometimes called the double—a sort of counterpart of the body which could not exist happily without some material habitation. The best habitation was the actual body it had occupied in the living world. This conviction encouraged the system of embalming, which brought large gains to those who were supposed to know the only effectual way of doing it. To guard against such a disaster as the destruction of the embalmed body, the idea was fostered that a properly constructed and sanctified image would also serve as a habitation for the Ka. As a logical sequence from these two premises there grew up, step by step, an elaborate system of tomb building and furnishing which gave lucrative employment to the priests, and so greatly strengthened their financial and spiritual power that ultimately they became the real rulers of the nation.

The effect on art was far reaching and persistent. No variation from established types could be permitted, for that would have seemed a confession

that some mistake had been detected, and their authority would consequently have been weakened. Evolution is a hateful word to the rulers of nearly all religions. Archaic forms of speech and action are excellent sedatives; they satisfy the desire for mystery, and do not suggest doubts as to whether they have any real meaning.

But there is a good side to every question. One effect of this belief in the necessity of a material body for the Ka was certainly beneficial, for it gave a great inducement to sculptors to produce good portrait statues. The logical steps which led men to provide that body with food and raiment led them on to build imperishable tombs. Thus arose that simplest and most permanent architectural form, the pyramid, so perfect to Egyptian minds that it was reserved exclusively for royalty.

When the possession of an imperishable tomb had become the ideal of all the wealthy class—the poverty-struck masses of the nation do not seem to have been included in this religious scheme, for according to Asiatic ideals a man who has no property is hardly to be considered as a human being—the next and logically correct step was to furnish it not only with food and raiment, with slaves to do their master's bidding, and with amulets against all evil spirits, but also with property and amusements for those who could afford to pay the priests for such desirable luxuries. Food and raiment, slaves and amulets had indeed been buried with rich men long

before the crystallisation of the doctrine of the Ka, but now the question was how to enable them to take their other property into the shadowy regions of the underworld. In course of time a satisfactory solution of the difficulty was discovered. The Ka itself being a shadowy, unsubstantial form, mere forms or shadows of its former wealth would suffice for its enjoyment in a world where all things were intangible. A picture outlined upon the wall would satisfy the disembodied spirit, and thus a large amount of property could be conveyed into a tomb of practical dimensions.

It was an ingenious arrangement, beneficial not only to the deceased but also to the colleges of priests. It provided lucrative work for their art schools. As for those priests who could not draw they could employ their skill in sanctifying the pictures. Without a blessing and a fee the most artistic picture would have brought no comfort to the poor lonely ghost. And herein lay the germs both of success and failure. At first it must have encouraged the study of nature, for artists and priests worked hand in hand, and their patrons would be pleased by the production of as accurate representations as the infant art of painting could conceive. In course of time the natural inclination of mankind to obtain results with less expenditure of energy would lead the slothful or unskilful to lay more stress upon the efficacy of the priestly blessing. It was difficult to make good pictures. Bad work could perhaps be

recognised and condemned even by the ordinary layman, but he would accept it if he could be tricked into believing that the quality of the picture or sculpture was not so important as the orthodoxy of the incantations spoken over it. The all too common appetite for ostentation and mere quantity would be encouraged, hasty and stereotyped designs would take the place of original and careful work. Aspirations towards more spiritual conceptions would not be welcomed by unworthy priests striving to obtain more worldly power. The desire for material comfort and luxury would be stimulated instead of being restrained, and art would be prostituted to satisfy that desire, projecting the coarse forms of its gross imaginations even into the shadowy regions of a future world. In such environment how can art thrive? It is easy to drive men along a downward path; the relics of the later dynasties show what depths they reached. The ideas which led men to provide an unsubstantial form for the enjoyment of an unsubstantial being, may also have tended to make them reluctant to give the paintings too great an appearance of reality. Their pictures were of the nature of a diagram or of a ground-plan. Indeed, their garden pictures were often real ground-plans with men and trees standing up in them, much in the same way as a modern surveyor's draughtsman will place little trees to show the woods on his map of an estate. There was never any attempt at rendering perspective,[33] neither did they ever try to make

the figures of their men and animals stand out in bold relief, as the cave men had done with such success. To represent solidity in the abode of a phantasmal man would have been almost as bad as sacrilege.

It is very unfortunate that we have so few specimens of early dynastic drawing that we cannot well trace the various steps of its development. The engraved ivory and wooden plaques (Fig. 184) from the royal tombs of the first dynasty are interesting archæologically, and perhaps they may be taken as another confirmation of the theory that drawing in its early stages develops more slowly than carving. One of them shows a man with a curious sort of pigtail (also found on a mace head of the same period), and a long robe, similar to that worn by the clothed figure on that beautiful palette, "Peace and War," and by the old man sculptured in ivory (Fig. 156). The dearth of specimens which confronts us when attempting to study the development of outline drawing is also felt when we consider Egyptian colour work on the flat. From the predynastic period we have only the very crudely coloured drawings found in 1899 at Hierakonpolis (Fig. 183). It is quite possible that very little of such work or of pure outline drawing was done in the earlier dynasties. Specialisation had not yet begun, and artists had not yet realised the natural limitations of all sculpture work, and the latent possibilities of the undeveloped art of painting. In-

FIG. 184.—Incised ivory plaques found in a first-dynasty tomb at Abydos. Actual size. Now at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

FIG. 186.—The upper portion is about five feet long and is now in the Ashmolean. It represents men catching birds in a ground net, similar to that still used in Italy. From the tomb of Atet, wife of Nefermat. Medum. See p. 242.

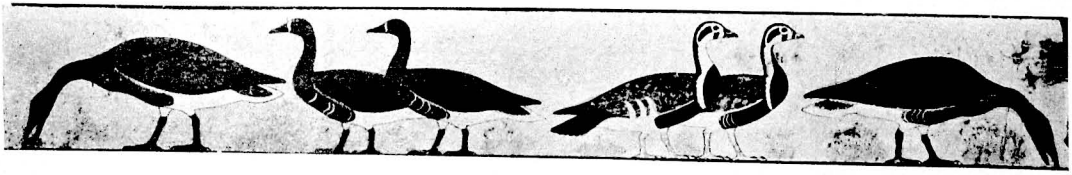

Fig. 185.—Ordinary coloured fresco from the brick passage leading to Nefermat's tomb. All his other frescoes were "inlaid" on stone. This portion is about five feet long. Most of these paintings were destroyed when Mariette tried to remove them in the early seventies.

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deed, the distinction between drawing and sculpture was hardly recognised. Drawings were generally executed by incision more or less deep. If the interior edges of deeply incised drawings were rounded off, the result would now be considered as a "sunk relief," and would be classed as sculpture, although, indeed, it would be hard to say exactly when it had ceased to be mere drawing (Fig. 176). It would be rash to assert that this actually was the origin of sunk relief. We have seen that low relief is infinitely older than any plastic work of the Egyptians; they lived in a much more complex age than the old cave men, and there were so many influences affecting all their art that it is difficult or perhaps impossible to trace the actual origin of any special branch. Their low relief may have been a degeneration from sculpture in the round, or it may have been evolved as an imitation of repoussé metal work, although this seems hardly probable.

Painting had certainly not yet become a special branch. Colour was used only as a means of enhancing the effect of representations made by sculpture or by its still weakly offshoot outline drawing. In fact until the palæolithic invention of toning had been reinvented there was but little scope for painting as an independent art. We shall have to pass over many centuries before finding any signs of such a reinvention, for there is very little evidence that the effects of light and shade were ever utilised by the Egyptians

in their representations on the flat. Even in later times, when polychrome work had become common, it was only used to show the various colours of birds' plumage or of the hides of animals. In that style of art high excellence had already been attained as early as the third dynasty, when the justly famous geese were painted at Medum (Fig. 185).

In the same place and at the same period a curious experiment in colour work was made by or for a high official called Nefermat. It was a sort of inlaid fresco formed by filling up with various coloured pastes the figures cut and rather undercut in the flat stone wall (Fig. 186). In an inscription he says that "he made this to his gods in his writing unspoilable," but it did not prove very enduring. Much of the paste crumbled away or dropped out bodily, and when the tomb was discovered only a few portions were found well enough preserved to be worth rescuing from the relic hunters.

The commonest use of colour, as far as we can judge from the specimens hitherto discovered, was as a mere flat wash on the figures in relief. The bare skin of men was painted brown, while that of women was tinted yellow (Fig. 187). A special colour was often conventionally assigned to certain substances, and they were sometimes quite as unsuitable as the colours employed in the same way by heralds and mediæval monks. Reliefs and paintings can therefore best be studied as a single class, and they are chiefly to be regarded as outline drawings. From

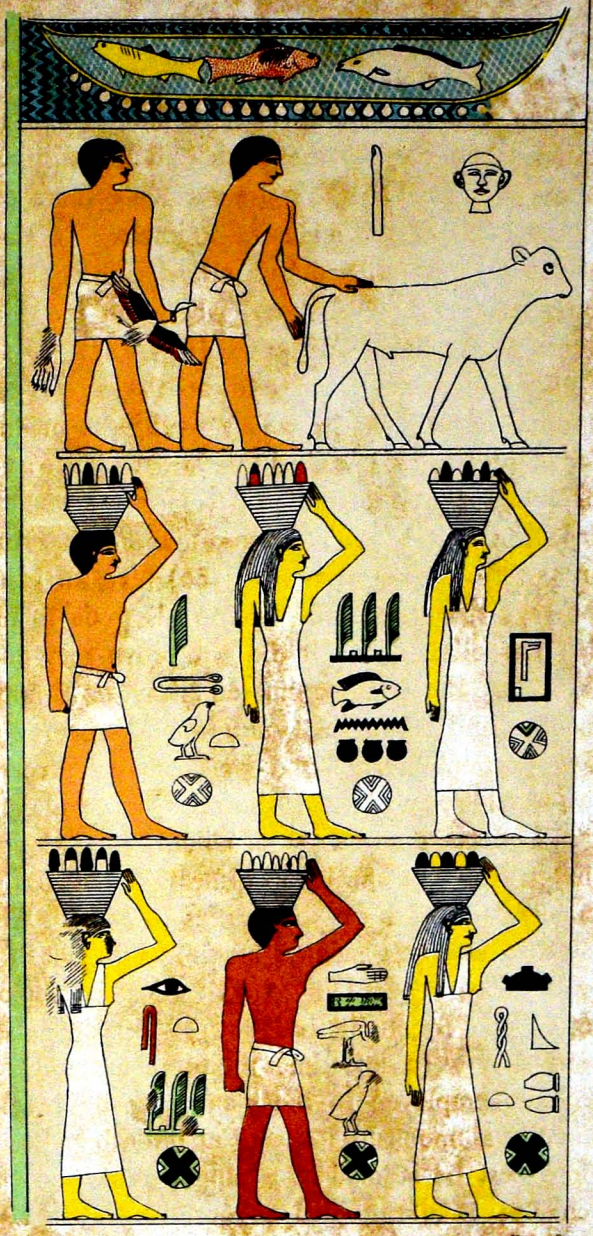

FIG. 187.

PLATE X.

FIG. 187.—Figures carved in low relief on the walls of Rahotep's tomb at Medum. They were copied by Professor Petrie in 1896 and published in his report on the excavations he made there. Like many other ancient monuments in Egypt they were insufficiently protected from the ravages of curiosity mongers. When the greater part of them had been irretrievably ruined the rest were removed to the Cairo Museum in 1911. This portion represents slaves bringing funeral offerings to Rahotep to sustain him in the other world. The figures are about one-third life size.

24 F

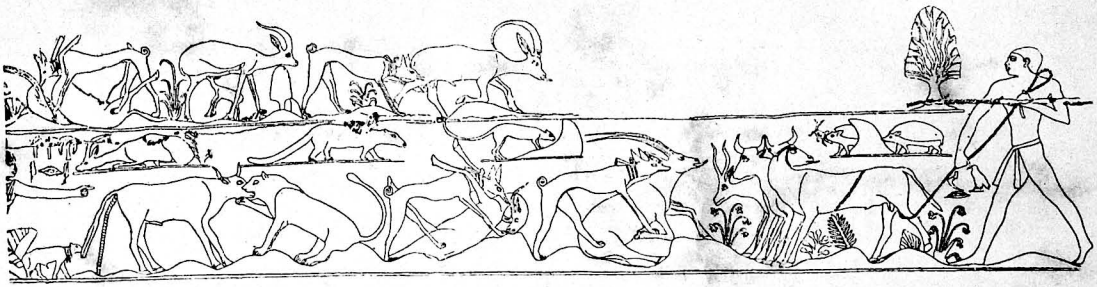

FIG. 188.—In nearly all reliefs and paintings, previous to the golden age of Greece, the figures of men and animals were drawn without any indication of the scene or even of the ground, beyond an occasional simple straight line forming the bottom boundary of the picture. This is a noteworthy instance of a bold departure from that rule. It is almost the only example of any attempt to represent hills otherwise than by merely conventional signs.

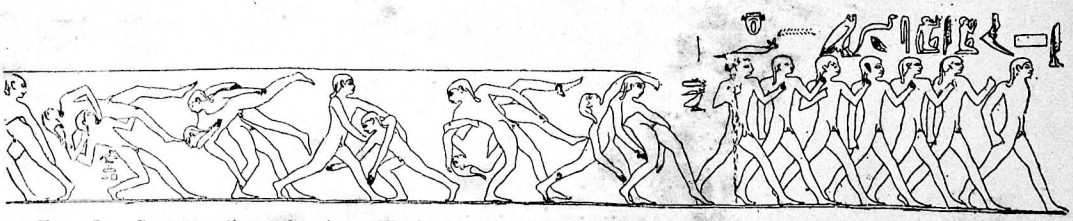

FIG. 189.—Boys wrestling and racing. The best work of its sort ever done in Egypt. For a thousand years or more we find no evidence that any other race was able to surpass it.

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FIG. 190-*a*.

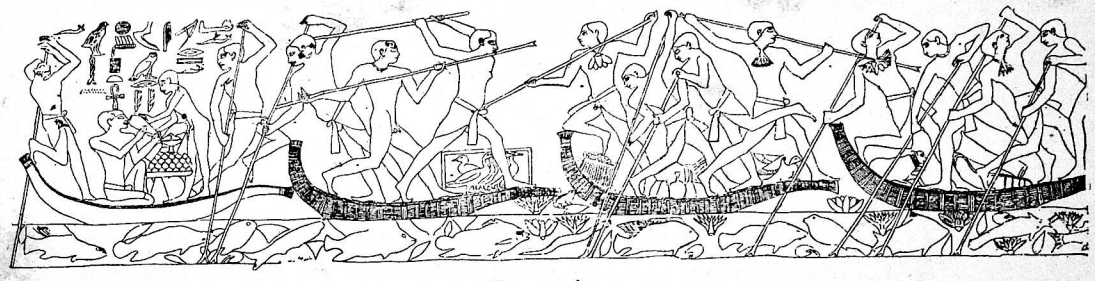

FIG. 190-*b*.

The man drinking from a vase is thought to be the sculptor of this series of reliefs (Figs. 188, 189, 190) since the hieroglyphs of chisels and the name Ankh-en-Ptah are placed above him; but as usual the artist's name is not mentioned. They were carved on the walls of Ptah-Hotep's tomb at Saqqara. VI. dynasty 2750 B.C. Fig. 190-*a* is from a photograph lent by Prof. Petrie.

that point of view they have very great merit. It is difficult to believe that such spirited delineation and such excellent composition (Figs. 188, 189, and

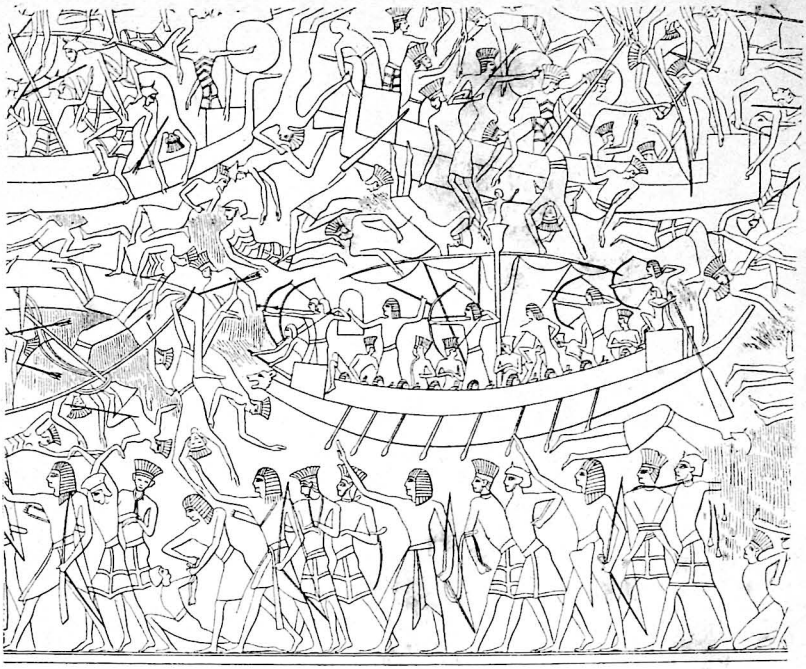

FIG. 191.—Sunk relief on the wall of the temple at Medinet Abu, near Thebes, representing the defeat of the confederation of the Cretans, Philistines and Hittites by Rameses III. (1200 B.C.). The style is not unlike that of the Bayeux tapestry. A few of the foreigners are depicted full face.

190) can be the work of men who died five or six thousand years ago, and who had apparently no previous schools of art from which to draw encouragement or warning. They show what strides

an art may make when it has opportunity and the stimulus of a widely-felt and definite, but not ignoble purpose. It was a misfortune for the world that such skill and genius should have been directed and controlled by men who had slight sympathy with freedom or with truth. The later crowded and elaborate compositions (Fig. 191) show how little progress can be made when the strong currents of artistic purpose are diverted, and forced into narrow channels to drive the wheels of base machinery for the extortion of more pay.

Since most of these productions were buried out of sight in well-sealed tombs, the stagnation may perhaps be attributed partly to the lack of criticism and of comparison with previous works. The absence of the healthy stimulus of wide appreciation must have been lowering to the general tone. How can art prosper if so many of its children are buried as soon as they are born?

There is one example (Fig. 192) of an attempt to improve upon that time-honoured system of painting the bodies of men and animals with a flat sheet of colour, variegated if the subject required it, but never toned to show the play of light and shade on rounded or uneven surfaces. Formerly it was always quoted as the earliest instance of the use of high lights to give the effect of relief; since the discoveries in France and Spain it has lost much of its interest. It merits attention, however, as additional evidence of that violent, though only temporary, breaking

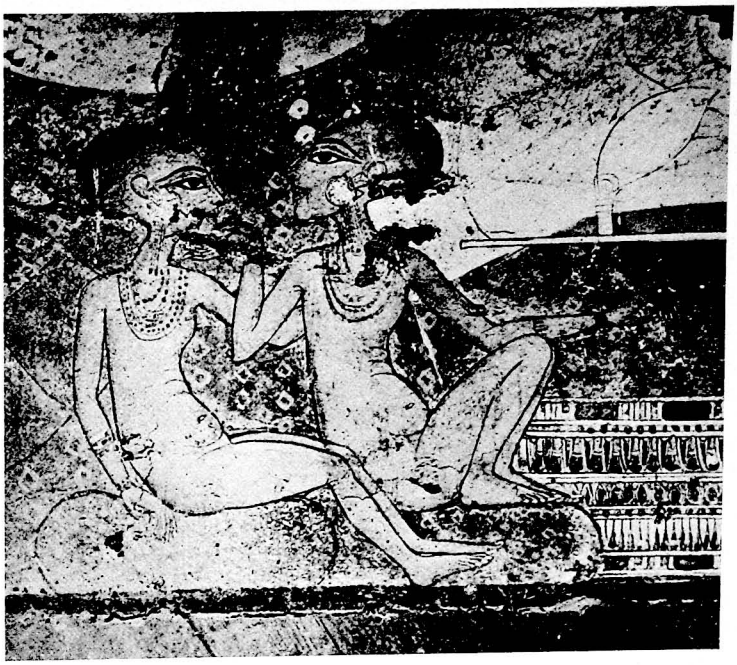

FIG. 192.—Fresco from Tell-el-Amarna representing the daughters of Akhenaten. It is in the Ashmolean Museum, but the white paint on the thighs can hardly be seen now. Possibly other artists have also experimented with toning and with high lights powdered or painted over their flat colours, and time has effaced all records of their discoveries. Professor E. A. Gardner found a vase at Naukratis showing distinct traces of such a process in early Greek times, but the powdery substance soon fell off.

The drawing of these little princesses and of most of the productions of this period is very poor, though it is less rigid than the old official style.

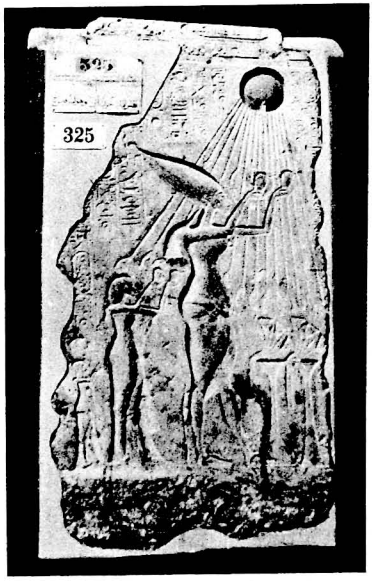

FIG. 193. — Limestone slab from Tell-el-Amarna, 3 feet high, with sunk relief figures of Akhenaten and his wife worshipping the sun. Compare his slender waist and wide hips with those of the Cretan, Fig. 317 *bis*. It was probably his foreign sympathies rather than his religious heterodoxy which alienated his people. They would hardly be able to follow the theological hair-splitting of the priests, or to understand the wickedness of worshipping the sun's rays instead of the sun's disk.

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away from long tradition which occurred in the eighteenth dynasty 1580–1350 B.C. The new style of art was especially in favour during the reign of the well-intentioned Akhenaten, 1375 B.C.[34] (Fig. 193), the so-called heretic, a pathetic figure in the monotonous annals of the kings of Egypt, most of whom seem to have been possessed by the evil spirits of greed and fear, oppressing their own people and being oppressed by their own priests.

It is difficult to form a right estimate of his character and of his actions. He has been called "a fanatical heretic of the worst description,"[35] and he has been lauded as a great reformer. Mr. Weigall has written a long and interesting book about him (*The Life and Times of Akhenaten* (1910)), and has by no means exhausted the subject. All we can now say is, that in religion he rebelled against the priests of Amon, and in art he tried to encourage a system more naturalistic and less trammelled with conventions than that which had been forced upon the people for twenty centuries of the past, and was to hinder all progress for still another twenty centuries of the future, until it was too late to revive the latent germs that once had stirred the world.

The original source of Akhenaten's strange artistic revolution is still unknown. It may have come from Crete, for many signs have been found that, long before his time, Cretan art had been sufficiently developed to act as a ferment even in a land so highly civilised as Egypt. In fact, Crete's most flourishing

period was during the troublous times that Egypt passed through in the interval between the twelfth and the eighteenth dynasties. Also an earlier period of Cretan art development is to be noticed as nearly coincident with the depression which Egyptian art experienced during the five centuries that elapsed between the sixth and twelfth dynasties. These fluctuations were probably connected with variations in the political conditions of the two countries. We are tempted to try to trace in them the vicissitudes of a struggle between the Mediterranean race and the Semitic element poured forth from Arabia, between European naturalism and Asiatic conventionalism, Western freedom and Eastern bondage; but the time is not yet ripe for such wide generalisations. At present we have to be content with patiently noting details, and trying to deduce some sense of order out of the chaotic mass of evidence, which even now is all too scanty and imperfect.

There is one detail which does not seem to have generally received the attention it deserves—that is, the absence of full-face drawing from all dynastic Egyptian work before 1600 B.C. Certainly we get a full-face head as a hieroglyphic sign in the first dynasty (Fig. 136), and in representations of the cow-faced goddess Hathor (Figs. 194 and 148), and of that strange god Bes (Fig. 195), but in all the other numerous delineations of men and women, frequently arranged in postures extremely difficult to draw correctly, I can find no instance of any but the rigidly

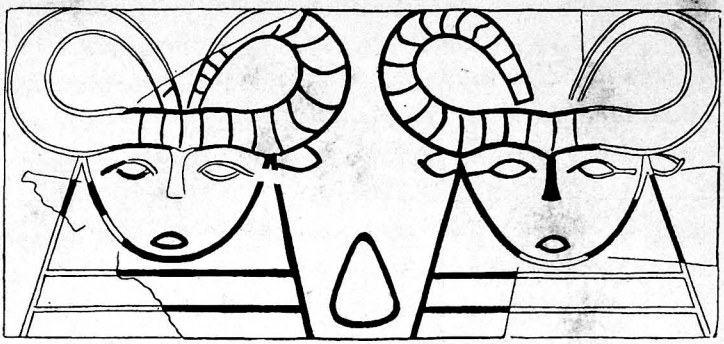

FIG. 194.—The black lines are a transcript of a drawing on ivory found in a royal tomb of the first dynasty at Abydos. It represents Hat-hor, who was supposed to take the form of a cow. Compare the heads at the top of Figs. 148 and 149.

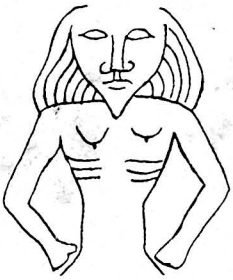

FIG. 195.—Part of a figure of Bes, incised on an ivory amulet or magic wand to give "protection to the lady of the house." Eighteenth dynasty or earlier. In the British Museum (Fourth Egyptian Room). He is often represented as clothed with a panther's skin, and as his name means "a small feline animal" the custom of drawing him always in full face may be connected with the ancient and persistent fashion of giving a full face to those animals (see page 138).

profile face. With the advent of the eighteenth dynasty we get occasional examples of a full-face drawing. Even then it is only given to captive or slaughtered foreigners (Fig. 191), to workpeople (Fig. 196), or to musicians, who probably were slaves (Fig. 197). In connection with this illustration, taken from a painting now in the British Museum, I may mention a pitfall which is a good instance of the danger of drawing deductions from copies of a picture instead of from the original. The painting is not only incorrectly reproduced in Champollion's great work, *Monuments de l'Egypte et de la Nubie* (Paris, 1835–45), Pl. 377 *ter*, but he mistakenly attributes it to a twelfth dynasty tomb at Beni Hassan. Perrot and Chipiez, in their *History of Ancient Art*, vol. ii. p. 343, copied the incorrect drawing, and devoted half a page to discussing the strangeness of finding such an early instance of full-face drawing. Their copy has been reproduced in other works, and many unfortunate foreign and provincial readers may be led astray; for even if they take the trouble to work back through Perrot and Chipiez to Champollion, they would have some difficulty in ascertaining that he was wrongly informed. The original is now in the British Museum, and did not come from a tomb at Beni Hassan, but from a tomb at Thebes.

The importance of these full-face drawings lies in the possibility that they may help to trace the source of some art motives. Sir Arthur Evans tells me that no drawings, nor even low reliefs, of that sort have

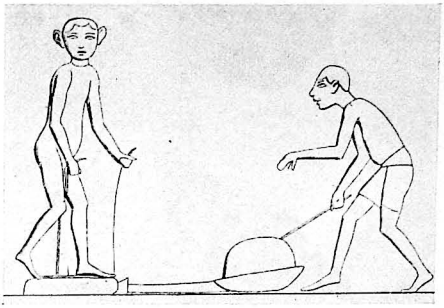

FIG. 196*a*.—Part of the drawing of the slab (Fig. 196*b*) given in Rosellini's *Monumenti Civili del Egitto* (1835), No. 63. I do not know any other instance of a really childlike face in ancient art, but it is not now visible upon the slab. The man's arms are so incorrectly copied that possibly the boy's face is equally inaccurate, or may even have been invented altogether by the draughtsman.

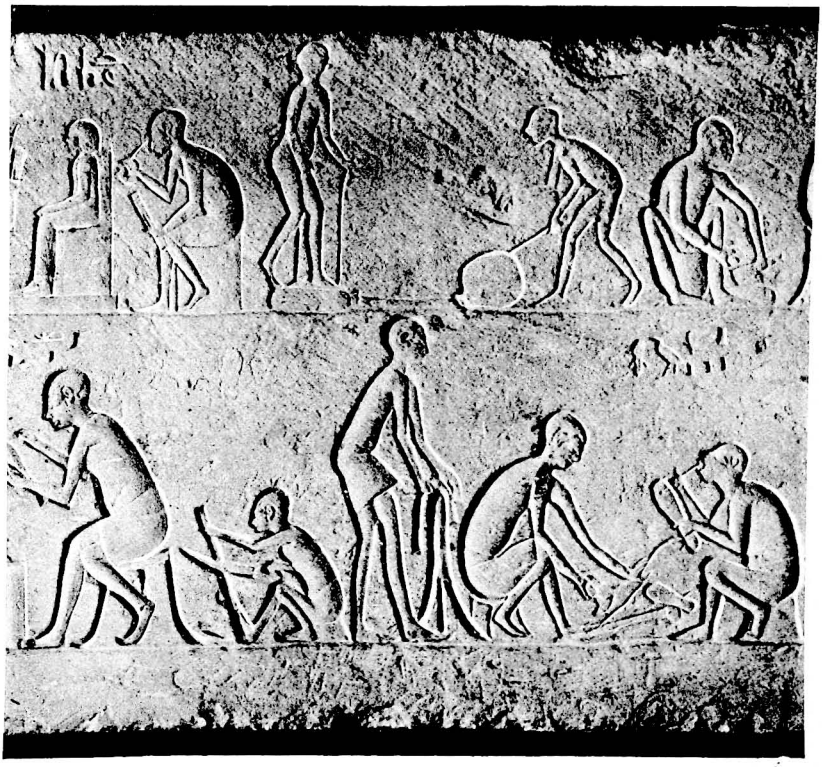

FIG. 196*b*.—Part of a white limestone slab with two rows of figures in sunk-relief. It was brought from Egypt by Rosellini, but its exact origin and period are unknown. From internal evidence it is assigned to the eighteenth dynasty. The boy blowing the bellows for the metal worker is about five inches high. Archæological Museum, Florence. Photograph by Alinari presented by Mrs. Sellon.

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FIG. 197.—Part of coloured fresco from Thebes, now in the British Museum. About one-quarter actual size.

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yet been found in Crete. There is, however, a regular series of such representations to be found among the Chaldean reliefs and cylinders. Some of them show a deity seated in a chair, but the chair is in profile,

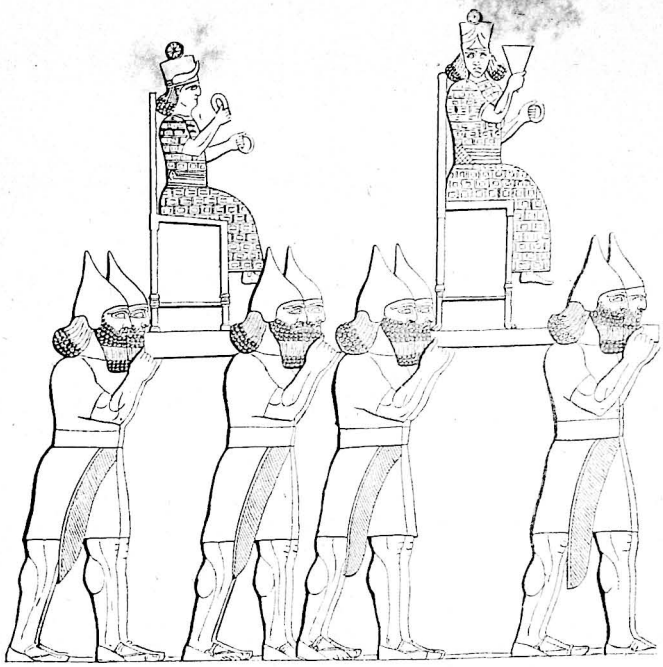


FIG. 198.—Drawing copied from Layard's Nineveh of a relief discovered by him and brought to England. It was sent by mistake to the Bristol Museum and not properly housed. It is now in the British Museum (Assyrian Saloon, No. 863), but as the face is quite unrecognisable, it is impossible to say how far the drawing is correct. Size about four feet high.

and the deity is turning its head to face the spectator (Figs. 242 and 258). This motive was very persistent, for in an Assyrian relief of about 740 B.C. we find soldiers carrying the image of a goddess in exactly

the same attitude (Fig. 198). Quite recently a small wooden seated figurine (Fig. 199) having this attitude was bought in Egypt by Dr. Longstaffe and presented to the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. It bears no inscription, and its origin cannot be traced, but it is attributed to the eighteenth dynasty. The figures on the horoscopes of the twentieth dynasty also have this curious attitude (Fig. 200). They may have been derived from Chaldea, as that country was famous for its astrologers. This all points to Western Asia as a possible source of Akhenaten's art revolution. It has often been said that eighteenth dynasty art was affected by Syrian influence even before Akhenaten's time, but no definite evidence has been forthcoming; very little is known about Syrian art in that or any other early period. It is to be noted that the only deity, besides Bes, Hathor, and the composite Tet, represented full-face in Egyptian art is the goddess Qetesh (Fig. 200 *bis*). Dr. Budge, in his *Gods of the Egyptians* (1904), says she is of Syrian origin, but gives no reference

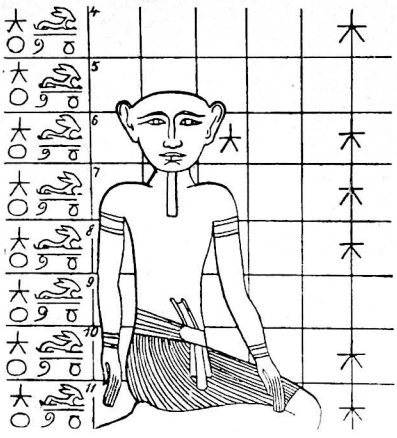
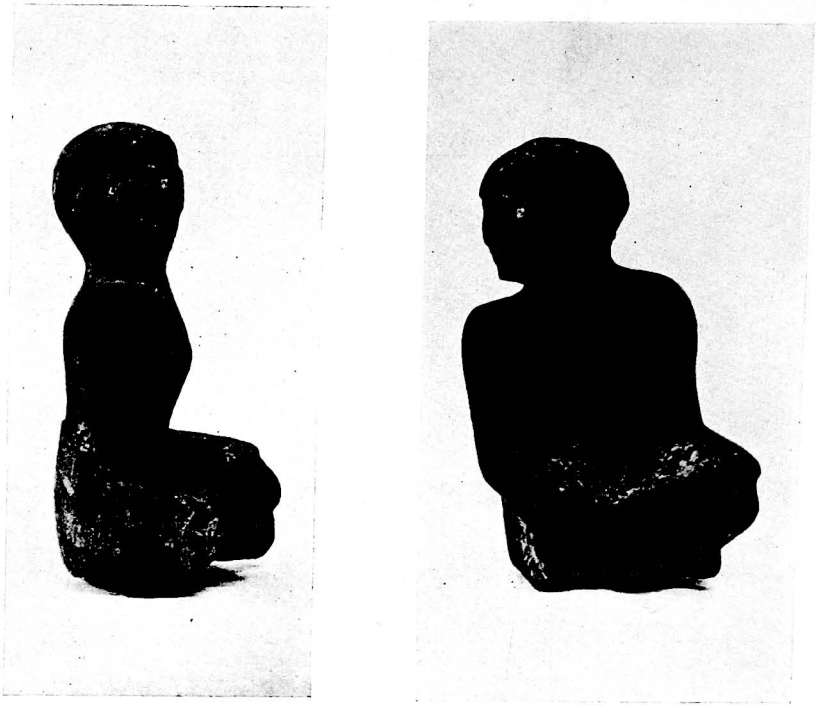


FIG. 200.—The regular type of figure depicted on the astrological tablets of the twentieth dynasty. A similar figure occurs on a twelfth-dynasty sarcophagus.



a *b*

FIG. 199.—Wooden figurine about three inches high bought at Gizeh. I cannot hear of any other figures of this sort, though possibly there may be several lying unnoticed on the shelves of various museums.

As all the other examples of a profile figure showing a full face are low reliefs, it might have been thought that possibly they represented "two-faced" gods, especially since they face sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left. Such prototypes of Janus do occur in Chaldean work—there is a good example in the Berlin Museum—but this specimen seems to show that the reliefs did not represent a double-faced deity.

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by which one can trace the period or the manner of her arrival in Egypt. Apparently there is no extant Syrian monument representing her.

FIG. 200 *bis*.—Defaced figure in high relief of the goddess Qetesh or Kent on a limestone sepulchral stele of a master craftsman of the nineteenth dynasty. The robe of these female statues is often only indicated by a line at the neck and at the ankles, so that when these parts are damaged it is difficult to determine whether the statue was really nude. Dr. Budge says that the earlier representations were nude, but he gives no instances. In Greek work the development was in the contrary direction. British Museum. Size about twelve inches.

These momentary glimpses of foreign influence open up curious vistas of thought. Perhaps the rigid profile position was a long sustained religious protest against the strange old gods of Babylonia. Or did the priests imagine that it was not dignified for a god to turn his head and seem to take some interest in what was going on around him? Art motives are an interesting study, but the underlying impulses which create those motives are of far more entrancing interest. These full-face pictures of the deities may possibly be connected with the worship of the sun, a kindly god in the temperate climate of Chaldea, but a fierce malignant power in Southern Egypt.

Akhenaten's vain effort seems to be a good example of the rule that art growth springs from the mass and not from a few enthusiasts. He and his clique had no support from the downtrodden nation, and when he died the priests of Amon regained their overbearing sway. They cursed his excommunicated ghost, and drove it to wander homeless and starving through the dreary deserts of this world and of the world to come. They were not very clear in their ideas whether there was any boundary between the two. Henceforth there was no hope for art in Egypt. She could and did acquire power and wealth and luxury, but her great soul was dead.

CHAPTER X

THE EARLIEST CHALDEAN ART

We have seen that Egyptian art reached its highest level after being crossed with a foreign strain, the origin of which is still obscure. Many of its characteristics are so similar to those of the early art of Chaldea that archæologists were for a time rather inclined to consider it as an offshoot of the Chaldean, or at all events as having been very strongly influenced by it.

At present the tendency seems to be towards believing that their similarities were due to ideas derived from a common ancestral race, possibly Semitic Arabian, of which we have as yet no satisfactory traces.

Recent researches have shown that these ideas did not form the basis of Chaldean art. They only caused modification in a well-developed style which was chiefly attributable to the genius of an ancient local race. These people (in later times called Sumerians) had reached a fairly high stage of civilisation long before their independence was threatened by outsiders. This discovery was very disconcerting to literary historians and philologists, for that race was proved to be—not a branch of the civilising Aryans

nor of the gifted Semitics, but of a negroid people having affinities with the Mongols. They used an agglutinative language—a form midway between the monosyllabic languages like Chinese and the inflected systems used by the Indo-European and the Semitic group.

These results were not obtained by men sitting comfortably in libraries and building up theories without observing facts, using bricks made without straw, those little straws of well-recorded observations that seem so insignificant and are so difficult to gather. Lives were risked and lives were lost in collecting the material for the scientific study of these long forgotten races. An abridgment of the story can be found in Professor Sayce's *Archæology of the Cuneiform Inscriptions* (S.P.C.K. 1907), but of course that book is chiefly devoted to the literary or linguistic side of the question.

The conclusions arrived at scandalised the philological world, which, as Professor Sayce says, "was comfortably convinced that none but a Semitic or Aryan people could have been the originators of civilisation," and was "little able to understand what is meant by scientific evidence."

Thanks to the energy and liberality of the French and also, though to a less extent, of the Germans and of the Americans, still deeper layers have now been opened out, and abundant evidence has been found of the civilisation of the race that used those mysterious hieroglyphic characters from which the

cuneiform characters were afterwards developed. Elaborate and well-illustrated reports are published by the French Government every few years, and students have access at the Louvre to a good selection of characteristic specimens. Explorations in Persia were begun in 1897, and have been carried on whenever the unsettled state of the country did not render the work too dangerous.[36] Twelve quarto volumes called *Mémoires de la délégation en Perse* have been issued; the thirteenth is now in the press. M. J. de Morgan, the chief of the expedition, has kindly allowed me to read the proof sheets of this last volume and to use some of the illustrations, but no extracts can give a proper idea of the importance of this latest contribution to the history of art.

The earliest relics of that strange Negro-Mongolian race do not come from Chaldea proper, but were dug up at Susa, the capital of the mountainous district called Elam (Western Persia). This country forms the eastern border of that great Babylonian plain, of which the southern part was occupied by the Chaldeans. These relics lay beneath some seventy feet of clay and sand that had been gradually piled up over them by the disintegration of successive structures built of unburnt bricks. All over Babylonia and Persia you can recognise the sites of hundreds of cities unknown and unexplored, raised far above the usual level by constant importations of fresh building material, just as London has risen above the marshes that once surrounded Tower Hill.

The lowest strata, reposing on a slight natural elevation, show that the founders of Susa had

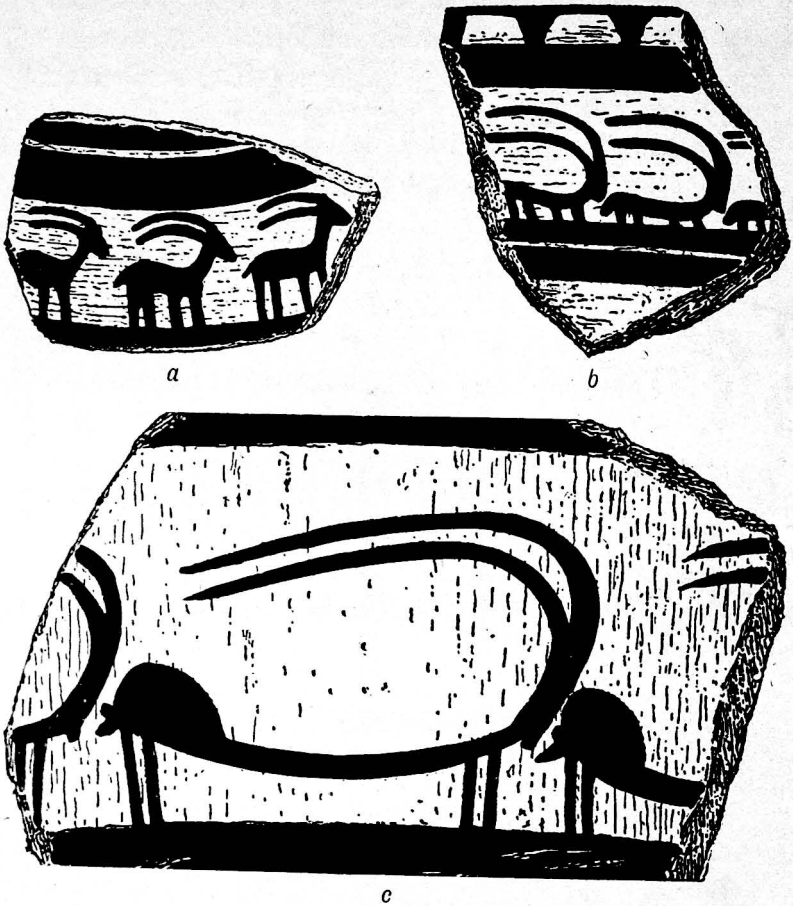


FIG. 201.—Modifications of the gazelle motive.

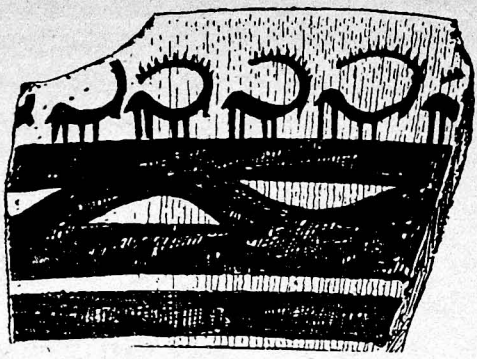
hardly passed out of the neolithic state. Copper was scarce, and stone was the only material generally

available for making knives or chisels or other cutting implements. Yet they had been civilised long enough for the decoration on their pottery to become so conventionalised that it is often difficult to trace the origins of their designs. Look at this cup (Fig. 201-*f*). Who

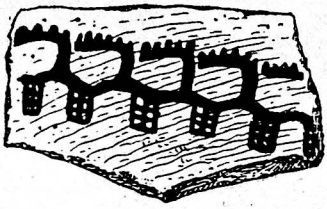
d *e* *f*

FIG. 201.—Modifications of the gazelle motive (*continued*); *a*, *b*, *c* are fragments (actual size) from the excavations near Moussian; *d*, *e*, *f* are about one-third of their actual size. They were found in the cemetery outside the walls of the earliest town at Susa—now seventy feet below the summit of the mound. Compare these rows of birds with those of Fig. 123.

would say at first sight that the middle figure represented a gazelle? It is seen in rather less stylised form on the other cup (Fig. 201-*e*), and still less conventionalised on the fragment (Fig. 201-*d*). On the fragments (Figs. 201-*a*, *b*, *c*) the transition stages are fairly recognisable, but no specimens have yet



a



b

c

FIG. 202.—Modifications of the goat design.

been found to lead us back to its original and probably much more natural form.

Into what curious designs the goat form might pass is seen on these vase fragments (Fig. 202-*a*, *b*, *c*). In one case the bodies become joined to give a con-

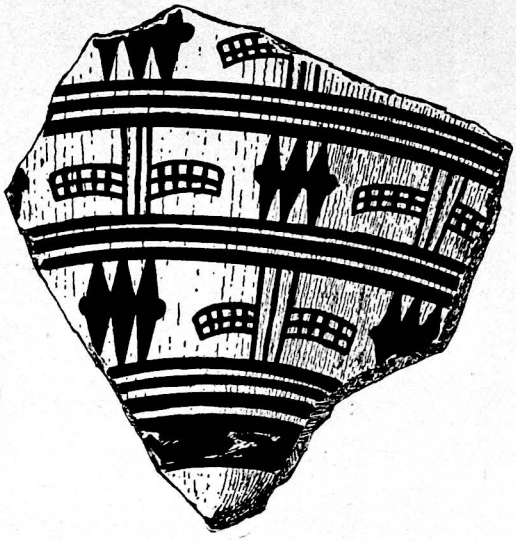


FIG. 203.—Designs supposed to represent stylised birds, degenerate forms of Fig. 204.

tinuous pattern; while in the other the horns join the body and form a circle propped by three legs. One might almost feel inclined to doubt that the last figure was really intended to represent a four-legged animal, but many other specimens have been found showing that the copyists were contented to give only three legs to a figure that still bore some resemblance to a quadruped. Another strange instance is seen in

Fig. 203. It does not look much like a bird, but Professor Breuil believes it to be a degenerate form of figure 204. The long-necked birds on the cups

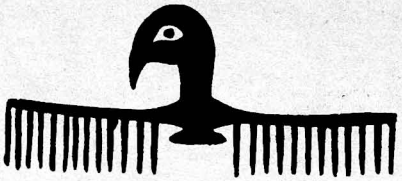


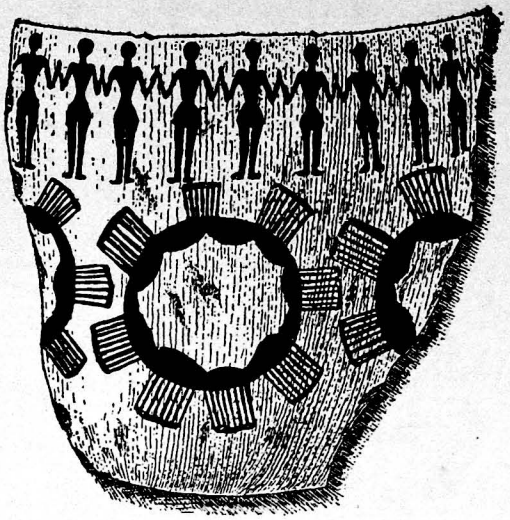
FIG. 204.—Compare this stylised bird with the more naturalistic bird in Fig. 220.

degenerated into rows of plain vertical straight lines by frequent copying; every step of that degeneration can be traced. Another bird rather like a wild duck seems to have been transformed into a Z (Fig. 205),

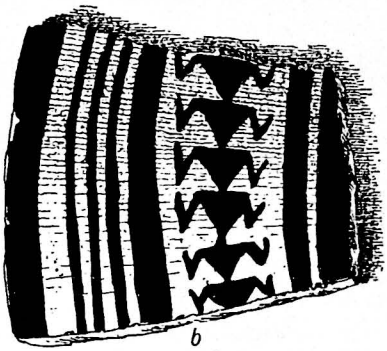
FIG. 205.—Modifications of the bird form, taken from various fragments of painted pottery.

resembling those Z's straggling in curious groups over old Egyptian vases (Fig. 120); but I have not heard of any such groups being found in Chaldea.

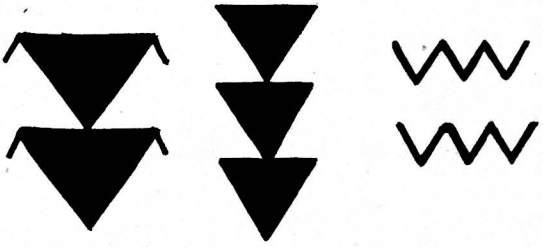
The most interesting and perhaps the most extraordinary are the human figures, which can be traced from the fairly naturalistic drawing A (Fig. 206) through the easily recognisable shape B, to the merely geometrical designs C and D, or to the simple zigzags E.



a



b



c *d* *e*

FIG. 206.—*a*, actual size; *b*, two-thirds actual size; *c*, *d*, *e*, taken from various fragments.

Other variations were made by placing two or three bodies side by side, giving them only one pair of arms

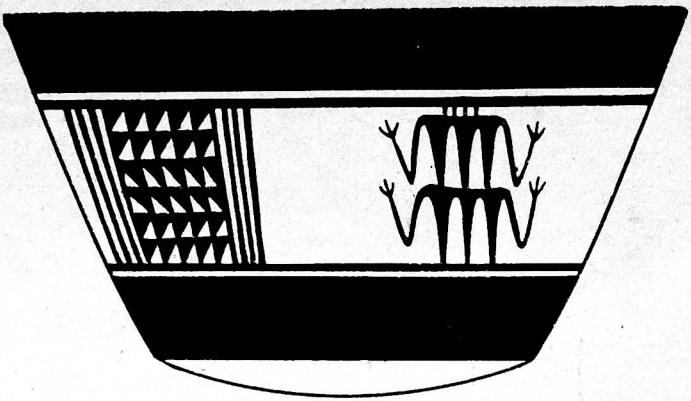


FIG. 207.—Bowl of yellow earthenware as thin and hard as porcelain. From the excavations in the mounds at Khazineh, near Moussian. Two-thirds actual size.

(Fig. 207). Then the arms disappeared and more bodies were added. Thus we get the very common pattern seen on this fragment (Fig. 208), which would be quite unintelligible if we could not trace it from its original form.

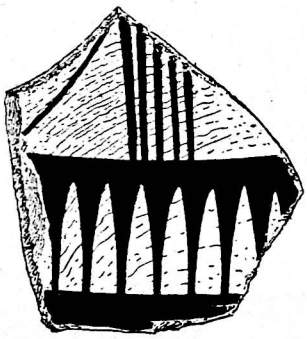


FIG. 208.—Fragment of similar ware from the same site.

The series of heads of oxen (Fig. 209) is curious, because the final result looks so much like a man's head and arms that even expert archæologists thought it must be a human form similar to those female figures

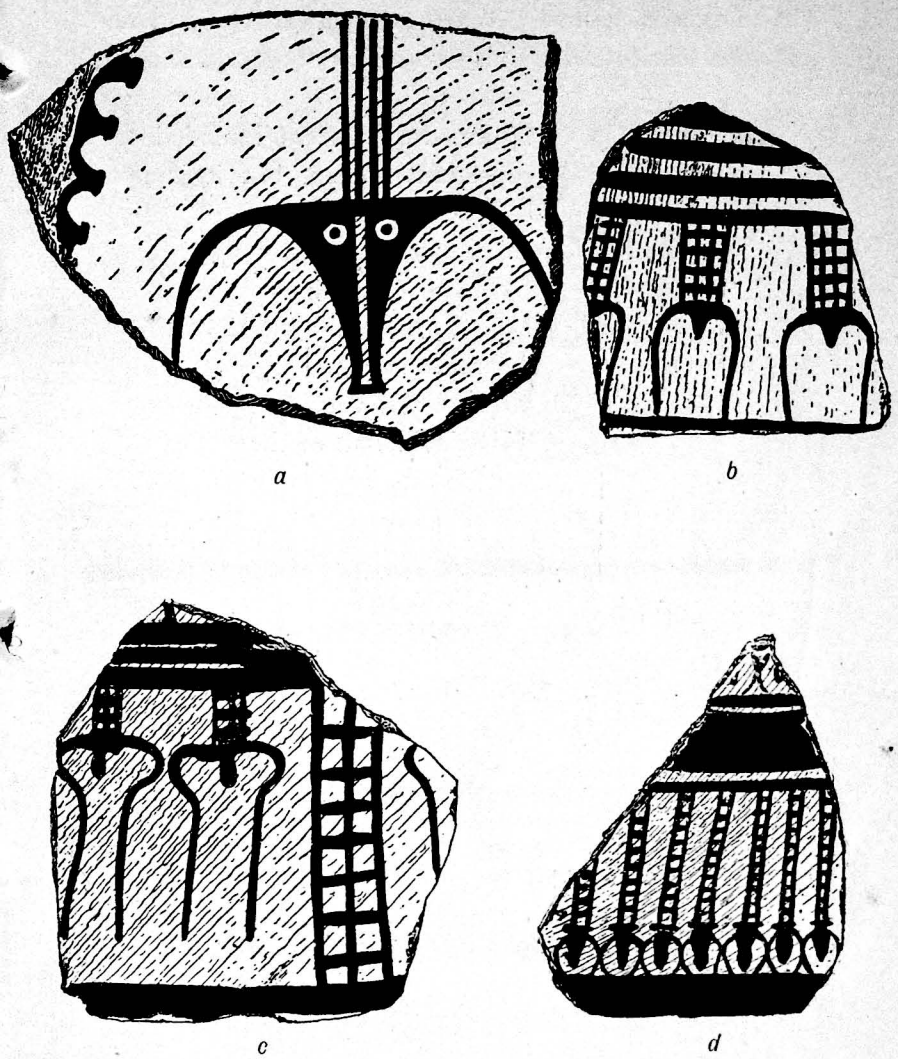


FIG. 209.—Modifications of bulls' heads and horns. Fragments from Moussian. Actual size.

on Egyptian pottery (Fig. 120), until Abbé Breuil pointed out its derivation. There are some small fragments (Fig. 210) on which the figures really seem intended to represent women, but it is not safe to draw definite conclusions from a few imperfect specimens. We have previously remarked what strange modifications these bucrania may undergo (see Fig. 78). On a very fine vase from Khazineh, one of the many city mounds near Susa, bulls' horns in a continuous chain form a very effective decoration (Fig. 211), more

FIG. 210.—These figures may be intended for women. Compare with Fig. 120 and Fig. 372.

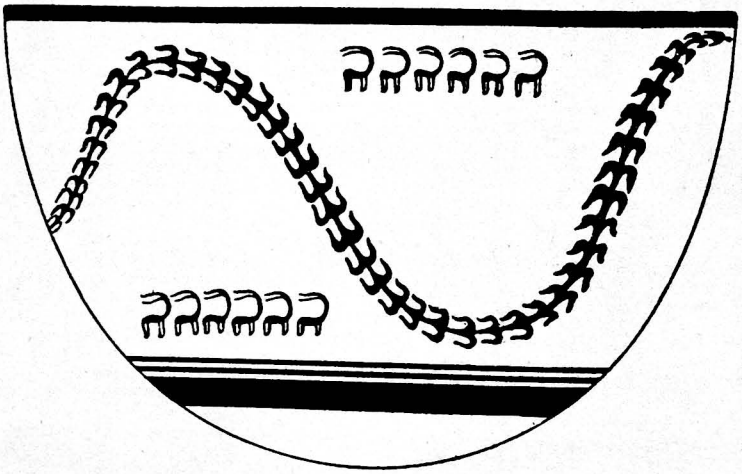


FIG. 211.—Bowl of hard thin yellowish earthenware from Khazineh, near Moussian. Half actual size. Compare the decoration with that on Fig. 284. All this thin pottery is considered by experts to have been turned on a pivotted wheel of slow rotation. See *Délégation en Perse*, xiii. p. 30.

To face p. 267.

FIG. 212.—Drawings of men and ox heads incised on the smooth surface of the rock near Tenda, Italy. Sometimes the horns are of exaggerated length, like those in Fig. 209*c*.

effective perhaps to charm our eyes than to charm away the evil spirits, whose imaginary existence has burdened the lives of countless generations having greater faith in devils than in God.

Those long horned figures are strangely similar to many of these innumerable incised drawings (Fig. 212) found high up in the mountains of the Maritime Alps near the Col di Tenda. They have been very carefully noted and described by Mr. C. Bicknell in his *Prehistoric Rock Engravings in the Italian Maritime Alps.* (Gibelli, Bordighera, 1911.) They are not easily recognisable, and if there had not been such a very great number of them they would probably never have been noticed. They afford good ground for hoping that other incised drawings will be found in Europe, when people have learned to keep their eyes open for such faint traces of man's ancient handiwork. They are covered with snow for a great part of the year; it is difficult to imagine why so many thousand large figures should have been laboriously pecked out on the smooth rocky slopes of such an inaccessible and barren district.

Archæologists have generally agreed in attributing them to the bronze age of North Italy, only about some three thousand years ago, or perhaps a little more; but no satisfactory explanation of their purpose has yet been given. It is possible that a sort of prehistoric Lama once held sway there over the wild pastoral tribes, and professed to protect their cattle and other possessions against harm by inscribing them

in his sacred book—upon payment of a fee, that mainspring in the performance of so many religious rites. There have always been men who will trade upon the hopes and fears of their credulous fellows, priding themselves too on the holiness of their rascally proceedings.

This class of men flourished exceedingly in Elam and in Chaldea. The animistic religion of those early races lent itself readily to the deceptions of wizards and soothsayers. That rich city of Eridu, close to the Biblical Ur of the Chaldees, owed its wealth to the trade in charms and incantations carried on by the priests of Ea, rather than to its traffic as a seaport town. Those busy streets once thronged by anxious seekers after good gifts from heaven, or by the greatly daring toilers of the sea, are now buried deep beneath accumulated refuse, the salt waves that lapped its quays now break upon a shore a hundred miles away. What a site for an enthusiastic excavator, yet it is almost untouched.

In later times the people of these regions called themselves Sumerians, but we have no means of knowing whether this name was used in those earlier days, for as yet no traces have been found of any sort of writing on the relics from the lower strata. Neither have any statuettes been found which might show what race they belonged to, but a very primitive figure of baked clay (Fig. 213) seems to prove that at least some of them had that same reverence for a female goddess which characterises all the "Mediterranean"

race. The few drawings of human figures on the pottery are so crude that we cannot glean much information from them (Fig. 214). They bear a striking resemblance to that Egyptian drawing on a red vase (Fig. 100), they are also very similar to the figures on Minoan pottery from Melos (Fig. 301), and on the Dipylon ware of Greece (Fig. 372), but we have already noticed that not much importance can be attached to the resemblances

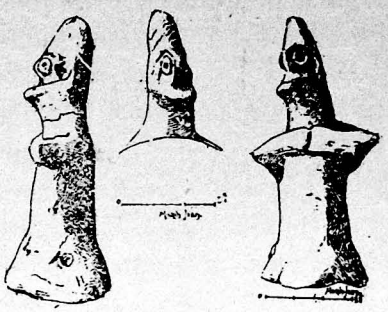


FIG. 213.—Terra cotta image from the earliest city at Susa. It has the usual attitude (holding the hands to the breast) of the ordinary figurines of later periods. It probably represents the same goddess, Nana. (Ishtar or Astarte). This supposition is strengthened by a painted clay figure of a dove found in the same deposits.

FIG. 214-*a*.—Fragment from cemetery of earliest city at Susa. The circle may be a still further degeneration of the gazelle design (Fig. 201).

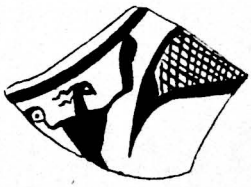


FIG. 214-*b*.—Fragment of painted pottery of the second period. Susa. Notice the hair, and the head shaped like a bird's (Fig. 373).

of comparatively simple forms. Another resemblance to Minoan pottery is to be seen in the vessel with a tubular spout (Fig. 213 *bis*), which is occasionally found in the earliest deposits, and still more frequently in those of the second period. Although the cups and bowls were so well made, and of such good shape, no large vases have yet been found, only very small specimens with four perforated handles (Fig. 214 *bis*) rather like those of the earliest stone vases of Egypt (Fig. 94). In one of their methods for producing a design there is a curious similarity to the system of *traits réservés* adopted by the Ionians of Rhodes and Asia Minor several thousand years later, for the zigzag marks in Fig. 215 were formed by reserving a zigzag space when the colour was painted on the body of the vase. Perhaps the most surprising of all their designs is one showing a tree apparently laden with fruit, and having two birds standing at its foot (Fig. 215 *bis*). Among all the representations found on ancient vases, up to and

FIG. 213 *bis*.—Vase with tubular spout. From the cemetery of the first city at Susa.

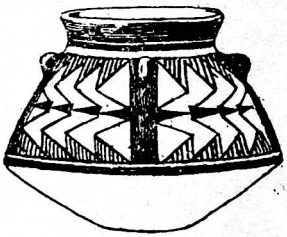


FIG. 214 *bis*.—Vase with perforated handles, probably for attaching the threads by which it was suspended. The design is peculiar and inexplicable.

including the Greek period, this is almost the only drawing which shows any appreciation of the beauty of a tree and of its foliage.[37]

FIG. 215.—Vase with zigzag design made by *traits reservés*. From the cemetery at Susa. About four inches diameter. The four perforated handles are rather similar to those on the very earliest stone vases in Egypt (Fig. 94).

Taking their work as a whole, it seems to prove that they were a people of simple habits, refined and cultured, but possessing little vigour and self-assertiveness. Their designs are well balanced and not overcrowded; indeed, we see no signs of that *horror vacui* which is often said to be characteristic of archaic work. I am inclined to think that the confused and crowded compositions found in certain periods are a sign of decadence rather than of archaism. It is a sign often observed when wealth and luxury are increasing, and when art is beginning to be paralysed by a desire for great display. A nation may pass through this stage triumphantly, issuing all the stronger for having resisted the deadening pressure of mere wealth, or it may succumb crushed by the burden of the very weapon which should have served to guard its life from ills. The

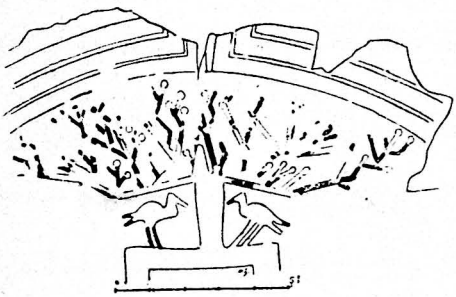


FIG. 215 *bis*.—Unique representation of a tree. Susa. Size about four inches.

inhabitants of Susa, and of the surrounding land of Elam, were soon to pass through this phase; later on we shall see how they survived it. They were already in some ways more civilised than the neolithic Egyptians; for besides practising weaving and metallurgy, they used and perhaps were the inventors of the potter's wheel.[38]

The best specimens of their pottery were dug up from some great mounds about ninety miles from Susa, and not far from Moussian, a village in the lower ranges of the Elamite mountains, on the western borders of modern Persia. Most of the illustrations (Figs. 201 to 215) have been taken from these specimens. The ware is of a fine texture, thin and hard, ringing like porcelain, but not glazed. Its colour is generally light buff or pale yellow, the designs were drawn (before the ware was fired) with black or dark brown paint, though some vases are red and their ornamentation black. It is difficult to realise that they are the decadent products of a nation that had flourished and decayed while yet the great Sphinx of Egypt was still a shapeless mass of unhewn rock.

Shall we ever discover where that nation's art first blossomed and matured?

No stone carvings have yet been obtained from those lowest strata, but at Susa a few flat bits of limestone were found to have simple designs worked on them with a sort of wooden drill and wet sand (Fig. 216). These might be taken for the earliest specimens of the seal engraver's art, but it is diffi-

cult, and often impossible to determine the comparative age and use of the various relics from these strata. Neither crudeness nor excellence of execution can afford us any trustworthy criterion. We have seen that crude specimens may often be less ancient than those of far better workmanship; or they may be contemporaneous, and their inferiority may merely

FIG. 216.—Clay impression made by a hard white stone cylinder seal found at Tello. The workmanship is very similar to that of the designs on the pieces of limestone found at Susa.

be due to their having been produced in a different locality where art was not so well advanced, or they may have been made by inferior artists living in the same district. Also certain specimens may have been preserved for centuries in some temple or palace, finally to share a common burial with objects of much later date under the wreckage of some great catastrophe.

These are the ordinary and unavoidable difficulties that all archæologists have to contend with. There are many other difficulties when any special study,

such as of art, has to be pursued. Well-preserved relics are rare, and they are liable to swift decay soon after their discovery. The illustrations of them in the old standard works are not to be relied upon, especially with regard to points that were not considered important when they were published. The accounts of new discoveries are scattered in the journals and reports of innumerable societies, and they deal chiefly with archæological rather than with artistic aspects. They are often much belated, and seldom have good illustrations. They have many different systems of naming and of classification, and the names of people and places take a different aspect in French, German, and other foreign languages, since they are necessarily spelled phonetically. There is no common agreement as to dates previous to about 1600 B.C., so that an object dated 3000 B.C. in one report may be really older than one dated 4000 B.C. in another. Even in museums one has the same difficulty. For instance, in the Babylonian department of the British Museum, a mace head of Enannatum's time is labelled 4500 B.C., while he himself is dated 2900 B.C. in a recent book on Sumer and Akkad by Mr. L. W. King, one of Dr. Budge's assistants in that department.

These considerations will serve to show how cautious one has to be in expressing opinions about the progress or degeneration of art in any remote period. When the actual relics of that art have to be examined there is another difficulty. If only a few specimens have been found, deductions drawn from

them must be quite provisional. If great numbers have been discovered they are generally scattered about in so many museums that it is almost impossible to compare them properly. Some museums take pains to secure casts of the most important specimens not represented in their own collections, but too many authorities still look upon their museums as "treasure houses," and do not care for "worthless" imitations.

It is unfortunate that we have not more specimens of early seal engraving, for seals represent the state of art in their period better than amulets or offerings to the gods. The latter are more likely to be conventional or archaic, because in the choice of subject and treatment less liberty was allowed to the artists who made them. It has to be constantly borne in mind that art had little freedom or opportunity for expansion in times when it was dependent on the patronage of warrior kings, or on the favour of the priests. Art for art's sake was unknown. It was strictly utilitarian. But men to whom have been vouchsafed glimpses of the real beauty of the world cannot be bound for ever by the bonds of material utility. It was hard for them to steer a course between their patron's base desire for splendour or mere personal advantage, and their own vain longing to express the higher conceptions which might possess their souls, but were so difficult to fix in forms perceptible to other men. They succeeded best who were in touch with mother earth, and realising their limita-

tions were content to add grandeur and beauty to objects desired by mankind instead of making beauty and grandeur the only objects of their work.

All honour to those unknown men who throughout the ages have fought the brave fight against sordid and mercenary ideals. Their names are not recorded, and in their time they were seldom held in high esteem.

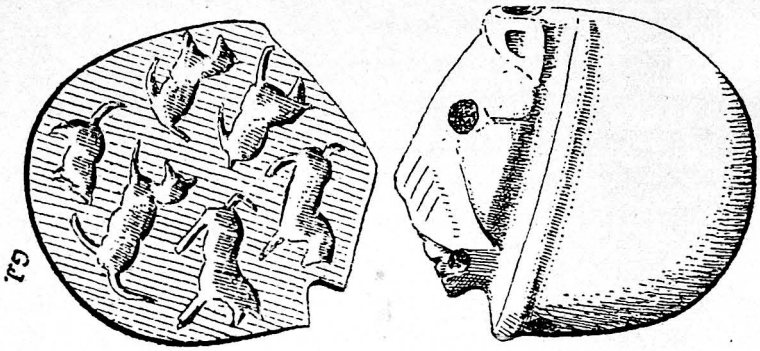


FIG. 217.—*a*, under side; *b*, upper side of a seal. Notice the curious ridge from ear to below the mouth, it is similar to the flat band in Fig. 158, representing the mane. Hard limestone. Actual size. From the second city at Susa.

They had few material luxuries, nor did they work for fame. They received no vain incongruous titles of knightly honour won by pen or brush or pencil;[39] almost as ludicrous as those higher martial titles of nobility won and worn nowadays by victors in fierce financial battles. They were imbued with high ideals, and they produced good work just as a tree produces fruit or flowers. Let us revere their memory, there are so many trees producing little else but leaves or

thorns! There is no reason to lament that they were not rewarded with high titles or base gold. They added to the welfare of the world more than they took from it. That is the measure of their glory, as the reverse is the measure of the wastrel's shame.

The objects shown in Figs. 217 and 218 are probably the very earliest known examples of seals, although, as no impressions made by them have yet been found, it is not quite certain whether they were used as seals or merely as amulets. As usual in early work animals, not men, are the subjects chosen. It is strange that a carver who could make such a good lion's head should have drawn his other animals with only two legs, but that agrees with our previous experience that carving in the round should have improved much faster than bas-relief or drawing. There are very few of these specimens. Their antiquity was rather overstated in the first accounts, as they were supposed to have come from the earliest deposits in the great mound of Susa; that mistake has now been rectified (*Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse, XIII.*, 1912, p. 60), and they are classed with the relics of the period immediately succeeding the destruction of the first city, the city which produced the strange pottery described at the beginning of this

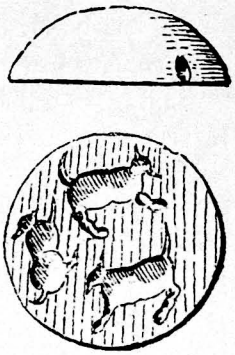


FIG. 218.—Limestone seal with perforation for a string. Susa. Actual size.

chapter. For that civilisation ended, like so many others, in a great catastrophe. Charcoal and ashes in widespread layers some sixty feet below the present surface of the mound bear mournful witness to the havoc and destruction wrought five thousand years ago.

When a city or a state was found to have suffered such a calamity and to have lost its special type of civilisation, archæologists often used to suppose that all its inhabitants had perished or migrated, and had been replaced by the conquering race. Now they are beginning to realise that this is very seldom the case. It is not easy to exterminate or banish an entire population. It does not seem ever to have been effected by predatory raids, but only by great migrations. Such migrations are rare, and are generally the result of climatic changes, or of new inventions of vast importance altering the whole conditions of men's lives. A raid like the Norman Conquest or the Mahomedan irruption does not immediately change the general conditions of life for all the conquered, but only for those of the upper class. If that class possesses higher art standards than their conquerors, their art will suffer serious modification. Unless it is firmly rooted in the general mass of the people, it will not survive the shock. The crude ideals of uncultured men will sway the minds of conquerors and conquered, and we shall see the fruitful vine of art wither and die down, because it had no depth of soil to grow in.

The Susa population seems to have been permeated with artistic feeling, and though their art

standards were altered by the conquest, its general growth was rather strengthened by the downfall of their upper class. I think we may assume that there

FIG. 219.—Thick earthenware fragments from second city at Susa; showing the return to a naturalistic rendering of animal life.

was a conquest of Susa, and that it was effected by some alien foe, for although conquests may be made by the diffusion of ideas, they do not at the same time produce the blackened ruins that record the march of armies. That it was an alien foe seems proved by the great changes in the character of the relics found in the supervening strata. The fine pottery disappears; its place is taken by a much coarser ware, which is sometimes decorated with fairly natural figures of animals (Fig. 219), and birds (Fig. 220). Instead of the cups we get large vases, often of graceful shapes, rather like those of the second predynastic period in Egypt.

FIG. 220.—Three fragments pieced together showing a bird painted on pottery of the second period at Susa. The dotted legs are conjectural. A prototype of the Austrian and Russian double-headed eagle.

But the designs are of better type, and instead of being drawn with a single colour, two colours—black and red—are often used with good effect upon

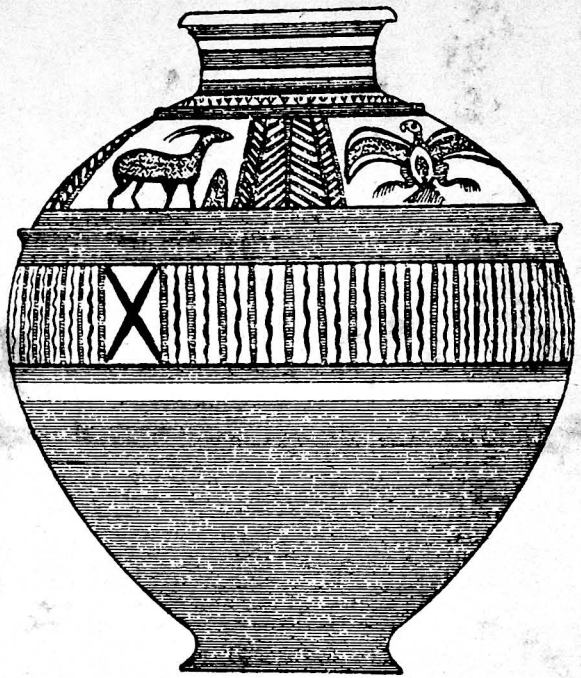


FIG. 221.—Large vase made on a potter's wheel. Second Susian period. Estimated as being contemporaneous with Naram-Sin's dynasty. The shaded part represents the red colouring, the blank spaces the natural yellowish colour of the clay. The thick black lines show the black colour used in these designs. M. Heuzey has traced the development of this Chaldean eagle into the emblem now used by European monarchs. (*Mon. et Mem.*, Piot. I. p. 19). From cemetery at Tépé Aly-Abad. One-fourth actual size.

a yellow ground (Figs. 221–2–3). The rectilinear character of the former period becomes less pronounced, semicircles and wavy lines are more fre-

quently used, and although the spiral has not yet been found on any of the thousands of vases that have been unearthed, we get this very special design (Fig. 220 *bis*) which is strangely similar to a favourite motive of the Cretan potters, less ancient by some fifteen hundred years (Fig. 308). Vases of dark coloured earth having incised designs (Figs. 221 *bis* and 222 *bis*) are found in these deposits, which M. J. de Morgan assigns to the period of Naram-Sin, therefore roughly contemporaneous with the sixth Egyptian dynasty 2600 B.C. (see page 304, and also the Chronological Table, page 5). Occasionally a filling of white material is used to heighten the effect of these incisions (Fig. 223 *bis*).

FIG. 222.—Vase from Tépé Aly-Abad (near Moussian). One-eighth actual size. Red and black design on yellowish clay. No satisfactory explanation has been given of the origin or meaning of these rayed semicircles.

FIG. 223.—Vase from Tépé Aly-Abad. One-eighth actual size. Compare with Fig. 311.

Stone work improves, a few poor bas-reliefs are found, and the first signs are seen of those cylindrical seals which play such an important rôle in the

history of Babylonian art (Fig. 256). They seem to have been a Semitic invention; it is significant that they also occur among the relics of the earliest dynasties of Egypt. Impressions were taken by rolling them over the soft clay; Fig. 224 is from a photograph of an impression made by a remarkably perfect cylinder found at Susa. The animals are so well engraved that it would almost seem as if that unknown early phase of Elamite art (see page 259) had come to life again, loosened from its grave of

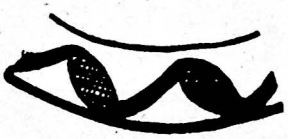


FIG. 220 *bis*.—Second period, Susa.

FIG. 221 *bis*.

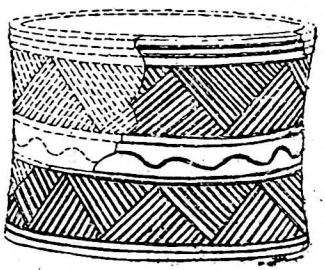


FIG. 222 *bis*.

Dark brown earthenware with incised designs. Second period, Susa.

artificiality by the advent of a strange and energetic race untrammelled by convention and still in touch with nature. On a similar cylinder (Fig. 225) the animals are not so well engraved, but they show that tendency to represent a full face instead of a profile which is so persistent in Chaldean art and

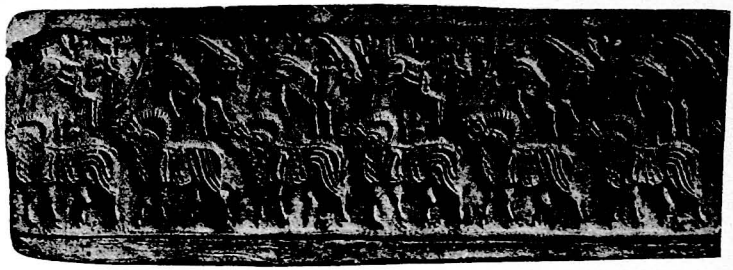


FIG. 224.

FIG. 225.

FIGS. 224 and 225.—Both these impressions were made on clay, which was then baked and glazed. The same accentuation of the shoulder-joint is seen in early Egyptian work (Figs. 133 and 137). The animals on the knife-handle and on this upper seal might well have been drawn by the same hand.

FIG. 226.—This design is very conventional; the seal cutter has mixed up the bull and the bison types. The heart-shaped ornament is found also on the pottery. The cross (Fig. 227) also occurs frequently in either the Greek or the Maltese form.

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so strangely absent from all Egyptian work previous to the eighteenth dynasty. Figure 226 has been constructed from several imperfect and fragmentary impressions, a difficult process which has to be adopted when the original cylinders cannot be found. It shows a more advanced stage of full-face drawing, although the hind legs of the bull are not well rendered.

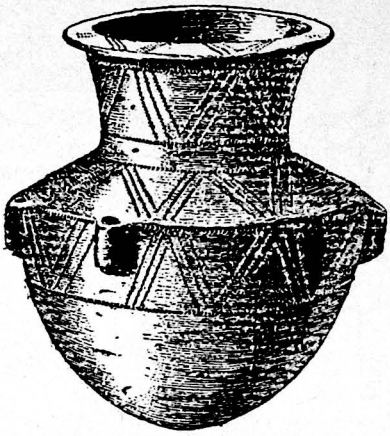

FIG. 223 *bis*.—Vase found at Tépé Aly-Abad. So few specimens of this incised ware with white filling have been found, that it is difficult to be certain about its origin. The perforations of the handles are vertical, like those of the vases of central Europe. The Egyptian vases always had horizontal perforations.

In time it may be possible to determine the relative age of these early cylinders, and thus to trace the development of the Chaldean seal-cutter's art. Impressions made by them are often found on clay tablets covered with cuneiform inscriptions, but these inscriptions seem all to have the same archaic character. Apparently the style of writing changed much less rapidly than the style of art, which exhibits very varied qualities in the different specimens. Some of them have flagrant defects of drawing but are redeemed by a certain originality of pose (Fig. 227). Some have that zigzag pattern

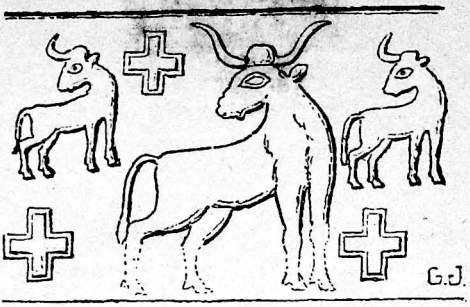

FIG. 227.—The seal engravers of Chaldea were like the cave men of France in their uncertainty as to the right manner of depicting a bull's horns when the head was in profile. In later times they seem to have almost always given him two horns and only one ear (Fig. 260), but the bison was generally given a perfectly full face of rather human character. Notice the Greek crosses.[40]

FIG. 228.—The S signs on this seal impression and on Fig. 232 may be an undeveloped spiral. The horns and eyes are peculiar.

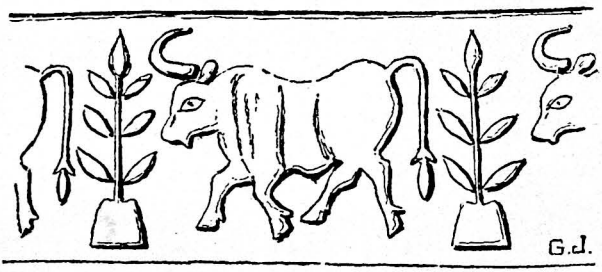

FIG. 229.—This bull strongly resembles one on an Egyptian plaque in the Berlin Museum.

on the bodies of the animals (Fig. 228) which is

FIG. 230.—Seal showing signs of fantastic treatment of an ordinary theme.

FIG. 231.—This deer seems to be in absolute profile, but there are indications that the legs were doubled as in the ordinary conventional rendering of a galloping animal. The dragon seems to have his fore legs resting on a rock or cliff, but that was probably not intended by the engraver. It is more likely to be due to a flaw in the seal.

a favourite device of all people in the primitive stage. Others are full of life (Figs. 229 and 230), showing a keen appreciation of natural and simple forms, while not a few contain an element of fantasy quite in accordance with that phase of unreality through which all art appears to pass as it advances

FIG. 232.—Fantastic animal with the fore part of an eagle and the hind quarters of a lion.

(Figs. 231 and 232). The drawing of the man in Fig. 233

would seem to show that he belongs to an earlier period than the man in Fig. 234. The latter has affinities with the early dynastic style of Egypt just as the fantastic

FIG. 233.—Incomprehensible signs, possibly hieroglyphics.

FIG. 234.—The oblong design probably represents a door.

animals in Fig. 232 have some similarity to those on the Egyptian palettes. That curious representation of a bull with only one horn (Figs. 227 and 229) is also

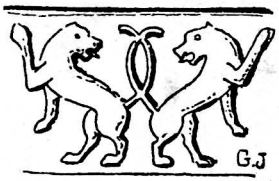

FIG. 235.—An exception to the rule of heraldic opposition.

FIG. 236.—The figure between the lions may be meant for tortoises.

found in Egypt, but no designs similar to these pairs of lions (Figs. 235 and 236) have yet been found there, although one of the Egyptian hieroglyphs much resembles their strangely twisted tails. All these

specimens afford no absolute proof in favour of the claims of either country to precedence or originality. Père Scheil says that these Chaldean seal cylinders are previous to 4000 B.C., but he does not say what date he thinks that would correspond to in Egyptian chronology. In fact the dating of all the earlier periods in both countries is still largely a matter of conjecture, and at present it is premature to pick out any two of them as being contemporary.

The causes which led to that great change in Elamite art (see page 279) are still as unknown as those which led to the somewhat similar change in Egypt (see page 191). Judging from what took place in the neighbouring country, Babylonia, we may suppose that it was due to an invasion by that Semitic race which is supposed to have come from Arabia, and is known to have overrun the broad valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, and to have established itself as a dominant caste among the Sumerians of the Chaldean plains. The hill tribes who inhabited Elam would naturally be the last to come under its influence. The Elamites seem to have preserved their own language, but after a temporary improvement the national art died away. For the next thousand years or more it is to Chaldea that we must turn for evidence of progress.

The invaders of the Chaldean plains, unlike those who had such influence in Egypt, do not seem to have brought with them a higher form of civilisation when they first swarmed out of Arabia. That they were a

pastoral people appears evident from their calling a city "a tent," and their kings shepherds. Erech, one of the earliest of their settlements, was called the sheep-fold. The term invader is perhaps not quite correct; the Semite may have come in by peaceful penetration, but how he came or whence he came is still one of the most obscure of problems.[41]

The chief point that concerns us now is how his coming affected the development of art. I think a connection may possibly be traced between this infusion of Semitic ideas and the degeneration of the painted pottery and the appearance of figures carved on stone.

The Sumerian religion being animistic, especially encouraged the use of charms and magic signs. Probably all those designs painted on the pottery or engraved upon the cylinders were believed by their owners to exercise mysterious powers; thus the seals and cups and vases were in a certain sense their household gods.[42]

The Semitic religion was anthropomorphic. These shepherd kings of Chaldea wanted human figures to represent their gods, and also they wanted to have themselves represented as gods or as kindred of the gods. Primitive artists have always found more difficulty in drawing the human form than in carving it; therefore, as soon as these kings could order artists to do work for them, they chose carved work instead of painting, and that sort of work came into fashion even among those Elamites and Sumerians who still believed

in the greater efficacy of the animal representations.

A great many fragments of carved work have been found at Tello. This is the modern name of an enormous mound of earth about 50 feet in height and many acres in extent, which marks the site of the ancient Chaldean city of Lagash (also called Shirpurla). In 1887 the French Government commissioned M. de Sarzec to explore it; his excavations have been the most successful and perhaps the most scientific of all that have yet been made in the great plain formed by the Tigris and Euphrates, which may be broadly described as Babylonia, although strictly speaking the name should only be applied to the centre part, and not to Assyria in the north or to Chaldea in the south.

After the sad death of M. de Sarzec, a victim to his devotion in the cause of science, the work was continued by Captain Cros, and it is still going on. Eight large well-illustrated reports entitled *Découvertes en Chaldée* have been issued by M. Heuzey, the keeper of the Oriental Antiquities in the Louvre Museum, where a number of the statues and other objects found at Lagash (Tello) and at Susa are to be seen. As Tello is in Turkish territory most of the best things were carried to Constantinople.

There are no neolithic remains at Lagash; the site was probably covered by the sea in neolithic times; now more than 200 miles of alluvial plain lie between it and the nearest coast line of the Persian Gulf. The earliest relics date from a time when cuneiform writing

was well developed and had lost the traces of its pictograph origin.

It is supposed that the Sumerians were then still predominant at Lagash, but it is very difficult to disentangle the story of the struggle between them and the Semites, and to be at all certain of the part played by each of these two races. It is generally held that the Sumerians were more artistic and perhaps less devoted than the Semites to material wealth and luxury. This would seem to fit in with the conception of a great ancient artistic Mediterranean race, non-Aryan and non-Semitic, extending from Spain to Elam, and possibly akin to the palæolithic cave men of France. Such a race may have formed the patient mass of unambitious workers whose love for nature and simplicity was exploited and corrupted by the Arabian Semites in Chaldea and in Egypt. The dominating caste stimulated science and all studies tending towards material improvements, but eventually had the same debasing influence on art that was evident in all lands affected in later times by the third Arabian wave issuing forth under Mahomed and his successors.

The oldest specimens of graven work from Lagash are strangely crude (Fig. 237). M. Heuzey says that they "represent in the primitive Chaldean sculpture a distinct epoch or a separate school. A bust of the same primitive type is in the British Museum." The bust he mentions is a small alabaster one (Fig. 238), unique of its kind. It can be seen in

FIG. 237.—Fragment, eight inches long, of a stone frieze found at Tello.

FIG. 238.—Alabaster bust inscribed with the name of the god Nebo. The nose had been mended and broken off again; apparently it was originally very large. British Museum. Height about eight inches.

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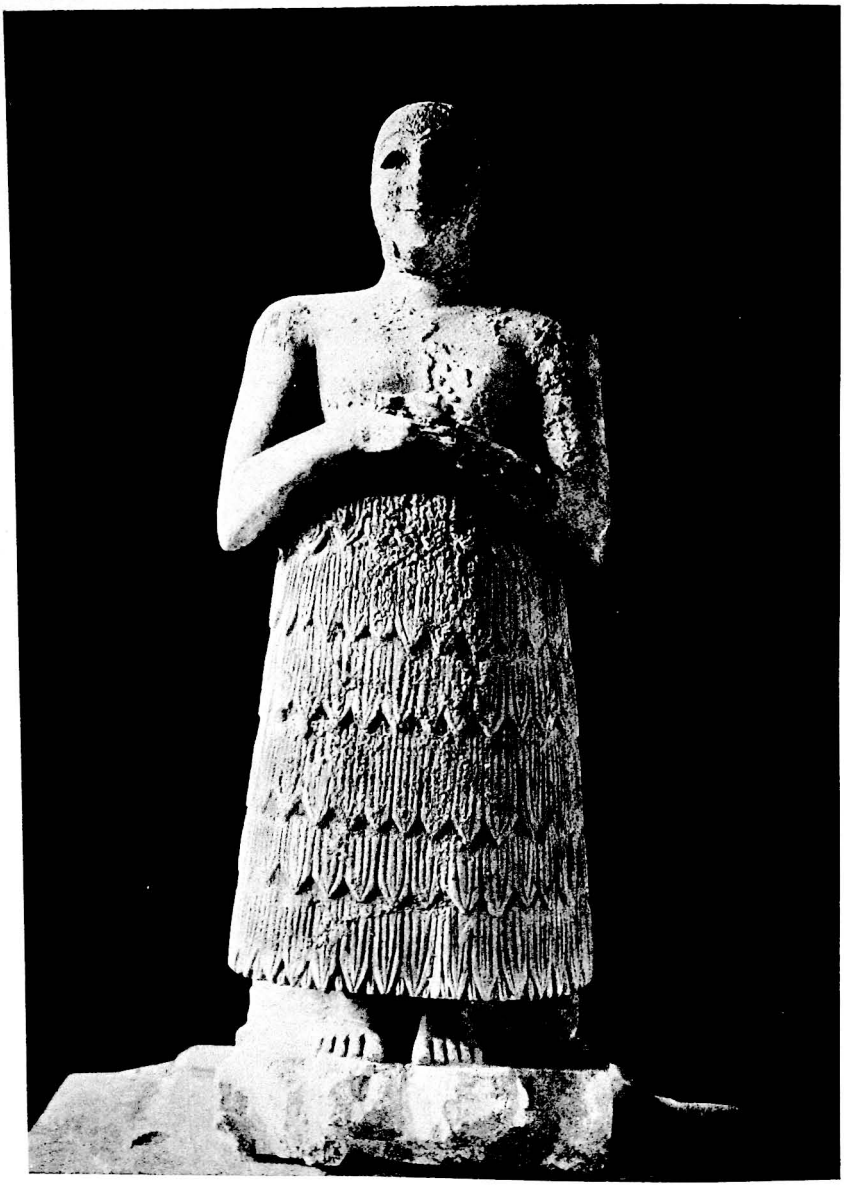

FIG. 239.—Marble figure found by Mr. Banks at Bismaya (Nippur). About thirty inches high. Now at Constantinople. From a photograph presented by Sir Edwin Pears.

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the Babylonian and Assyrian room, Wall Case 28, among a number of late figurines mostly of Greek type. Very few specimens of the work of this school have been discovered, and its development cannot be traced.

Several small statues have been found at Tello showing rather a better style of sculpture, but very little seems to be known about them. In the Babylonian and Assyrian room of the British Museum there is a small and very crude statuette of an "early Sumerian royal personage," but no information is given about its origin. It is figured in the catalogue (Pl. XXXIII., p. 142) and dated (p. 144) about 2500 B.C. (Gudea's period), which seems rather late for such poor work.

A much better specimen (Fig. 239), assigned by Mr. L. W. King to Ur Nina's dynasty (3000 to 2850 B.C.), was found by Professor E. J. Banks during the Chicago University explorations at Bismaya. This town lies about fifty miles north-west of Tello, and occupies the site of the ancient Nippur, which used to lie on the banks of the Euphrates, until that great river shifted its course some twenty miles to the westward. Mr. Banks gave this account of the discovery: "During the afternoon of the 27th of last January (1903), while standing on the summit of the temple at Bismaya watching the progress of the excavations, Abbas, a bright young Arab from Affedj, stuck his head out of the trench in which he was working and excitedly motioned to me. In

a moment I was in the trench. Two and a half metres below the surface, and imbedded in the west corner of the mud-brick platform of the west temple, appeared the smooth white shoulder of a large marble statue. As the discovery of such an object creates great excitement among the superstitious men, I quickly covered the white marble with dirt, and with the remark that it was nothing but a stone I transferred the gang to another place. The remainder of the afternoon was spent in wondering if the statue were perfect, or if its head were lacking, if it bore an inscription, and what its age might be.

"When at sunset the last man had left the excavations we descended into the trench, and with our hands carefully dug away the hard dirt from beneath the statue. The bent elbow appeared; we had found a statue with the hands free from the body. We dug towards the neck, and to our disappointment the marble came to an end; the statue was headless. Then digging at the other end we reached the feet; the toes were missing, but we recovered them from among the small fragments of marble which were scattered about in the dirt. It was dark when the statue was released, and, standing upright, by the light of a match we searched it over for an inscription, but beneath the clinging dirt nothing like writing was visible. Wrapping about it an aba, we each took turn in carrying it to camp, fully a quarter of a mile away. It was not an easy task, for our ancient king weighed nearly two hundred pounds.

"In the tent a bath was quickly prepared, and as the dirt was washed away three lines of a beautifully distinct inscription in the most archaic characters appeared, written across the right upper arm. They were but three short lines, little more than three words, but later, when I was able to translate them, they told us all that we most wished to know.

"About three weeks later, February 18th, a workman who was employed at the north corner of the temple, thirty metres from the spot where the statue was found, was clearing away the dirt from near a wall, when a large round piece of dirty marble rolled out. We picked it up and cleared away the dirt. Slowly the eyes, the nose, and the ears of the head of a statue appeared. I hurriedly took it to my tent and placed it upon the neck of the headless statue. It fitted; the statue was complete. From beneath the thick coating of dirt the face seemed to light up with a wonderful smile of gratitude, for the long sleep of thousands of years in the grave was at an end, and the long lost head was restored; or perhaps the smile was but the reflection of our own feelings." (*American Journal of Semitic Languages*, Chicago, 1904–5, p. 57.)

M. de Sarzec was not so fortunate with an early statuette discovered in the course of his excavations. He was watching a workman digging, when a stroke of the pick brought down a fall of earth and revealed a small alabaster figure. The digger, like many other men in higher walks of life, being more intent upon the work that he was doing than on its possible

results, raised his pick again, and "before I had time to rush forward and seize it, the pick, falling at that instant, broke off the head and crushed it." (*Découvertes en Chaldée*, p. 48.)

The smile observed by Mr. Banks is to be seen on other Chaldean statues and in a few Egyptian ones. It is very noticeable in archaic Greek statues during the experimental stage. Probably it was due to a desire to give animation to the face, instead of the usual rigid stare. The eyes of this statue now show hollow and expressionless; formerly they were bright with some precious material imitating their natural shape and colour. It was the custom for people in those days to have their eyebrows shaved and trimmed to form rigid curves. These were represented in sculpture by inlaid strips of metal; the empty grooves above the eyes now render it all the more difficult to judge of the original effect.

The name of the statue was read at first as Daudu, but now it is interpreted as Esar, King of Adab. Like many other statues of that period it is quite small, only about thirty inches high, including the pedestal. It is peculiar in having the arms standing out more freely from the body than was usual even in much later ages. The posture shows only a slight variation from the Chaldean attitude of reverence, that conventional folding of the hands which in Syria is still the proper way of expressing respect. These statues were not intended to commemorate the glory of the kings, but their devotion to their gods.

The hands, although much injured, are better modelled than the hands in any succeeding periods for many generations. Hands, indeed, presented a difficulty which few cared to tackle. They can be made almost as expressive as the face, but such rendering cannot be expected in early work, for even to the face it was only incidentally, almost as it were unintentionally, that sculptors gave any expression until about the sixth century before Christ. Within the narrow limits prescribed by royal or priestly ideals the sculptor might copy the features of his patron, or might represent some simple action, but nothing further. It is no wonder, then, that he neglected the study of hands, moulding the fingers in more and more impossible forms and positions, until in that debased Assyrian art he did not even care to put their proper number.

CHAPTER XI

CHALDEAN STATUES AND RELIEFS

In dealing with palæolithic art we have seen that the growth of small bas-reliefs was possibly stimulated by the desire to satisfy an increased demand without expending any more time and trouble on the work. The same tendency would be felt in Chaldean times and would affect their work even when it was of a larger size. As the influence of the Semites increased, and wealth became more concentrated, the sculptor's energies were directed towards the decoration of palaces and temples rather than to the satisfying of a popular demand for amulets. Statues or large statuettes would be produced, and then friezes and panels in low relief, for they would make a greater show than statuary, and on them the story of the patron's deeds could be more easily expressed.

The relics of such work are, however, too few and too fragmentary to enable us to trace with any certainty its evolution during the struggles for political supremacy which raged among the numerous little city-states of Chaldea during the period preceding the domination of Sargon, the Semitic king of Akkad. His exact date has not yet been fixed, since the old computation, 3758 B.C., is now con-

sidered erroneous, and at least a thousand years have been subtracted from it. The evolutionary period of intestine Sumerian struggles ending with subjection to the Semite, may therefore be placed between 4000 and 2700 B.C. In the absence of a good series of statues, or low reliefs of large size, we have to be content with smaller carved objects, some of which can be approximately dated by the cuneiform inscriptions incised upon them. The most interesting of these relics is a large mace head (Fig. 240). The lions have the full-face aspect which seems to be characteristic of Sumerian art, but their manes are rendered in a style which, together with the profile face, may prove to be characteristic of the Semitic influence that appears to have affected both Egypt and Chaldea.

FIG. 240.—Limestone mace head dedicated by Mesilim, a Semitic king of Kish (previous to 3000 B.C.) to Nin-Girsu, the god of Lagash, a Sumerian city under Mesilim's suzerainty. The inscription is in rectilinear cuneiform (or arrow-headed) characters which have lost all the old curved lines due to a pictographic origin. The decoration has the same motive as the design on the silver vase (Fig. 244), but the eagle of Lagash, being on the top of the mace head, is not seen in this illustration. Six lions are rudely carved on the sides, each of them attacking with teeth and claws the hind quarters of the one in front. The manes are rendered in the same way as in the Egyptian carvings. This style died out in Chaldea. In later representations we get the more naturalistic style of Figs. 244 and 246. Size about eight inches by six inches.

It is possible that one of the underlying causes of the differences in the art of the two races is to be found in the dissimilarity of their

religious symbols and beliefs. People who live in a temperate climate have a natural love for the sun. When they have become sufficiently civilised to calculate the lapse of time by the movements of the sun instead of noting only the simpler variations of the moon, the sun god becomes the lord of heaven, and a full round face would be considered as the natural aspect of a benignant deity. In hot dry countries the sun is never reverenced to the same extent, and therefore the Semites issuing from Arabia would not have the same affection for it as the inhabitants of Chaldea, and they would not regard its disk as suggestive of a kindly influence. These primitive ideas would of course become obscured and complicated when professional priests found it necessary to frame elaborate definitions in order to exclude rivals from the emoluments of their caste. To trace the vagaries of theological word-spinners is a thankless task, but the simpler forms are well worth studying, for the fundamental ideas are extremely persistent. They may undergo curious inversions by reason of conquests or migrations, but their vitality is wonderful. We have a good example of it at the present day in Abyssinia. In that country the profile form is almost exclusively reserved for devils.[43] The feeling is so strong that when dies were cut in France for King Menelik's gold coinage they all had to be destroyed because his head had been represented in the profile manner customary in European countries. It might be difficult to discover the sources and

migrations of these dislikes and preferences, but the fact remains that they do exist and must be taken into account when studying the history of art.

About 3000 B.C. Lagash seems to have attained a prominent position under a Sumerian ruler called Ur Nina. The only sculptural work that can be

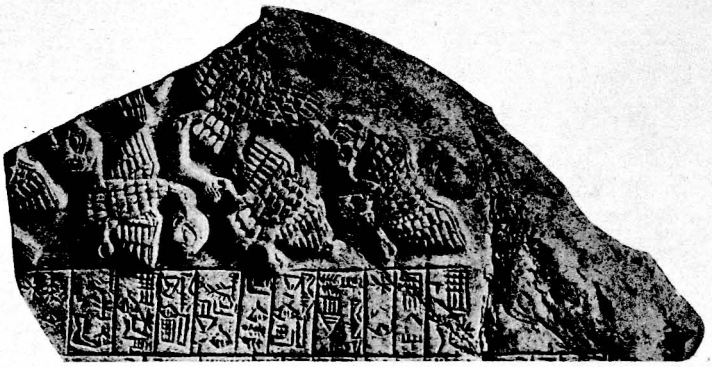

FIG. 241.—Fragment recording the victories of Eannatum (about 3000 B.C.). Part of a limestone slab (originally about six feet by four feet and five inches thick) now called the Stele of Vultures. It was ornamented on one side with historical scenes and inscriptions, on the other with mythological scenes and imprecations. It was buried near the ruins of an ancient palace of the rulers of Lagash, but only about half of its fragments have been recovered. Most of them are now in the Louvre, but two of them seem to have been stolen from Tello and sold to the British Museum, where they may still be seen.

definitely assigned to his period is a series of small votive plaques crudely depicting him and his family. Ur Nina's grandson, Eannatum, erected an elaborate monument with bas-reliefs representing his expeditions and slaughters. It is called the Stele of Vultures, because on one of the fragments (Fig. 241) vultures are represented pecking out the eyes of the

corpses on the field of battle. Archæologically it is very interesting, and M. Heuzey has written a long account of it in his *Études de l'archéologie orientale*, vol. i. pp. 49–82, but æsthetically the subjects and their treatment are crude and repulsive.

Not much progress can be discerned in the few votive plaques that are attributed to Eannatum's successors at Lagash. One of them is interesting because it shows the antiquity of that particular system (discussed in page 251) of depicting a seated goddess as presenting a full face while the rest of her body is in profile (Fig. 242). The curious markings on the foreground indicate hills, a simple convention which we have already noticed in very early Egyptian work (Fig. 161).

Another plaque, bearing the name of Entemena, (about 2900 B.C.) is noteworthy because it contains the best early example of that decorative widespread and long lived design, known as the guilloche, (Fig. 243) which may have been derived from the twisted lions' tails seen on the early seal impressions found at Susa (Fig. 236). On this plaque we have also an early instance of an heraldic emblem of a town; the eagle grasping the two lions represents the city of Lagash. It is similar to the bird that was figured on the large vase found near Susa, but here the Chaldean tendency to give a full face instead of a profile view is apparent. The artist has even attempted the difficult task of giving a full face to his lions, straining their heads upwards to seize the eagle's wings.

FIG. 242.—Fine white limestone slab with square hole in centre for the support. The nude figure is watering a sacred plant. Compare with the goddess Fig. 258. About seven inches high. Louvre.

FIG. 243.—Plaque made of a composition of clay and bitumen, perhaps a natural product. It was broken in transit to Paris, this illustration is taken from a cast made by M. de Sarzec before sending it. Notice the calf similar to the animal in Fig. 244. Height ten inches.

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FIG. 244.—Silver vase found at Tello. It took many months to dissolve off the incrustation which covered the whole vase but is now only seen on the feet. About fourteen inches high.

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Outline drawing had during this period made considerable progress. Judging by the comparatively few examples hitherto discovered it was chiefly employed for decorative work on metal, and on the shell plates that were used instead of ivory for inlaying. In using this term decorative we have constantly to bear in mind that decorative effect was quite a secondary idea; the main purpose was to please or propitiate some unseen power, or to create a talisman which should convey some special power to the possessor of the decorated object. Any art criticism which does not take this into account is liable to go grievously astray. At present we are continually hampered by the inability of the archæologists to explain the meaning and purpose of many of the designs, and therefore it is often useless to speculate why the artists of various ancient countries adopted or evolved different styles or conventions in trying to express themselves. But it is a most fruitful field of inquiry, and will in time produce very interesting results.

The great skill in outline drawing attained by these precursors of the Babylonian and Assyrian civilisation is shown by the figures engraved on a silver vase made for Entemena (Fig. 244). We find there the same full-faced eagle and lions that we saw on his votive plaque, but in this case each lion is turning its head to attack a goat. In all similar Egyptian representations (Figs. 138 and 145) the lion is drawn in profile; that fashion of depicting it does not appear

in Chaldea until much later (Fig. 256). The Chaldean lion, or lion-headed bird, is frequently represented as attacking a bull (Figs. 245 and 246), but on Entemena's vase and plaque the bovine animal occupies a separate zone. It is drawn without horns, and in a curious attitude as if just about to rise to

FIG. 245.—Drawing, incised on a shell, of a lion-headed eagle attacking a bison. It is sometimes called a celestial bull, but the bull created by Anu at Ishtar's request, to punish Gilgames for resisting her charms, was generally represented in profile and with wider horns, rising not from the side but from the top of the head, as in Figs. 246 and 260. Actual size.

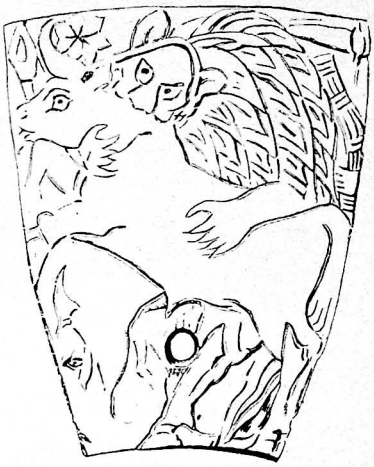

FIG. 246.—Drawing on shell, probably used for inlaid work, as ivory was used in Egypt. Actual size.

its feet. That type does not seem to have been at all persistent, though the art motive of a full-faced lion attacking a bull had extraordinary vitality. It persisted through all Chaldean art, migrated to Mycenæ, and was adopted by Greeks who perhaps had never seen a lion in their lives.

In two of the drawings (Figs. 247 and 248) there

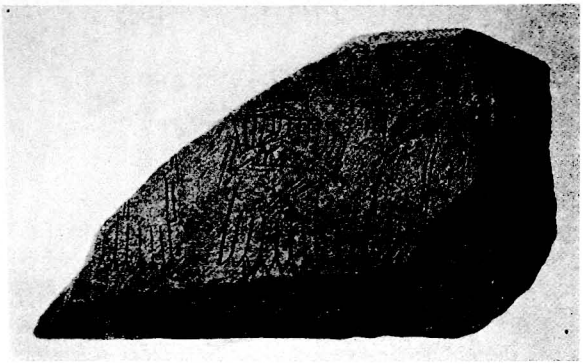

FIG. 247.—Drawing incised on a fragment of white limestone, ten inches long.

FIG. 248

FIG. 251.—Only a few fragments of this stele have been found. It is of fine white limestone resembling marble, and is carved on both sides. Height about twelve inches. All these specimens are in the Louvre Museum.

FIG. 249

FIG. 250

FIGS. 248 to 250.—Shell plates found at Tello, about half actual size.

seems to be an attempt to break away from the traditional error of placing a full-face eye in a profile head. The eye is in each case slightly foreshortened, but it would be rash to accept such a startling innovation as intentional. It may only be an imitation of the animal eye (Figs. 249 and 250), an imitation which is frequently seen in early Greek drawings.

The next stage in the development of relief sculpture is seen in two fragments of a "Stele of Victory," erected for one of the Semitic kings of Akkad (Fig. 251). The composition is still pictographic, the figures being arranged in zones forming a continuous band of narrative, an inartistic device common to all crude work, though it may be as elaborate as that on Trajan's column or as simple as the childish embroidery of the Bayeux tapestry. The figures are more diverse and are far better modelled than in any previous work, but the treatment does not seem to be inspired by any higher ideals.

Although we have so few art records left from those early centuries, there are many inscriptions and other indications which show that during this period the Semitic race became dominant over the whole Babylonian plain, organising its resources, regulating its language, and apparently invigorating its art. They were not yet numerous enough to debase it with their sordid and mercenary ideals.

Lagash (Tello) and other towns and principalities having been united to form the Semitic kingdom of Akkad, Naram-Sin, one of its earliest kings,

undertook the siege of Susa and the conquest of Elam, about 2600 B.C. To commemorate his success he had a sandstone slab (Fig. 252) carved with low relief figures of himself (Fig. 253) and his followers pursuing the enemy into the mountains and forests. It is commonly called the Stele of Victory. Taking it as a whole, and having regard to its general conception, its bold relief, its careful execution, and especially to the grouping of its figures, it may be said to be one of the finest of all known monuments previous to those of Grecian times. There is little of that angularity and feeling of constraint that is characteristic of all the serious work of Egypt. M. de Morgan, in his account of it, says, "If Chaldea had not been impelled by the force of circumstances towards the brutal impressions caused by constant struggles, she would have produced very high art; her beginning provided all the

FIG. 253.—Sketch of the figure of Naram-Sin treading on a fallen foe. The horns which adorned the head-dress of kings and deities were always shown in front view even on a profile head. Some of the artists of these periods may have realised the incongruity, but their patrons must certainly have preferred the only view which left a strong impression on their minds and which they could easily recognise.

FIG. 252.—Stele of Victory found at Susa. Now in the Louvre. Yellowish sandstone. Height about six feet.

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elements." *La Revue de l'Art Ancien et Moderne.* July–Dec., 1908.

During the next hundred years the advance was still more rapid. As far as we can gather from the scanty records unearthed in the northern cities, the improvement was more noticeable in that southern part of the country where the Sumerians had not yet lost all their influence.

Susa being in the highlands of Elam was still too primitive or too far away from the centres of progress to share in the advance, though we have a remarkable proof that its population preserved its love of art, and had not become degraded by that lust of domination so characteristic of its Semitic conquerors. When the kingdom of Akkad went the way of all kingdoms founded on violence and greed, and began to sink so miserably that now even the site of its capital cannot be found, the Elamites rebelled against their oppressors, freed themselves, and again founded an independent kingdom. Many centuries later (about 1100 B.C.), under a king called Choutrouk Nakhounta, they made a raid upon the city whence the redoubtable Naram-Sin had in olden times marched forth to conquer them. There they found the Stele of Victory, commemorating the defeat and slaughter of their forefathers. Instead of breaking down the carved work thereof, as the Semites used to do, they carried it in triumph back to their own distant city. Strange irony of fate; the preservation of the best record of their enemy's prowess is due

to the forbearance of insensate revenge and the broad-minded appreciation of art shown by the descendants of his victims!

Yet it was not a pleasant subject for contemplation except to men with Asiatic minds. Certainly it does not show the same delight in carnage and in human suffering that is so apparent in the earlier sculptures, but it represents the same glorification of the strong man triumphing in unequal contest over an unresisting foe that we find in all these early works. Ruthless oppression and rapacity are covered with a thin veneer of religion, but mercy is unknown.

It is the beginning of a dismal history. The dominant classes, which seem to have been recruited chiefly from that old Arabian Semitic race and imbued with the same evil principles, founded or seized various capitals, and called their empire by different names, but it was always the empire of greed. Well organised for martial and commercial robbery, they drained the conquered lands while neglecting to foster the resources of their own country. As time goes on the empire extends its baneful sway over the whole of that fair region, the fabled site of Paradise. It then stretches out its greedy claws to Syria and to Asia Minor, and even as far as Egypt, sucking the life-blood of the people, and becoming diseased and bloated with its loathsome food. At last, when outwardly at the height of its prosperity, a sudden blow pierces its mercenary armour, and the miser-

able Assyrian tyrant collapses under the heel of Cyaxares.

It was not a period of unmixed evil, for good and evil are always so interwoven that we can hardly conceive of the existence of the one without the other. In art good and noble influences were at work, possibly assisted by religion, though we see very little evidence of it. When brute forces are arrayed against each other in a struggle for existence and for mere material luxuries, the most successful religious leaders are those who take advantage of sordid hopes and superstitious fears. Ferocity is more easily mitigated by such means than by exhortations to practise justice and to love mercy; most of those priests who had sympathy with their fellow-men would naturally adopt the easiest, perhaps the only means at their disposal. This is the most charitable way of regarding the elaborate fictions of religions; but those who adopt bad means are tempted to use them to attain bad ends; the process of degeneration can too often be traced in the relics of their art.

To trace degeneration would require a special and much longer study. The study of progress is more interesting, though in Chaldea, a land of clay houses and clay books, we have fewer records of the growth of art than of the growth of literature. The range of subjects too was much more limited than in Egypt. It is doubtful whether there ever was any popular art, for the Chaldeans seem to have had no popular religion save that of fear. Even their gods were always

quarrelling among themselves, and were supposed to be dependent on human offerings for their food and pleasures. A strange reflex effect of the conditions of life in a country torn by constant struggles for petty supremacy, and where the few available luxuries seem to have been absorbed by the rulers and the priests. However, we have only the official descriptions of their religious beliefs, and it has been justly observed that official religion is no true indication of popular beliefs. Buddhism does not recognise the efficacy of prayer, and yet the Buddhist people pray.

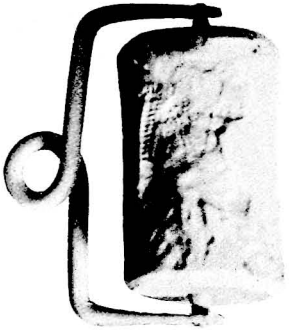
Some day we may discover more evidences of popular art, but an alluvial plain does not offer favourable conditions for their preserval. The nearest approach to anything of that sort is shown by the seal cylinders generally representing mythological episodes. We have seen that it is extremely difficult to discover what the engravers desired to express in the earlier seals; it is also by no means easy to interpret the meaning of many of the later ones. When using the term later with respect to seal cylinders it must always be remembered that there is very little conclusive evidence as to their date, most of them having either no inscriptions or else only vague references to unknown gods or kings. Their comparative age has generally been estimated by their style, but that is now beginning to be recognised as a very unsatisfactory test. Great numbers of them have been collected, but unfortunately very few of the collectors know exactly where their specimens were

FIG. 254.

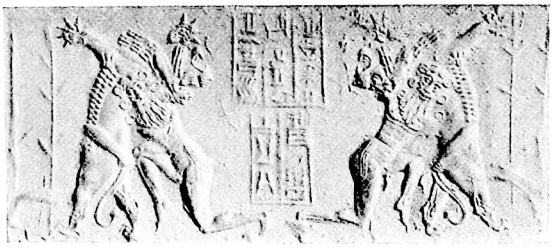
FIG. 255.

FIG. 254.—The goddess seems to have taken refuge in a thicket, which a god is hacking down. A smaller god presents her with a mace. The seated goddess with a flounced dress is inhaling the fumes of a sacrifice. Found at Tello.

FIG. 255.—Probably very early work. In British Museum.



a



b

FIG. 256.—(*a*) Cylinder in the British Museum, from which the impression (*b*) was made. The wire handle and axle is conjectural; there is no evidence to show how these cylinders were rolled over the clay. Actual size.

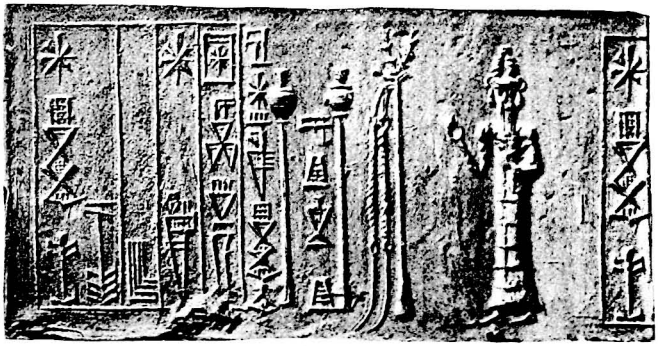


FIG. 257.—The word physician is mentioned in this inscription, but the figure has the horned head-dress of a deity. The three "standards" in front of him have not yet been explained. Found at Tello. Three-quarters of actual size.

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dug up, for such portable curiosities have a ready market and pass through many hands, and perhaps through many generations of possessors before reaching Europe. Many forged specimens have been produced, and some genuine examples have had alterations or additions made to them in modern times or even by their ancient Babylonian owners.

Thus there are many pitfalls for students of these relics which are so fascinating and seem to bring us so closely in touch with the daily life of bygone times. As the old cylinder rolls once more over the plastic clay we see appear in strange relief the very forms which greeted the expectant eyes of men who lived in long-forgotten days in far away Chaldea, eyes that rejoiced at the plain evidence of the protection of those immortal gods whose godship has not lasted as long as the poor stone engraved to celebrate their power and immortality. Eyes that glistened with warm sympathy as upon the clay the simple tale was told of the misfortunes of some persecuted goddess (Fig. 254); eyes that shone with delight at the story of a hero's great success (Fig. 256). In imagination we may see the pride of ownership setting its seal on stores of corn and wine and oil, or signing a contract hopeful of much gain. Then the gaunt physician rolls out his cabalistic signs (Fig. 257), the hunter or the cattleman rudely commemorates the deadly spring of some devastating lion (Fig. 255), the humble suppliant recalls his promise to make a sacrifice to that mysterious goddess (Fig. 258).

This cylinder is one which awakened a great deal of interest in the subject at the beginning of last century, but I have not been able to get any better illustration of it than this rough sketch published in 1815 by its purchaser, Mr. C. J. Rich, in his pamphlet *Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon.* Mr. W. H. Ward gives the same illustration in his *Seal Cylinders of*

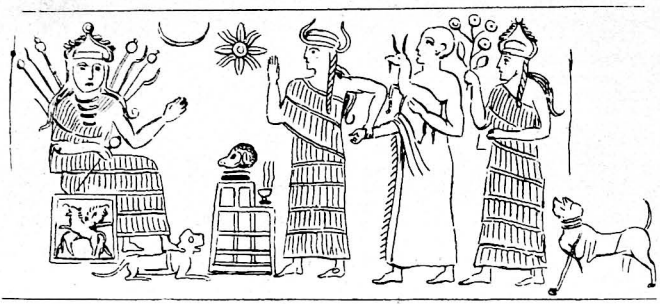

FIG. 258.—Seated profile figure of Ishtar (recognisable by the weapons on her shoulders and the lion at her feet) with her face in front view. The star above the altar is the conventional Chaldean method of representing the sun.

Western Asia (Washington, 1910), and he says that he does not know what has become of the cylinder. His book is perhaps the most comprehensive that has yet appeared, dealing solely with this subject, but unfortunately the illustrations are sketches instead of photographs. But few references are given, and there is no index, therefore it is not very useful to art students. At present it seems almost impossible to make a thorough study of the artistic evidence afforded by the innumerable cylinders scattered all

over Europe in public and private collections. Perhaps when those at the head of affairs have realised that museums are for students as well as for sight-seers they may provide the officials with funds for securing casts. A good beginning might be made with these seal impressions, since they would not be very expensive, and would afford almost as good a means of study as the originals themselves. One of the finest specimens is that one (Fig. 256) now in the British Museum, showing Gilgames with his arm around a lion's body, apparently about to lift it up and dash it to the ground. A work so extraordinarily vigorous and free that one can hardly believe it to have been executed four or five thousand years ago, and to have been a forerunner of such a stilted style as we see in an Assyrian rendering of the same subject (Fig. 259). In this last example the curious conservatism of that nation is shown by their still representing Gilgames'

FIG. 259.—Assyrian low relief of Gilgames and the lion. In the Louvre.

full face, although their other work is always in profile. It may be that they represented him thus because he was identified with their sun god. In the coarse accentuation of the muscles of his legs we may see the influence of that delight in mere brute

FIG. 260.—Impression of a cylinder found at Tello, supposed to be of Gudea's time. The profile figure confronting the lion may be intended for the owner of the seal, or for some one he wished to propitiate. Gilgames has the usual full face and no clothing except a girdle, which, in conjunction with his very slender waist, may be the prototype of the Cretan representations of strong men. The eagle of Lagash stretches its claws towards the two human-headed bison in the time-honoured manner. They seem, however, to have been mixed up in the designer's mind with Eabani and his struggle against Gilgames, who apparently is duplicated in the right-hand figure.

force which was a characteristic of the Assyrians, and was reflected in all their art.[44]

The well-known cylinder showing Gilgames watering the celestial bull is of better execution, but not so full of life. Another favourite subject was Eabani, a sort of Chaldean satyr in form, but not in habits, a friend of Gilgames, and his ally in vanquishing the celestial bull (Fig. 260). These myths are pro-

bably the echoes of the stories of real deeds performed ages ago when wild beasts were common enough in Chaldea. Abbé Breuil thinks that this story of a celestial bull with human face originated from degenerate drawings of real bisons, copied from pictures drawn by artists who in ancient times had often seen the actual animal. In a short article pub-

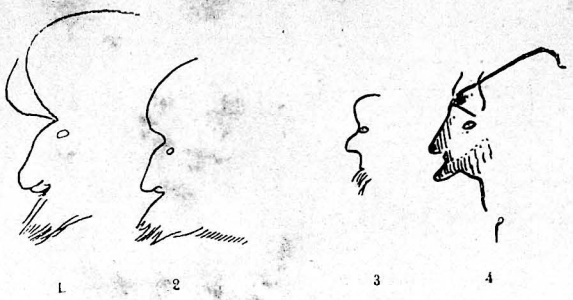

FIG. 261.—1. Sketch made by Prof. Breuil of a bison's head incised on the rock at Altamira. 2. Sketch of the same head published by M. Alcade del Rio in *Portugalia* (1906), p. 148, with this explanation: "No. II. shows an unmistakable profile of a human head, so strongly accentuated that it inclines me to believe that the artist had grasped the typical features of his race." 3 and 4. Sketches of similar heads of bison by other archæologists.

lished in the *Revue Archéologique*, 1909, i. p. 250, he shows how even modern archæologists, copying some of those faithful palæolithic drawings of bisons' heads, have supposed them to represent human faces, and have published them under that designation (Fig. 261).

It is possible that the story of Eabani, tamed by a female, may really represent the first domestication of wild animals, by the same process now used in

India for catching and taming wild elephants. It would be interesting if we could discover any very early illustrations of that story about Eabani. Such a discovery is not very probable, because pictograph stories require a certain amount of skill in grouping, and that is a skill which is not developed at an early stage. There are a few instances of it among these seal cylinders, notably the one depicting the disastrous attempt of Etana to reach heaven on the back of a

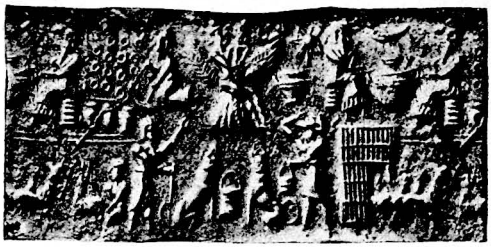

FIG. 262.—Impression of a seal cylinder found at Tello, showing Etana on the back of an eagle starting on his disastrous flight to heaven. His strength or his courage failed when he had nearly reached his goal.

friendly eagle (Fig. 262). Dr. Edward Meyer considers this "one of the most wonderful art creations of Babylon." It is easy to read into a picture much more than the artist ever intended, but I think that the accentuation of the astonishment of the shepherds and their dogs in the centre of the picture by contrasting them with tranquil unobservant groups of women at their daily work, and by goats slowly issuing from the fold, is a device which has no parallel for many a hundred years.

In some of these seal cylinders the postures and costumes have a curiously modern look due to a certain extent to the fashion of suspending the principal garment from the waist and giving it a flounce-like arrangement. That modern appearance is also noticeable in many Cretan representations, and is due to the same cause. Such similarities must often occur among nations that wear skirts. Terra-cotta figurines have been found in Bœotia which seem to show that hooped skirts were worn there three thousand years ago. These resemblances have no great importance, and cannot be taken to prove any continuity of art or any connection between races.

Indeed, there can only be three distinct types of garment—the loin cloth, suspended from the waist and developing into the skirt or trousers; the loose wrap or cloak, suspended from the shoulder and developing into the various forms of toga; and lastly the shirt, fitted on to the shoulders and developing into a coat or a jacket. The effect of costume on art is too far reaching to be discussed here, but it may be noted that the heavy Chaldean skirt probably prevented sculptors from studying and representing the lower limbs. Even in modelling the feet they failed as miserably as with the hands.

There is a sad lack of specimens of the sculptural work produced during the two centuries that preceded and the century that came after the triumphal creation of Naram-Sin's Stele of Victory. We should expect to find at least some statues of the gods,

but possibly they were made of wood, and used chiefly as supports for the clothing and adornments which the records say were lavished on them. They were fed and anointed, treated in fact just as human beings, even being exhorted by the priests to wash their hands before partaking of the food set before them. Still it is strange that no statues of Chaldean gods have yet been found. The belief that the capture or destruction of the image of the city-god gave its captor power over that city, may have brought about the destruction of all of them in turn. But also it may have induced some cities to hide them very carefully in periods of danger, and perhaps in time their hiding-places will be discovered.

Some day when a real love of art and a desire for knowledge has led more people to further the exploration of the neglected sites of cities that flourished in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, long before those two majestic rivers had united to form a single stream, we may be able to trace the steps that led up, in little more than a century, from the vigorous but archaic style of Naram-Sin's time to the refined productions of Gudea's sculptors.

A Sumerian by birth, Gudea ruled over Lagash (now called Tello) nominally as a deputy of the Semitic Akkadian kings, but his city had shaken off their yoke for many years, and had since maintained an independent and apparently peaceful existence. The French excavations at Tello have unearthed an astonishing number of statues and bronzes dating

FIG. 263.

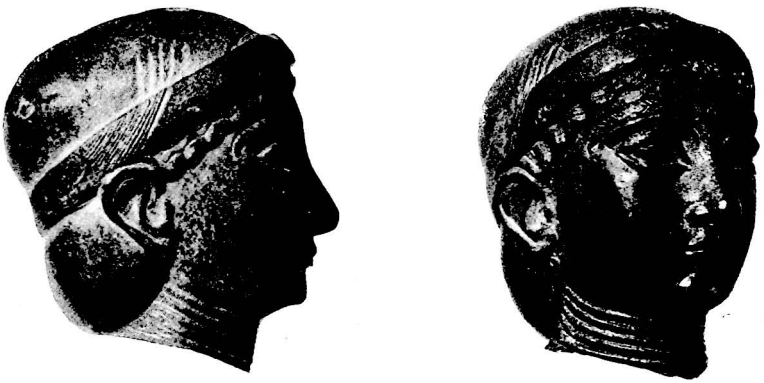

FIG. 264.

FIGS. 263 and 264.—Most of the Chaldean statues are fragmentary and headless, but by a fortunate chance the head of this small masterpiece was found not far from the body. The lower part has not yet been recovered. The high prices paid by unscrupulous "curiosity" collectors may have caused it to be stolen for some museum or private person. The dishonesty of collectors is proverbial, yet these people consider themselves highly cultured and lift up their voices in righteous indignation against ignorant men who, oppressed by poverty, transgress the law. Height of this fragment, seven inches. Grey green diorite. Louvre.

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from this golden age of Asiatic art. Many of them represent Gudea himself, but this can only be gathered from their inscriptions, for most of them are headless.

Consider this statuette of a Chaldean lady (Figs. 263 and 264). It is not of soft stone, cut rapidly in moments of happy inspiration; it is not moulded bronze, cast from a model altered and improved perhaps a hundred times before the artist could achieve his high ideal. It was carved with infinite boldness, patience and skill in one of the toughest of all rocks, a fine grained diorite. Does it not show the strength of will as well as the delicacy of touch possessed by that unnamed sculptor?

It is sad that the conditions of the times should not have allowed such a type to flourish long. Lagash increased its wealth and extended its borders, but omitted to strengthen its defences against envious assailants from without. It never seems to have entered the Asiatic mind that to raise the general condition of the common people would be the best safeguard against barbarous and famished invaders. The ideal of an Asiatic ruler was to gather luxuries for himself and his caste at the expense of his subjects. They were expected to be grateful for the few crumbs that fell from his table. He gave them work, to use a modern phrase; why should they grumble if he enriched himself while they remained sunk in poverty? But this sort of destitution has an enfeebling effect, for poverty, like hunger, is made worse by the pre-

sence and contrast of unattainable plenty. Invaders, on the other hand, had generally been hardened by destitution, shared equally by leaders and their men. There was more energy in the attack than in the defence because there was less solidarity among the defenders. Thus the very conditions of peace and plenty which should have enabled art to flourish and expand brought about the downfall of its unwise patrons.

And in all that fair valley there is no evidence of any growth of art after this period. It pandered to the evil passions of domination and display, of heartless luxury and pitiless chicanery, until, under the rule of those robber merchants the Assyrians, whose crown prince was a dealer in wool as well as a stealer of slaves, it produced those harsh and brutal sculptures which now disfigure the walls of the British Museum.[45]

During all these struggles for material advancement most of the productions of the best and immediately succeeding periods were mutilated or destroyed. Captain Cros' account of the finding of this statue (Fig. 265) shows the fate that overtook Gudea's city: "In January 1903 we found a headless statue of green diorite lying with its base upwards in a mass of cinders, charcoal, and raw brick reddened by fire. The building must have been destroyed by a great conflagration" (*Revue d'Assyriologie*, 1904, p. 9).

The Turkish government retains most of the specimens dug up at Tello; but by a strange coincidence this statue found its way to the Louvre Museum,

FIG. 265.—Statue of Gudea (2450 B.C.). Diorite. About four feet high. Louvre.

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to which some years before its turbaned head had been presented, though nobody suspected that they belonged to one another. When it was being examined by the museum experts, M. Leon Heuzey noticed that the shape of the fracture at the neck seemed to correspond with that of one of the heads exhibited in the museum and labelled "nameless." It was sent for and found to fit so exactly that there could be no doubt about its being the original head contemptuously struck off by the victors at the sack of Lagash.

If that cunning fiction of the Egyptian priests were true, that a man's soul cannot have a happy after life unless he is provided with a material image to inhabit, what joy this replacement of his head would have given to pious Gudea after so many thousand years of ghostly wanderings. He seems to have been a good prince and anxious for the welfare of his people. In one of his inscriptions he makes use of the word liberty—an evil-sounding word to most rulers of that time, as it is even now to men with minds of Asiatic type. What would he think of the present condition of the masses in Paris and of the relation between the rulers and the ruled in modern Europe?

Until the whole country from Nineveh to the Persian Gulf has been better explored it would be rash to pronounce any final opinion about the degree of perfection reached in sculpture. We have now no other criterion of its art, for no paintings have been

discovered and no drawings, except those few engraved shells and that silver vase of Entemena. It is an unfortunate deficiency, since sculpture and seal engraving are too limited in their field to afford good grounds for judging how far Chaldean artists attained success in the expression of ideas and feelings. It seems, however, as if we might fairly consider Gudea's time as the golden age of Babylonian art. None of its productions are of such excellence as those of the fourth Egyptian dynasty, although that dynasty is supposed to have flourished several centuries earlier. It is just possible that they were contemporaneous, for their respective dates are still undecided, and no records have yet been discovered of any definite relations between the two countries previous to about 1600 B.C.

There is a certain amount of force and originality about the sculptures of Gudea's time. They also show great technical skill and good anatomical observation, though the fingers are often twisted into impossible positions and the heads are generally too large for the bodies. M. Heuzey thinks the reason for this was that "the Chaldean sculptor regulated his work by the form and disposition of the original block, which he had already begun to regard as a natural statue or betyle. First he carved out the head, then he utilised the rest of the block as best he could." (*Revue d'Assyriologie*, 1904, p. 21.)

To understand this view we have to remember that the Semitised Chaldeans, in common with many

FIG. 266.—Bronze statue of Napir-Asu, wife of Ountash-Gal, King of Elam (1500 B.C.). This portion is four feet three inches high and weighs two tons. Cast by the "cire perdue" process. Found at Susa. Louvre.

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other primitive races, regarded their kings as gods, and had been accustomed to venerate their gods under the form of tree trunks and pillars of stone. In their eyes, therefore, the statue was primarily a sacred block of stone, the carving of a head and limbs upon it was mere decoration and of quite secondary importance. This opens up the whole question of the evolution of sacred images, and had better be discussed later on.

In the treatment of draped statues the Chaldean showed much promise. There are no signs in Egyptian work of development in this direction. The bronze statue (Fig. 266) of Napir-Asou, the wife of a king of Elam, is a very fine example of this treatment at a much later period; but it is too isolated a specimen to afford a basis for judging of the general progress of art. Nearly a thousand years separate it from Gudea's time, and it has no parallel in later times for nearly another thousand years. It is an extraordinary piece of work, and its survival is so strange that it is worth making a digression to give a sketch of its adventures.

At the sack of cities bronze statues were usually broken up by looting soldiers for the sake of the metal; but the followers of Assurbanipul in 650 B.C. seem to have found this statue too massive, and they were only able to break off the head. Having escaped destruction at their hands it was buried deep enough by accumulated ruins to preserve it safely for two thousand five hundred years from casual fossickers.

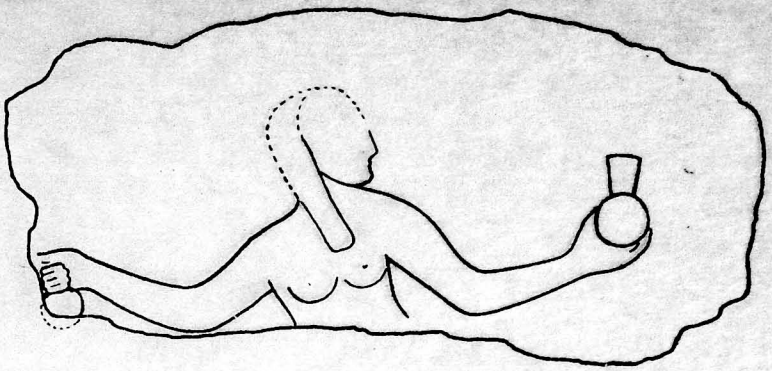
When M. de Morgan's men had dug it up and had conveyed it many weary miles to the side of the river Karun for transportation to France, the tackle suddenly gave way, and it rolled down the river bank into the water. Some of the pools in that stream are very deep, and it might have been impossible to recover it; but, with its usual luck, the statue came to rest at the edge of a deep hole, and now has found a safe home in the Louvre Museum.

Fig. 267.—Fragment of dark green steatite statuette of robed figure. Gudea's period. Half actual size.

Another remarkable arrangement of drapery for such an early period is to be seen in a fragment of a statuette of Gudea's time (Fig. 267). That parting of the robe to show the lower leg is also seen in many profile figures on Chaldean seals, but this is the only instance of it in the round.

Equally surprising is the sculptured band of nymphs round a fountain basin from Gudea's palace (Fig. 268). It is unfortunately in a very poor state of preservation; but there is no mistaking the grace, almost the abandon, of their posture.

Not many relief sculptures have yet been found definitely assignable to this period. Among them, however, we again see signs of that inclination to depict certain gods and goddesses either wholly in full face (Fig. 269) or in that peculiar position we have already noticed, the body in profile and the head



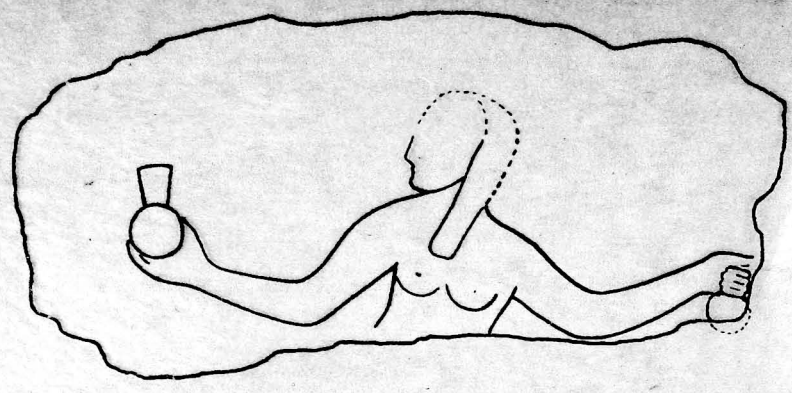


FIG. 268.—Fragment of the edge of a water-basin from the platform in front of the palace at Tello. Limestone. About sixteen inches long. Louvre.

FIG. 269.—White limestone relief of a female figure holding a vase (similar to that in Fig. 268) from which flow streams of water. She is recognised as a goddess by the head-dress with horns on each side. It is possible that she is not wholly full face but in the same position as the god in Fig. 270, for the arm of a throne seems to be showing below the vase. Height about eleven inches. Constantinople.

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FIG. 270.—Relief of the god Nin-Ghirsu. It is of porous limestone and in bad preservation, but a study of the original shows it to have been well modelled and of finished workmanship. Height seventeen inches. Louvre.

FIG. 271.—Alabaster relief, damaged by fire. It is supposed to represent the goddess Bau sitting on the knees of her husband, Nin-Ghirsu. Height four and a half inches. Louvre.

showing the full face (Fig. 270). A very strange composition is shown in Fig. 271 where a full-face goddess is seated on the lap of a god. Such a grouping is exceedingly rare. It occurs in a very indistinct form on a glazed quartz mace head of the earliest Egyptian dynasties (now in the Ashmolean Museum), and again on a relief representing Akhenaten and his wife. The first of these examples being far older than the relief, and the second being much more recent, it would be rash to attempt to form any theories about the origin of this art motive.

These isolated specimens awaken keen regret that so few efforts have been made to extend the area of exploration and thus increase our knowledge of this critical period. Such works of art must have had many predecessors and probably some successors. Where are they now? Are they buried beneath those heaps of mud rising parched and desolate above the ruined plains? Or have they, like the statues of the Parthenon, been burnt for lime by the devastating Turk?

Buried or cremated their spirit still lives. The bold attempts and patient strivings of those ancient artists cannot have been in vain. We are not able to trace the steps, but it seems fairly certain that even the Greeks, and through the Greeks all modern artists, have felt the influence of that Sumerian grace which, wedded to Semitic vigour, produced so many realisations in stone and bronze of vague artistic dreams of strength and beauty.

CHAPTER XII

DISCOVERIES IN CRETE

PALÆOLITHIC art perished, we know not how. Egyptian art was buried alive, stifled and swathed in the mummy bands of priestly greed. The living body of Chaldean art was slowly turned to stone, cold, grim, unfeeling; all its humanity perishing in the hard struggle first for material prosperity and then against barbarian robbers. Having by honest work transformed a marshy swamp into an earthly paradise, the people were beguiled to taste forbidden fruit. The serpent lust of easy acquisition led them to prey upon their weaker neighbours, and no doubt it was their women who told them it was good. Then came the destroying angel of retaliation, and the gates of a possible artistic paradise were closed to them for ever.

Perhaps it is not quite fair to take the Semitic legend of the fall of man as indicating also the part played by woman in the drama of Mesopotamian history. It is very difficult to estimate her influence in those ancient times. The story is complicated by the presence of the two different races, the Sumerian and the Semitic, with two different tendencies in their attitude towards woman; the one apparently idealising

her as a source of goodness in its widest sense, the other regarding her as a temptress whose power should be restrained as much as possible. From this mixture of ideas we get that strange phenomenon of woman being worshipped as a goddess and treated as a chattel or a slave.

These conflicting tendencies appear again in many different ages. The contest of the Greeks against the Amazons might possibly be taken as a symbolic rendering of the perennial struggle. In later times the extravagances of the knight's devotion and of the ascetic's renunciation are phases of the same uncertainty. When shall we cease to oscillate between these two extremes and recognise that woman is no better and no worse than man, though so widely different in her aims and methods that it is difficult to find any standard of comparison? [45a]

The future of each nation depends on its measure of success in solving the great problem of her proper sphere and work. "Crushed in the east, toy sceptred in the west," she has never yet had a fair chance. To exact from her too much work and subservience results in that economic and mental stagnation which is all too common in the east. But a sexless type, unable or unwilling to bear the burden of motherhood, seems to be produced by those social conditions which allow her to have perfect independence without the obligation to fulfil any duties. Such conditions can only arise in a wealthy and dominant class. When more careful study has been

given to the social and economic conditions of nations during their decline, I think we shall find that the failure of the dominant classes to produce healthy and sufficient progeny was one of the chief causes of their downfall. A coarser and more ignorant, but sexually more efficient class takes their place in spite of their individually courageous struggles; art and literature become decadent, and from the crest of its intellectual wave the nation sinks into a depression which may engulf it, and from which no nation seems to have been able to emerge unscathed.[46]

The centre and perhaps culminating point of this worship of the female seems to have been somewhere in the Mediterranean region. The pages of unwritten history are so mutilated and deficient that it is not possible to tell a well-connected tale, although to those scanty records there have recently been made most wonderful additions which will greatly help students of sociology and of comparative religion. Many of these additions have been due to the extensive researches in Crete undertaken by Sir Arthur Evans. A large gap in our knowledge of the past has been well filled up by his brilliant discoveries of a vanished civilisation, the existence of which was barely suspected thirty years ago.

As early as 1883 Dr. Milchhöfer had indeed prophesied in his *Anfänge der Kunst in Griechenland* (p. 127) that much of the work supposed to have been done by Myceneans would be found to have really come from Crete, but the learned world was

then ruled by literary men, and they had an unfounded prejudice in favour of Greece. They had also been rather dazzled by Dr. Schliemann's splendid discoveries and did not realise that his deductions were quite as unscientific as his methods of excavation.

Also M. Edmond Pottier, the learned Conservator of the Oriental Antiquities in the Louvre, when referring in his *Catalogue des Vases Antiques* (1896, vol. i. p. 199) to the strange fragments of pottery then called Mycenean, suggested Crete as being possibly their real source, although in his wonderfully clear-sighted forecast of the revelations likely to be made by future discoveries he left Crete out of the question and accepted the usual view that Greece must have been the centre of that unknown civilisation, which had left such scanty and such puzzling relics. Thus in page 38 of that very interesting Catalogue he said: "If all this pottery had been exported from a single centre, its diffusion shows clearly that it must have been produced by a maritime commercial race, seeking a market in all the surrounding regions. . . . We are led to descry, beyond the Homeric age and long before the legendary Trojan war, a Greece provided with active workshops, bold navigators, commercial settlements—in a word with a complete civilisation. This is confirmed by the following facts, according to which we ought to consider the Homeric age, not as the beginning but as the end of a definite social stage."

Until the end of the nineteenth century the political conditions of Crete were not favourable to

archæological research, but a number of interesting finds had been made, and they encouraged Sir Arthur Evans to bide his time. Meanwhile he gradually and cautiously bought up the fields beneath which had been found traces of the city of Knossos, the ancient capital of dread King Minos, and the legendary site of that mysterious labyrinth, the hiding-place of the child-devouring Minotaur.[47]

Not until 1900 did his patience and foresight have their reward, but since then every year has revealed fresh secrets of the history of a long forgotten race. Americans and Italians have also done good work in the island, and now the progress of its civilisation and especially of its art can be traced from the very beginning.

It would take up too much space to give even a short account of the various explorations. Professor Burrows has given a scientific description of them in his *Discoveries in Crete* (1907), and Sir Arthur Evans is preparing a well-illustrated volume on the subject. This book has been anxiously looked forward to for some time, as hitherto no good illustrations have been obtainable of many of the best frescoes and reliefs. A number of excellent models and drawings and a few original specimens are to be seen in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, but nearly all the finds are preserved in the Candia Museum in Crete.

It is a great thing to have rescued such treasures from oblivion, but even archæological and artistic

treasures bring with them that feeling of anxiety and insecurity which is one of the many curses of wealth. If war should sweep over such towns as Athens, Cairo, Constantinople, or Candia, or if violent upheavals should take place in the more settled countries of Europe, what irreparable losses might we suffer! We should then regret that these secrets had ever been wrung from the bosom of mother earth by children whose brethren were unworthy of the grand trust confided to their care. The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake has become a matter of national and international importance, and now every civilised nation has its missions for extending our knowledge of the past. This gives us a faint hope that means may be found to bind nations more closely together in spite of the conflicting interests of their commercial magnates. Artists and archæologists, together with other specialists, are inclined to neglect or even to despise politics and political economy. Inordinate one-sided development is fatal to the health of the human body; is there no fear that ill-balanced specialisation may tend to endanger the safety of things that are so dear to specialists?

The result of their labours in the last decade has been that we can now regard Mediterranean art as a distinct entity. Its centre can provisionally be fixed in Crete, and its influence is known to have extended all over the Ægean Sea and the greater part of Greece; eastwards to the shores of Asia Minor, but chiefly westwards and as far as Spain.

Digging down far below the now famous first and second palaces of Knossos, Sir Arthur Evans found vestiges of the hearths and homes of a neolithic race whose civilisation may have been of earlier date than that of Egypt. Before this point can be settled, much more extensive excavations will have to be made in both countries.

Security is a very necessary condition for good growth. By its comparative inaccessibility Crete had that condition in a greater degree than even Elam or Egypt. Its inhabitants also learned to be masters of their destiny by dominating the forces of the sea. Thus too they laid the foundations for that wealth which was to be one of the sources of their glory and the great cause of their destruction.

At a very early period they began to manufacture pottery, and having no dread of the great water, they were able to carry this and other products to distant lands, and to make profitable exchanges with foreign nations. In many Egyptian graves of predynastic and early dynastic times, explorers have found one or two vases of a special sort of ware, sometimes called buchero (Fig. 86). Being so different from all other Egyptian work of that period they have always been considered as importations. Now the discovery of a large amount of very similar ware in the neolithic deposits at Knossos gives a clue to their origin, and affords a basis for calculating the age of those deposits.

It is rather strange that the Egyptians should

apparently never have made this pottery for themselves. This dark or black buchero ware, having incised patterns filled with a white substance, seems to have been produced during their neolithic stage of development by many different races, and in lands as far apart as Elam and Peru. If it could be proved that such ware was never made in Egypt, it might help to show that the Egyptians had passed through a part of their neolithic stage in some other land.

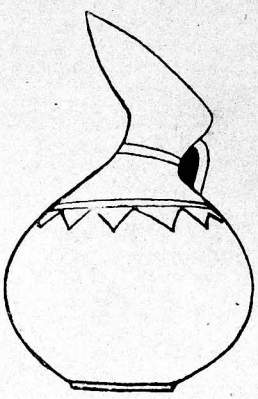

FIG. 272.—Jug with the body of a gourd and spout like a bird's beak, a very common form in the earlier ware of Crete, Troy, and the whole Ægean district. In this specimen the pattern was simply incised with some pointed instrument on the dark coloured clay. Found at Phylakopi (in the island of Melos). Height eight inches.

The designs incised on this ware are in all countries very similar, being chiefly composed of zigzags and triangles; curved lines are seldom found. In southern lands the shapes are often derived from gourds (Fig. 272), while in northern countries they are more like the common forms of leather or basket work (Fig. 222 *bis*, see also p. 157).

In Crete, at about the end of the stone period, this system of incising the design was given up in favour of painting the ware with white lines on a dark polished surface. This smooth surface was obtained by coating the rough pottery with liquid clay and afterwards polishing it by hand. Glazing does not

seem to have been used at that time in Crete, although it may have been known in Egypt and Chaldea. The stages of the early development of pottery are similar in all countries, but sufficient data are not yet available for making exact generalisations. Dr. Wosinsky, in his special work on this subject (*Die incrustierte Keramik*, 1904), says that he thinks the white filling was generally an imitation of painting, but may have preceded it in some countries. Most archæologists consider that this white filling always came first.

The neolithic deposit at Knossos is more than twenty-four feet thick, so that probably it took some thousands of years to form; but at present it is not possible to make any accurate estimate of its age. The deposits just above the neolithic show a retrogression in the potter's art, a deterioration similar to that observed in Egypt towards the end of its neolithic period; unfortunately there are no grounds for even guessing at its cause. All that is known is that when these strata began to be formed copper had come into more general use. Accordingly this has been taken as the starting-point of the next age, which Sir Arthur Evans has appropriately called the Minoan, a convenient term which seems likely to be accepted for the whole region influenced by Cretan civilisation.

Being a seafaring race, and apparently akin to the old non-semitic inhabitants of Egypt, the Cretans probably had frequent communication with that country, especially as sellers of olive oil and of the

murex shellfish for making purple dye. This would account for their many similarities of habit, as well as for their rapid development after they had once reached a certain point.

Egypt had attained a high culture, while the Cretans and the people of the isles were still rude sailor men, but the deadening influence of mere agricultural pursuits in a monotonous land with an unvarying climate had made its inhabitants passive slaves to priests and kings.[48] On the other hand, in the Ægean, a constant contact with nature in all her changing moods had inspired these toilers of the sea with an independence of thought and a disdain for control by incapables. This gave the keynote to their lives, and was soon re-echoed in their art.

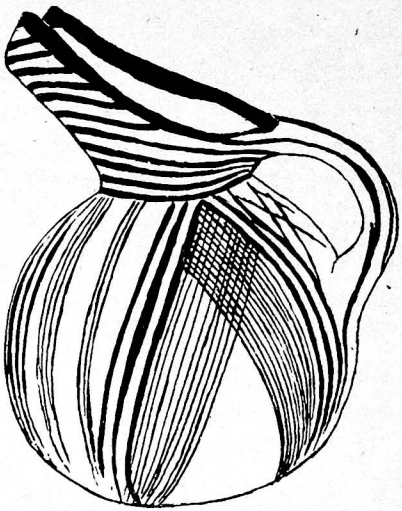

FIG. 273.—Another form of beaked jug, decorated with dark red lines painted on the light coloured clay surface. Early Minoan. Found at Phaistos. Height nine inches.

The forms of their pottery had long been distinguished by a certain natural grace and simplicity, such measure of beauty as we find in the shape of a boat or of anything evolved with singleness of pur-

pose, and not as a compromise or a makeshift. After the first degeneration which, in Crete, just as in other lands, seems to have followed the change from stone implements to copper or to bronze, these forms appear again and attain still greater perfection, although their makers did not use the potter's wheel (Fig. 273). The designs are very simple, merely a few straight lines in red or orange on a pale yellow ground.

This copper period, which is called Early Minoan by Sir Arthur Evans, is roughly synchronous with that of the Egyptian pyramid builders.

The best development of Cretan art was in the next period, the Middle Minoan, which lasted until the twelfth Egyptian dynasty had passed away. Bronze replaced the softer copper, and the potter's wheel and furnace came into general use. Wealth had so increased that palaces were built at Phaistos and at Knossos, but they had nothing in common with the gloomy strongholds of the rulers of other countries, for they had few or no defensive works. They had magnificently broad flights of steps, and wide open spaces where crowds of people could freely move about, or assemble to witness dangerous sports and feats of skill.

The difference between the life of this people and of those in other lands is so striking that Senator Mosso, in his *Palaces of Crete*, even talks about their socialism. It could, however, have been only partial, for real socialism would require a far higher organisation than was possible in those days, when the diffi-

FIG. 274.—Disk of baked clay found by the Italian mission at Phaistos. Various interpretations of it have been made, but until a fairly long inscription has been found written in this and in some known language, it does not seem likely that any interpretation could be trustworthy. Similar figures are stamped on the other side of the disk. It is about six inches in diameter and five-eighths inch thick. A facsimile is in the first vase-room of the British Museum, together with reproductions of various other Cretan and Mycenæan specimens.

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culties of communication made special individual efforts more necessary and effective than they are in crowded and complex communities.

Tradition says that they suppressed piracy, but probably they themselves were not averse from making an honest living occasionally by robbery. Aristotle, living more than a thousand years later, saw no objection to it. And even now do we despise all forms of robbery? Carlyle asserted that any man or woman who does no work is either a beggar or a thief, and theoretically we confess that he is right; yet there are many idle ones who feel no shame, but rather pride themselves on being independent of the necessity for working.

While in these centuries Egyptian art became stereotyped and devoted chiefly to the commemoration of its rulers, and to providing the wealthy with a chance of life beyond and within the tomb, Ægean art rejoiced in freedom, and gave no anxious thought to gloomy myths. Not that these Mediterranean folk were irreligious, or had no conception of a future life. The reverent care with which they treated the dead disproves that.

Before long we may be able to read their writing, and thus to learn what they themselves said on the subject. Thousands of tablets have been found inscribed with well-formed characters; a few have pictographic inscriptions. This round tablet found at Phaistos in 1909 is unique (Fig. 274). The characters were not drawn, each little picture was im-

pressed by its own special seal. This shows that probably it was a very common form of writing, therefore in time we may expect to find many more specimens. Judging by the head-dress on one of the characters (Fig. 275), the writing was used by a people having affinities with the "strangers from the islands of the west" represented in that Egyptian relief at Medinet-Abu (Fig. 191).

FIG. 275.—Head from Egyptian relief at Medinet-Abu (1200 B.C.) showing the classical straight-nosed type, usually called "Greek" but apparently a common type in the Ægean long before Greek times.

It is unfortunate that these tablets did not receive the same treatment as the Chaldean ones, which were systematically fired soon after being written. Cretan tablets were only sun dried, and most of them must have long ago returned to shapeless earth. At Knossos, however, a large number were found baked as hard as brick. Here is another instance of our profiting by ancient catastrophes. They were baked by a great conflagration in which the palace and nearly all its other treasures were destroyed.

As regards religion, the Cretans seem to have had a higher ideal than the Egyptians. There are no signs of cringing before a vengeful deity, or of propitiating him by cruel slaughters of those who

worshipped other gods. In the neolithic stage they had the usual idols, strange uncouth forms (Fig. 276), that may seem to us mere travesties of deity, formless conceptions with no idea of nobleness or grace. But is that judgment just? Religion when it is young is not content with mere abstractions, it desires some concrete form for its devotions. The worship is not given to the form, but to the ideal it represents. The underlying meaning of the glyptic and pictorial representations of divinity are too subtle to be considered here, but no artist can ignore them altogether.

Looking at the question from a purely artistic point of view, I think we may find that the ordinary conditions of life had a decided influence on their evolution. We noticed before that the absence of statuettes of human form from the later palæolithic deposits may have been due to the more frequent use of clothing as the climate became more rigorous. Sculptors would then have had more difficulty, and less satisfaction in representing the human form covered with the rough garments of those days. Therefore that branch of art lay dormant for very many centuries. We also noticed how in Chaldean times the wearing of a heavy skirt seems to have killed all study of the lower limbs, attention being concentrated chiefly on the head and shoulders.

In the Mediterranean region the difficulty was sometimes avoided by purposely omitting the lower

parts (Fig. 276), or by giving the figures a squatting position, with the legs doubled up underneath. This posture is more clearly represented in a statuette from Adalia (Lycia) (Fig. 277). No very distinct examples of this treatment have yet been found, but archæologists seem to have no doubt that it was an attempt to portray a posture which may have been considered very dignified in regions where chairs were still unknown.

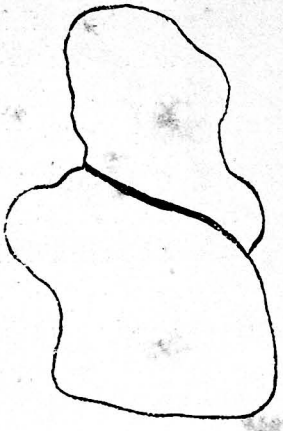

FIG. 276.—Image of unbaked clay found at Phaistos in pre-Minoan strata. A similar ("steatopygous") development of fat in the gluteal regions is to be noticed in palæolithic and Egyptian images, and among the Bushmen and Hottentot women of the present day. The head is missing. Actual size.

There is another important difference between these statuettes and the palæolithic ones. Most of the Mediterranean pre-Minoan statuettes are clothed, and as might be expected in those temperate climes, the clothing is thin, almost transparent, the navel generally being clearly indicated. In colder countries the clothing became more and more accentuated, as barbaric artificial adornment (Fig. 278) attracted the attention of artists more than the beauties of the natural form, which they seldom or never saw. In the southern region the reverse took place, and ultimately clothing was for certain statues discarded altogether.

a

b

c

FIG. 277.—Small figurine of dark clay. The incised lines are filled with a white chalky substance. Notice the size of the eyes. The absence of the mouth is a curious characteristic of nearly all primitive figures. Actual size. British Museum.

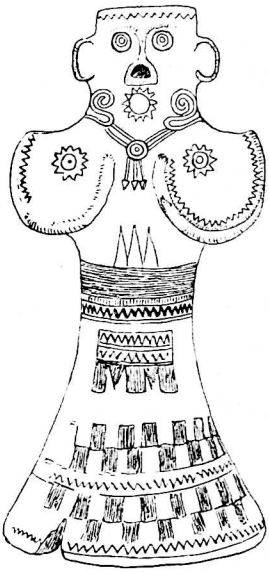

FIG. 278.—Large clay figurine found at Klicevac, near Belgrade. It is supposed by Prof. Hoernes to date from the second millennium B.C., but it is difficult to obtain accurate information about the Servian antiquities.

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The series of neolithic idols is at present a very small one, and it is hard to trace their development into the nude figurines (Fig. 279), or into those queer schematic shapes called "violin" idols (Fig. 280), both of which are so abundant in all this Ægean region throughout the whole Minoan period.

FIG. 279.—Flat figures generally made of marble. They are often called Amorgos idols as they were found in abundance in the tombs of the island. They are probably not idols but protectors or companions of the dead. They vary very much in size. These specimens came from the Cyclades islands and are ten and twelve inches high. In the Ashmolean Museum there is a specimen two feet in height.

It is harder still to account for this very inartistic treatment of the human form, representing a divinity, at a time when artists were evidently capable of better work. The natural conservatism of all religions seems hardly a sufficient cause. May it not have been due to a reluctance to give too realistic a form to the concrete image, a reluctance which would naturally become greater in proportion as the ideal became more vague and spiritual? In Christian art the same feeling is noticeable with regard to representations of the persons of the Trinity. Representations

of the Holy Ghost in human form have seldom been attempted, and such pictures of the Father have become much more rare in modern times.

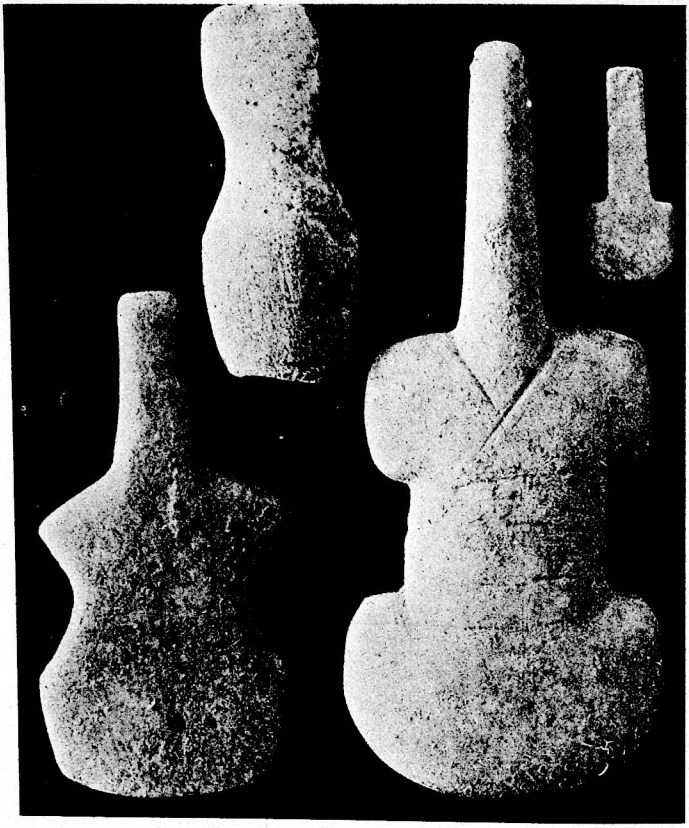

FIG. 280.—Marble "violin idols" from the Cyclades. About five-sixths actual size. See Dörpfeld's *Troja und Ilion* (1902), pp. 379–381.

In this way we may perhaps account for these two contrary currents in the artistic development of

FIG. 281.—Part of a nearly life-size statue found at Kouyunjik, the large mound which covers the site of Nineveh. No record seems to have been kept of the exact locality, but it was possibly in one of the palaces. The statue may, of course, be of more remote date than the king Ashur-bel-kala, whose names, titles, and genealogy are inscribed on its back, but it will not be of later date, because the name of a king who had long been dead would not be inscribed on a statue. British Museum.

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forms expressing reverence for a great mother goddess, the attempted embodiment of many ideals—of fruitfulness, of protection, of consolation, perhaps even of gentleness and grace. To one class of mind a strange symbol would appeal, and appeal all the more strongly if it diverged from any other familiar shape. Another class would look through nature up to nature's God, and would welcome in every beauteous female form a direct gift from heaven, firmly believing that when God made a perfect human body it was in His own image that He created it.

Between the end of the Minoan period (about 1200 B.C.) and the early Greek there is a most lamentable gap in our knowledge of the evolution of the nude female statue, for so few specimens have been discovered. Apart from a limited number of rough clay statuettes, and some tiny figures on Babylonian seals, we have only a few Egyptian reliefs, and this absolutely unique torso, supposed to have come from Nineveh (Fig. 281). Its date cannot be later than 1080 B.C., because the name and genealogy of Ashur-bel-kala are engraved upon it. It is the earliest known example of an undraped life-sized female statue, but it stands now neglected and forlorn amid the coarse sculptures of its Assyrian captors. A strange instance of the vicissitudes of fortune. At one time an object of reverence and devotion, possibly too the crowning glory of some famous sculptor with bold original ideas, then dragged forth from its temple and carried with the spoils of war to be exposed

to the rude gaze of people debased by tyranny and rapine; exhibited perhaps for centuries to an unappreciating mob as mere evidence of a successful raid; then again a helpless witness of unutterable cruelties, and of the ruthless vengeance of the Medes; torn from its pedestal, and buried beneath heaps of ruins; dug up by curio hunters who did not even trouble to record where it was found; shipped as a nameless relic to an unsympathetic land; mercifully hidden in an obscure niche from the listless gaze of careless sightseers; headless and truncated, without a title and without a history, the goddess awaits, and may await in vain, the vivifying touch of fresh discoveries which could reveal the secret of her origin.

Some day it may form an important link in the chain of evidence as to the origin of this type of statue. It represents a fairly distinct school of sculpture, which in its time must have produced many other examples, and surely they cannot all have been destroyed. It is to be hoped that before long archæologists may succeed in bridging this gap. At one time nearly all of them held that the idea of a mother goddess originated in Chaldea, and thus that country became considered as the source of the nude female statue. This belief has been strongly contested by M. Salomon Reinach. As the type was so rare in Chaldea, and so common in the Mediterranean region from the very earliest times, he considers that it really spread from there eastwards.

His theory has been greatly strengthened by

FIG. 282.—One of the best preserved of a number of ivory figures found in a small stair-cupboard in the palace of Knossos. The waist was wanting and has been supplied by wax. The left leg and part of the right arm are also wanting. It is supposed that these figures, some of which are nearly a foot in length, were suspended by fine wires as if they were vaulting over bulls (see Fig. 300).

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recent discoveries, but until Syria has been properly explored, and has yielded up her secrets, the point seems likely to remain unsettled. Mention is frequently made in Babylonian and Assyrian history of the capture or destruction of statues of the goddess Nana, but in none of these passages are there any descriptions of the statues. The earliest representations of this type with any claim to artistic beauty were found in Egypt, and date from about 1400 B.C. They, however, represent either Qetesh (Fig. 200 *bis*) or the sky goddess Nut, both of whom are said to be of Syrian origin.

Looking at the question simply from the art point of view, it seems unlikely that the harsh and brutal Assyrian school should have evolved a high ideal of female beauty, and indeed no good examples of nude figures have yet been found in all that district. Therefore even if we admit that the Chaldeans had originated the idea, yet as the line of descent is broken in Assyria, we must look elsewhere for its further evolution. No nude female statues, or even passably good figurines, have yet been found in the Mediterranean region, but there are sufficient fragments of stucco reliefs and of ivory figures (Figs. 282 and 283) to show how well Ægean artists could model the human form. When the artistic capacity of the Ægeans met on Syrian soil with more developed conceptions of the female deity, it is possible that then the inspiration came to produce statues of the nude female with a form more perfect than any of

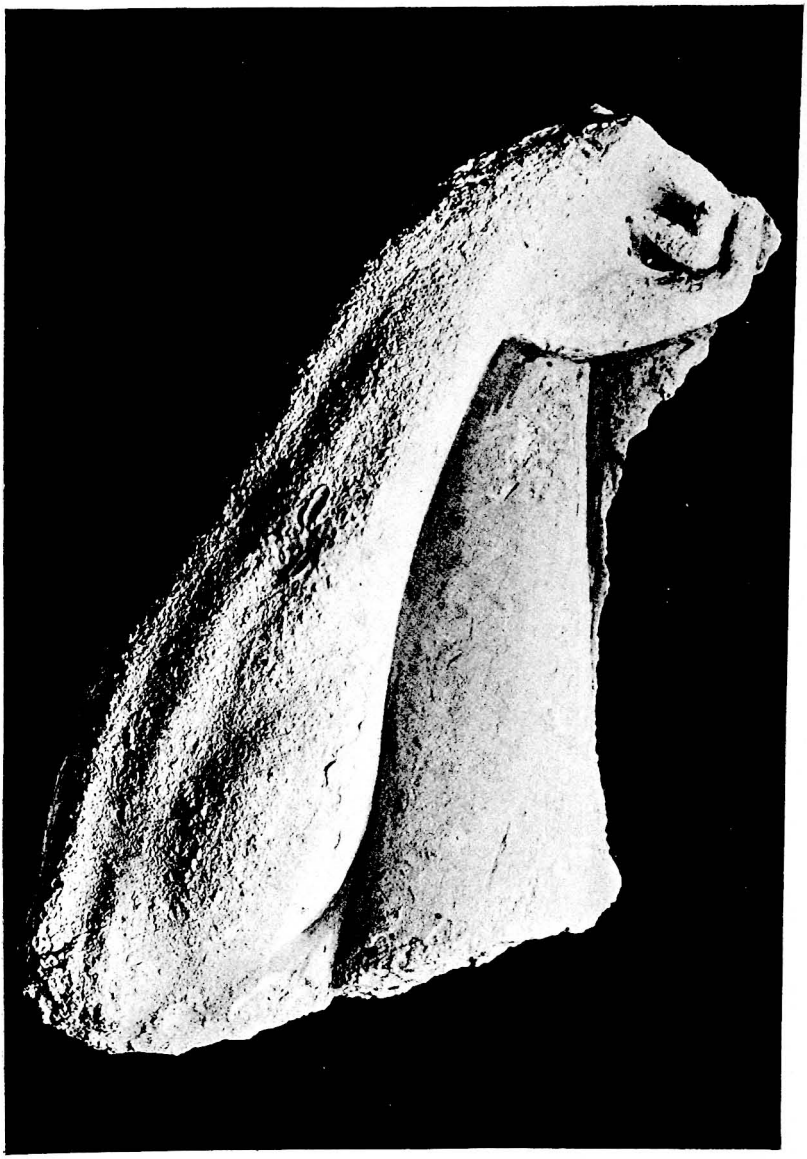

FIG. 283.—The object grasped by this hand and arm has been supposed to be a vase like that in Fig. 29-*b*, but it seems more like a bull's horn (Fig. 335). This and the other stucco relief (Fig. 284) are considered to have been made in the Late Minoan II period, and therefore roughly contemporary with the eighteenth dynasty and the Cassite Queen Napir Asu (Fig. 266). The rapid degeneration of Egyptian sculpture towards the end of the eighteenth dynasty suggests the possibility that the earlier and better work of that dynasty was due to some foreign influence—probably Cretan or Syrian.

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those others with which men had previously been satisfied.

We may discard the supposition that there were any impure or lascivious ideas necessarily connected with these statues. Impure practices were no doubt at times associated with the religion which they symbolise, but that does not condemn the whole religion as impure. Horrible cruelties have been committed by Christians in the name of their religion, but that does not prove it to be a cruel faith.

Regard these statues as works of art, then it is easy to see how they may have awakened different ideas in different minds, inspiring some to worship and others to destroy. Art is the language of the emotions; it can only speak to those who understand the language. If this understanding is only acquired by a definite association of certain ideas with certain forms and colours, is it not possible that art may be like speech, and find expression in several different languages? Shall we therefore condemn those who speak a different tongue, and dare we insist that they shall only use our own?

This brings us round again to the idea that art is dependent on its environment. The artist desires to give concrete expression to his emotions, not only for his own solitary satisfaction, but also in order to communicate them to his fellow-men. How can he do that unless they can understand his language? Will not all his poetry be wasted if his poems are in an unknown tongue?

Some artists seem to think they can invent a language of their own, and they consider it beneath them to use the common tongue. Others apparently talk gibberish. Emotions may be communicated by these queer means, but have they any lasting value? As far as can be gathered from the history of art it has not progressed by sudden starts or strange devices. Like language it has been evolved. The great masters were those who seized and wielded materials ready to their hand.

CHAPTER XIII

PROGRESSIVE CRETAN ART

SIR ARTHUR EVANS' work in Crete was distinguished not only by his careful and scientific system of excavation, but also by the accuracy and comprehensiveness of his deductions. To reconstitute the history of a nation from the scarce fragments of its ruins requires imagination and insight as well as patient labour. It is not given to every explorer to combine these qualities with such happy effect that his resulting conclusions are generally accepted by the archæologists of all nations.

The period which is most interesting to artists is the Middle Minoan, when Cretan art was full of vigour and originality, and had not yet become corrupted by a desire for rapid production and display. The various stages of development cannot be traced quite so clearly as in Egypt or Chaldea, partly because there are not yet sufficient examples, partly because sculpture was not so commonly employed. Statues and reliefs furnish the best evidence of the degree of perfection attained by the art of any particular period, since they are but little liable to decay, and are more likely to be the work of good artists. Such expensive material as marble and bronze would

not generally be entrusted to inferior men. Frescoes, terra-cotta figures and vases might be, and generally were produced by copyists. Even when original they would naturally not be executed with such care and forethought as sculptures. This absence of statuary is unfortunate for us, but it shows a happier state of affairs in Crete, where art seems to have been the heritage of the people, not the monopoly of the few. Some of their best relief work was done in a sort of stucco, made of lime and pounded marble, but only fragmentary specimens have been found (Figs. 283 and 284).

FIG. 285.—Terra cotta figure found at Petsofa, Crete. The loin cloth and foot gear are painted on the red coloured clay. Middle Minoan.

How well they modelled even ordinary clay votive figures is shown by this statuette of a young man (Fig. 285), wearing a short dagger, resembling the copper ones frequently found in Early Minoan tombs. As the figure is attributed to the next period, the Middle Minoan, the shortness of the dagger may be due

FIG. 284.—Coloured stucco relief found at Knossos. Nearly life size. It has been used to make the reconstruction shown in Fig. 293. The decoration on the chest may be a string of stylised bull's heads like the bucrania amulets used in Egypt, or it may be derived from shell or other forms like those of the golden necklets found at Phaistos. (See *Mon. Antichi*, xiv. p. 599, Fig. 62).

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to technical considerations. We do not yet know much about the history of these side weapons, but the young man probably used to wear rather a longer blade, for in proportion as civilisation grows weapons too increase in size or in range. It took about fifteen hundred years for these daggers to grow into the swords wherewith Minoan civilisation was destroyed.

Civilisation and its results seem to move in a vast vicious circle. Civilised men invent things, and with them exploit or oppress the uncivilised. In time the uncivilised also learn how to use them, then they annihilate the civilised, and one more dark age sweeps over an unrepentant world. In our pursuit of material gain we have broken down the barriers of giant mountain ranges, and have bridged the all dividing sea; now we are learning to surmount the limits imposed by pathless space. As an ultimate result will our descendants some day see the sky black with barbarian hordes disdaining death; will that be the end of all our inventions, and of our struggles for supremacy in commerce? It is difficult to imagine how absolute defeat and universal ruin can possibly befall our highly organised communities, but unless history fails to repeat itself, some such calamity will surely swamp the artificial powers of wealthy Europe.[49]

Such forebodings did not trouble the Minoans; they were probably unconscious even of the existence of the wild northern European races by whose waves of expansion their own ship of state was ultimately

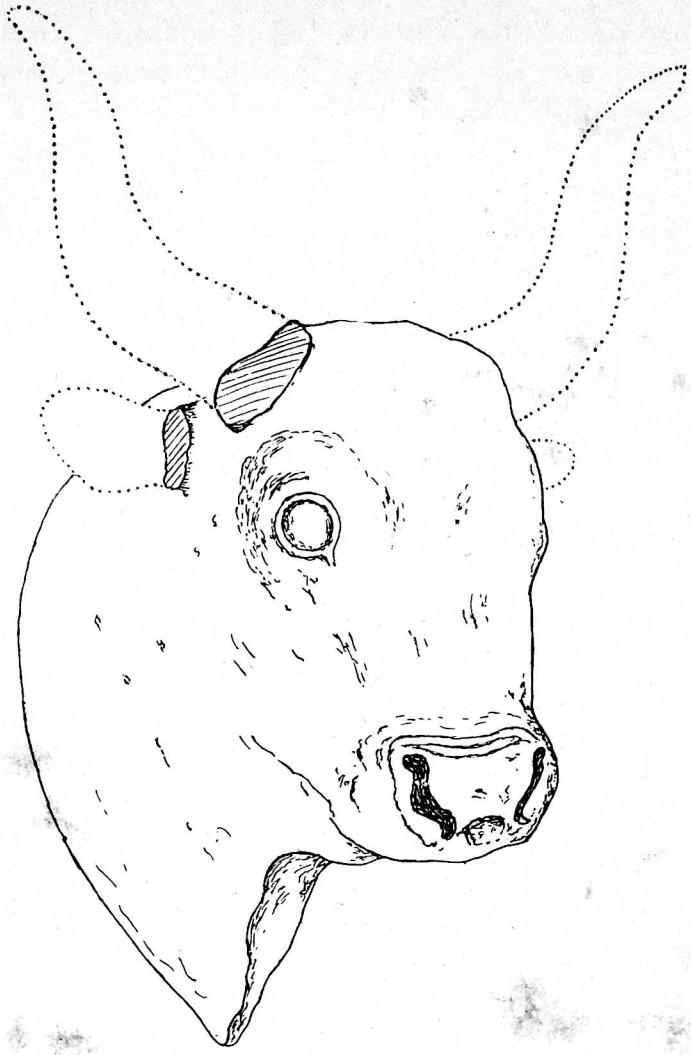

FIG. 286.—Small Rhyton (libation vase) found at Gournia by Mrs. Boyd Hawes. It is made of fine grey clay covered with a shining white slip (a paint made of clay) to imitate silver. The eye sockets are black. There are also splashes of a red pigment in places. Late Minoan I. (about 1600 B.C.). Nearly half actual size.

wrecked. They were then in the heyday of their youth, and their art tingling with life and colour bears faithful witness of their joy.

FIG. 287.—Earthenware Rhyton found in the second palace of Phaistos by Dr. Pernier (*Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, vol. xiv.).

Here is a rendering of their ideal of force (Fig. 286), a mere bull's head indeed, but breathing conscious strength and dignity. It is free from the taint

of cruelty and oppression; it was not to glorify some king, it was a simple vessel for pouring out libations in honour of some god. In later times there was a sad decay. Look at this head (Fig. 287), the presentment of a mask rather than of a real animal. The artist had lost touch with nature, and floundering in his ignorance had added useless and unmeaning lines above the eyes and nostrils. They remind us so much of the superfluity of lines in that Egyptian bull (Fig. 137) that we might suspect some connection between the art of these two periods if they were not separated by a space of two thousand years or more. Redundancy is one of the sure signs of either the intemperance of youth or the degeneration of old age. Fondness for the superfluous will necessarily produce similar results in very different periods.

FIG. 288.—Head of a clay (probably votive) figure of a bull, found at Amyclæ, near Sparta.

At the end of the Late Minoan the degeneration was still more apparent in the votive terra-cotta animals (Fig. 288). Perhaps it is hardly fair to judge of the general condition of art by such specimens, but they do seem to show that personal contact between craftsmen and the people had diminished. The makers no longer sought the direct appreciation of those they worked for. Commercialism had entered in; probably such things were made impersonally in workshops

FIG. 289.—Fresco found in the ruins of a Cretan villa (Late Minoan I.) at Hagia Triada, near Phaistos. The cat is grey brown, the pheasant scarlet, the foliage light red brown, on a light buff ground. About four feet long. A rather similar cat is seen in an Egyptian tomb of twelfth dynasty, at Beni Hassan.

FIG. 290.—Another fragment from the same villa and coloured in the same way, with the addition of black and orange for parts of the flowers and rocks. Good coloured illustrations of these frescoes are given in *Mon. Antichi*, xiii. (1903), Tav. 8 and 9.

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and inspired merely by a desire for the profit on their sale to any casual customer.

It is, however, too early now to form definite conclusions about the artistic and social development of the Ægeans. We must wait until their language is interpreted and their art productions can be arranged in a less unbroken series.

The most distinctive of these productions are the frescoes. Both in their treatment and in their subjects they are widely different from all previous work. Unfortunately we have no specimens of the early stages of this art; they nearly all belong to the Late Minoan. However clever and effective they may be, one cannot help feeling that their forerunners must have been much better (Figs. 289–295).

Crete is still full of possibilities, and perhaps some earlier paintings may be discovered, though the chances are against it. Unlike the Egyptians its inhabitants do not seem to have been under the thrall of priestly teaching with regard to the dismal fate of the unassisted dead. Although the germs of that idea are as evident in Minoan customs as in those of most other primitive societies, no tombs have yet been found elaborately furnished and painted for the use of the "doubles" of those who could pay for the necessary religious ceremonies.

The earlier paintings in dwellings would naturally be destroyed when new buildings were constructed, for sites were seldom abandoned except after great catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions. It is quite

possible that towns abandoned in earlier times may yet be discovered. Indeed, one such discovery was made many years ago in that part of the island of Santorin or Thera which escaped destruction when before the dawn of history the slumbering underworld awoke and poured its raging fires into that peaceful

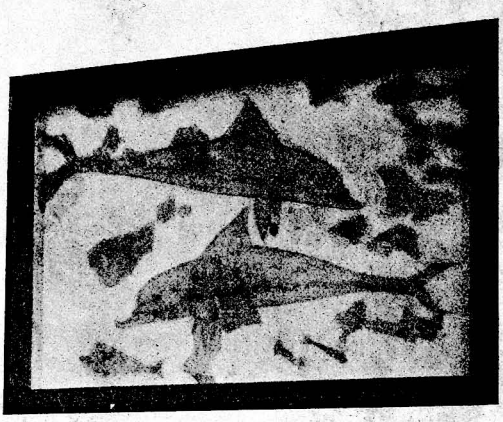

FIG. 292.—Fragments found at Knossos and now framed in the museum at Candia (Crete). The dolphins and other fish are painted with blue of various shades. The spray and bubbles flying off the tails and fins give the impression of fish seen through the glass of an aquarium. The rocks are coloured black and yellow as in Fig. 291.

sea. The ruins were not thoroughly examined, as the proprietor of the vineyard planted on the overlying volcanic ash demanded too high a compensation. A short time afterwards they collapsed, destroying all chance of further exploration. Some pottery and a few frescoes were brought to light, and gave rise to much controversy; now, owing to Sir Arthur Evans' discoveries, the frescoes can be recognised as dating

FIG. 291.

PLATE XI.

FIG. 291.—Portion of a fresco (apparently a framed panel), pieced together from fragments found in a small room of a house in the second city at Phylakopi, in the island of Melos. The blue colour was rather brighter when first uncovered, and there were signs that a red colour had been used on the wings of the fish and on the conventional rocks bordering the picture. Size, about twelve inches long. Period, Middle Minoan II. or III. (about 2000 B.C.).

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from the Late Minoan period, and therefore do not help us much.

Minoan artists had a fairly wide range of subjects, from solemn religious functions to merely decorative

FIG. 293.—Attempted reconstruction from various coloured stucco reliefs. The lighter parts are conjectural. Life size. A facsimile is in the Ashmolean Museum.

glimpses of marine life, such as flying fish (Fig. 291) or dolphins (Fig. 292). It is perhaps strange that no pictures of their ships have yet been found nor any representations of actual fighting.[50] It is still more strange that no painting, relief, or statue records the

FIG. 294.—Fragment of painted stucco found in the second Palace of Knossos. The lips are bright crimson, the dress blue with black and red strips. Two-thirds actual size. Late Minoan I.

FIG. 295.—Fragments of stucco, probably part of the decoration of the Queen's Apartments in the Palace of Knossos. The girl's figure is half life size, her jacket is yellow with a blue and red border. She may have been one of a group of dancers, like the "choros" which Homer mentions as having been devised by Dædalus for Ariadne at Knossos.

memory of any man whom we might suppose to have been a leader or a king. An attempt has been made to reconstruct from various coloured stucco fragments a figure of a man who may have been a prince or king. Sir Arthur Evans has kindly allowed me to reproduce a photograph of part of it. He does not consider the head and head dress in the reconstruction accurate enough for publication (Fig. 293).

That their fresco painting was a well-established art which must have acquired a reputation for itself by many previous productions seems proved by the custom of making large painted plaster panels for transportation to distant localities. Their general style shows a certain ready facility and too often also a desire for cheap effect which reminds one of the wall painter's art still practised in many parts of Italy. This girl's head from Knossos is of that sort (Fig. 294). Its chief interest is that it dates from about four thousand years ago. The exaggerated size of the eye and of the lips shows that lack of a sense of proportion which is characteristic of inexperienced youth as well as of decrepitude. It found its worst expression in the fisherman (Fig. 318) painted in the same (L.M. I.) period. The dancing girl with widely streaming hair (Fig. 295) has the proportions that might be expected in a subject where grace was the essential quality.

A far higher type is seen in these fragments of a fresco representing a cupbearer (Fig. 296). His clear cut features and well poised attentive attitude show

FIG. 296.—Fragment of a life-size fresco found at Knossos, and supposed to represent a cup bearer. No coloured illustration of it is yet available.

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what a high level some artists had attained. At the same time we see that such artists were unable or

FIG. 297.—Notice that the bull's head is given in front view not in profile as in earlier Egyptian work.

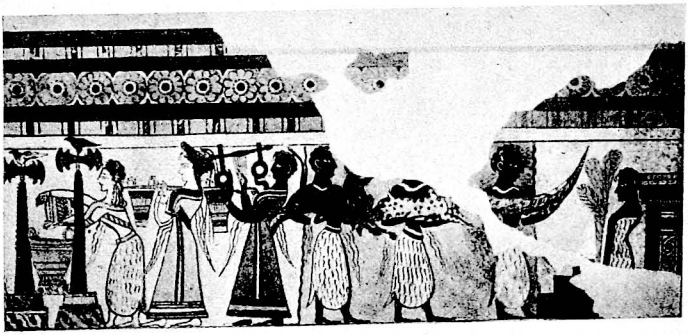

FIG. 298-*a*.

FIGS. 297, 298-*a*.—Drawings of the scenes painted on the sides of a sarcophagus (Fig. 298-*b*) found in the Villa at Hagia Triada. The dark figure at the end is supposed to represent the deceased standing before the door of his tomb to receive the funeral sacrifices. Women, distinguished by their white arms and faces, seem to have the largest share in this ceremonial.

unwilling to draw a profile eye. It seems an easy thing to draw; that artists should have taken so many

thousand years to learn to do it rightly is a striking instance of the effect of custom in blinding men to truth. Otherwise their profile figures are consistent; the chest and arms are not turned round to face a different way from head and legs, as in most of the Egyptian and Assyrian work. No instances are known of any attempt to draw the human face in full instead of in profile. Apparently the greatest advance made by these Minoan painters was in the art of grouping; but this is chiefly to be inferred from the stone and metal work in relief; for only a very few and very summary sketches have yet been found among the frescoes. Of colours they used the full range, but were not fond of intermediate shades. They adopted the Egyptian convention of painting red the bare limbs of men but they left the dead white of the stucco ground to represent the fairer skin of women (Figs. 297 and 298).

Signs are not wanting that Ægean art had reached its climax by the end of the Middle Minoan period, and was ceasing to give expression to real feelings and perceptions. It was beginning to be commercial and to be the victim of that system of payment by results which is so fatal to all higher development. It is probable that this was partly due to the growing intercourse with the Hittites and the Semitic peoples in Syria and Babylonia. Then for a while luxurious Egypt attracted the attention of the Cretans. In tombs of the eighteenth dynasty we find frescoes showing the Keftiu, as they were called, carrying

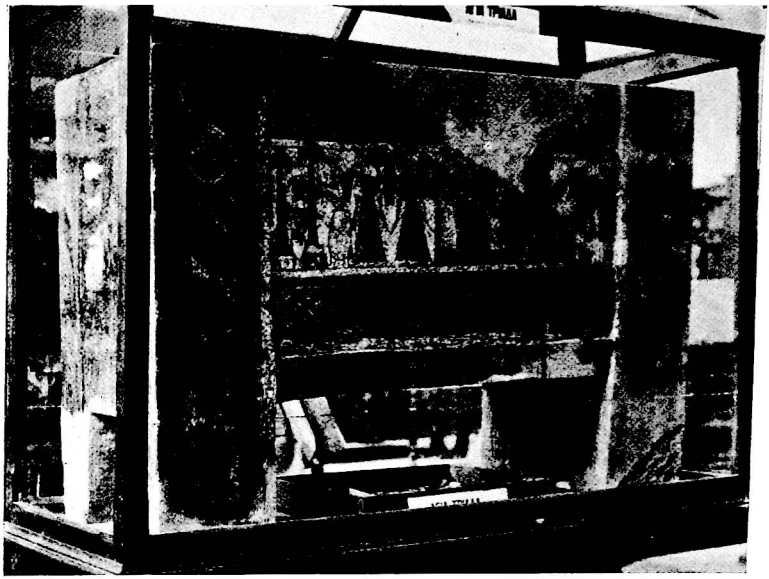

FIG. 298-*b*.—The Sarcophagus from Hagia Triada, now in the Museum at Candia. At one end is painted a chariot containing two persons and drawn by a horse; at the other end is a similar chariot drawn by a winged quadruped.

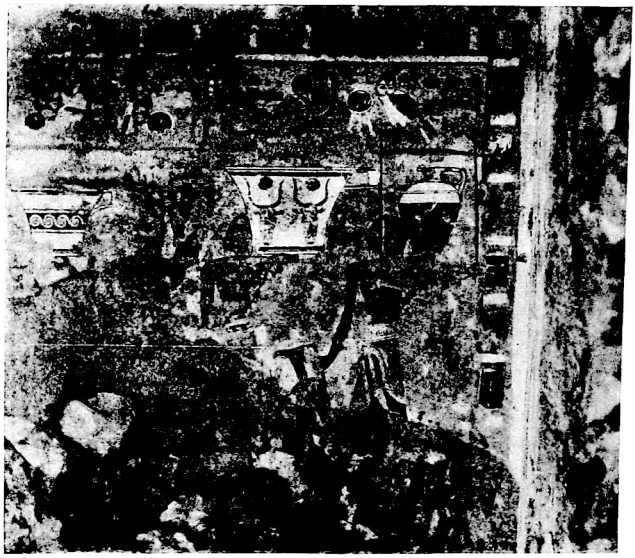

FIG. 299.—Fresco in the tomb of Senmut (about 1500 B.C.) showing the Keftiu bearing vessels of Cretan form (see Fig. 336).

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vases of Late Minoan form (Fig. 299).[51] When Egypt had lost its power, then there came the bad influence of Mycenæ, "rich in gold," where Cretan products found a ready market.

At this time Greece was still in a very backward state; but the Achæan princes who ruled over Mycenæ,

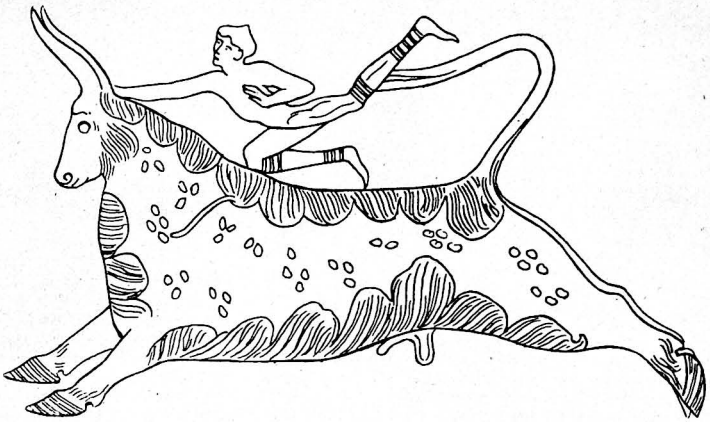

FIG. 300.—Outline restoration of a nearly complete fresco painted crudely on the wall of the Mycenean Palace at Tiryns, Greece. The most interesting part, the face, is unfortunately missing and the artist who restored it was not aware that no three-quarter profiles have yet been found of earlier date than the fifth century B.C., a thousand years later than this fresco. Reproduced from *Tiryns* by permission of Messrs. Macmillan.

Tiryns, and other southern towns had by their wealth acquired a certain veneer of civilisation. It is not fair perhaps to judge their taste by the few examples of paintings found in their palaces, but what can be said for men who liked to have upon their walls such a fresco as this bull and acrobat (Fig. 300)? If they were not guilty of killing Ægean art, they were certainly aiders and abettors of the crime. They are

accused of killing it also in the physical sense, for they are supposed to have been the invaders who laid waste the palaces of Crete and dealt its civilisation the blow from which it was never able to recover.

In the absence of sufficient evidence from painting and statuary we have to rely upon the pottery to fill up the many gaps in our knowledge. In fact it is

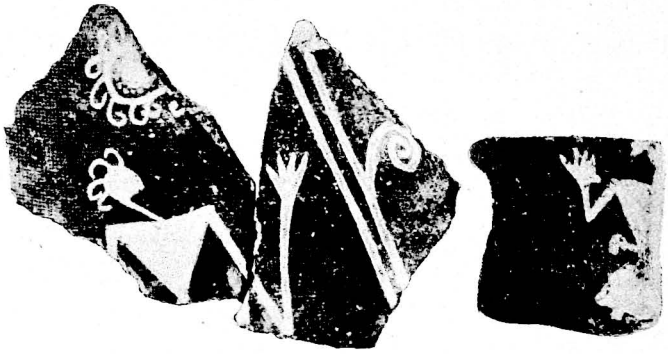

FIG. 301.—Fragments of dark pottery with white figures found in the earliest strata at Phylakopi. A fragment with a rather similar figure in red was found at Phaistos (*Mon. antichi. VI. Tav. IX.*). Compare with Figs. 100 and 373-*a*.

almost entirely by means of the decoration on the vases that the general history of Minoan art has been reconstructed. We now have to confess that although the exclusion of archæologists from Crete during the latter part of last century was tantalising, it was really beneficial; for it is only of recent years that excavators have realised the importance of noting and preserving every fragment of pottery. At Phylakopi in the island of Melos, Mr. C. C. Edgar and his fellow-workers had to sort out and record from ten to twenty

thousand fragments every day during the summer of 1899. Such careful work would have been deemed ridiculous by the old collectors of museum specimens. If they had been let loose at Knossos or at Phaistos twenty or thirty years ago the pages of Cretan history would have been irretrievably mutilated and confused.

On some of these fragments there were strange drawings of men with triangular bodies (Fig. 301) like those on the pottery of Susa and of Egypt, but with sword handles much like those worn by men on early Greek vases (Fig. 373 *bis*). Another design (Fig. 302) has a wonderful resemblance to those stylised forms of men on the Moussian ware (Fig. 207). The relics found in various places in Crete and the other islands have not yet been sufficiently well co-ordinated to serve as a basis for any general sketch of their evolution. The belief is beginning to gain ground that Mediterranean art had more affinity with Chaldean than with Egyptian; and that the Ægeans continued to follow the older traditions of Chaldea while the Egyptians, being restrained from following

FIG. 302.—Vase found at Phylakopi, white design (man's body and arms) on dark ground. Compare Fig. 207.

their natural inclinations, developed that peculiar and stereotyped art which was only occasionally galvanised into life by influences from outside. In early dynastic times there were certainly communica-

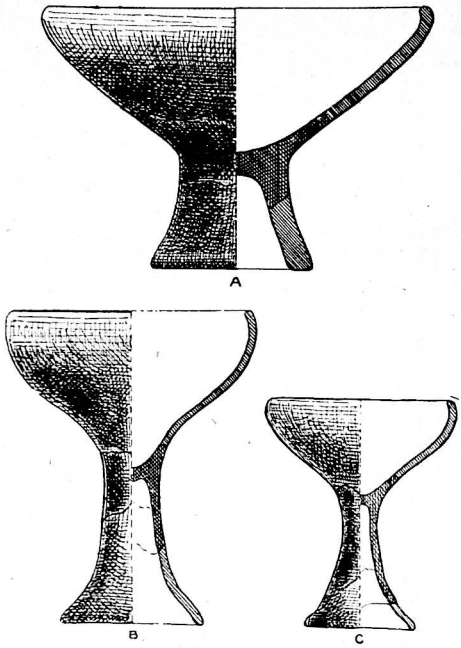

FIG. 303.—Dark-faced, hand-polished, earthenware goblets with hollow stems (shown in the sections). A, found at Abydos among first dynasty relics; B, C, found at Knossos in pre-Minoan strata.

tions between Egypt and Crete (Fig. 303), but until Asia Minor has been better explored we cannot say whether there was any direct intercourse between Crete and Chaldea.

We have seen that although the neolithic and

Early Minoan ware was of good shape and colour, the decoration on it was too elementary to give any indication as to the sort of work done by higher artists during those periods. In Middle Minoan times (about 2000 B.C.) an extraordinary outburst of ceramic activity took place, an outburst for which it is difficult to assign any definite cause. It appears to coincide with the first prosperity of Babylon (a few centuries after Gudea's time) and to precede the short spell of peace and prosperity which Egypt enjoyed during the twelfth dynasty. Egyptian art then had a slight revival of that naturalism which seems to have been always latent in its people and to have been continually suppressed by those in high authority. It would almost appear as if the Cretans had supplied the Egyptians with new ideas and in return had received some of that wealth offered so freely by the Nile to the dwellers on its banks. It was a poor return to make, and we may gather that it had an injurious influence on Crete. Just as its wise men thought the earth to be the centre of the universe round which the sun and stars revolved, so did its leaders evidently think that the dull mass of wealth must be the centre of attraction to which all other spheres of light and energy must be subordinate. Basing their calculations on this false assumption, it is no wonder that they went astray and that their systems could not stand the test of time.[52]

In the earlier periods wealth seems to have been more diffused in Crete than in the autocratic kingdoms

on the Tigris and the Nile. When the richer men began to use cups and vessels made of precious bronze, or still more precious silver (Fig. 304), instead of alabaster or other brittle stone (Figs. 305 and 306), there was apparently a large class of fairly well-to-do people who continued to use the old-fashioned earthenware. This intermediate class was evidently desirous

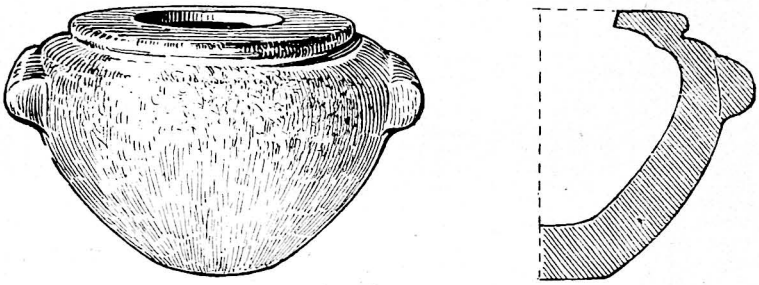

FIG. 306.—Bowl made out of a small block of Egyptian syenite and having the same shape as some of the stone vessels of the early Egyptian dynasties. Found at Knossos in early or possibly pre-Minoan strata (*B. S. A.* ix. p. 98).

of fair forms but unable to afford the doubtful boon and certain bane of beauty embodied in all too precious metal. Thus the potter's art did not decay as it did in Egypt and Chaldea. On the contrary, a certain stimulus seems to have been given by the more extensive use of bronze and other metals for making cups and vases. It led the potters to produce a ware which was as hard and thin as that of ancient Susa. They also strove to copy the forms and even the lustre of the metal vessels (Fig. 307). This rivalry with metal workers induced them in rather later times to

FIG. 304.—Silver vessel about four and a quarter inches high found in a tomb at Gournia, Middle Minoan II.

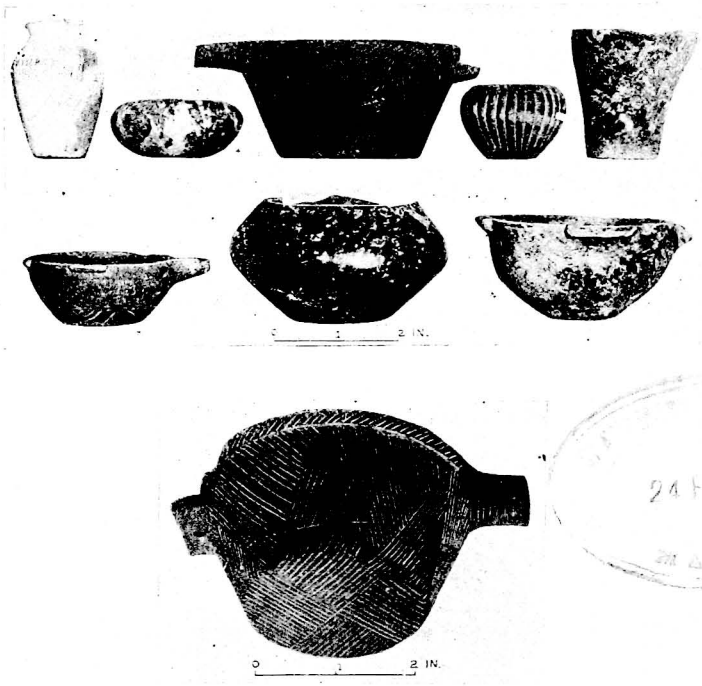

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FIG. 305.—Stone vases from an Early Minoan cemetery at Palaikastro. Some of them may belong to the Middle Minoan period. Compare the decoration of the largest bowl with that of Fig. 222-*bis*.

To face p. 366

FIG 308

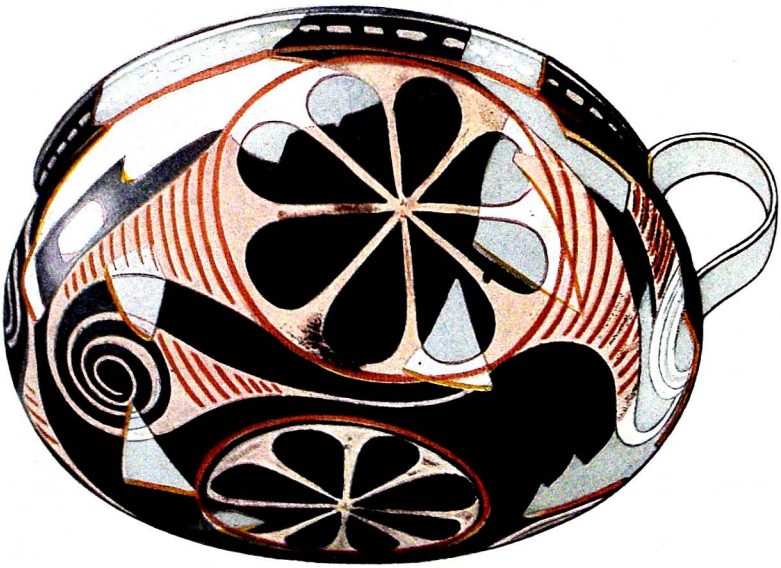

FIG. 310

FIG. 308 and 310.—Two delicately thin "Kamares" cups found at Knossos. The missing portions are indicated by lighter tints. Mid Minoan II. About two-thirds actual size. Compare the designs on Fig. 308 with the Chaldean design in Fig. 220bis.

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arrange their decoration in bands (Fig. 308), thus imitating the vases made of strips of metal riveted together; sometimes they imitated also the rivet heads.

Although occasionally the designs show a reminiscence of the natural forms of leaves and flowers

FIG. 307.—Two-handled cup of very thin earthenware, not thicker than an ordinary wine glass. The sprays painted on it are alternately red and white. Found in a tomb at Gournia. Middle Minoan II. Four and a half inches high.

(Fig. 309) yet as a rule they are entirely geometrical, but with a predominance of curved lines.[53] Among these the spiral is so frequently used that from this time onwards it is considered by one school of archæologists as proving Mediterranean influence wherever it is found. This pottery has received the name of "Kamares ware" (Fig. 310), from having been first found in a cave near the village Kamares, below

Mount Ida. The composition, drawing, and colouring are generally very harmonious and decidedly original. The semicircles with radiating lines

FIG. 309.—Two-handled vessel with spout. Creamy white design with yellow and crimson details on a lustrous black glaze. Kamares ware. Middle Minoan II. Knossos. Height nine inches.

(Fig. 311) recall to mind the vases of Elam, but the coincidence is perhaps fortuitous. The Cretan pottery had a wider range of colour, skilfully combining vermilion, orange, and brown designs on a black or pale yellow background. It shows the

simplicity and chastity of youth, with the usual accompaniment of severity, but it soon grew florid and luxuriant.

Then the perceptions of these islanders became enlarged; they looked out upon the world and saw that it was good. With broader views of life they no longer found so great a charm in petty decorative details—details that were probably personal in their origin, and derived from the tattoo marks on themselves and their neighbours. That is a strange barbarian stage from which some people never seem able to emerge.

FIG. 311.—Kamares ware cup found along with a jug in a recess in one of the rooms of the first palace at Phaistos. Compare it with Fig. 222. (*Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, vol. xiv.)

The bounteous feast of form and colour spread by nature for all her children, although ignored by most of her young barbarians, was partially appreciated by this Cretan race, whose mentality had not been starved by tyranny or by privation. Then they strove to fix the glorious vision and to interpret it. It is sad for us that none of the original attempts have been preserved, we can but judge of them by the reflections left upon the earthenware. Grasses and flowers, seaweeds and shells and fishes, the fairy nautilus and the demon octopus, were rendered with a skill which only comes from intimate knowledge and keen appreciation

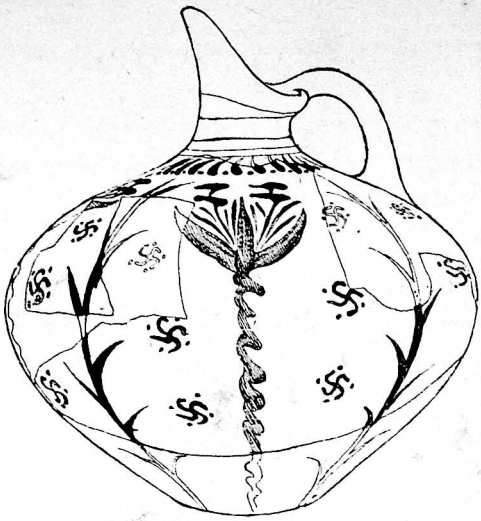

FIG. 312

FIG. 313.

FIGS. 312, 313.—Conjectural reconstruction of two vases from fragments (shown by the darker strokes) found at Phylakopi in Melos. Black and brown designs on reddish yellow clay. The Melian relics have not yet been well correlated with those of Crete: these are assigned to the L.M. I. period. One-third actual size.

(Figs. 312 and 313). But the ceramic painters soon found that they could not satisfactorily reproduce the brilliant colours of the frescoes from which they probably took their inspirations, therefore they gradually ceased doing any polychrome work and limited themselves as far as possible to white on the light clay ground for these naturalistic drawings (Fig. 314).

FIG. 314.—Vases found in the second palace of Knossos, M.M. III. The largest is ten inches high and is of a reddish brown colour, the lilies are plain white.

It is noteworthy that no drawings or paintings of human or animal figures have yet been found on the pottery of the early part of this period. Their absence seems to corroborate the theory that artists have always experienced more difficulty in drawing these subjects than in modelling them. In addition to the large stucco figures already mentioned there are

several faience statuettes (Figs. 315 and 316) and plaques (Fig. 317) which show how successful the

FIG. 315.

FIG. 316.

Reconstructions from various portions of glazed faience figures found in the Temple Repository of the second palace at Knossos. The robes are elaborately modelled and painted. Fig. 315 is thought to represent the mother goddess with her symbolic snakes; Fig. 316 her votary. One-third actual size. Fig. 316 *bis* shows how a similar subject was treated at a later period. M.M. III.

Minoan potters were in modelling figures in the round and in relief. The only drawing of a human

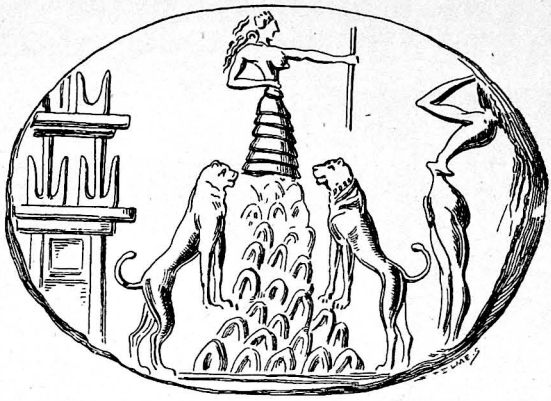

FIG. 316 *bis*.—Reconstruction from several fragments found at Knossos of clay impressions made by a seal one-third of the size of this drawing. It represents a votary with his Cretan girdle and slender waist worshipping a goddess at a mountain shrine, symbolised by the hillocks and also by the stylised ox-heads ("horns of consecration") on the left. Compare with Figs. 242 and 371.

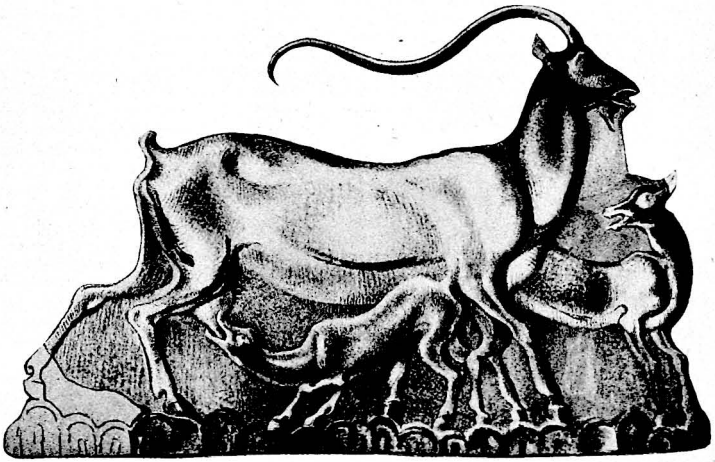

FIG. 317.—Plaque in relief reconstructed from numerous fragments of faience work that had been made in a mould. Pale green with dark sepia markings. About half actual size. M.M. III.

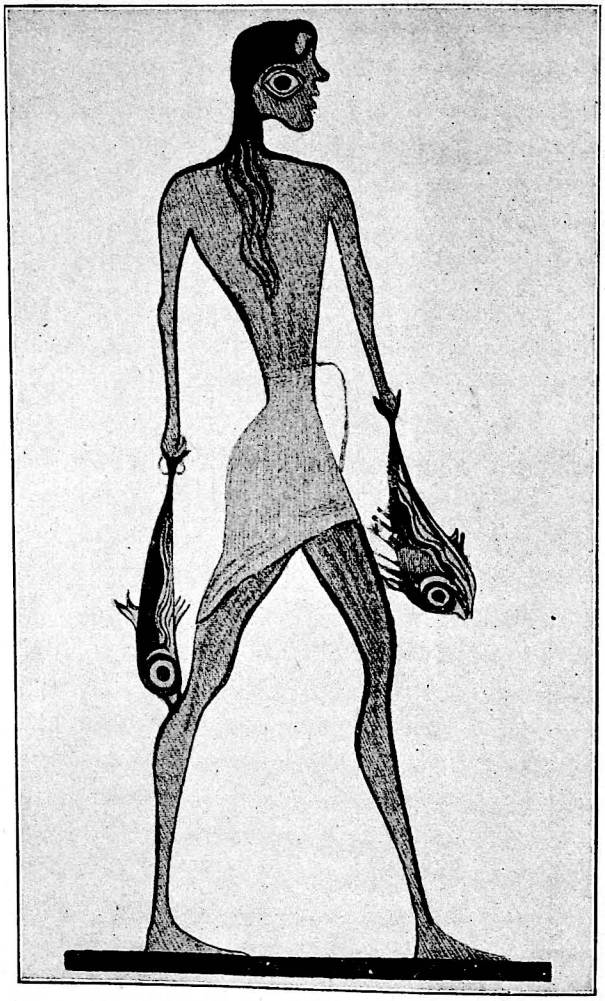

FIG. 318.—One of four fishermen drawn on the earthenware stem of a support for a lamp or a fruit dish. Found at Phylakopi. Four-fifths actual size. Probably the eye was enlarged in order to increase its efficacy as a charm against evil influences. The artist's sense of proportion had been ruined by his patron's desire for material advantages.

FIG. 320.—A coloured illustration of this vase, which was found at Palaikastro, will probably be given in the volume about the excavations there, shortly to be published by the British School at Athens. It is perhaps by the same hand as a vase found by Mrs. Boyd Hawes, and published in colour in her book on Gournia. In his *Palaces of Crete* (p. 264), Mosso, discussing degeneration, says that this vase is "of the first period," but his dating is not generally very accurate. Professor Bosanquet, who has kindly given me permission to reproduce it, tells me that it is certainly Late Minoan II. Dark brown on a light buff ground. Height eleven inches.

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figure on pottery is this miserable specimen from Melos (Fig. 318), yet it is later by a century or more than that faience ware, and its badness may be due to decadence. The Melos artists were perhaps more daring than those of the parent school in Crete. They ventured to depict the swallow in its flight

FIG. 319.—Swallow drawn with black paint on light coloured clay. Phylakopi.

(Fig. 319), a subject which has not yet been found elsewhere in the Ægean, except on a gold ornament from Mycenæ.

One of the happiest inspirations of the Minoan potters was to use the octopus for their vase decoration; several splendid specimens have been dug up (Fig. 320). The creature was admirably adapted for decorating curved surfaces, but it also becomes

easily conventionalised (Figs. 321 and 322). Towards the end of the Late Minoan period it is hardly recognisable (Fig. 323).

The healthy growth of Cretan civilisation had been greatly favoured by the course of events in other countries. Troy, rich in gold and bronze, had been burnt to the ground in the Early Minoan period; the successive villages that occupied its site until Mycenean times could give no trouble to the nascent power of Crete. It was unfortunate for Schliemann that he mistook this "burnt city" for the Homeric Troy he sought with such energy and zeal. The consequence was that, although he had dug through it, he missed seeing the real Troy and its Late Minoan (Mycenean) luxury, greater and more refined than Homer had imagined it.

In the Mid Minoan period upheavals in Chaldea had sent great waves of restless exiles to overrun the lands of Syria and Palestine, finally penetrating as far as Egypt, and ruling as "shepherd kings" over its disunited and enervated inhabitants. It is difficult to say how far this affected Crete, but probably it helped to free her art from the paralysing influence of a decadent civilisation. She was then able to strike out that independent line which has had such far-reaching effect on the progress of the world.

It may be a mere coincidence, but when the Egyptians shook off the foreign yoke and became a flourishing and aggressive power under the eighteenth dynasty, then Cretan art began to degenerate. The

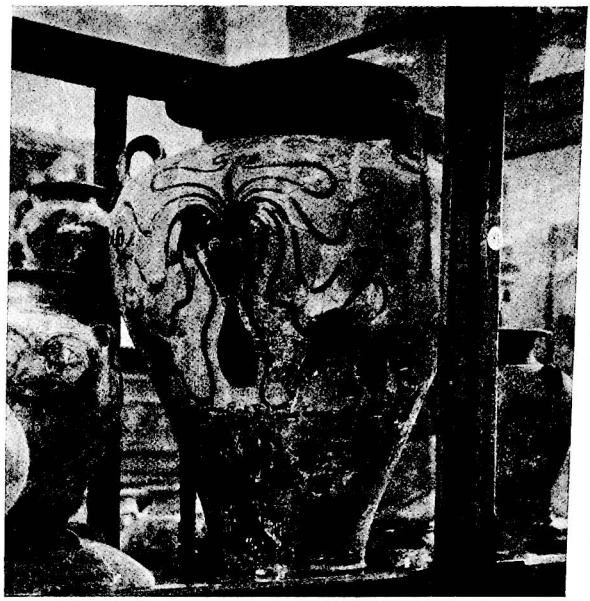

FIG. 321.—Large jar in Candia Museum. These less carefully rendered forms of octopus are generally supposed to show the beginning of stylisation, but there are many varieties of the tribe Octopoda, and some of them have very much the same appearance as the one on the jar.

FIG. 322.

FIG. 323.

FIGS. 322 and 323.—Stylisation is more apparent in Fig. 322, and seems complete in Fig. 323, but these wavy lines are also found in earlier ornamentation, before the octopus motive was popular, and this pattern may be derived from them. These vases are called stirrup vases from the shape of their handles; also false necked amphora because the actual neck or spout is at the side and the centre neck is solid.

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FIG. 324.—Large jar (thirty-nine inches high) reconstructed from fragments found at Vaphio, near Sparta. In this "Palace" and other Late Minoan styles the ornamentation consists of dark-coloured designs drawn on a light ground. In the simpler Middle Minoan style the reverse system was employed. It reminds one of Ruskin's expression, that early Gothic windows showed patterns of light pierced through the darkness of the walls, while the later tracery showed designs drawn with darkness upon light.

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FIG. 325.—Large vase (three and a half feet high) built up from fragments found in the passage to a chamber tomb at Mycenæ. Probably imported from Knossos (see *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (1903), pp. 157–205, "The Pottery of Knossos," by Mr. Duncan Mackenzie). Notice the curious modification of the rounded ends of the leaves of the great scrolls into fantastic volutes.

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first steps in this degeneration are evident in the pottery of the Palace style (Figs. 324–329), so named by Sir Arthur Evans, because its motives were similar

FIG. 326.—Large jar (four feet high) built up from fragments found in the restored second palace of Knossos. The design is in relief assisted by painted lines. It represents a stylised papyrus flower (profile) and leaves. The large rosettes are the same flower seen full face.[54] The zigzag markings *may* be meant to indicate water, as in Egyptian drawings.

to those of the frescoes in the restored portion of the second palace of Knossos. Apparently there had been a revolution in which the second palace had

been burned down; at present we have no clue as to whether it was a revolution of the people against a tyrant, or of a tyrant against the people.

FIG. 327.—This design may have been evolved from a combination of the ordinary profile papyrus flower with the rosettes of Fig. 326.

When we have more information about the events of that period, and more evidence about the progress of its art, it will be possible to demonstrate the intimate connection between the social and artistic con-

ditions of a nation. It could be shown all the more

FIG. 328.—Earthenware vase resembling the one held by the cup-bearer (Fig. 296). Black pattern on a ruddy yellow slip.

FIG. 329.—Vase of similar technique but more naturalistic design than Fig. 328. Palaikastro, Crete. Both figures are one-third actual size.

clearly in Crete, because the question there seems

not to have been complicated by foreign invasions or by disquieting inventions.

Although there are no representations of men or women on the painted pottery of Crete, there are several very excellent specimens of such work in relief on vases cut out of steatite (Figs. 330–334). In the earlier days vases of harder stone were imported from Egypt; later on similar ones were produced in Crete, but the beauty of these hard stone vases consists entirely in their contours; they have no designs or figures carved upon them. The steatite vases with reliefs all belong to the Late Minoan period, and must, I fear, be classed as shams.[55] They were originally covered with gold foil, to simulate embossed vessels made with solid plates of gold. The rage of disappointed looters against this deceptive ware is often recorded by the minuteness of the fragments into which the vases have been broken. We, on the other hand, have to be thankful to the makers of these shams, for if they had been made of solid gold still fewer would have survived.

FIG. 330.—Steatite relief of an archer resembling those in Fig. 332.

What marvels of the craftsman's skill, what dreams of beauty from an artist's brain have perished, burdened with their weight of gold or silver, victims of successful warriors' greed! Most lamentable, and yet

most just. They are but instances of the inexorable law of the self-destructiveness of passions unrestrained. Greed and vainglory seek unnatural gratification,

FIG. 331.—Fragment of a steatite box found at Knossos.

scraping together a great heap of golden ornaments, a flaunting evidence of ill-used wealth. In course of time other sufferers from the same disease appear, and they with violence destroy that artificial pile, reduce it to its constituent elements, and then labori-

ously begin again to build another temple to their derisive god. They are like children piling up sand castles diligently scooping up all the surrounding sand. The higher they build the less support have the foundations. Well were it for the world if but

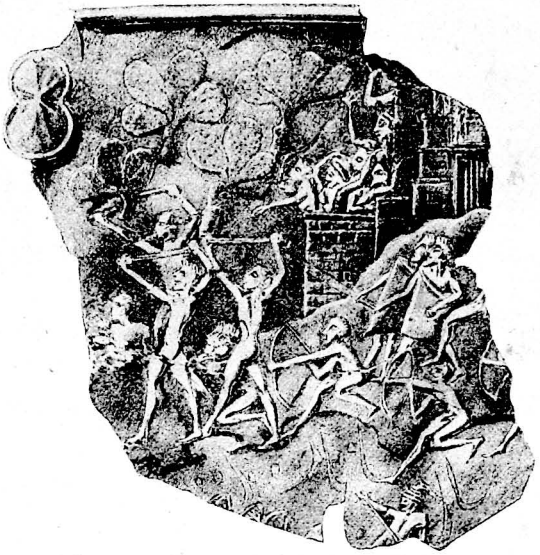

FIG. 332.—Fragment of a silver vase, found at Mycenæ, representing a skirmish outside a walled town. Facsimile in British Museum.

the dissipation of that wealth involved no more distress than children suffer when their sand castles crumble on the shore.

The groups of figures carved upon these vases confirm the belief inspired by some of the frescoes that Minoan artists had begun to solve the problem of pictorial composition. A fragment of a silver vase

found at Mycenæ is tantalising evidence of their skill (Fig. 332). The flatness and processional monotony of Egyptian and Chaldean work was repugnant to the broader-minded Cretan. Even when actually representing a procession (Fig. 333) he disregards its regularity and uniformity, those wave lengths of vibration which stirred responsive chords in the Semitic mind. He seizes the life and joy of the movement, and we feel that he is not a mere critical recorder, aloof from the crowd, but a man in full sympathy with his fellow-men, and delighted to fix and convey to others the sensations awakened in his heart. This rhyton (Fig. 334), found by the Italian mission at Hagia Triada, is a fine example of skilful grouping; incidentally it also shows the greater sense of justice inherent in a free people. We no longer have the threadbare subject of a victorious king slaying his unresisting enemies. Here man strives with man in equal contest; here the figures of the bulls are not designed to symbolise successful oppression by brute force, but rather the overcoming of it by strange daring and great skill.

Some writers hold that these reliefs and the similar frescoes (Fig. 300) represent victims worried by bulls. Sad visions have been conjured up of youths and maidens sacrificed to gratify the "lust allied to cruelty" of wealthy tyrants levying a human tribute from their vassal states. It may have been so in the last degenerate stage; the Greek legends lend colour to the foul accusation. Certainly, too,

FIG. 333.—Extended drawing showing the band of figures round the "harvester" vase. The men are carrying implements resembling the forks used for corn or hay in Palestine at the present day. The lower part of the vase is missing. About half actual size.

FIG. 334.—Black steatite Rhyton, about eighteen inches high, found in the villa at Hagia Triada in 1903. A year afterwards nine other pieces were found, thus enabling Signor Halbherr, the head of the Italian Archæological Mission, to reconstitute the whole vase. Late Minoan I or II. (*Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, 1905.)

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some of the figures, apparently impaled on the horns of charging bulls, are female, for they have the conventional white skin. Other archæologists think that they are not impaled, but merely clinging to the horns. They point out that women had such a large share in the religious functions of Crete that they may well have taken part also in these dangerous performances. Like the Olympian games they were probably religious, and characterised more by feats of skill than by bloodshed. There is some confirmation of this theory in a curious seal (Fig. 335) on which a man is represented vaulting over a sitting bull, an animal so sleek and fat that no one could imagine it to be a dangerous antagonist.

FIG. 335.—Agate seal found at Præsos, the old capital of the Eteocretans. Enlarged to twice the actual size.

The exact interpretation of the meaning of these scenes is still so uncertain that it seems safer to wait for fresh evidence. Even that procession has been the subject of much controversy. It has been said to represent a band of harvesters, a religious dance, a peasant rebellion, and a troop of soldiers. The famous so-called hunting scene in bold repoussé work on one of the gold cups from the Vaphio tomb near Sparta is supposed by Mosso to be a bull race

(Fig. 336-*a*). According to him the rider of the first bull is a female gymnast and she has not been gored by its horns but is clinging to them. The second bull has failed to jump the net and has thrown its male rider headlong. He says that similar performances are still given in Italy in the province of Viterbo.

These two cups (Figs. 336 and 337) are a triumph of the goldsmith's art. They were found by Dr. Tsountas in 1889, and were for some time a puzzle to archæologists, for although they have the usual faults of archaic work, they show a freedom and vigour never found in previous productions. The discoveries at Knossos led to their being classed as Minoan, and the finding of that rhyton in 1900 has confirmed the belief that even if they were not imported from Crete, they must have been made by Cretan artists who had come over to work in Greece.

The latter explanation is perhaps the most reasonable, for Crete never seems to have been rich in gold nor very devoted to its worship. The Myceneans, on the contrary, had comparatively large quantities of that metal, probably the result of the early exploitation of Thrace, one of the four rich gold-bearing regions of the ancient world. More than a hundredweight was found by Schliemann in a few tombs at Mycenæ. This would be equal to about £4000 in our present coin, and was possibly then worth twenty times as much. Strangely enough silver was very rare at that period, and is supposed to have been worth twice as much as gold.

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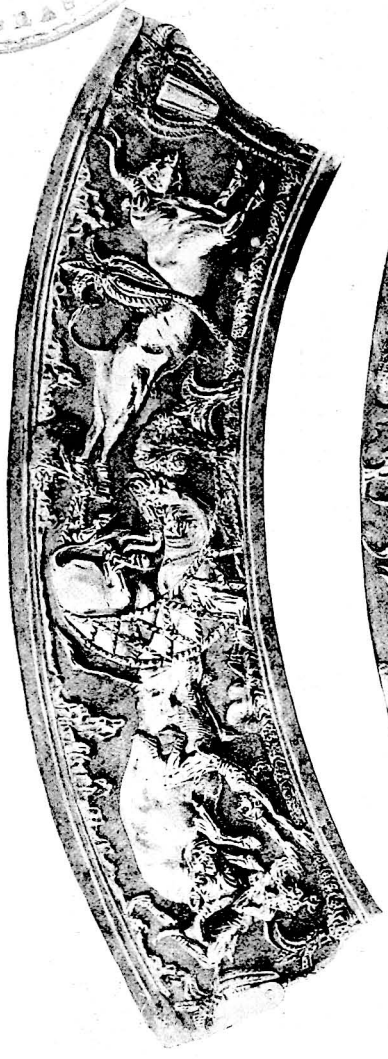


FIG. 336*a*.

FIG. 337*a*.

FIGS. 336*a* and 337*a*.—Extended drawing of the Vaphio cups. The artist was evidently unrestrained by any conventions or technical difficulties from representing animals in whatever attitude he considered most effective, profile, full face, turning their heads back, or bending them down sideways to toss an aggressor. The exaggerated length of the body was an accepted convention to represent rapidity of motion; it is seen here in four different degrees, each corresponding to the speed with which the animal is moving

To face p. 387 *and Fig.* 336*b*

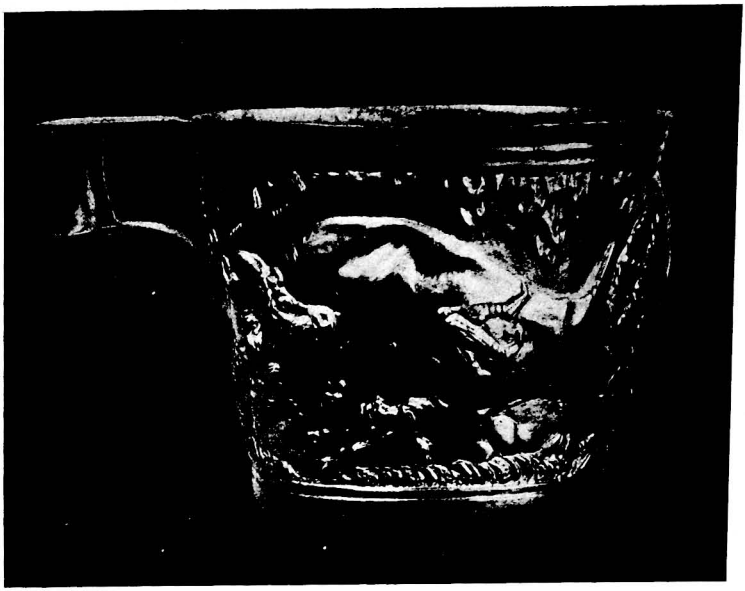


FIG. 336*b*.

FIG. 337*b*.

FIGS. 336*b* and 337*b*.—Gold cups found in a Mycenean "beehive" tomb at Vaphio. They are wonderfully fine examples of repoussé work, but they have the mannerism of an art that has passed its prime. Nine-tenths of actual size.

To face p. 386 *and Fig.* 336*a*

In those days neither gold nor silver was coined into money. They were simply desirable commodities, and used as convenient articles of barter. To those who have studied the fluctuations in the purchasing power of these metals it seems unfortunate that civilised nations should still take either of them as their standard of value. But human nature is very conservative in its beliefs about what is desirable or beautiful, and it will be centuries before even the civilised portion of the world realises that it has little definite use or desire for the actual gold, and that the high value of it is chiefly due to custom and convention.

In former times personal adornment with gold was a universal custom with those who could afford it. Some day that custom will be as extinct as tattooing. Even now it is chiefly kept up by the female sex, just as in savage races it is the women who are the last to give up beautifying themselves with tattoo marks.[56]

Until comparatively recent times few beautiful and durable materials were commonly available; the rare and brilliant gold therefore had a natural fascination for mankind. Those who sought to enslave their fellow-men took full advantage of this weakness, for portable wealth is a most potent weapon, and the possessors of red gold were often able to dominate their world. It was probably with this weapon that the semi-barbarous Myceneans conquered and dispersed the more civilised inhabitants of Crete, and thus closed that chapter in the history of art.

For many after centuries this history presents a picture of confusion, degeneration and decay. The strangely oscillating pendulum of human thought and action had reached the utmost limit of its swing. Now with increasing speed it plunges back as if its upward climbing had had no real result. Such a belief may often be founded on too narrow a conception of the history of the world. Reactionaries may rejoice as the pendulum swings earthwards, the advocates of progress will watch with wonderment and fear its downward course, but still the great world clock moves on impelled by some hidden force. And who are we that we should claim the power to hasten or retard its speed? Our work is on a smaller scale and our vain frettings are but useless waste of energy that should be given to more humble duties lying ready to our hand.

Varying phases may be necessary stages in the development of man, as useful for his growth as to the plant world are the changes from bright summer to rich autumn and dark winter. We are tempted to lament the falling of the sere and yellow leaf; is it not better to regard it as but a sign that the new growth is feeling the first great pulsations of life within its buds? The old leaves have served their purpose, why sorrow that they should be pushed off by those which have to carry on the work? There is no great merit in a struggle to maintain conditions that are no longer beneficial to the world. It is only to a dead branch that dead leaves cling.

The vigour of the living branch that casts them off shows that their growth had indeed at one period been vigorous and useful.

When the time comes for our civilisation to be displaced by the stirrings of a newer life, God grant it may be said of us that we have served our purpose faithfully and that our growth was sound.

CHAPTER XIV

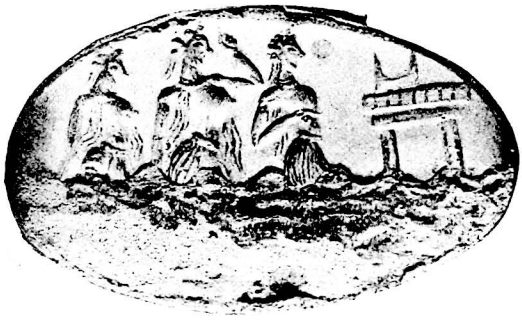
HUMBLE ORIGINS OF GREEK ART

THE cold blasts of barbarism that swept over Ægean art, leaving it shrivelled and distorted in its Cretan home, produced an autumnal glory of golden splendour in the cities of the southern part of Greece. In Mycenæ, in Tiryns, and in Sparta there was abundance of that wealth which has nothing in common with real welfare except in the origin of its name. The goldsmith was the chief exponent of their art, as he has always been in rich periods of poor taste.

Large quantities of elaborate jewellery were discovered by Schliemann in the Late Minoan graves of the acropolis at Mycenæ (Fig. 338). It astonished the archæologists of that day, and it received extravagant praise from people who did not dream that art could be older than the Greeks. Even now they hardly seem to realise that better work (Fig. 339) was done in Egypt a thousand years before the goldsmiths of Mycenæ produced those clumsy signet rings of massive gold to please their wealthy lords. In the whole hundredweight of golden ornaments buried in these tombs there was hardly a single specimen in which the value of the mere material was not infinitely greater than that of the artistic work expended on

a

b



c

FIG. 338.—Signet rings found in the Acropolis of Mycenæ. They represent Cretan women performing religious functions; *a* and *b* are solid gold, *c* is silver, plated with gold; *a* and *c* are magnified three diameters, *b* about two.

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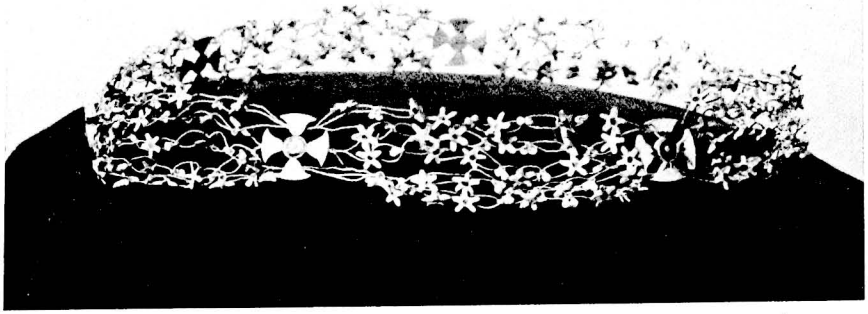

FIG. 339.—Head-dress of a princess of the twelfth dynasty (2000 B.C.) found at Dahshur. The flowers and berries are of carnelian, turquoise, and lapis lazuli set in gold, and connected by gold wires. This is the only example of a Maltese cross in Egyptian work, and may be derived from Chaldea or the Ægean, or it may have had an independent origin, as a combination of four stylised lotus or papyrus flowers.

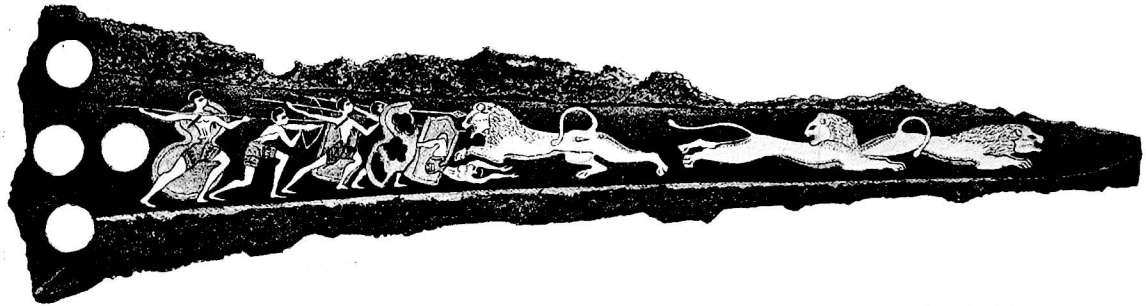

FIG. 340*b*.—One of the five bronze daggers found in tombs of the Acropolis of Mycenæ, inlaid with gold and silver. Nine and a half inches long.

it. It always seems as if mankind had such a limited amount of energy available for the satisfaction of its æsthetic instincts, that the more work it spends in providing material so much the less can it devote towards enduing that material with the higher forms of art.

Quite typical is the contrast between the taste displayed in the figures on those seals and the refinement of these designs (Figs. 340-*a* and *b*), worked with thin sheets of precious metal on thick blades of bronze. Though found at Mycenæ, they are thought to be the work not of local artificers but of Cretan craftsmen.[57] They are of earlier date than the seals and other ornaments of solid gold; it seems as if art was then still struggling to be free, but gradually the new master's heavy hand crushed and deformed it. During many

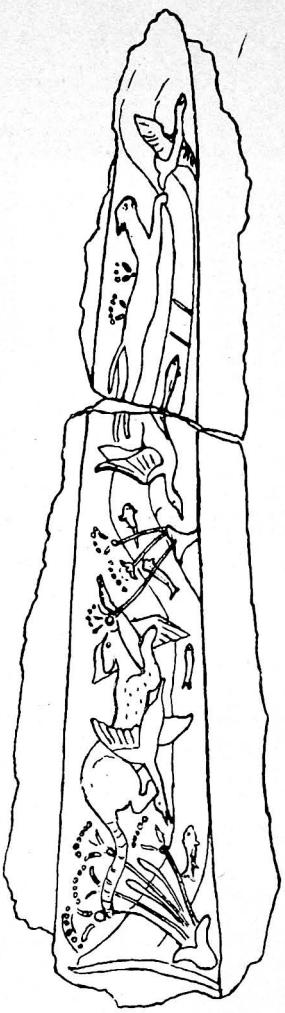

FIG. 340-*a*.—One of the bronze daggers found by Schliemann at Mycenæ covered with a thick incrustation. Several years elapsed before it could be removed and it is said that he never saw the delicate inlaid work of silver and gold skilfully alloyed to produce various colour effects. Length, seven inches.

succeeding centuries its feeble efforts awaken pity, almost derision.

It is doubtful whether we shall ever be able to disentangle the whole story of the troublous period that ensued, or even to estimate the real character of the currents that met together in this whirlpool of the ancient world. For some unknown reason—political, climatic, perhaps geological, but probably economic—a great upheaval and dispersion of nations seems to have taken place north of the Balkans, and to have ultimately affected the whole of the then known world, even as far as Egypt, where the Jewish exodus shows a small back eddy in the universal movement.

During this period iron gradually supplanted bronze.[58] The economic changes produced by such a revolution in the habits and capabilities of nations must have greatly contributed to the general unrest, if indeed they were not its chief cause. The acknowledged standards of value were all upset. Those who were rich in bronze became gradually reduced to comparative poverty. The centres of wealth production were shifted; even the art and craft of warfare had to be modified by the races that adopted the new metal. It must have been a terrible period, especially for those who had been nourished in comfort or luxury. Ignorant of the sources of their power, carelessly following the beaten path trodden by their ancestors, they were utterly unable to understand why their wealth was vanishing. For, just as

in modern times wealth is a weapon, and each man thinks himself entitled to all the advantages he can obtain by using it, so in those days a weapon was wealth, and none felt any scruple in using it to force his fellow-men to yield their property and lives to serve his will. When new inventions rendered a rich man's weapons less efficient the chief sources and mainstays of his wealth were correspondingly diminished.

The wealth already accumulated by the older civilised nations had exercised its usual disruptive influence, separating more and more widely the richer families, and rendering them more and more antagonistic to each other and to their poorer brethren. Art had long felt its baneful sway, and everywhere was decadent. Nations had no cohesion, and each in turn fell victim to predatory combinations formed not by the most intelligent and civilised but by the strongest and most unscrupulous wielders of the new weapons.

The free and energetic Ægean race spreading along the Mediterranean shore had rivalled and in many ways outshone the far wealthier Egyptians, but now its power was broken, and there was no other race fit to carry on the tradition of its art. Its trade fell into the hands of the Phœnicians, a Semitic tribe which had acquired some skill as mariners in the Persian Gulf, but had been forced to emigrate to Syria after the Elamite reaction in the Cassite period.

The culture of these Phœnicians used to be very much overrated. That phrase, "the grave Tyrian

trader," captivated the fancy of mid Victorian scholars, with whom words and phrases had undue influence. In the nineteenth century traders were beginning to be idealised as beneficent messengers of peace; the literary world did not imagine that commerce could degenerate into a struggle for monopolies, a struggle nearly as injurious as ordinary warfare, and infinitely more sordid.

The Phœnicians were credited not only with the invention of the alphabet, and with the introduction of civilisation into the distant West, but also with the diffusion of their love of art. Wherever any unexpected trace of artistic taste was found, its origin was immediately attributed to these Semitic traders. Nowadays the tendency is just the other way. The merchant princes of Tyre and Sidon, and the founders of great Carthage have been called "peddling bearers of culture at second hand," and Dr. Hogarth says that "the great difficulty which confronts a student of Phœnician art is to find a distinctive Phœnician art at all."

The waves of Cretan civilisation had lapped in vain against the mountain fastnesses of that strange Hittite federation whose stubborn power had checked and diverted the well-trained myrmidons of Egyptian and Assyrian greed, but apparently had no constructive energy, and left no lasting mark on literature or art. Its function seems to have resembled that of Switzerland in the Middle Ages—a barrier, not a contributor to the contending streams of evolution.

One of these streams, when it first began to trickle down from the vast reservoirs of the mysterious north, had been barred effectively by the Hittites, and being barred had gained in strength. This was the Ionian branch of a flood issuing from that Aryan spring, so rich in strong ferments for the stirring of mankind, but whose exact locality is still a matter of dispute. The Aryan or Indo-European race (if race it be and not some strange influence affecting many kindred races), of which so much is written and so little known, seems to have thrust itself as a wedge-shaped phalanx from the steppes of Asia to the western shore of France, a mighty flood, destined in later times to cover half the world. As it surged along the great Danubian plain it sent one overflow, consisting of Hellenes, across the Balkans. Another section, the Italiotes, penetrated through the Alps to form the basis of the Latin people. Of the first overflow a portion, afterwards known as the Phrygians, branching eastwards, crossed over the Hellespont into Asia Minor. There on the forgotten and long buried ruins of the burnt city of prehistoric Troy some of these wanderers built another city, girt with great walls like those of Greek Mycenæ, and adorned with the same barbaric splendour. Others who had come before, and still others who had followed after, colonised the fertile regions along the coast, but do not seem to have penetrated far into the Hittite land.

Backwards and forwards swept these migrant

tribes, displacing and mingling with the original inhabitants, or else forcing their own kindred to wander farther on. Some of them crossed and recrossed the intervening seas, so that it is well-nigh impossible to trace the origin and wanderings of any individual tribes, and almost hopeless to attempt to distinguish their share in the evolution of the art that we call Greek.[59]

What stage of civilisation these Indo-Europeans had reached before their surplus swarmed over into Greece and Asia Minor, and how far their art had been independent of southern influence, have been matters of much controversy. It is, however, generally admitted that their material and social conditions were not nearly so complex as those of the Mediterranean, Egyptian or Chaldean races, and that their art had not developed beyond the decorative stage and was of rectilinear geometric style.

It may be that when they first entered Crete in comparatively small numbers their influence was a healthy one, stimulating the more refined but less vigorous inhabitants, just as the early Semites stimulated the Sumerians. They were not sufficiently coherent to acquire any distinctive name, or if they did it has not come down to us. The chief evidence of their presence is afforded by the place names, and by the shape of the skulls found within their tombs. Then fresh swarms seem to have come over in much greater numbers, and to have conquered rather than mingled with the people in possession. Thus they

checked and injured the free growth of art, forcing it to minister to their more barbaric tastes.

This was the Achæan wave, conquering the southern part of Greece, building great strongholds at Mycenæ and at Tiryns, accumulating vast stores of gold and debasing Ægean art. After a few short centuries another wave, known by the name of Dorians, slowly advancing through Thrace, deprived the Achæans of the sources of their gold, and thus indirectly stirred them up to attack and ruin Crete (about 1400 B.C.).

As the Dorian pressure became more and more acute, the Achæans sallied forth again to find new homes; this is now thought to be the real cause of their attack on Phrygian Troy (about 1250 B.C.). The sad story of the wanderings and disasters of the Achæan princes after their capture of that city is said by Curtius to be a poetic rendering of their vain efforts to find new tracts of land when they had discovered that the Trojan territory was too small or too strongly held to satisfy their wants.

With the final successes of the Dorians in the eleventh century, the last flicker of artistic life was extinguished throughout the whole of the Ægean. It is possible that deep down in the hearts of the conquered people a few sparks still glowed, especially in obscure spots like Cyprus and other islands, destined to stimulate or add to the bright flame which, after centuries of darkness, was to burst forth in Greece and to illuminate the world. But of this

period of gestation the records are too confused and scanty. When Asia Minor has been systematically explored we may be able to see how far its Aryan invaders were affected by Hittite and Oriental art, and thus helped to carry it across to Greece. In Greece itself the British, French, German, and other Hellenic societies are doing splendid exploration work, but much more will have to be done before we can trace the rapid steps with which a semi-barbaric race ascended so rapidly to the highest pinnacle of artistic glory. At present we can only note sporadic efforts, such as those in Bœotia, Sparta, Ephesus, or Naukratis, which produced no continuous development, but probably helped the general growth of art until it blossomed forth in full beauty in Attica.

For three or four centuries after the Dorian invasion we have little evidence regarding the progress or degeneration of the inhabitants of Greece, beyond that furnished by the pottery and a few carved objects. The Greek language was developing into a marvellous instrument for expressing human thought, although their literature was still in the unwritten stage. The oral traditions about the origins of art which have been preserved by Greek writers are not more trustworthy than those of other nations. Progress in art, as in other branches of knowledge, is usually attributed not to a gradual evolution by the efforts of the many, but to the teaching or the brilliant discoveries of a few semi-divine masters. Early chroniclers always prefer the dramatic and the per-

sonal; the recording of slow growth finds no favour with them nor with their readers.

Thus the early Greek writers attributed the invention of sculpture to Dædalus, asserting that he made his statues so life-like that they could even see and speak, and would run away unless bound with a chain to their pedestals. Later writers are much more rationalistic, and only say that "Dædalus was the first to open the eyes of statues, to free their arms from their sides, and to make their legs stride, while his predecessors had left their eyes shut, their arms glued to their sides, and their legs as if grown together" (Professor E. A. Gardner's *Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, p. 79).

Greek sculpture, like all other art that is really original and progressive, arose from small beginnings and in response to very definite desires. We have already seen that the stimulus to artistic effort was often given by impulses that were wholly unconnected with any desire for works of art. What direction this impelling force should take was a matter for the artists to decide, if they had sufficient independence and strength of will to dominate and guide it. Where there is no impelling force all guidance is in vain.

Palæolithic man evolved his art from a desire to have control over the forces of nature; the Asiatic from a desire to display his control over his fellowmen; the Egyptian from a desire to secure a dwelling-place for his spirit after death. The Greek

evolved his art from a desire to secure the earthly presence of his gods.

The blind forces of nature, sometimes beneficent but more often harmful, the brute forces of human rulers claiming to be divine, the dim dread forces of the dwellers in the world beyond the grave, were now succeeded by the intelligent forces of a group of beings who, although immortal and of fearful power, were yet of like passions with their worshippers, and could feel sympathy with all their sorrows and their joys.

As to the origin of this religion we know but little. The seeds of various religions, like the seeds of different plants, have often a strong resemblance to one another, although from some may spring the brightest flowers, from others but the rankest weeds. The tree and pillar cult of many early races seems to have had its analogy among the Aryan speaking peoples, but the powers that made these shapeless blocks their dwelling-place were imagined by the Greeks as of beings of a purely human form. That devotion to the grotesque and horrible which characterises certain races, and that inclination towards the weird and unnatural which distinguishes other phases of human evolution, seem to have found no echo in the Aryan mind. The Greek gods could indeed change themselves into animals, but they changed completely, and did not become composite as in Egypt. The only unnatural forms commonly imagined by the Greeks were those of Centaurs

and of Satyrs, both of whom represented brute forces and desires. Their Sphinxes and Sirens were derived from foreign sources.

But from imagination to concrete expression the advance is slow and difficult. Even when sculpture and painting have become articulate, how sadly do they fail to correspond with our mental conceptions of what might be done if only we knew how! And thus the Greek, age after age, slowly transforming the uncouth stone or shapeless trunk into the semblance of a human form must occasionally have felt despair at the apparent hopelessness of his endeavours. It was not that he consciously desired to reproduce the outward semblance of a man and intentionally strove to make it grow into a perfect statue. He chiefly strove to make his figures fit for the indwelling presence of the gods. Therefore he tried to give them some resemblance to his own conception of how they would appear if he could see their immortal bodies with his own mortal eyes. The vague image in his mind grew with his own mental growth. Growth is not conscious, and is not greatly quickened by merely taking thought. Its essential element is life—life permeating the whole body, not simply concentrated in an unduly developed brain. The Greek sculptors may be considered as forming one of the hands of the corporate nation, and their actions may be judged as being necessarily influenced by the condition of the whole body politic. Now the whole Greek nation was imbued with a firm belief in gods of human form,

and naturally strove to visualise this firm belief. Those whose productions were helpful in these strivings would soon meet with keen appreciation; and appreciation is the quickening fire of all artistic life.

The true artist loves to be understood—that is his best reward; though men whose lodestar is material wealth assert that the desire for money is the best incentive, and they estimate the value of his productions in their sordid terms of coin. Artists do not seem to have obtained large money rewards for their work even in the palmiest days of Greece. Sculptors were usually the servants of the state,[60] and probably the same system was pursued in the period called archaic—that is to say, down to the end of the sixth century. The prospect of obtaining some renown was, however, beginning to be opened out both to sculptors and to painters; and for the first time in history we find the names of artists plainly recorded on their work. In the Hellenistic period (350–150 B.C.) money played a much more important rôle in the history of art, and probably assisted in its swift decay.

The early stages of their efforts to express the inchoate ideas of their less gifted fellow-men have not yet been fully traced. It is difficult to assign definite dates to the statuary of the archaic period, but it is supposed that none of it is much earlier than about 600 B.C. Previous to that we have only small statuettes and votive figurines.

These eighth century ivories found at Ephesus (Figs. 341 and 342) were votive offerings in an early

FIG. 341.—Ivory figures found in the deposits surrounding the earliest temple of Artemis (Diana) at Ephesus in 1904–5. Actual size. Constantinople.

FIG. 342.—It is difficult to imagine what could have been the origin and purpose of this ivory carving. That attitude is not seen in any other specimen and the style is equally strange. Actual size. Constantinople. Facsimile in the British Museum. See *Excavations at Ephesus*, Hogarth, 1908, pp. 42 and 232.

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temple to the great Diana of the Ephesians. They show distinct signs of Oriental influence in the elaborate details of their drapery, covering with merely conventional folds the poorly modelled form. The term "Oriental" has a very limited meaning when used in connection with art work in Greek times. It does not refer to any region east of Persia, for we have no evidence that any art development had yet taken place in India. The ivory lion (Fig. 342) might seem to indicate that Asia Minor had received some influence from China, but nothing definite is known about the condition of art under the Chou dynasty which was ruling China at that period. There is no proof that the current of artistic influence

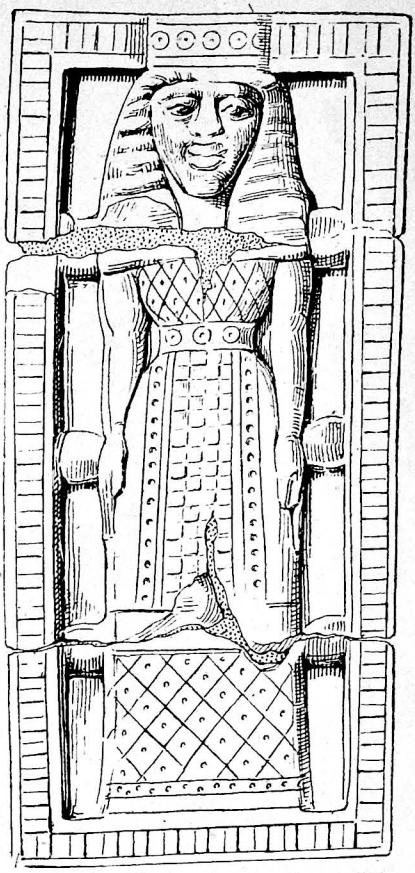

FIG. 343.—Early seventh century ivory relief. Very similar to the statue (Fig. 349-*b*). Probably an imitation of the very ancient statue of Artemis, which at that time was still reverenced in her temple at Sparta.

had ever set westward from China towards India and Persia in those early times, but there is every reason to believe that it did flow eastwards. All the well-known early Chinese art was influenced by the Buddhist missionaries from India after India itself had received an impulse from the Greeks following

a *b* *c*

FIG. 344.—Early seventh century. Ivory. The square block-like form may be due to haste and carelessness or may be an intentional copy of the square pillar idol of their forefathers (see Fig. 349-*a*). Scale $\frac{3}{4}$.

in the wake of the victorious troops of Alexander (327 B.C.).

The next series of examples of the plastic art comes from the Greek mainland. About a hundred thousand figurines have lately been dug up from the site of the temple of Artemis Orthia, that temple of Sparta which witnessed those strangely contrasted rivalries when boys of gentle blood competed for the honours awarded for excellence in singing or for

endurance of most brutal flogging. Unfortunately no photographs of these figurines and other relics are yet available. Judging by the drawings (from which Figs. 343–346 are a selection) published in the Annual

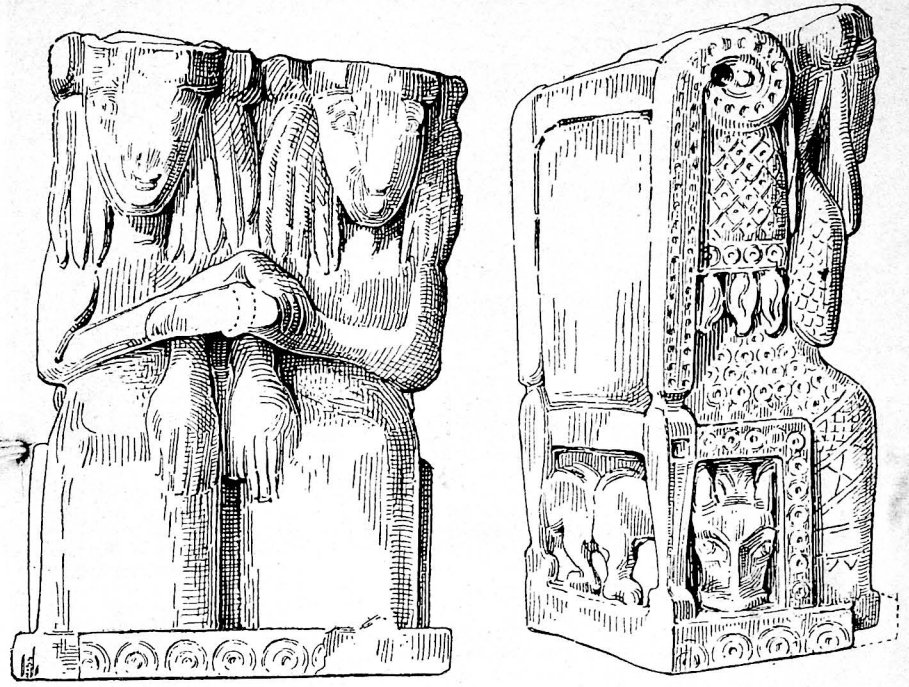

FIG. 345.—Early seventh century work. Ivory. A strange composition not yet identified or explained. One of the men seems to be holding the other by the wrist, in the fashion that is frequently found in Chaldean seals (Fig. 258) and on some Greek vases. Scale ½.

of the British School at Athens (1906–7, p. 94 ff.) it does not appear that any important deductions can be made from them about the progress of art in that period (700–600 B.C.). The most interesting is an

incised plaque (Fig. 347) which seems to show that, contrary to the usual rule in former times, drawing was in a more advanced state than carving. The rest, with the exception of the nude statuette, are apparently crude reproductions of works of Oriental origin.

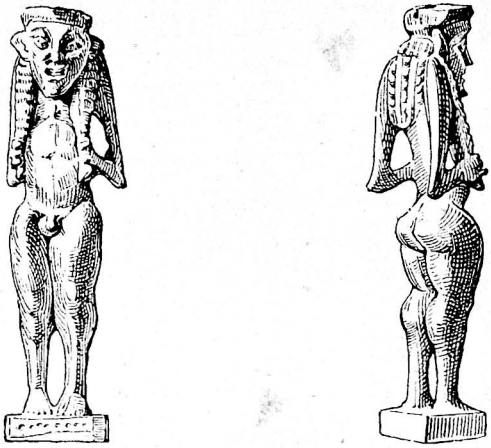

FIG. 346.—Late seventh century. Ivory. Probably reflecting the custom of athletes appearing naked at the Olympian games, which had now become well established. Scale $\frac{3}{4}$.

This Oriental influence had probably been transmitted both to Ephesus and to Sparta through the medium of rich Lydia, whose ruler, Gyges, had such stores of precious metal that he is supposed to have originated coining it into money, thus facilitating its exchange for other commodities. A most fateful invention, pregnant with great results, destroying men's cherished ideals, loosening some bonds and tightening others with increased severity. Slowly but surely it

undermined the rule of custom by which all the affairs of life were regulated, and it gradually substituted that rule of contract which has turned the whole world into one vast market-place of hagglers over the amount of coin they shall receive. By raising up a rival system it diminished the importance of landed wealth and of the possession of

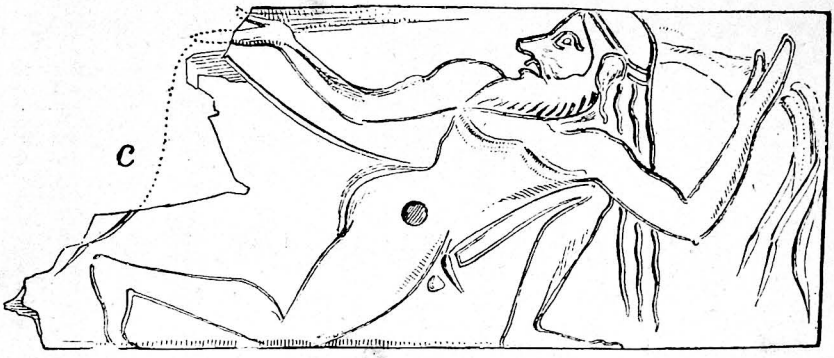

FIG. 347.—Incised ivory plaque, possibly a preliminary sketch before cutting the relief. Compare it with Fig. 137. Here the man's chest appears to be shown, not his back.

large herds of cattle and of great stores of corn. Trading on an extensive scale became more practicable. This encouraged the growth of industrial cities, acquiring wealth from surrounding peoples by keen commercial dealings instead of by parasitic battening on the tribute extorted by despotic rulers. The power of the sword thus began to pale before the power of the purse. Who shall say which power can work more evil or more good?

It is unfortunate that so little is known of the

evolution of the Eastern and Western wings of the mixed race that we now call Greek. It is doubtful whether Sicily and Magna Græcia contributed much to its artistic development, although the rulers of their cities were wealthy and luxurious. They had indeed made a good beginning, and at one time were, in their art work, considerably ahead of Greece, especially in the designs on their coinage; but their later work did not fulfil the promise of its earlier days. The civilisation of the Ionian and other Greek communities fringing the shore of Asia Minor was up to the end of the sixth century in many respects far in advance of that on the mainland; but we have only a few relics of their art, and the written records make but little mention of it.

History in those times had no interest for mankind; youth does not care to hear stories about its own childish days. Until more comprehensive excavations have been made we cannot well judge how far the Asiatic Greeks had travelled on that glorious road which led their brethren to such fair heights of fame. Some day when sufficient funds are forthcoming for the systematic exploration of the great prehistoric mounds of Kolophon and other districts on the Anatolian coast we may be able to reconstruct the history of the left wing of the Greek army of civilisation before the time when it was crushed and dispersed by the mercenary hordes of ravening Persia.

When we come to consider the paintings on the vases we shall see more plainly how strong were

Oriental influences throughout the whole Greek world during the seventh century. But by that time Oriental sculpture had fallen very low, and probably it was chiefly concerned with reproductions of those female effigies which were and still are so reverenced in the Mediterranean area. Although this cult has died out in the East, many archæologists maintain that the type had its origin in Asia, and they are inclined to consider the Greek Aphrodite as the direct descendant from the nude figurines of Egypt and Chaldea. The line of descent is broken, however, both in Egypt and in Asia; nor can it be traced far back in Greece. Neither can we be sure that the underlying ideas connected with these images were always the same. In the earliest times they were probably imagined to be useful charms or fetiches, not real deities; then they came to be regarded as protectors or as companions of the dead. It is from the graves that most of them have been obtained; if the primitive Greeks had been in the habit of burying their dead we should have known much more about their early history, but the Aryan peoples practised cremation, consequently until they became settled and began to preserve the ashes and to erect memorials of the dead, they left few traces of their religion or their art.

As images have been found in Europe in palæolithic strata, it almost seems as if the practice of burying small figures must be due to one of those customs or religions which are so persistent that they

FIG. 348.—Bronze figure from the Temple of Hera and Menelaus, near Sparta. About 700 B.C. Height five and a quarter inches.

have been described as springing from the soil in

a

FIG. 349-*b*.—Life-size marble statue of Artemis (a goddess similar to the Diana of the Romans, but confused by the Greek settlers in Ephesus with the Babylonian mother goddess Astarte), dedicated by Nikandre of Naxos. It has no depth, but is like a thick board roughly carved into human shape. See Loewy's *Nature in Early Greek Art* (1907), p. 54. Now in the National Museum at Athens.

b

FIG. 350.—Life-size statue found near the Heræum in Samos. It bears an inscription stating that it was dedicated to Hera (Juno) by Cheramyes. The lower part is like a circular column or tree trunk. About 550 B.C. Louvre Museum.

certain areas, and existing quite independently of the

races that may successively occupy the lands.[61] Mr. L. R. Farnell, in his five large volumes on *The Cults of the Greek States*, has shown what a number and variety of facts have to be studied before we can attempt to arrive at any conclusion on so difficult a subject. Therefore we must be content merely to notice how an apparently indigenous and ever recurring desire for representations of a nude female form, although repressed for a time, broke forth again with increased intensity, thus causing a special development of plastic art by Greek sculptors when they had overcome the technical difficulties connected with that form.

At first the nude female type found no acceptance among the Aryan speaking migrants from the north; all their earliest representations of a goddess are draped (Figs. 343 and 348). Nor could they depart entirely from the tree trunk form (Figs. 349 and 350), which probably was hallowed in the minds of their own people by long association. This form indeed enabled them to indicate with some success the folds of drapery by a conventional system of shallow parallel lines. If the limbs had been modelled in a more natural manner the folds would have presented a more difficult problem, for the ungainly skirt of the Asiatics and Cretans had now been superseded by garments suspended from the shoulders. They were fastened by those ancient safety-pins called fibulæ, which being characteristic of the north and mid-European civilisation have been so useful to

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FIGS. 351 and 352.—Two of the numerous marble statues broken down in the Acropolis when the Persians sacked Athens (480 B.C.). These works, having been executed only a few decades previously, had not suffered by long exposure, and their burial has preserved not only all the details of the sculptor's touch but also much of the colouring given by the painter. The embroidery of the robe is elaborately rendered; the hair and the pupils of the eyes have a reddish tinge.

The base of Fig. 352 has been discovered. It shows that the statue was dedicated to Athena. By his experimental downward curving of the lips, the sculptor succeeded in giving a dignified expression to the face, befitting a votary of the virgin goddess. In all its details this statue shows the coming of a new era.

archæologists engaged in tracing its progress through various southern countries.

The graceful folds assumed by such robes contributed another factor to the many favourable influences that helped the development of sculpture during this period, but it was only by slow degrees and by many strange experiments that the Greek sculptors learned to reproduce those folds successfully. In the early Attic school of the sixth century there is an extraordinary elaboration and delicacy in the arrangement and treatment of drapery (Fig. 351). This arrangement "in its zigzag folds, and in the variety of texture in different parts, is a mass of conventions; but within the established schemes we often find here and there a piece of very careful study after nature. Here, as throughout the history of archaic art in Greece, freedom and accuracy of work in detail precedes any general advance towards freedom of type and of composition" (*Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, p. 168). Attica seems at that time to have been still in sympathy with its Ionian kindred in Asia Minor, loving luxury and hating simplicity. Then a better influence appears to have reached it from the Peloponnesus where the Dorian element was strong. The schools of Argos and of Sicyon practised a severe and simple style which had a strong effect upon the art of all the rest of Greece, striving to shape its better thoughts in stone. This statue from the Acropolis bears evidence of the restraining influence of an increased desire for truth in place of artificiality (Fig. 352).

It is not easy to assign any definite names to these early statues, nor can we even assume that all the female ones are deities. Only a few can be taken as representing Athena or Hera; not many of them could be mistaken for Aphrodite. It is quite possible that some of them were merely stone substitutes for the living victims formerly offered to the gods. Or they may have represented worshippers who thus dedicated themselves symbolically to the service of their patron deity.

The Aryan influence seems to have been still strong enough to make the male deity more popular; even Athena and Hera have something masculine in their nature. The nude and essentially feminine type of goddess does not commonly occur until much later. It blossomed out suddenly in the fourth century, apparently without any intermediate stage of development. That rapid evolution had, however, been rendered possible by a long course of study of the nude male form, to which we must therefore turn our attention.

Here again we have the same difficulty that we had with the female type. Of the male archaic statues there are indeed many more examples, but no other means of judging of their relative dates except their style, and a few rather untrustworthy indications such as allusions to them by ancient authors, or the shape of the letters of inscriptions upon them. One very striking characteristic of the series is that it seems to begin suddenly about the end of the

seventh century with fairly well-developed statues of life size. The absence of any connecting links between them and the votive figurines, and of any very crude work, such as we saw in Egypt, is perhaps due to the primitive statues having been made of wood, which soon decayed, or of bronze, which was subsequently broken up for the sake of the metal. It is well known that numbers of bronze statues were made by Phidias and other sculptors during the best period, and yet not one of them has survived. Many of the earlier stone figures seem to be imitations of bronze statues; they show the same avoidance of deep cuttings and projecting masses that is characteristic of the work of sculptors who have to trust their models to unskilful casters (Fig. 353).

However, it is also possible that the transition from

FIG. 353.—Crude Bœotian figures, about five feet high, carved in soft porous tufa. The relief is so high that they might almost be classed as statues in the round. An inscription states that they were dedicated by Amphalkes in memory of two friends, Dermys and Kitylus. The junction of the legs with the V-shaped abdomen resembles that of a modern articulated doll. Notice the gradual improvement in Figs. 355–6–7 up to 363 and 366. Found at Tanagra. Now in Athens.

figurines to life-sized statues was made abruptly in

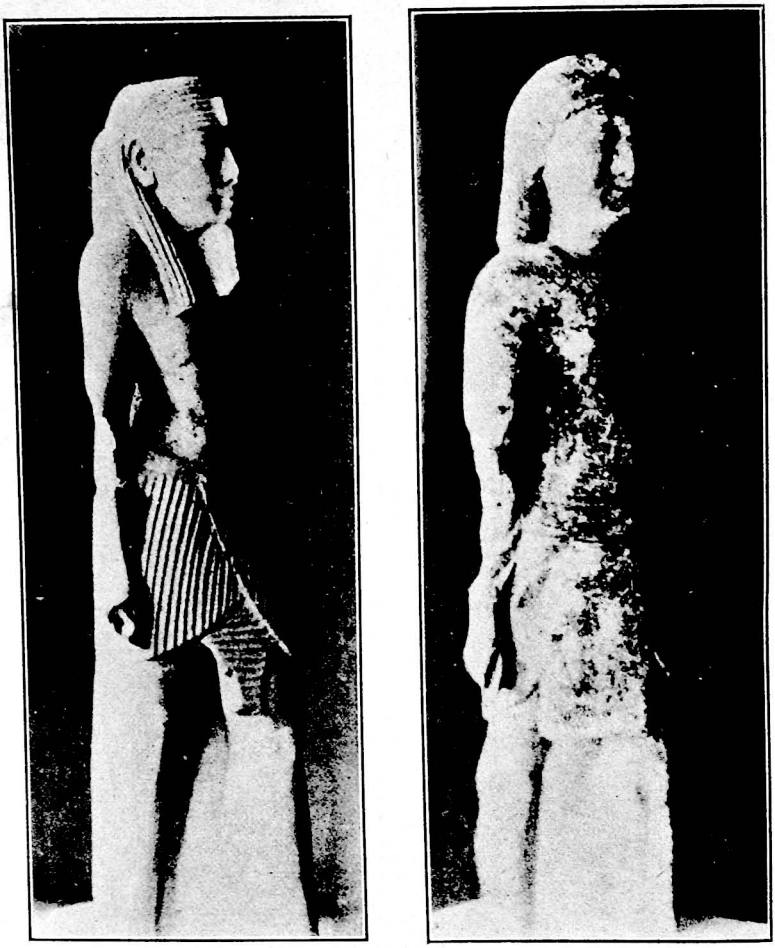
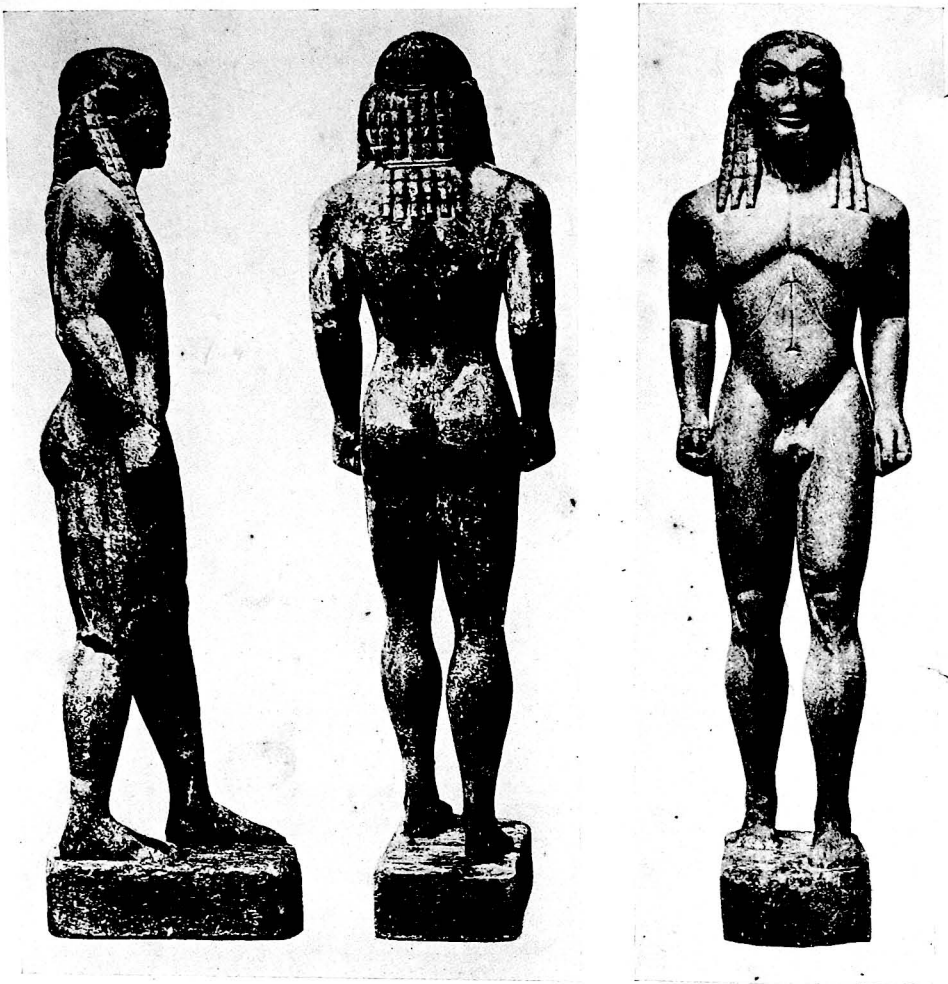


FIG. 354.—Two statuettes found at Naukratis. One was evidently made by or for an Egyptian, but the other shows the influence of the Greek spirit breaking away from tradition. University College.

consequence of other changes affecting the general



a *b* *c*

FIG. 355.—This and another similar marble statue (rather larger than life size) were found at Delphi in 1893. They date from about 580 B.C., and have been supposed to represent Cleobis and Biton, whose memory was still treasured at that period. The story is that when they could not obtain oxen for the chariot of their mother, a priestess of Hera, they themselves dragged it several miles to the temple at Argos. She prayed that they might receive the goddess' best gift; when they went to sleep they did not awake again. This legend seems to reflect the distress prevalent in Greece in the middle of the previous century and the discontent due to the spread of industrialism and the importation of foreign slaves.

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life of the people. We have noticed that the invention of coining gold and silver into money had caused a great expansion of trade. Greece with its numerous natural harbours was an excellent basis for commercial ventures, and the Greeks took full advantage of the opportunities thus offered. Then in the latter half of the seventh century the Greeks were allowed to trade with Egypt as a reward for the help they gave Psammetichus in his revolt against his rivals. In that country they may have seen some of the finest works of art the world had yet produced, although the Egyptians themselves were then no longer capable of producing anything of any merit. But this new nation, sprung from the union of ancient cultured races with old untamed dwellers in the forest or the plain, had fine senses to perceive, and keen power to assimilate the essential elements of Egyptian art. Many of the statuettes dug up from the site of their colony on the Nile at Naukratis show how strongly the Greek craftsmen of that city were influenced by the study of Egyptian examples (Fig. 354), and that influence soon spread to the Ægean Islands and to the mainland of Greece.

This statue (Fig. 355), dug up by the French in the course of their deservedly successful explorations among the ruins of Delphi, bears the signature of an Argive sculptor, but in pose and in general style it conforms to the Egyptian canon. It is neither well proportioned nor delicately modelled; its face is coarse and inexpressive, but it is vigorous and alert. We

are tempted to imagine that the Peloponnesian sculptor had taken his inspiration, not from the later decadent Egyptian work, but from that of two or three thousand years before. We are forcibly reminded of Ranofer and of other statues of the fourth and fifth dynasties (Fig. 168).

But it differs from them in one important detail, a detail which marks a daring step in advance, and reveals the existence of qualities which placed the Greeks in the front rank of all the nations of the world. They dared to face realities—they refused to be the slaves of tradition; they accepted the natural consequences of their own professed beliefs. They believed that God made man in his own image; on that belief they acted when they made an image of their god, therefore they practised no concealment under a false pretence of decency.

Many other nations have asserted that they were created by a god, but they have been as ashamed of their own bodies as if they had been created by a devil. Nakedness was to them a sign of inferiority or degradation. This perversion of ideas was similar to that which still leads some people to estimate a man, not by what he is, but by the clothes and by the adornments he puts on. Hypocrisy and ostentation are fatal to all art; the habits of the early Greeks were fatal to hypocrisy and ostentation.

One great factor in bringing about this innovation, and in enabling it to be carried out successfully, was the practice which had grown up in the seventh

century of appearing naked in the Olympian games. This morally and physically healthy custom prevailed also in the public gymnasia where Greek youths and men acquired that corporal and mental excellence which gave them a just contempt for the barbarian, and ultimately enabled them to repel the attacks of his invading hordes.

CHAPTER XV

GREEK SCULPTURE

In those days war gave greater stimulus to the desire for physical excellence than it gives now, when success depends more on forethought and combination than on personal strength or skill. It also tended by killing off the unfit to diminish the number of the physically inferior, for when death was dealt by keenly wielded swords and spears instead of by undiscriminating shells and bullets, it was the weakest who succumbed. Nor had the weak a much better chance of survival if they stayed at home, for even then they were liable to be massacred in cold blood by the enemy or to be slain in private quarrel by their own countrymen.

Among the Greeks this desire for bodily superiority had more chance of satisfaction than it had among the subjects of despotic kings who feared to see their people grow too strong. For in Greece the problem of good government was beginning to be solved. It was dimly perceived that a government ruling with the consent of the people was more beneficial to the community than one based on force alone. The actual form of government was not so important in their eyes, and the various tribes or

states of Greece called their rulers by many various names—kings, archons, councillors. Even the so-called tyrants were in many respects rather like the presidents of the modern South American republics. They seldom maintained their rule long after they had lost the confidence of their subjects.

But even in the states that were most free there always remained one difficulty, that of finding out whether those rulers still retained the consent that had been given—a difficulty which we moderns have not yet altogether solved. It is seldom that a community has any definite initiating will, therefore the early Greek rulers did not always before taking action attempt to ascertain the will of the people, but they generally tried by holding public meetings to secure its assent to what they had done. Hence arose the idea that a Greek state should not contain more men than a good speaker's voice could reach. Thus every free man besides being a warrior was also a politician, for he was strongly interested in all questions affecting the fortunes of his town. State affairs were not so very complicated in those tiny cities. The population of Croydon is now far larger than was that of Athens in its palmiest days, even including all its slaves.

Before the Persian War there was but little national feeling, and each city strove to dominate or destroy its neighbours, regarding them as strangers, just as in mediæval Europe or in modern Italy, where even now the inhabitants of each town call other Italians foreigners. In those days a man's outlook and

experiences were narrow, but they were most intense. The acute penetrating character of Greek genius, like a sharp sword concentrating all its energy along a narrow line, may perhaps be due to the environment in which it was evolved, for to this political intensity of civic life was added the intensity of affection or of hatred cherished for private friends or foes. It is easy for a man to forgive his foes or to forget his friends if he very seldom sees them; but in those times his friends were near and dear, and he could see the faces of his foes scowling at him every day. He could not get away from them. In the temples, in the public baths, in the narrow streets, and in the market-place they met or jostled with him, and thus fanned the glowing embers both of love and hate. Each man's life was strangely public, and his history was known from his cradle to his grave. All his work was keenly criticised, and whether as mechanic, as artist, or as poet he would soon hear how his productions were appreciated or condemned.

There was none of that temptation to do slovenly work which comes from the feeling that its producer will never see or hear of it again, and that the purchaser does not always know or care whether the work is really good, but is chiefly anxious to be sure that it is the product of such and such a well-known maker. To the Greek it would have seemed strange that experts should discuss whether a picture should be classed as by Polygnotus and therefore worth ten thousand drachmæ, or by some unknown man and

therefore worth comparatively little. Such a reason would have seemed unreasonable to him. If the picture was good it was valuable, no matter who painted it. Art products were for enjoyment, not for docketing and hoarding like treasures in a miser's chest, useless to all, even to their vain possessor.

This leads us to consider the conditions under which the early Greek sculptors did their work, and the inducements held out to them to do it well. We have already noticed that they were employed chiefly by the state, and that the state generally acted in accordance with the will of the people. Just as the inarticulate nation found expression of its will through its rulers and of its strength through its generals, so it found expression of its feelings and emotions through its artists and its poets. They were all working for the welfare of the state, however much they might differ as to the means by which that welfare could be maintained. The remuneration of generals and of rulers, as well as that of artists and of poets, was fixed by custom. To offer their work to the highest bidder would have no more occurred to artists and poets than it did to the rulers and the generals. Even personal distinction was not very keenly sought after until shortly before the decadence. We see this with strange clearness in the case of the generals, for their names were not inscribed upon the monuments of victory until after the battle of Platæa, and then Pausanias was blamed for allowing it. As for special rewards in money, they would perhaps

have felt as much insulted by the offer as would a general of Japan.

In many ways the condition of sculptors in Greece resembled that of artist craftsmen in Japan under the old feudal daimonos. The feudal system is indeed a sort of crude socialism, and the free men of Greece also lived in a semi-socialistic condition—in Sparta even their meals were provided by the state. But this socialism did not sap personal independence; there can be a socialistic individualism if the balance is well kept. If perfect, it would be far more favourable to art than a system which renders a select few continually fearful lest they should lose what they have got, and leaves the great majority always uncertain whether they will be able to obtain anything at all.

Of course sculptors had private patrons too, but the statues that these patrons paid for were not shut up in private houses. They were placed in the temples as offerings to the gods or exhibited as memorials in the agora and other public places, where they were subject to comparison with all the other sculptors' work. Thus every artist had a fair chance of his productions being seen and appreciated. The certainty of criticism restrained any very popular man from producing hurried, inferior work to satisfy ignorant or debased tastes. As the patrons had only a slight sense of ownership of the statues they had paid for, there was but little temptation to offer extravagant prices. Consequently artists were not

led to believe that the proper reward for their labour should be an extra amount or quality of food, raiment, and luxuries.

Their social position does not indeed seem to have been very high, but is a high social position necessarily so congenial to men of artistic temperament as to be a suitable or desirable reward? Would Shakespeare have done better work if he had been the friend of millionaires and kings? The wives perhaps do sometimes desire that sort of recompense. In this way the female may be said to have an influence on art, stimulating a man to efforts to improve his own position instead of assisting in the general progress of art. It is sad, but very natural, under our competitive commercial system. The wife would only have the reflected glory of her husband's success, while she would have a very tangible share of his improved income. Until woman becomes economically independent and can make her own position for herself, she will, as a rule, stimulate her men folk to work for results which correspond to ingrained feminine ideals produced by long ages of economic subjection. That a wealthy man should take a fancy for her has always appeared to the female as almost the only road to luxury or distinction, and naturally she imagines that if such a man would take a fancy to her husband's productions it would be a noble road to fortune and success.

It is difficult to get away from the usages and convictions of one's own day. The merely wealthy

buyer has in modern times had such an overpowering influence on the worker's fate, that the hope of patronage by some Mæcenas appears like a lode-star to an artist instead of as an *ignis fatuus* luring him to his doom.

The Greek sculptor was not only fairly free from mean hindrances and sordid inducements, not only was his mental picture of the human form in graceful pose or rapid motion constantly refreshed by seeing the finest specimens of manly strength and beauty rhythmically exercising their nude bodies in the open air, but he was also inspired by high ideals and surrounded by men in sympathy with his noblest aspirations. The whole Greek nation was saturated with a firm belief in the constant presence of its gods and in the reality of their existence as perfect human beings.

Each city-state, too, believed that it was under the special protection of some god or goddess. As the Greek visualised his city in the same way that he visualised other abstract conceptions—that is, in human form—the god soon became the ideal embodiment of the city, and the city the material embodiment of the god. Hence each free citizen became a part of the living body of a deity; in it were centred all his hopes and fears, and thus the faint rays of individual action were concentrated into one burning focus of intensity.

When we use the word *incorporated* with regard to our own cities, it brings no definite picture before

our mental eyes, but to the Greek the vision was definite and true; therefore his sculptors strove to realise it in marble and in bronze. Like all true artists, they were well aware of the difficulty—nay, the impossibility—of realising an ideal; they also knew that high aims could not be reached without careful study of each detail, so that they might recognise their limitations and their possibilities.

Thus in that Argive statue (Fig. 355), we see they had not dared to break with the conventions of antiquity. The pose is rigid and symmetrical; no other way could they as yet conceive of showing strength and dignity. Only the chief muscles are well modelled, the contours of the smaller ones are hardly shown at all; the veins are not even indicated. An incised line shows where the false ribs end; a strange convention, reminding us of the palæolithic habit of drawing incised lines upon a carving to supplement its evident deficiencies.

During that wonderful sixth century, the traditional age of the Seven Sages, when democracy began to triumph over privilege and philosophy weakened the power of priestcraft, when infantry learned the value of discipline and co-operation, and thus, together with the common sailor-man prepared the way for victories not only over Persia, but also over Carthage and the rich Etruscan lords—during all that fervid period of rapid evolution the seeds of art were thrusting their way deep into the congenial soil of Greece. Schools of sculpture were springing up all

over the mainland and in the islands of the archipelago, each having some distinctive feature by which its products may still be recognised.

It would take too long to give even a brief account of all these various schools, nor do the battered fragments that have been dug up offer many striking examples for illustrating their rise and progress. This statue (Fig. 356), found in an old cemetery not far from Athens, gives some idea of the style of the early Attic school. Its date is probably about 530 B.C., some fifty years later than that heavy Argive figure. In its modelling and in its proportions it shows a distinct improvement, but the sculptor's memory was still unable to retain the fleeting curves of mobile lips, and he gave them the ordinary "archaic smile," which seems to us unmeaning. To the statues of the gods this smile was perhaps intentionally given, in order to influence them to regard their worshippers with that same benignant feeling which the sculptor had done his utmost to express.

The eyes are not so large and staring as in the Argive statue, but they are still too prominent, standing out almost on a level with the brow. The custom of painting their statues, or of inserting coloured stones to represent the eyes, probably prevented the early Greeks from recognising that it is not so much the eye itself which gives expression as its position and surroundings. It was only after many experiments, such as making them too large or very prominent, or even placing them obliquely (Fig. 351), that

b

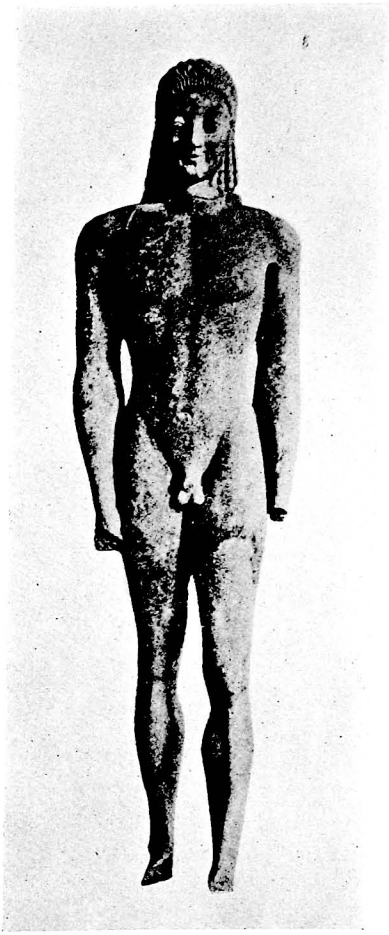

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FIG. 356.—Marble statue found in a burial-ground between Athens and Laurium in 1900. The flame-like rendering of the hair is peculiar. The statues shown in Figs. 355, 356, and 357 belong to a very large series of nude male figures having all a similar pose and ranging from nine feet high to rather less than life size. They used to be designated as "Apollos," but to most of them there is no reason for assigning that name. They are now considered as being generally memorials of athletes. Athens National Museum.

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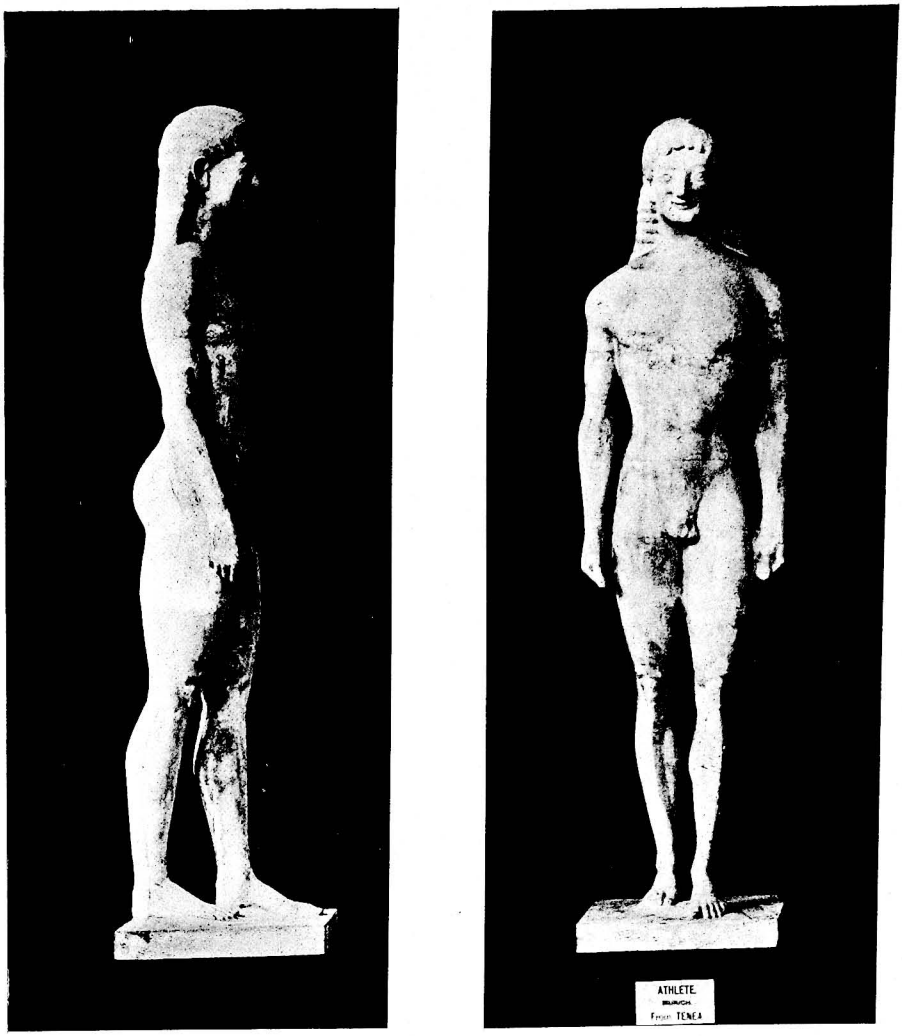

FIG. 357.—Marble statue found in 1846 at the foot of the Acrocorinth on the site of the ancient city of Tenea. It is probably contemporary with or perhaps slightly earlier than Fig. 356. Though it is of rather better execution, the sloping shoulders, narrow abdomen, and hesitating pose do not seem to justify the claims made for it by the admirers of "ruler art." Munich Glyptothek.

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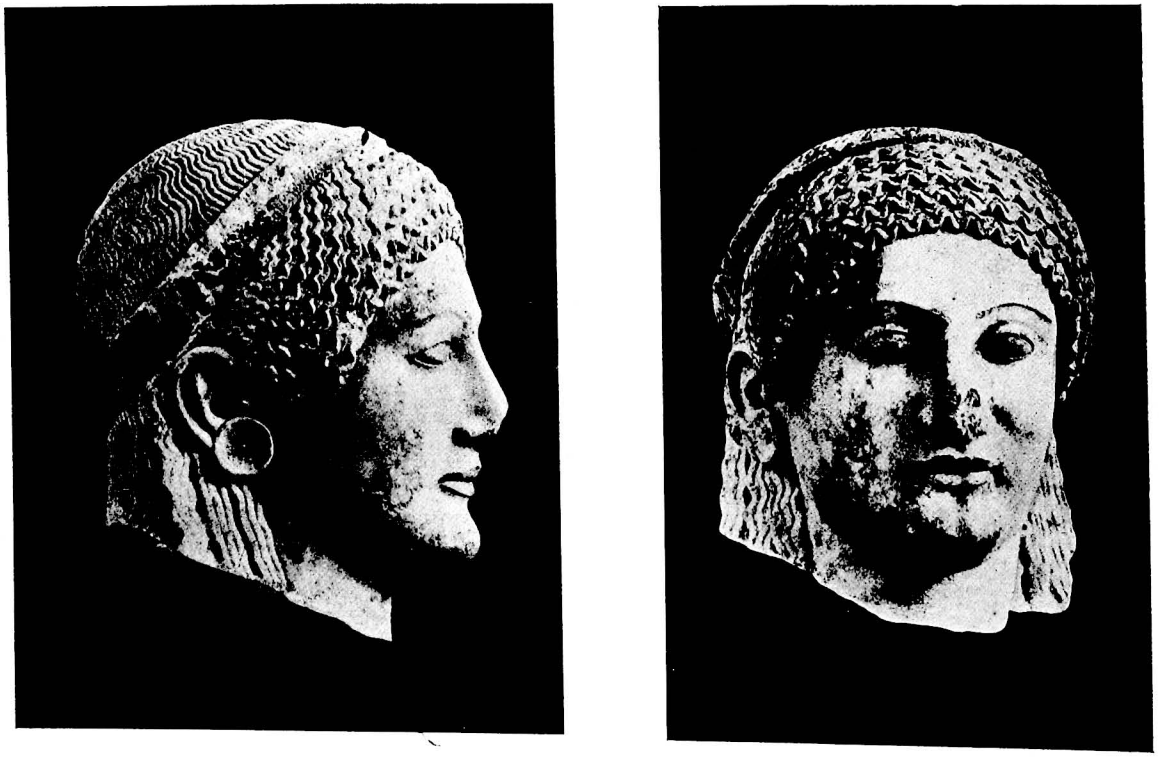

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FIG. 358.—This head is of a rather more advanced type than most of the other draped female statues buried in the Acropolis. The right arm and shoulder have been recovered, but not the base, on which an inscription might have rendered its identification possible. Acropolis Museum, Athens.

FIG. 359.—Marble head, about two-thirds life size, found in the Heræum near Argos. Executed about 430 B.C., probably by one of the Argive sculptors who had come under Attic influence. National Museum, Athens.

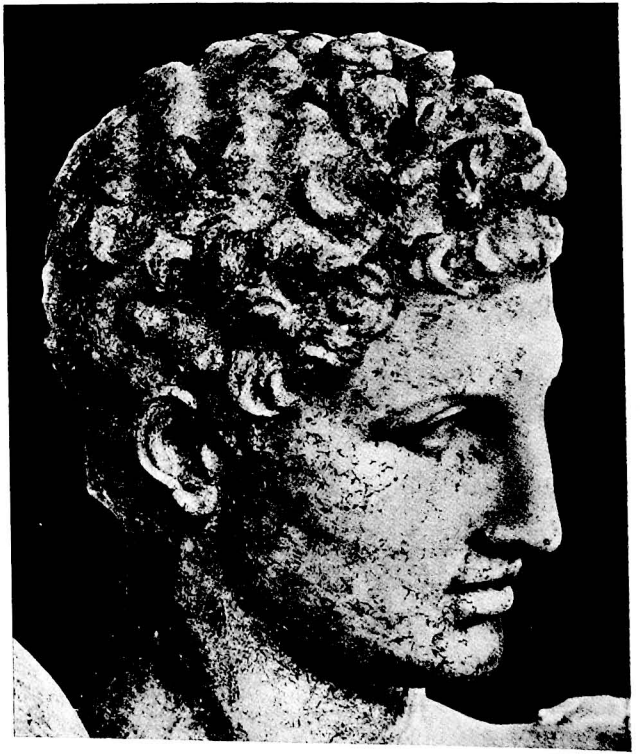

FIG. 360.—Head of the Hermes (Fig. 368) found in the Heræum at Olympia. Date about 350 B.C.

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they learned to give them life by setting them further back beneath an overhanging brow (Fig. 359). This is very marked in the head of Hermes (Fig. 360), which shows how Praxiteles solved the problem in the fourth century.[61a] That device was not adopted suddenly. There are many examples of their tentative efforts in this direction. By comparing Fig. 358 with Figs. 356 and 357, the good effect will be noticed of even a slight advance towards a naturalistic rendering of eyes and eyebrows. The change of position is seen more plainly in the profile, and we might wonder why the unreal appearance of the earlier profiles had not long ago brought the Greek sculptors to adopt such a simple remedy. There are perhaps two reasons for their delay. In the first place, the profile appearance of sculptures in the round was at that time regarded as of but slight importance. Their chief attention was given to the frontal view, which was the only one appealing strongly to their fellowmen. Also, if a sculptor had noticed that the profile of his work was quite unnatural, it would not have disturbed him greatly. His efforts were directed towards producing an impression on the mind of the beholder, and he would have disdained the idea of making a slavish realistic copy of the human form. Realism is in the present day often confused with naturalism, although indeed mere realism is but as the lifeless body of an art, and can convey no message to mankind. Expression is the essence of all art, as subtle and intangible as is the breath of life in man

—so subtle that the weights and scales of realism are utterly fallacious as a help to reach our goal. Naturalism is useful as a standard of comparison, and is a wholesome check on false or wildly rash expression.

The Greek sculptor trained his mental eyes by studying all the varying forms of living things, and then he strove to reproduce these forms as the expression of his ideas. If to some slight extent they gave the impression he desired, he noted the result; but when the frontal view was not successful it is not likely that he would have turned round to the side to seek the causes of his failure. Yet, on the other hand, when he had found that a deeper setting of the eye gave better expression to his work, he probably also noticed that the profile was now more natural, and thus he felt encouraged to continue the experiment. This intermediate stage is seen in that head (Fig. 358) wrought by an Attic sculptor shortly before Athens was sacked (480 B.C.) by ruthless Asiatic hordes.

Perhaps that artist lived to see the destruction of his beloved city at the command of haughty Xerxes, enraged at the opposition of a vulgar mob of Westerners — poor, unrefined, and ignorant. No self-respecting tyrant could brook the insolence of men who dared to claim the right to rule themselves, who cherished subversive notions about the right divine of kings. Little did Xerxes, or the unrecorded sculptors whose work he overthrew, dream that the gods had

guided his devastating hand to give only a temporary death to those crude products of immature genius still struggling to be free. The statues which he had overthrown and desecrated were afterwards buried deep beneath the ground when the victorious citizens of Athens returned in triumph and, feeling still greater confidence in the protection of the gods, restored their grand Acropolis in still greater glory.

Thus the work of those humble searchers after truth has lived, and we can see the fragments of it, wrought by their own patient hands. Of the works of their illustrious successors—of Phidias, of Polyclitus, of Praxiteles, who in spirit and in deed built upon their ruins—hardly a single example has survived. The actual bronzes, and the very marble endowed with life by those Promethean hands, have disappeared, and it is chiefly through the uncertain medium of later copies that we can discern the greatness of our loss. How strange is fate! The perfect growth, the ripe fruit of centuries of effort, has all but disappeared, while the roots from which it sprang have been preserved.

The victories of Marathon and Salamis mark the passing of the Greeks from childhood into youth, and their sculpture also witnesses the same swift, mysterious change. Its period of tutelage is over; its bondage to Egypt and the East is broken. To the everlasting wonder of the world, it strikes out an independent path and strides forth with giant steps. In the Titanic struggle for physical and for mental liberty,

the Greek nation perished as a ruling race, just as the Spartan heroes perished in the battle of Thermopylæ, but none the less the glory of the victory was theirs. Henceforward the preponderance of Eastern force was to be balanced by the new-born strength of Europe.

In both cases the contest was between two principles, which, although seemingly opposed, are still essential to the welfare of the human race. It does not much matter how they may be called, the tendency of each will always be the same. Tyranny and liberty, conservatism and progressiveness, anarchism and socialism, mere custom and pure reason, faith and free thought, inertia and energy, are all the outcome of two fundamental qualities. Men spend their lives in the vain effort to suppress the one or to exterminate the other; but the complete victory of either would be fatal to the world. The real difficulty is to keep the balance, to adjust the right proportion of the influence they should wield.

Professor O. Montelius has well summed up the character of the two divisions of the world: "If we compare Europe with the East typologically, we find much greater vivacity in our part of the world than in the East. In Europe we see a greater variety of shapes, an activity and love of change, which, in most cases, are connected with practical improvements. Consequently we have a more rapid development, which contrasts strangely with the conservatism of the East, where the ancient shapes

may remain unaltered for thousands of years. The richness of the materials used in the East is not a good equivalent for the wealth of variety in shape in Europe. This typological contrast is noticeable in very early times, and has always persisted. It is intimately connected with that difference in character of the races which has been of such importance in their development, and therefore so decisive for their history and their mutual relations, even up to the present time."

The sense of balance and proportion which was felt so strongly by the Greeks kept them from rushing to extremes in the first full tide of their success. Although Western ideals were for the time triumphant, mankind was not sharply divided then, any more than it is now, into two separate sections, each endued only with the one or with the other of these two fundamental qualities. There were advocates of tyranny in Greece itself as well as advocates of liberty, and when the foreign danger was removed, internal struggles caused the partisans to segregate to various centres.

In Sparta the main current of ideas had long ago set strongly towards conservatism. In his desire to maintain the privileges of his own narrow caste, the Spartan had sacrificed his home, his liberty, all luxury, all poetry, all art. For the sake of life he had given up all that makes life worth living, and when history begins "we find her (Sparta) under an iron discipline, which invades every part

of a man's life, and controls all his actions from his cradle to his deathbed. Everything is subordinated to the art of war, and the sole aim of the state is to create invincible warriors. The martial element was doubtless, from the very beginning, stronger in Sparta than in other states; and as a city ruling over a large discontented population of subjects and serfs, she must always be prepared to fight; but we shall probably never know how, and under what influences, the singular Spartan discipline which we have now to examine was introduced."—Bury, *History of Greece*, vol. i. p. 157.

In Athens, on the other hand, among the free citizens, mere personal liberty was perhaps much overrated, but for a time it gave them scope for development. Although ultimately they were unsuccessful, and were crushed by the iron heel of Sparta, there is no doubt which city has best deserved to win the whole world's gratitude and praise.

Of course this personal liberty was not enjoyed by the whole population. The free citizens of Athens were like the rest of the world up to quite recent times, totally unconscious of the danger and injustice of slave-holding. They could no more conceive of a world without slave-owners than we can conceive of a world without property owners, and they had equally good grounds for their convictions.

It is difficult to select examples to illustrate the rapid progress of sculpture during the fifth century —the golden age of Attic art. There are innumer-

FIG. 361.—Life-size bronze statue of a charioteer found at Delphi. Fragments of horses were also dug up, and a basis recording the dedication of the group by Polyzalus, a brother of Hiero, king of Syracuse. It was perhaps the work of the Attic sculptor, Calamis, who was considered to rival Phidias and in some respects even Praxiteles. He flourished about 470–450 B.C.

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able fragments showing every stage of development, but very few even fairly complete statues (Fig. 361). Most of the Greek statues exhibited in modern galleries are copies, for which we have to be grateful to wealthy Romans and various ancient rulers. Nearly all the originals have disappeared, but so many copies were made in the decadent period that a sufficient number have survived to give us some idea of the real work of Greek sculptors during the spring and summer of their glory. As the patrons of these copyists had but little artistic discrimination, copies of the same statue may vary considerably; they are therefore not very trustworthy. However, by industriously collating the authentic fragments and comparing them with the copies, learned experts have made the history of the period fairly clear for those who care to undertake a special study of it.

One of the works recorded as having been executed shortly after the re-occupation of Athens in 480 B.C., is a group representing the tyrannicides, Harmodius and Aristogiton. The Athenians commissioned two sculptors, Critius and Nesiotes, to make this group to take the place of the two bronze figures, set up some thirty years before, which had been carried off by Xerxes. Why he should have taken a fancy for those tyrant slayers is not quite clear; the subject could hardly have appealed to him, and the treatment of it must have seemed rather barbaric to the luxurious Persians. They did not retain them very long, for

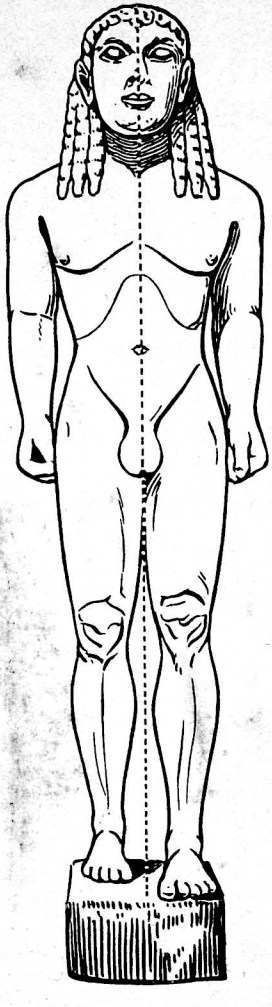

FIG. 362.—Outline drawing of the Argive statue from Delphi (Fig. 355) with the median plane dotted to show the rigid symmetry and "frontality" of these earlier works.

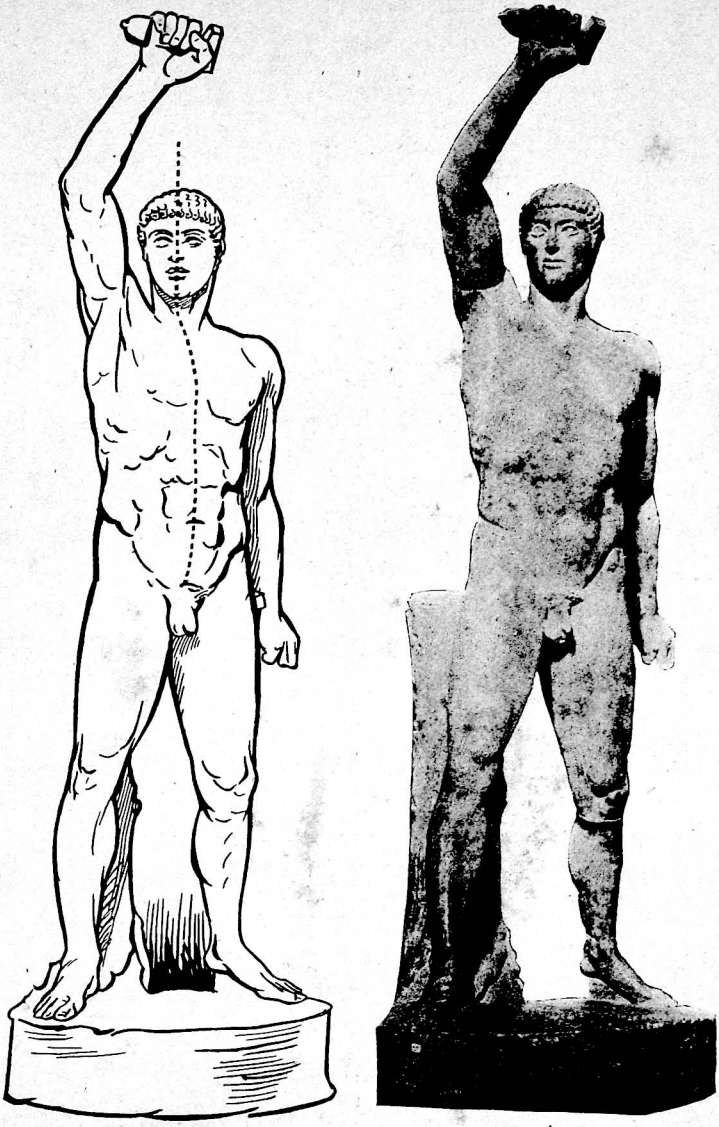

FIG. 363.—Life-size marble copy of the statue of Harmodius, who with Aristogiton slew the tyrant Hipparchus at Athens. The sculptors of the original group helped to slay the tyrant custom which for so many centuries had imposed its "frontal" law upon mankind. Naples Museum.

in less than two centuries the figures were brought back triumphantly to Athens and placed by the side of their substitutes.

A probable copy of the group made by Critius and Nesiotes was reconstituted a few years ago by Friedrichs from two statues in the Naples Museum, which had been mistakenly restored and arranged as two combatants fighting one another. Fig. 363 represents Harmodius. Comparing it with Fig. 356, we can well see what a wonderful improvement the Attic sculptors had made in those fifty years of stress and storm. The details of muscles and veins are more accurately rendered, and there is no longer that pinching in of the waist and lower part of the chest which is so noticeable in the earlier statues, and seems like a reminiscence of Egyptian, or perhaps even of Cretan, work.[62] (See Fig. 177 and Fig. 293). The head is still rather archaic, especially as regards the eyes and the hair. How to represent hair was always a puzzle to early sculptors; they sometimes reproduced it realistically on their bronze figures, but a conventional form was absolutely necessary for their work in stone.

The greatest change of all is, however, in the pose of the figure, a change which marks a definite breaking away from that old law of frontality by which, consciously or unconsciously, all previous work had been regulated, and by which the work of all primitive people is still controlled.

It was a Danish Professor—Julius Lange of

Copenhagen—who discovered this important law and gave it a name. Like many of the so-called "laws" of nature, it is so simple that it seems almost obvious. In statues that conform to it "an imaginary plane through the top of the head, the nose, the spine, the sternum, the navel and the sexual organs" will be perfectly straight, and the legs will follow the direction of this plane (Fig. 362). The figure may bend forwards or backwards, may be kneeling or sitting, one arm or leg may be advanced, but these positions are always influenced by the frontal law, which demands that the median plane shall be quite straight (*Darstellung des Menschen in der älteren Griechischen Kunst* (1899)). Previous to 500 B.C. there are scarcely any exceptions to that rule. It was rigorously observed throughout the world, but in this statue of Harmodius it is ignored, and the median line curves slightly to the left (Fig. 363).

As long as sculptors were subject to this law they had to plan the head as facing to the front; it must not turn to the right nor to the left, and no sideway flexion of the body was allowable. It prevented the sculptor from representing any but the most simple actions; it rendered any combinations of figures impossible, except such combinations as would imply not much more relation of the individual members to one another than there is in a row of soldiers.

Having emancipated themselves from the rule of frontality, the Greeks were able to make those

wonderful combinations of figures in the pediments of their temples which have never been surpassed

FIG. 363-*bis*.—One of many copies of Myron's Discobolus, well identified by the description of it written by Lucian, who had been trained as a sculptor in his early days. It was a marvellous product for a period of transition (about 480 to 450 B.C.), "when sculpture was gradually freeing itself from the trammels of archaic stiffness and approaching that perfection of technical skill which was essential for its highest development."—(E. A. Gardner's *Handbook*.)

or even equalled. It took them, however, some time to learn how to overcome another difficulty—the difficulty of rendering accurately the transition

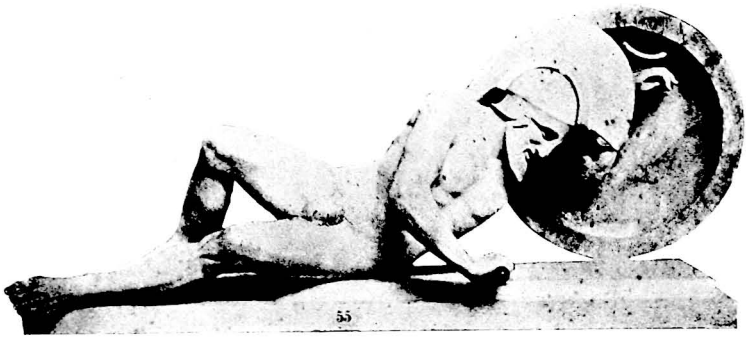

FIG. 364-*a*.—Dying warrior. From the east pediment of the temple on the island of Ægina. Probably one of the many sculptures executed shortly after the triumph of the Greeks over the Persians (480–470 B.C.). Now at Munich.

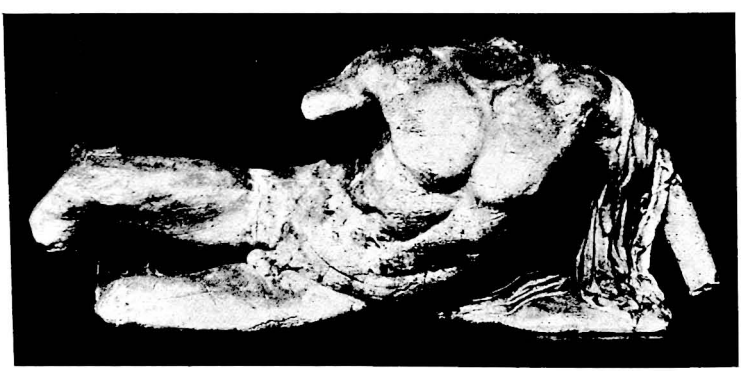

FIG. 365-*a*.—Cephisus (often called Ilissus), a river god. From the west pediment of the Parthenon. About 450 B.C. Now in the British Museum.

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from full face to profile in statues like that of the Discobolus (Fig 363-*bis*) or the dying warrior (Fig. 364).

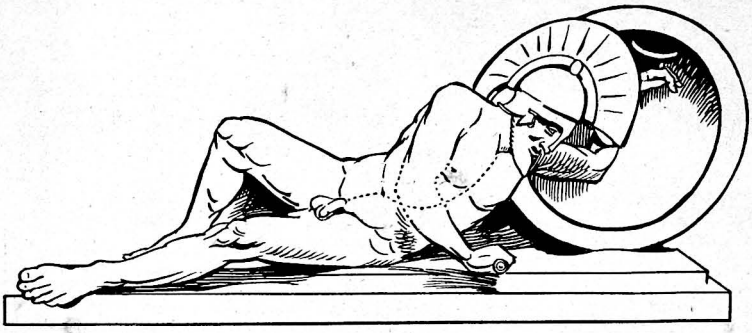

FIG. 364-*b*.—By covering the right-hand half of Fig. 364-*a* or *b*, it will be easily seen that the lower part of the statue would fit on better to the body of a man facing upward or forward. The sculptor had acquired a good mental picture of the appearance of a man's chest and of his legs and waist, but they were separate conceptions and he could not piece them together naturally in this position.

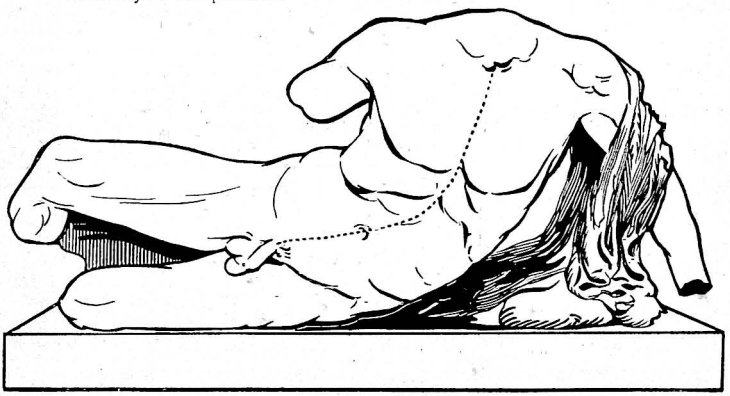

FIG. 365-*b*.—The Egyptians and the Assyrians never solved this problem, but the Greeks experimented continually until they had overcome the difficulty. The dotted lines show how the abrupt transition from chest to abdomen in Fig. 364 was remedied at a later period.

The twist of the body beween the hips and the chest is too abrupt, although not nearly so bad as in the

Assyrian and Egyptian low reliefs, or in the earlier Greek sculpture. The defect will be more easily recognised by noting the median line through the navel and sternum to the throat of the warrior, and comparing it with the similar line drawn on the body of Cephisus (Fig. 365), where the transition is correctly rendered although this figure cannot be dated more than twenty or thirty years later than that of Discobolus or the warrior. It was indeed a part of that glorious composition on the west pediment of the Parthenon, which was executed by or under the influence of Phidias.

To study these pediments is said to be a liberal education for artists; to imitate them is the despair of sculptors. But even Phidias could not have obtained such marvellous results unless his predecessors had smoothed the path by which he strode to glory. Genius stands forth indeed like the peak of a giant mountain in calm, majestic solitude, but it rests upon the unseen masses which alone rendered its elevation possible.

The history of Art now becomes almost entirely the history of Athens. When her power was shaken and the walls of the Acropolis again were broken down, she had still sufficient psychic impetus to attain even a higher stage of art. Then, when complete disintegration of the state took place, and her scattered artists roamed the world in search of work, even in their decadence, and though forced to minister to vulgar and degraded tastes, they set a standard which the rest could never reach.

FIG. 366.—The Doryphorus (spear bearer). Marble copy (made in Roman times) of the bronze statue by Polyclitus (of the Argive school about 440 B.C.), and known as the Canon, because it embodied his conception of the male form in its most perfect development and also the system of proportion which he adopted as normal. Found at Pompeii; now in the Naples Museum.

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a

b

FIG. 367.—One of a set of statues dedicated at Delphi by Daochus. It represents Agias, an ancestor who had been a victor in the Pancration (boxing and wrestling contests) at the Olympic games. It is probably a contemporary marble copy of a bronze statue by Lysippus. Notice the very different appearance of the statue in these two photographs taken from different points of view.

FIG. 368.—Marble statue of Hermes and the infant Dionysus by Praxiteles. Olympia. It is said that when Furtwängler was shown a photograph of this statue, taken shortly after its discovery, he asked "Why did they leave that cloth hanging on it?"

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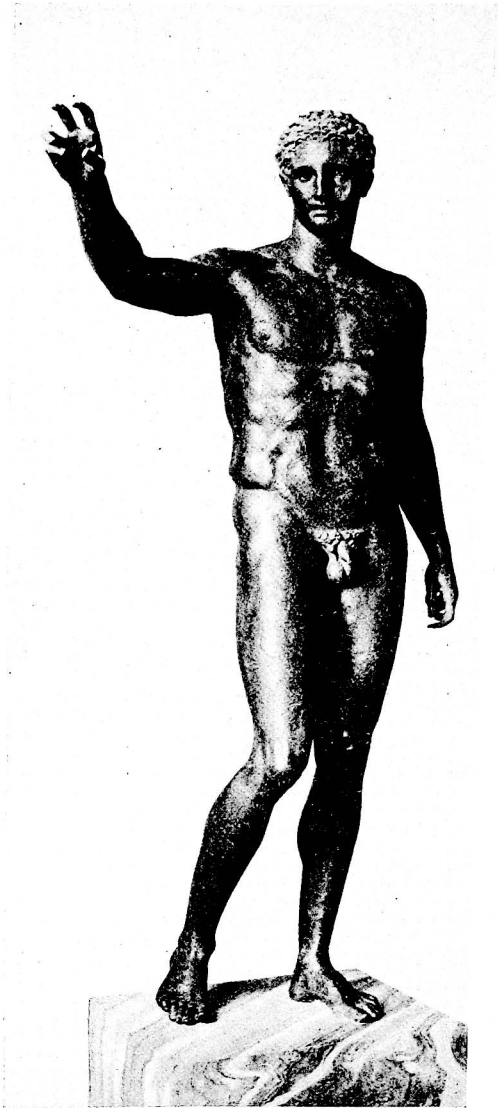

FIG. 369.—Bronze statue, perhaps representing Paris holding out the apple. The weak legs do not agree with the very muscular body; still it is a fine work, and dates from a period of which we have but few relics.

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It would be beyond the scope of this book to describe the further progress of Greek sculptors, but a few illustrations of their later work will be found useful for the purpose of comparison with the earlier productions of their countrymen, and with the results attained in Egypt and Chaldea. Fig. 366 is from a marble copy of a statue by Polyclitus; the original, made about 440 B.C., has disappeared along with all his other work. Fig. 367 is from one of the fine marble statues dug up by the French excavators at Delphi. It is probably a contemporary replica of a bronze figure of Agias, a victor in the Olympian games. The original was wrought by Lysippus, the court sculptor of Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.). Fig. 368 is taken from the marble statue of Hermes and Dionysus by Praxiteles (about 350 B.C.), one of the few statues that are undoubtedly by the hand of that great master. Fig. 369 is bronze and is interesting as a perfect specimen, but it is of later period, probably about 300 B.C., when art was beginning to decline. It was dredged up in 1900 from a ship that was wrecked off the Greek island of Cerigotto or Anti-Kythera about 2000 years ago. Apparently the vessel was on its way to Rome, laden with old statues and other treasures for those energetic wealthy rulers, who could enforce tribute from the whole world, but could not awaken the dead soul of art.

CHAPTER XVI

GREEK PAINTING

ALL the art products that we have hitherto examined, whether of the sculptor or the painter, owed their origin to certain definite desires quite unconnected with any longings for mere beauty. They seem to show that up to a certain point man's conception of beauty was conditioned by and grew with the satisfaction of those desires. If an artist's work gave pleasure by indirectly satisfying physical or even merely imaginary wants, it was beautiful; if not, it was ugly. Then as those wants became less gross, less selfish, and less fanciful, art satisfied them by other forms, which, giving pleasure, in their turn became considered beautiful. Thus gradually and unconsciously a standard was set up by which all outward forms were tested. Just as in physiology a healthy taste means a taste unconsciously developed during the lapse of ages for those things that will benefit and strengthen a man's body, so in art it has come to mean a love for those forms that will raise him to a higher plane of thought and feeling.

Eyes have been called the windows of the soul; are they not rather portals to which throng friends and foes seeking to pass that old experienced warder

—our great inheritance of taste? Woe to the citadel when he is feeble or corrupt.

In the whole history of the early world—that is, in such fragments of it as we can decipher—we see no sign that the idea of beauty was separated from the idea of purpose. Even now, in all our modern complications, I think we may assert that any object, natural or artificial, animate or inanimate, simply and well adapted to serve a rightful purpose, can be considered to have some degree of beauty. In all the early periods it seems that slight respect was paid to things that had no meaning and no use.

Life was then less complicated, men's studies and abilities were less specialised, the various arts were not yet distinctly separated from one another nor kept apart from the ordinary affairs of life. In Greek times music and poetry were still wedded, and the drama was their child. Athletic exercises were performed to the cadence of a flute, and in the public contests no prizes were awarded for mere feats of strength, but only when those feats were executed with rhythm and with grace. History was conceived as a long poem, and poetry had no separate existence save as the outward form of some definite message to mankind. Even Solon wrote his laws and his speeches in that form. Sculpture was not yet divorced from painting; it was created with various purposes, but among those purposes the mere desire for beauty had little or no share.

May be, if we could trace the whole history of

painting, that branch of art which represents the emotional rather than the intellectual life, we might be able to discover how the divergence of the arts began; but although in the early writings there are many allusions to Greek painters and their celebrated works, not a single example from the golden age of Greece has yet been found. Even the careful excavations of the last few decades have revealed only a few faint traces of their existence. At present we can only study the shadows of the figures painted by those illustrious artists, figures burnt into the memory of more humble craftsmen, and by them transformed and burnt into the surface of their pottery.

By such means, too, we can penetrate still further back into the mists of time, and trace some of the first awakenings of decorative art among the forerunners of the Greeks. We know not who they were; they may have been of kindred race, or perhaps they were descended from an old Ægean stock. Their early efforts are so similar to those of the Cretans that we need not do more than mention the proofs of their existence which have recently been brought to light by the excavations in Bœotia by Professor Tsountas, Dr. Sotiriadhis (Ἐφημερις αρχ, 1908, p. 63), and in Thessaly by Messrs. Droop, Wace, and Thompson (*Liverpool Annals of Archæology*, vol. i. No. 4, 1908).

The three English explorers had started excavating a mound at Zerelia, a place which was thought to be the site of the temple of Athena Itonia, the patron deity and battle-cry of the Thessalians. They ex-

pected to find it rich in relics of the best period of Greek art, but they were sadly disappointed, for no remains of that sort were discovered. However, just below the surface they found about 24 feet of a deposit rich in prehistoric relics, divided up into eight separate layers, the ruins and the refuse of eight successive villages or towns. Their investigations have already yielded many important results, carrying the history of Thessaly back to about 4000 B.C.;[63] but they have not greatly modified the impressions given by the Cretan and Ægean excavations as to the beginnings of civilisation in the Mediterranean area.

Even in the lowest strata, thin, well-made red-coloured pottery was found in abundance, along with a few vases decorated with elaborate patterns, red on a white, well-polished ground. In the succeeding strata the fine red ware diminishes in quantity, the decorated ware increases; gradually the fine plain red dies out, the decorated degenerates in style; some of the ruined houses, though only built of mud, are finer than the rest, some of the stone weapons are fashioned with more care. Even when the last stratum grew, by slow accretion of the village refuse and by mud houses tumbled down, the common people were still in the neolithic stage, nor had they learned to use the potter's wheel, although apparently a wealthy few imported Mycenean ware and flaunted rare strange bronze.

It may seem fanciful to try to read between the lines of such unlettered manuscript, but it appears to

me a sad epitome of many a human history. The earliest stage, that of mere barbarism, must have been passed through in some other place, and it is not recorded, for even in the lowest strata we find evidence that the simple population, leading an equal life, were already refined in taste and cultivated art with some success. Now greed and oppression enter in and dominate the careless race, unorganised and uncombined. Like deadly microbes they poison the life blood of the nation, too weak or ignorant to offer much resistance. Then art dies out and luxury corrupts the dominating few. Then comes the end. A new bronze-weaponed race sweeps the effete stone-using tyrants from their village throne, and for three thousand years they rest in their unhonoured grave.

Now once again their walls appear, their cups and vases see the light of day. We read the lesson of the unstoried past. We read, but do we learn?

The invading race was probably the Dorian or the Ionian. Until more excavations have been made, especially on sites occupied continuously during the three ages of stone, of bronze, of iron, the general history of the land cannot be traced. The question is still hotly disputed whether the conquerors brought with them their own style of art or adopted an old style of the conquered which might have been partially submerged by Ægean influences. At present the material evidence on each side is so scattered and confused that the contest is like guerilla fighting, in which both sides claim the victory and the outsider

FIG. 370.—Colossal amphora found at Sparta in 1905. The figures were formed in moulds and fixed to the jar before it was fired. Another fragment showing the horses was found in 1907. The shape of the shield and the absence of clothing points to its being sixth century work. It is sad that the spirit of greed and domination should have brought such promising work to an untimely end in Sparta, just as the same spirit killed the art of Egypt and Chaldea.

cannot discover what either side has won. As in such warfare he is liable to be maltreated by both the contending parties if he should venture near their battle-fields, let us leave that debatable intermediate period and pass on to the time—about 800 B.C.—when the Dorians were well settled in the Peloponnesus, after their invading hordes had traversed the greater part of Greece, but without causing much disturbance among their Ionian kindred in that outlying district now called Attica.

In Sparta they preserved their coarse and simple character; they even seem to have accentuated it in stern defence of their imagined rights, and in their fierce desire for mastery they crushed within their souls the germs of any higher life. They quitted the field of art; their early culture wasted, its faint results lie trampled under foot. Now only archæologists will care to dig them up; the artist passes by, wondering what might have been if other counsels had prevailed (Fig. 370).

In Attica the hill-top settlement at Athens had less of this exclusiveness; they admitted the inhabitants of other villages to share their privilege of living under the protection of Athena. Thus from that rugged rock a stream of life poured forth to mitigate the evils of the world. The one-man despotisms, useful for little savage tribes, fatal when greater numbers are concerned, beheld a rival scheme of government—the empire of the free—and ever since that time despots have waged a deadly war

against its progress. Despotism leads only to decay. It may shine for a while with a false glory, like that

FIG. 371-*a*.—Geometric vase found at Thebes. The designs are black on a light glazed ground. Athens. Height thirty-five inches.

of Nero's gilded house in Rome, but it exhausts the life-blood of the nations, and degeneration quickly follows in its train.

Consider all the despots of the world: what have they done for art? Their times were noted for magnificence, the unthinking look upon ostentation as a sure sign of progress, they do not recognise the early symptoms of decay. If but some master hand would write a new "Decline and Fall of Rome,"

FIG. 371-*b*.—Artemis, originally a nature goddess of the lake and stream. Her worship seems to have become ennobled in Greece. She developed into the virgin huntress, patron of animals and children, and sister to the god of music.

comparing its degenerate art with that of other empires of the world during their periods of decline, the popular delusions about the benefits of concentrated wealth and power would have a wholesome shock.

In Athens, then, were sown the seeds of freedom; the enemy indeed came in and sowed tares amid the wheat, but in spite of that the harvest was the most glorious one the world has ever known. Look at this picture on an Attic vase (Fig. 371). We have

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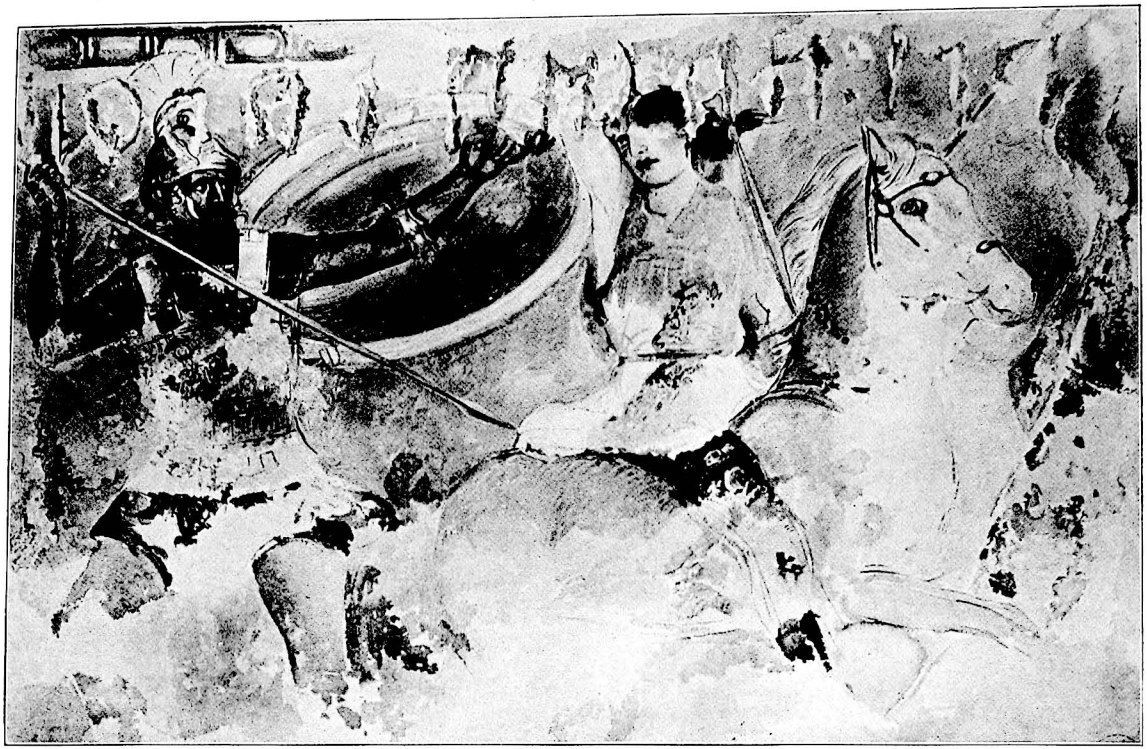

FIG. 372.—Part of a painting worked in tempera on a large alabaster sarcophagus discovered in 1869 at Corneto (the ancient Tarquinii). Large engravings of all the scenes represented were published in the *Monumenti inediti*, 1873. Coloured illustrations of them were given in the *Journal of the Hellenic Society*, 1883. There are so many different tones of colour in the painting that the estimated cost of a lithographic reproduction of this size was nearly £50.

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seen the art progress of despotic states: could one imagine that in a few short centuries art could rise in them from such a depth to any height at all? Yet Greece within four hundred years produced Parrhasius, Zeuxis, Tamanthes, and Apelles. True, we have now no relics of their work, but some idea may be obtained of how they must have painted by noting what those who had studied in their schools could do. This monochrome reproduction of a painting on an Etruscan sarcophagus (Fig. 372) of an Amazon fighting against a Greek shows how they had solved for their successors many of the problems that confront an artist working with colour on the flat. Glance back along the pages of this book and consider the results obtained by other races apparently as cultivated as the Greeks and far more numerous and wealthy. Is it not plain that they lived in quite a different world, that the expression of their thoughts is in a language foreign to our minds? But here we see that the rubicon is crossed, the ancient barriers are broken down, mankind has entered on new fields, those very fields where we are still at work. Let us go back to the beginning of that momentous struggle and observe the steps that led them to success.

Whether or no the influence of the neolithic potters lasted into the iron age of Greece, the fact is plain that as regards animate forms the Greeks of Athens had everything to learn, and very little to forget, when in the cemetery outside the Dipylon or

double gate they left those great funeral vases painted

FIG. 373-*a*.—Funeral vase, about four feet in height, found in the Dipylon cemetery. The women have their arms raised above their heads in the attitude of lamentation (see Figs. 122 and 210). The box with long-necked horses on the lid is of the same period. That elongation of the neck and body is often used to give the impression of actual or potential swiftness (see Figs. 336 and 340). (The box is drawn on a different scale.)

with strange pictures of the living and the dead (Fig. 373).

They are the roughest type of childish memory pictures, giving only the salient features of men or animals, and always giving them in their broadest aspects—those that would fix themselves most readily

FIG. 373-*b*.—Enlargement of 373. The front of the chariot shown gives the impression of having been intentionally diminished as if in perspective. The drawing of the wheels also seems inspired with the same idea, but it may be fortuitous. They are two-wheeled chariots; there is no reason to believe that any four-wheeled cars were used at that time.

in an inexperienced brain. Faces are drawn in profile, but not the eyes or bodies. Even the corpse upon the bier is turned to show the full width of its chest. A quaint Bœotian shield hangs from each

driver's neck, and artfully conceals the painter's ignorance how to draw the arms. Strangely enough the two-wheeled cars are drawn in rough perspective, and the two wheels are not much out of place.

The whole style shows a strong resemblance to early drawings found in Crete, in Egypt, and in Chaldea, but that is no reason for supposing it to be in any way derived from them. The hill tribes of India, the Polynesians, the Eskimos draw in this style, and Dr. Kerschensteiner has observed that a certain proportion of Bavarian children give triangular bodies to their human figures. Even in modern art schools beginners find an inverted triangle helpful when drawing an outline of the body.[64]

The inability to retain and to reproduce a good mental picture of living forms is not inconsistent with a considerable capacity for designing decorative work composed of purely geometric forms, a capacity which is often conspicuous in savages. According to Dr. Kerschensteiner the faculty for this sort of decorative drawing is, in young children, quite distinct from the faculty for depicting natural objects. Each faculty manifests itself separately at a very early age. Nor do the two sexes seem to possess them in the same proportion, boys having better capacity for seizing general characteristics, and for forming mental pictures of natural objects, while girls take more readily to artificial decorative work. But just as the two sexes are more similar in early youth than when fully developed, so in its youth Greek art took readily to

geometric decorative work, and its delineation of natural forms was very poor.

Most of the pottery found in that cemetery out-

FIG. 374.—Large Dipylon vase, three feet high, found at Athens. Black, purely geometric decoration. Variations of the meander (or key) pattern and a simple lozenge or cheque pattern are the usual designs on this ware.

side the Double Gate of Athens is purely geometric (Fig. 374); it was only by degrees that birds, animals, and human figures began to find a place on it (Fig.

375). Owing to its profusion there, and to its definite characteristics, the name Dipylon was given to all pottery of this style wherever it was found, but now it is confined to Attic work and the word "geometric" is used as a generic term for this style. It is a much less distinctive name since other varieties of geometric

FIG. 375.—Geometric bowl showing the introduction of designs from living subjects. A similar bird frieze is seen in Fig. 371. Height four inches. Ashmolean Museum.

ware are found in many other countries and in many different periods.

Another feature of this Dipylon style is that it is almost entirely rectilinear, curved lines being seldom introduced except in the form of simple circles mechanically drawn with a compass. The designs are much more elaborate than those of other early periods, such as the early Minoan or the neolithic Egyptian. They are not mere skeuomorphs, nor are they solitary patches of ornament; they are complete schemes

covering the whole surface. They seem to have been derived from patterns embroidered on textile fabrics, or incised on metal work, in both of which rectilinear forms are more easily reproduced than curvilinear.

A rather similar style of decoration is found all over the Danubian region on pottery and bronze work

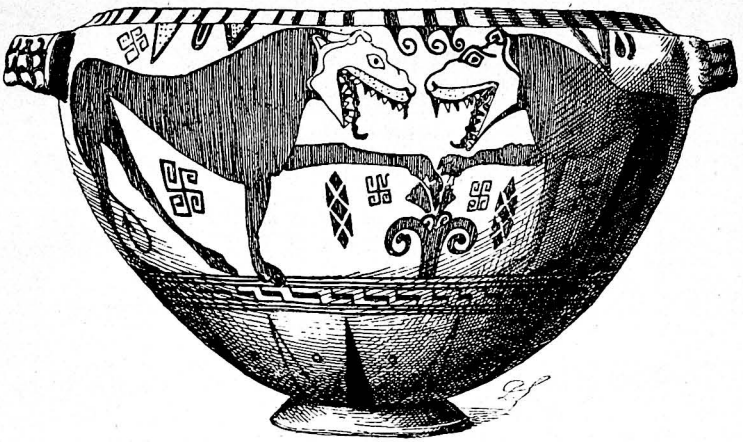

FIG. 376.—Large bowl, known as the "Burgon Vase," found at Athens, now in the British Museum. The rendering of the heads in outline while the bodies are mere black silhouettes was apparently derived from Ionian and Rhodian examples. The barbed tails are curious. About one foot in height.

of much older date than the Dorian migration, but that does not help to settle the question whether the origin of the Dipylon style is to be ascribed to Europe or to the East. The motives of those designs may have been taken from fabrics made at home or from Eastern rugs and bronzes which were probably well known in Europe in very ancient times, brought there

either as merchandise or as booty. European hordes made frequent raids into Asia, and some of them may have returned home, although most of them, if not exterminated, abandoned their nomad life, and formed settlements such as those of Galatia, to which in much later times some wandering Gauls gave its exotic name.

From the designs on these Eastern woven fabrics and embroideries were probably obtained the strange figures of lions and other animals almost extinct in Europe, but reproduced upon the pottery and metal work with curious transformations (Fig. 376), showing that probably the craftsmen had never seen the original animals. These migrations of patterns, due to war or commerce, make the study of origins very difficult and complicated, especially as the movements were often reciprocal, each nation learning something from the other. From the relics in the tombs, or in the sites of ancient settlements, we often get clear indications of these currents, and of their diversion or cessation. Thus among the votive offerings in the Spartan temple of Artemis Orthia, there are many pieces of amber showing the existence of a trade route to the Baltic. But after 700 B.C. the amber ceases, the connection with the north seems to be broken, Sparta, as well as the rest of Greece, turns its attention to the East. Eastern motives, which previously were rare and rather doubtful, now begin to dominate both style and subject in the painting on the vases.

During this Orientalising period, which lasted for more than a hundred years, the history of art is strangely complicated. Perhaps some day there may be discoveries in Asia Minor as wonderful, though not as unexpected, as those in the palæolithic caves of France and Spain. Then we shall really know something about the phases of this curious change. Now we can only see the faint reflection of them on the pottery of the various states.

FIG. 377.—One of the numerous varieties of the palmette pattern. For the origin and development of these designs see Riegl's *Stilfragen* (1893).

In Ionia the crude stage of the Dipylon is altogether absent or unrecorded. The Ionian Greeks seem from the first to have been strongly influenced by the refined experienced art of Egypt and the East. Perhaps to them is due the credit of having transmitted it to Greece, but they do not seem to have had sufficient psychic energy to digest it, so as to strengthen their own growth, and thus develop new and living forms of art for the enrichment of mankind.

So many currents met amidst the islands and along the shores of this new focus of the world that we are bewildered by the eddies that form and swirl and disappear in various local centres. Sometimes a survival of Mycenean or Minoan art seems welling up from unsuspected depths. Spirals and other curvilinear forms mingle with the lotus flower of Egypt or with rosettes and palmettes of the East (Fig. 377). Lions and griffins, sphinxes and other monsters march

in procession round the jugs and vases (Fig. 378), but the human element is wanting.

It is possible that in Ionia luxury and its usual concomitant, oppression, had destroyed all interest and belief in the real dignity of man. His joys, his

FIG. 378.—Small oinochoe (wine jug), six inches high, found at Corinth. The Corinthian ware was of reddish clay covered with a yellowish white slip. The designs are black relieved with purple and occasionally white. From Collignon's *Catalogue des Vases d'Athènes.*

sorrows, and his daily life are unrecorded, and artists seem to live in a phantasmal world of strange and brilliant animals armed with sharp teeth and claws. Redundancy and richness are the keynotes of their work; their figures have no real life or purpose,

and every vacant spot is filled with useless ornament (Fig. 379). Fearful, apparently, lest it should be said, "What is the meaning of this tangled life?"

FIG. 379.—Corinthian vase, supposed to have been dug up at Cervetri. In this vase the potter imitated the ring handles of a metal vessel, but he did not make them moveable. The arrangement of the decoration in zones followed the system natural to vases built up of strips of metal. Fourteen inches high. Louvre Museum.

they leave no space where the beholder's eye may rest, but with bright colours and unnatural forms they seek to dazzle and distract attention from all the

unreality of wealth and the bitter emptiness they see around, but do not dare to represent.

Cyprus and Rhodes, Samos and Clazomenæ vied with each other in this laborious art. Corinth and Athens followed in their steps, and revelled for a time in the strange richness. Like all young nations when they were in the patriarchal stage they had submitted to the rule of kings, hereditary or self-elected—the only means of fostering discipline if men are ignorant or widely separated. Under the aristocrats and wealthy tyrants who succeeded to the kings, the Oriental style was welcome and appropriate. Nor can we say that it was all in vain. It served to train men's eyes and hands, thus fitting them for better things when they were strong enough to walk alone.

Then came the time of trial. Was their development to be arrested at this stage, or could they burst their bonds, pursuing nobler aims? Spokesmen were wanted who could express their comrades' thoughts and take the lead in various ways. Conceit makes certain men assert that they alone are qualified to rule, and they object to change. Even good tyrants find it hard to realise that they are no longer necessary. They claim to be the saviours of the commonwealth, and weaker men fall grovelling at their feet. They cannot see that as the state grows larger and more highly organised, no single individual can hold the complicated reins. Signs of such times are manifest both in the history and in the art of Greece. Tyrants were slain or banished; men had to bestir their brains,

and think and say whether they disapproved. Of advisers there were plenty; parasites put forth their mercenary strength, and myrmidons assisted with brute force. No man is fit to live who likes to be a slave; no man can live along with other men and still be absolutely free. But what proportion of his liberty he should surrender is always a matter for dispute. Government, as well as art, is a long series of experiments. Greece now began to make them for herself. Athens was more successful than any other state in finding the right mean. Her citizens enjoyed a large amount of liberty; her artists were free from royal and from priestly supervision; but they all learned to recognise the value of a certain measure of restraint.

Ionia had made an early and a brilliant start, but there was a certain femininity about her growth—a love of refinement, of artificiality and of submission. There was also a lack of initiative that makes it hard to say what might have happened if she had not succumbed to Persia. It almost seems as if her art would have become stagnant and conventional, like that of Egypt or of Assyria. Possibly it was as well that she did fall, leaving the rest of Greece more independent, isolated, uncontaminated, free.

The mainland indeed enjoyed a strange conjunction of conditions most favourable for art—a bright climate, a good position for defence, moderate and not too concentrated wealth. The population was composed of elements not too divergent to be capable of fusion, their religion was fairly free from that

mixture of mysticism with mercenary aims from which springs priestcraft, their art and literature were free from any dominating foreign influence, their political life was not checked internally nor stunted by the dread of any overpowering danger from outside. Above all, they had a noble self-reliance, and could accept responsibility; willing to work and learn, willing to fight and die, yet loth to bow before a

FIG. 380.—The earliest known representation of Hercules attacking Geryon and his dog. It is inserted in the middle of a frieze of lions painted round a small pyxis (box) of light coloured clay. Found near Athens.

self-appointed lord, or copy slavishly the art of other men.

This love of independence, with yet a certain readiness to co-operate and to combine, was a new feature in the history of mankind—that is to say, among the races that had emerged from barbarism. Civilisation too often leads a select few to sloth, and sloth dearly loves a lord—some one to save it trouble, to stereotype its policy, its art, or its religion, so that it need not think. Greece was no home for sloth; it had outgrown its lords, its Eastern art, its mystic

mummeries, though in their Orphic form they lingered on another century. Once more the daily life of man seems interesting to men, the weird forms of monstrous

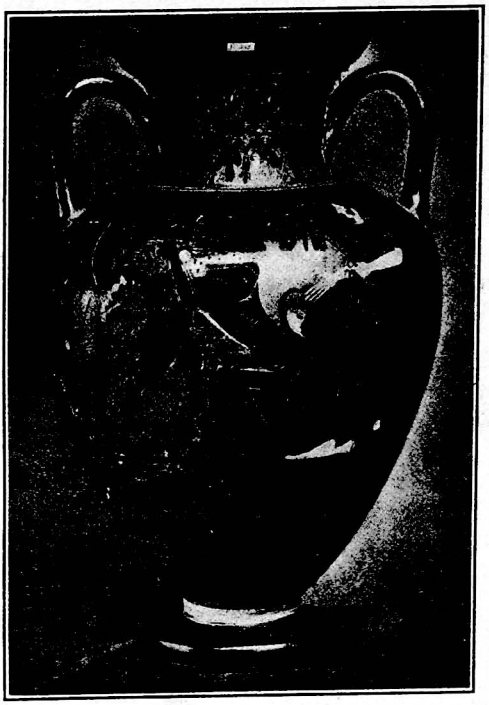

FIG. 381.—Amphora found at Vulci (Etruria), now in the British Museum, B. 232. Height nearly seventeen inches.

animals vanish from the vases, and human figures take the place of honour.

The change seems rather sudden, but there are previous signs of discontent with Orientalising art. Even in the middle of the seventh century—during

the rule of the Cypselid tyrants—we find a drawing on a Corinthian pyxis of Hercules attacking the monster Geryon (Fig. 380). It is a crude sketch on an insignificant little box, but it is interesting as being the earliest representation of the myth. Whatever

FIG. 382.—Figures painted with black varnish on a red panel of an Amphora found at Cervetri (the old Etruscan town, Caere). The few purple strokes are shaded in this drawing. One of Geryon's heads is full-face, perhaps to indicate that it was injured and in pain. The plume of a helmet presented a difficulty which the early painters solved by depicting it as hanging down on both sides of the head (see Fig. 394). Geryon's wings are of the same up-curling type as the wings of the Egyptian monster (Fig. 133). His name is written from right to left as in Asiatic writing, while ΕΡΑΚΛΕΣ is left to right, both systems being rather indiscriminately used at that period. British Museum, B. 155.

may be the origin of the legend about Hercules, there can be little doubt that its popularity among the common people was due to the desire for a deliverer, some one who was strong enough to free them from ravening lions (Fig. 381) or triple-headed owners of

vast herds of cattle (Fig. 382), who would cleanse the Augean stable of corruption and foul wrongs, who could ease the labours of men oppressed by the burden of the world (Fig. 383). He does not wield

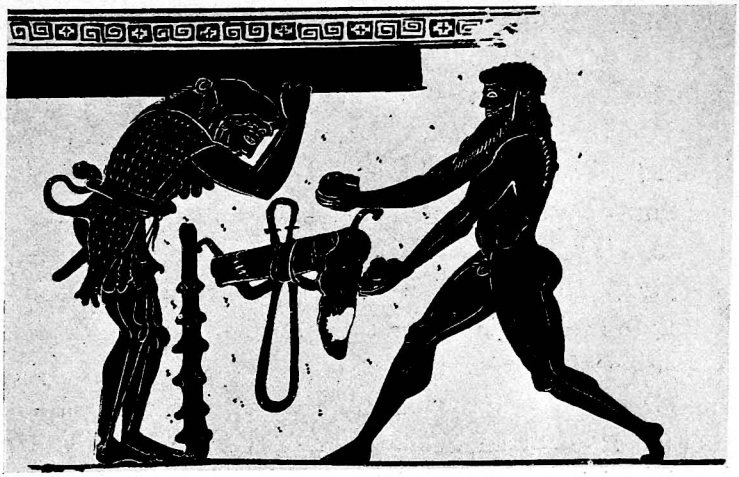

FIG. 383.—Hercules supporting the sky (represented by six stars and a crescent moon) whilst Atlas went to get the golden apples of the Hesperides. His club, bow and quiver are not lying on the ground, but stand up without any visible means of support, a detail which did not trouble the early Greeks. The figures are about four inches high and are painted with black varnish on a white slip on a lekythos found in Eretria. On these lekythoi or funeral vases, owing to the conservatism of religious customs, black figure silhouettes were painted long after red figure drawing was well developed. This vase is fifth century work and the drawing is much less stiff than in the ordinary black figure period, which ended about 500 B.C.

a kingly sword nor bear a lordly spear. His victories are achieved with the common archer's bow and arrow or with the poor peasant's club.[65]

Thus art unconsciously entered upon a new phase, and began to express the aspirations of the people

for better conditions in this present world. Stories of the pains or pleasures of a future life; invented by the victims or by the parasites of tyranny, never seem to have had much attraction for the Indo-European people, although indeed most of our conceptions of Hades had their origin in Greece.

There had been little idealism among the Egyptian painters. They bore the same relation to real artists that the old chroniclers bear to historians of real genius. They depicted a bald record of the past and present, or a biassed and ill-founded forecast of the future. They had no sense of proportion or perspective, and no vision of the possibility of man's rising to higher planes in this world or in any other condition of existence.

Greece had many difficulties to overcome before her ideals could be even partly realised, but the new spirit quickened her artistic life, and enabled her to achieve in a few centuries what other nations had failed to accomplish in untold millenniums. The doings of mankind, of heroes and of gods, sublime in human form, furnish the subjects for the artist's brush, and eagerly he strives to render the presentment worthy of the glorious ideal imagined as the real. Animals and conventional schemes are relegated to a subordinate place in his compositions (Fig. 384), and he soon learns to concentrate attention by simplicity instead of distracting it by over-crowded ornament.

I may perhaps be accused of unduly personifying Greece, and it may be said that it was only a con-

geries of little warring states developing each in a different way and at a different pace. This is a view one is much inclined to take when studying in detail

FIG. 384.—Early sixth century amphora showing Oriental influence by its lotus pattern round the neck, and by the arrangement of animals in zones, but they are relegated to a subordinate position now and human beings occupy the place of honour. On the other side of the vase is a very interesting representation of the sacrifice of Polyxena. British Museum. Height about fifteen inches.

the conflicting elements which arrange and re-arrange themselves in so many puzzling combinations. Doric and Attic art, Spartan and Athenian politics seem too

distinct to be regarded as emanations of a single personality; but if we take a wider view and compare the general result with that which was achieved in other lands, we are well justified in speaking of that result as the product of a single entity—of Greece (Prof. Percy Gardner, *Grammar of Greek Art*, p. 210).

It would be impossible to give in this short sketch the details of the progress of the various states. Broadly speaking, we may say that after the Orientalising period painters devoted their attention to perfecting their drawing of the human figure as a silhouette, a mere black form, relieved with lines of white painted upon it,[66] or by red lines produced by incisions made with a pointed instrument (Fig. 385). Purple and various other colours were sometimes introduced, especially by the Ionians, still the ware well deserves the name "Black figured," which is applied to the whole class of vases decorated with these silhouette-like forms. The neck, foot, and handles of the vessel were generally covered with a black varnish, leaving a square, oblong, or circular reddish-coloured field whereon to draw the picture. In later times this red field was extended all round the body of the vase.

On the mainland of Greece, the faces and bare limbs of women were generally painted white, and their eyes were drawn almond-shaped, while the men were black all over, and their eyes were circular with a small stroke at each side (Fig. 386). This convention was not observed by the Ionians, in whose

FIG. 385.—Fragment of B.F. pottery dug up when a road was being excavated at Athens It represents a funeral procession. The exaggerated length of the fingers (with the thumbs on the wrong side of the hands) recalls the Egyptian style, (*e g.* FIG. 200). The hand of one of the men in front is in an unnatural position owing to the painter not having left sufficient space for it when planning his drawing. Early artists of all races were very reluctant to hide any part of the faces of their figures. About half actual size.

To face p. 472.

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FIG. 386.—Fragment of B.F. Vase found at Eleusis. The border consists of stylised lotus flowers and buds, a favourite design in Egypt.

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work the men also have pale faces and almond eyes. The colour adopted for men's faces by the mainland Greeks may be accounted for by their having led much less luxurious lives, but it is hard to account for the strange shape given to their eyes. It may have

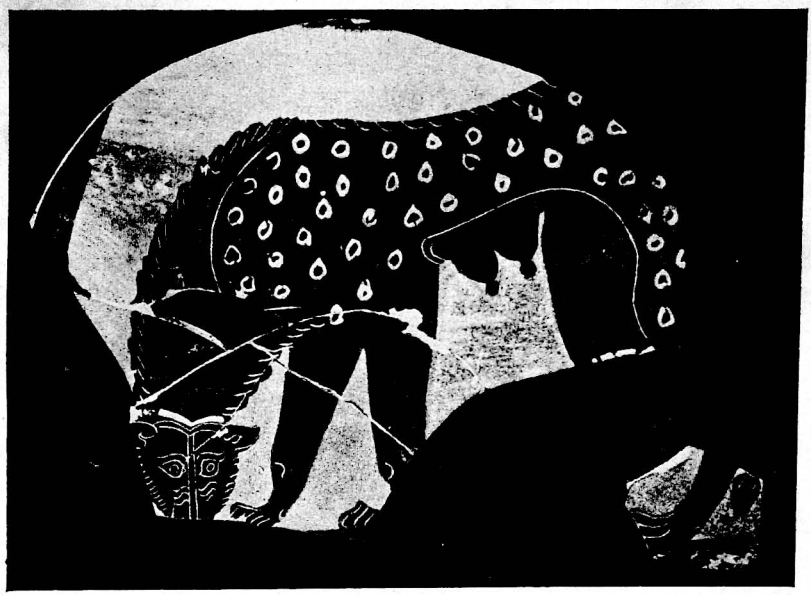

FIG. 387.—Fragment of an Ionian vase found in the old Greek colony of Olbia, on the Black Sea, at the mouth of the Dnieper.

been in imitation of the round eyes of bulls and lions, thus giving the impression of force in the male faces, or possibly, as Professor E. A. Gardner has suggested to me, it may have been a mere question of technique. The eyes on a black body could be made round without difficulty, as they were incised with a sharp-pointed

tool. Those on a light-coloured surface were drawn with a brush, and could therefore be more easily made almond-shaped. It is not an important question, but it shows how cautious one ought to be in assigning ulterior motives as the reason for conventions that may be only due to some detail of technical convenience.

The black-figured style lasted from about 600 B.C. to 500 B.C., and lingered on much longer in ware used for religious observances. This is in accordance with the usual conservatism of religions, which always cling to archaic ways and customs. The silhouette figures did not lend themselves to any great improvements either in form or colour, and towards the end of the period the workmanship was often hurried and careless, because of the great demand by rich Etrurians for Greek vases to be placed within their tombs. So many of these vases were obtained from Etruscan graves in the early part of the nineteenth century, and so few had then been found in Greece, that archæologists at first thought that they had been manufactured in Etruria, and even now they are still called Etruscan by many people who might be expected to know better.

Art never flourished under the rich Etrurian lords. For their own use they preferred the coarse barbaric splendour of expensive bronze work in relief to the more refined delineations by Attic artists on cheap earthenware. Those wealthy patrons of art buried the better work of Greece, and treasured

in their homes the inferior productions of the poor craftsmen of Etruria. It is symbolic of what has happened in so many other lands. When an energetic nation's wealth is unevenly allotted the struggle to obtain a larger share fosters ostentation or pretence and destroys the leisure of the great majority. Those who have got the gold become the rulers of men's destinies. They stimulate art as a costly curiosity, not as an expression of real feeling. They hide its products from the common gaze and bury it within their homes as effectively as the Etruscans buried it within their tombs. The things they really use are not artistic, but merely luxurious and costly. Then the avenger comes. Their wealth and stunted art melts in that fiery trial. The mere material passes into other hands. The stunted growth is killed, but the true soul of art will issue from its tomb and take new forms of life in better times.

CHAPTER XVII

THE TRIUMPH OF GREEK ART

We have noticed that the sixth century—the period of the black-figured vases—was a time of emancipation and expansion. The discoveries, inventions, and economic changes of previous centuries had gradually produced their natural effect in various lands, causing slow upheavals and submergencies as beneficial, or as disastrous as those that follow the sudden shocks of war. Forces of a different kind had become controlled by rulers of a different type, and until they in their turn could be controlled there was but little scope for art. In devising such control the Greeks had partially succeeded. The brilliant cruelty of warrior kings, the sordid cruelty of mean commercial lords, had been restrained; the Seven Sages had not lived in vain, and for a while the nobler part of man had opportunities of growth.

In sculpture we have good evidence of the rapid progress made under the new conditions. As regards painting, we have to glean what evidence we can from writers who lived hundreds of years later, and took their ideas about the early painters from authors whose works have disappeared. In most cases too they had not seen the pictures that they mention, but we can

gather the meaning of some of their ambiguous phrases by referring to the paintings on the vases. Pliny in his *Natural History* (Jex-Blake and Sellers, p. 101), says that Eumarus of Athens (who is supposed to have lived in the early part of the sixth century) was the first to distinguish male from female figures, and he also "introduced all kinds of new subjects." We may take this to mean that Eumarus set the example, afterwards followed by the potters, of giving a lighter tint to the faces and bare limbs of women. The "new subjects" were probably the mythological scenes which replaced the animal figures of the previous period.

The next painter mentioned by Pliny is Kimon of Kleonæ, who lived in the latter part of the century. Pliny credits him with having invented "*obliquas imagines*," an expression which has given rise to much discussion. Some writers think it refers to poses other than full face or profile (Gardner, *Grammar of Greek Art*, p. 101), others maintain that it refers to foreshortening (Walters, *History of Ancient Pottery*, vol. i. p. 397). If the former interpretation is true, it would show that vase painters were less advanced than those who, like Kimon, worked on a larger scale as fresco or terra-cotta painters, for no instances of three-quarter face drawing are found on vases until fifty or sixty years later (Fig. 396).

It is indeed highly probable that towards the end of the sixth century the mural painters did make more

rapid progress, and branched off from merely decorative work to that higher form of art for which Professor Percy Gardner has proposed the convenient term "substantive." Decorative art is subordinate to the general effect of the object decorated, and would necessarily be less subject to change in the direction of naturalism, since accuracy of representation is not wanted for decorative work unless it is also narrative. The geometric and the Orientalising styles were purely decorative. During their predominance there was no temptation to make naturalistic experiments. When the potters began to depict mythological scenes and tried "to tell a story" on a vase, they would not at first be disposed to admit any new treatment that might interfere with the general effect. After a time they and their patrons would feel that it was rather incongruous to represent white men by black silhouettes. This feeling would gather strength when any innovating mural painter had succeeded in giving a more natural appearance to his figures, either by the use of new colours or by more accurate delineation. The vase painter might then think of trying a new system of drawing, but as regards colour he would be confronted with another difficulty. Even if he decided that these colours would not spoil the general effect, how could he be sure that they would not change during the process of firing? Thus vase painting would naturally lag behind fresco painting, but we cannot tell how long it

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FIG. 388.

PLATE XV.

FIG. 388.—One of the terra-cotta panels which filled the metopes of the recently discovered Temple of Apollo at Thermon, the capital of the Aetolian League. The temple dates from the seventh century and its columns were originally of wood, therefore sculpture would not have been appropriate. As these panels had to be fired we cannot expect the same freedom of colouring that might be found in frescoes, but they probably represent the general style of painting at that period; merely narrative or decorative and without any attempt at toning to bring the figures into relief. The height of the man is about twenty-three inches.

lagged behind and remained unaffected by the progress made in other branches. Therefore until archæologists can discover a series of early frescoes, we cannot feel at all sure when the Greeks made the "inventions" recorded by Pliny.

We get some indication of the character of the mural painters' drawing and colour schemes from the terra-cotta metopes recently discovered at Thermon in Ætolia (Fig. 388). They date from the early part of the sixth century, and do not show any very different style of treatment from that on the vases of the same date. Only three colours were employed—white, black, and three shades of red, but this limitation may have been due to technical difficulties, for they had to be subjected to nearly as great a heat as the vases.

It is very unfortunate that we have no indication whatever of the origin or cause of the most important of all the changes made by the vase painters—the change from silhouette figures to pure outline drawing. It took place during the last quarter of the sixth century, and began by a complete reversal of the old system. The whole of the vase was now painted black except just the figures, which were left the natural colour of the clay—that is, red. It is difficult to account for this sudden change of fashion; possibly it was due to the example of artists like Kimon of Kleonæ, who worked at other branches of painting. Whatever was the reason, the new style soon became so popular that, after a short

time, the black-figured ware ceased to be made except for a few special purposes.

At first sight the change does not seem so very great, nor likely to lead to far-reaching results. It seems to be only a change from black silhouettes on a red ground to red silhouettes on a black ground (Fig. 389). The real difference is seen when we come to note the character of the lines showing the inner details of the figures. On the black-figured vases the white lines were painted and the red lines were incised; they were harsh and stiff and not susceptible of any gradation of tone. But for the red-figured vases the inner markings were made with a black pigment, which could be diluted so as to give finer lines, and also any desired variety of tone. In this way the vase painter obtained a result which M. Ed. Pottier calls an unobtrusive polychrome. The designs are, however, essentially linear drawings, and soon begin to be distinguished by their freedom and beauty. Wonderfully fine brushes were used, sometimes consisting only of a single bristle. By a careful and minute study of many different specimens, the whole process has been reconstituted. Some of the figures were first sketched on the red surface of the vase with a blunt-pointed instrument. Then the contours of all the figures that were to compose the picture were drawn with a brush making a line about one-eighth of an inch wide. This stage is shown on a fragment of a vase which, for some reason or another, never had the rest of the back-

FIG. 390.

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FIG. 389.

PLATE XVI.

FIG. 390.—Fragment, now in the Musée céramique de Sèvres, showing how the red figures were executed in the earlier period. The black band was drawn round the outline previously sketched on the soft clay with a dull point. The rest of the background was probably filled in by an assistant.

FIG. 389.—Achilles slaying Troilos, the son of Priam, a favourite subject of the Greek potters. They often toned down its savageness by representing Troilos as grown up. It was painted on the interior of a kylix (a shallow drinking cup) by Euphronius (500—470 B.C.). The face of Troilos below the forehead is a "restoration," and probably incorrect, since the early Greeks generally drew older faces in their few representations of children. This illustration serves to show the change from black silhouettes to red ones, but its details are as untrustworthy as those in the generality of coloured lithographs. The copyist has exaggerated the defects of the poor drawing published in 1843 in Gerhardt's Auserlesene Griechischen Vasenbilder, from which this and all the ordinary reproductions of the cup have been made. The colour is too dark and ought to have had a tint something like that in Fig. 386. The "restored" kylix is now in the Museum at Perugia; its original state is shown in Hartwig's "Meisterschalen," Plate 59.

ground filled in—a filling that was probably left to be done by some assistant (Fig. 390).

It used to be supposed that the fine lines were drawn with one continuous stroke, but this would not really be possible, since a single bristle would not hold enough of the pigment. By means of a magnifying glass the joinings can often be seen where the line was broken when the brush was removed to take up a fresh supply of paint. It was also commonly believed that it was impossible for the vase painters to make any correction of their strokes, and that the faultless execution was due to their almost superhuman skill. M. Pottier, however, thinks this to be an error, and he says that the result is due to their capacity for taking pains (*Douris*, p. 36).[67] It is probably also due to the keen criticism and appreciation of their fellow-workers and their patrons. Although the potters did a large export trade, their chief regular patrons were the ordinary freemen composing the Greek nation, excluding, of course, the slave population, whose tastes have to be left out of the account. Little more regard was paid to them than we pay to our beasts of burden or to our machines; they were merely kept in good working condition. What effect a large increase in their numbers may have had in accelerating the downfall of art in Greece is another question which must be left to the students of degeneration.

The rapid progress of the Greeks in art is sometimes explained by saying that they were an artistic

race; but there is no reason to suppose that all of them, or even a large proportion of them, could actually do any artistic work. The reason why art received such a stimulus in the sixth and fifth centuries was because there was a widespread appreciation of it, and a constant steady demand for its products for definite purposes. It was not dependent on the fickle favour of a small cultured circle of people, cherishing it not as a necessary and natural part of their daily life, but merely as one of their many luxuries.

The Americans are considered an inventive race, and that is so, not because the ordinary man makes inventions, but because he appreciates and requires new mechanical appliances for his own use, thus stimulating the inventive faculties of the few who are sufficiently gifted to be able to satisfy him. Both manifestations are the natural result of definite causes acting in a congenial environment. The belief that rulers can have much effect in stimulating art has as little foundation as a belief that the Sultan of Morocco could stimulate his people to make inventions.

Nor was Greek progress due to superabundant riches. Greece had few sources of wealth, and those few have not yet been well investigated. Historians used to attach little importance to the study of economic conditions. Sources of wealth were generally sought for in successful wars, regardless of the fact that war generally impoverishes both combatants, and is only of advantage to the victor if it allows him to pursue his

way in peace. Greece was really a poor country, and it remained poor until the great expansion of its trade after the Persian wars brought wealth and luxury to a small proportion of its citizens. The Homeric poems have indeed led us to believe in the splendour of the ancient palaces of Greece. They abound with those high-sounding terms in which the poets of all times have vaunted the magnificence of their royal masters. But here and there some casual phrase reveals the bare facts beneath the flowery robe of poetry, and we see that their daily life was even rougher than that of the mediæval knights and barons crowded together in their smoke-grimed halls.

There was not much more luxury even in the seventh century, it was only towards the end of it that the first stone temple was built in Greece. The palaces of the old kings, archons, or other chief men were probably rough specimens of architecture, and not to be compared with the spacious and refined buildings erected fifteen hundred years before in Crete. Thus at the end of the sixth century, when the statuary and the red-figured vases show that, owing to the patient labours of many unknown humble men, Greece was beginning to bring forth results far surpassing those that any previous civilisation had attained, we have this condition of affairs—no great rulers, no great priesthood, no great wealth. Under such conditions, is it possible that any art should live and thrive? The answer is written large enough that all who will may see.

The Greeks had long been freed from their leading strings, they had been schooled by many teachers, they had developed power by healthy exercise, they had increased its value by sturdy self-restraint, and now their mental and material growth was coming towards its prime. Then a gigantic foe appeared, threatening to crush them by mere weight, Darius, King of Persia, representing the powers that have for ages received the worship of mankind—the kingly, the priestly, and the money power. And yet he and his successors fell before the infant power of freedom, a power that even now is little understood, and seldom well directed.

After the struggle, and the victory, the Greeks acquired fresh confidence in themselves and in their own ideals; that feeling is now reflected in their painting and their statuary. The old conventions disappear and new ones take their place, more reasonable and more expressive. Unmerited abuse is sometimes heaped upon conventions, but they are inseparable from art; without them naturalism would degenerate into mere realism. Wax figures and stuffed animals would dethrone sculpture, drawing and painting would yield the palm to coloured photographs. On the other hand, convention without the controlling influence of naturalism leads to mere symbolism, and, when allowed full sway, develops or degenerates, as it did in Egypt into mere picture writing—hieroglyphics, the fine art of the priests. It is hard for artists to hold the balance between the claims of these two attendant genii.

It is possible, though it does not seem probable, that written language, which has developed from crude hieroglyphics, may in the distant future entirely supplant the plastic and pictorial art as a means of expressing perception or emotion. Word painting may become one of the fine arts. It would be consistent with the general struggle of mankind against material or mechanical limitations, against rules and conventions—a struggle which in literature has its outcome in the prose poem and the gradually decreasing popularity of the old poetic forms.

As regards the balance between naturalism and convention, the Greek sculptors set a fine example to the world; how sad it is that we cannot also see how their great painters solved the problem! We read warm praises of the works of Polygnotus, of Micon, of Panænos, but we have not found a single one, although from the descriptions of them given by Pausanias the traveller, we know that many of them were still in fair condition on the walls of various public buildings in the second century after Christ. It is a strange reversal of the fate that has befallen the older painters —those of Egypt and of Crete. Their names have perished, though their productions have lasted longer than the better work of Greece.

According to Pliny it was Polygnotus who first gave expression to his faces and permitted the draperies to reveal the forms that hitherto they had concealed. He is also said to have introduced perspective, but it was of a simple and childish sort, if we

may judge by the transcripts of it that have come down to us on the vases (Fig. 391). The decoration on the Orvieto vase (Fig. 392) probably shows how little

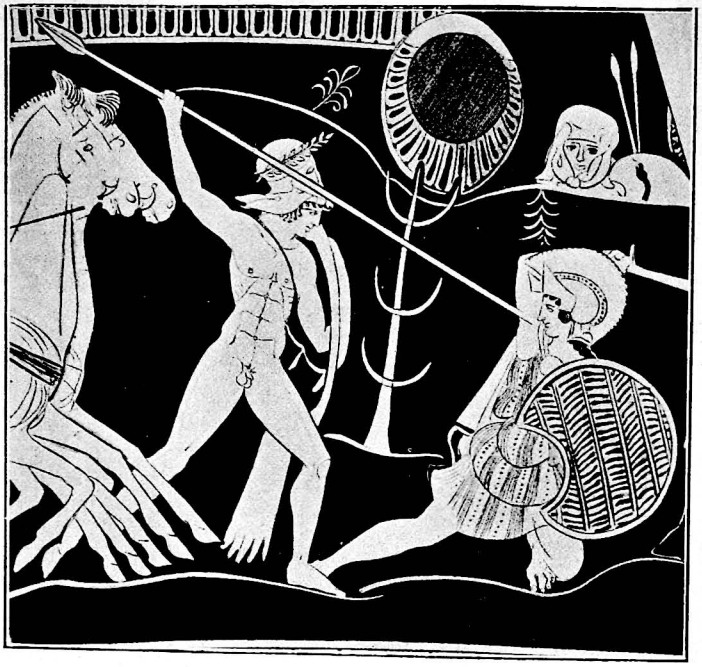

FIG. 391.—Red figure vase. New York. The head of the Amazon in the distance is as large as the head of the one in the foreground. She has her spears in the left hand and is represented full-face, perhaps to indicate her grief at not being able to assist her fallen companion. It is strange that an artist who could foreshorten the Amazon's leg should have given too frontal an appearance to the man's body. The tree is very conventional; the mark just above it is the spring of the handle of the vase. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

real progress he had made. Still it is an advance, and it marks the final separation of the art of drawing from that of sculpture in relief (see pp. 240–1), in which

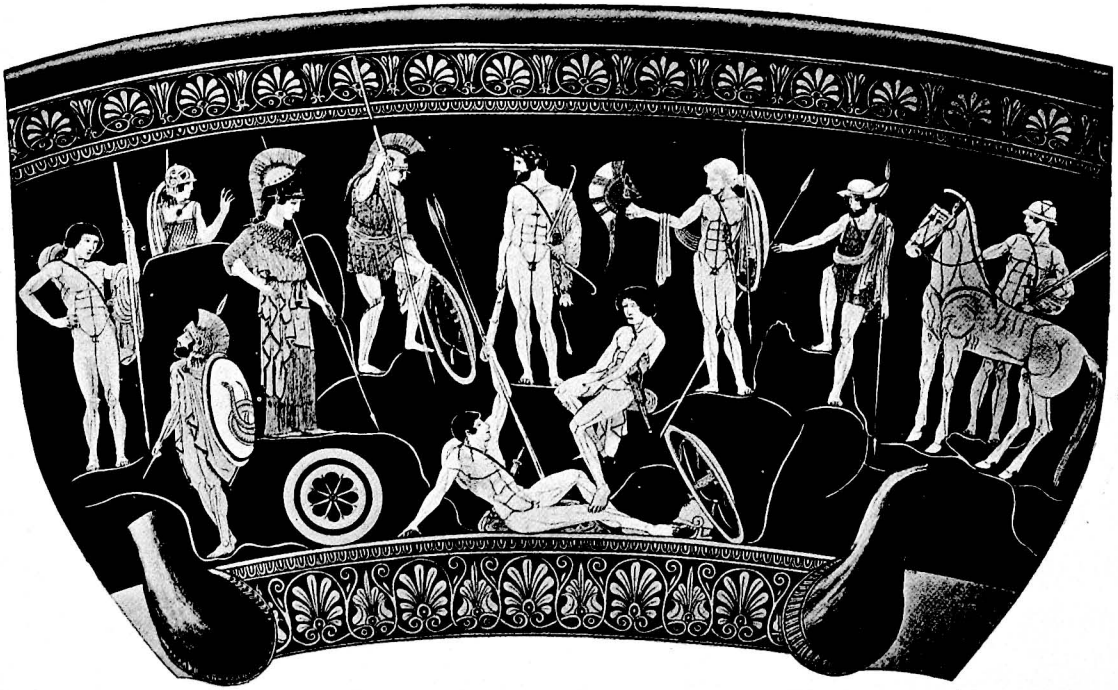

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FIG. 392.—Vase found at Orvieto, and generally called the Argonaut Vase. Dr. F. Hauser, in Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, says it is probably an allegorical representation of the Greeks (as Phylen) camped round Hercules and preparing to attack the Persian army—symbolised by the distant figure retiring in dismay. Louvre Museum. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

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perspective is really out of place. Perspective is indeed a most elaborate convention; it was utterly rejected by the predecessors of the Greeks. As Lange says, p. 22: "They must have known that a figure thirty yards off looked smaller than one ten yards off, but they also knew that both these figures were really of the same size, and they thought it unworthy of art to allow themselves to be deceived by an optical illusion. To represent the diminution due to perspective would have been regarded as a most ridiculous and childish fault."

In pictorial efforts from the very earliest ages onwards all the figures in any studied composition had been arranged on one uniform level, after the fashion of relief work on a frieze.[33] Instances of any transgression of this rule are almost unknown in Egyptian work, and there seems to be none in the Minoan. It is the departure from this custom which makes that rock picture in Algeria so remarkable (Fig. 82).

The painter of the Orvieto vase tried to obtain perspective by arranging his figures in different planes on various little hillocks. To the left a man in armour is disappearing behind a hill, and he is drawn on a smaller scale than the others, thus breaking through the convention that figures known to be of the same size must be drawn as large as those in the foreground, and not diminished on account of their being farther off.

The postures also are much more varied than those in the earlier pictures, and there is an attempt

at foreshortening the right thigh of the figure in front of the horse. Like so many other of these attempts, it evades the difficulty by concealing and only suggesting the foreshortened limb, but even

FIG. 393.—The only example of a horse and rider thus foreshortened, though horses drawing chariots were often given in this way. The difficulty of rendering the thigh is to a certain extent overcome by concealing it with the rider's right hand, thus giving her the appearance of taking no part in the contest. New York.[67a] From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

to make the attempt was a bold step in advance. Previously it seems to have been held that to depict a limb stretched towards or away from the beholder

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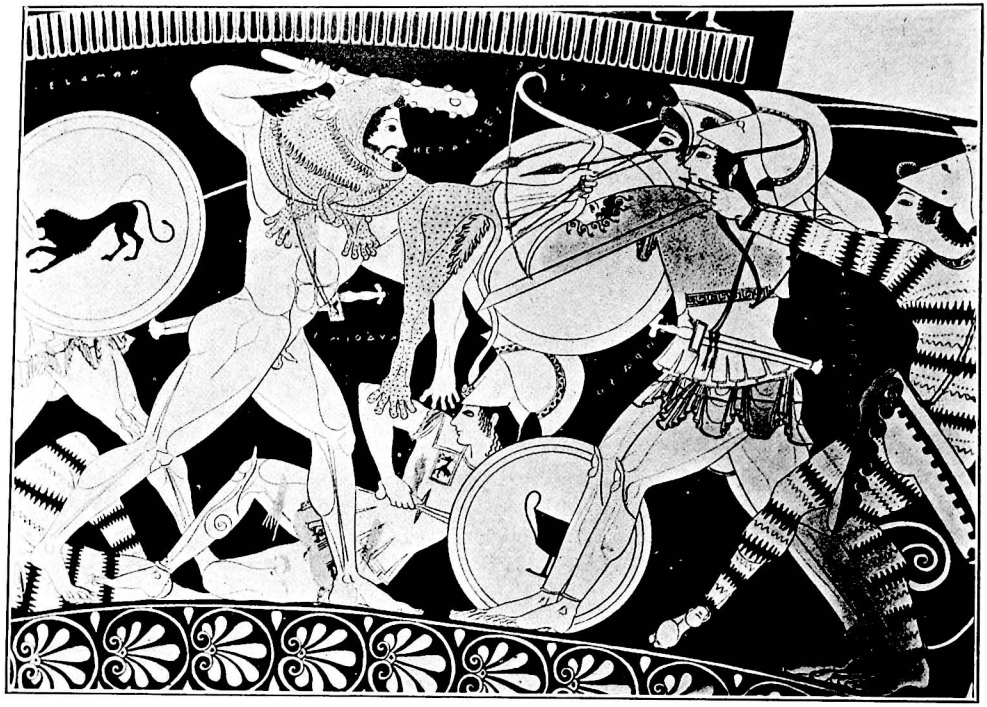

FIG. 394.—This large vase has been known to archæologists since 1723. It is now at Arezzo. The figures of the combatants are about eight inches high. The Amazon in the Scythian dress is twisting her foot in the manner often adopted by those who have aimed at a mark and are waiting to see the result. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

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was beyond the proper scope of art. A better example is seen in the left leg of the Amazon (Fig. 391) and in the right foot of the archer (Fig. 394). Strange attempts at foreshortening the bodies of animals are seen in Figs. 393 and 395.

Another bold innovation found on this Orvieto

FIG. 395.—Greek warrior and a soldier in Scythian costume inspecting the omens brought by the boy from the sacrificed animal. Apparently they are not satisfactory, and the dog, foreshortened to prevent his spoiling the composition of the group, seems designed to express mute sympathy with his mistress. Wurzburg Museum. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

vase is the three-quarter face pose of some of the heads (Fig. 396). The drawing is not very successful, but it shows what varied experiments had been made by the painters of this age, and perhaps as far back as Kimon of Kleonæ. They seem to

have felt that they could not yet use that position for expressing either dignity or beauty. Their earlier

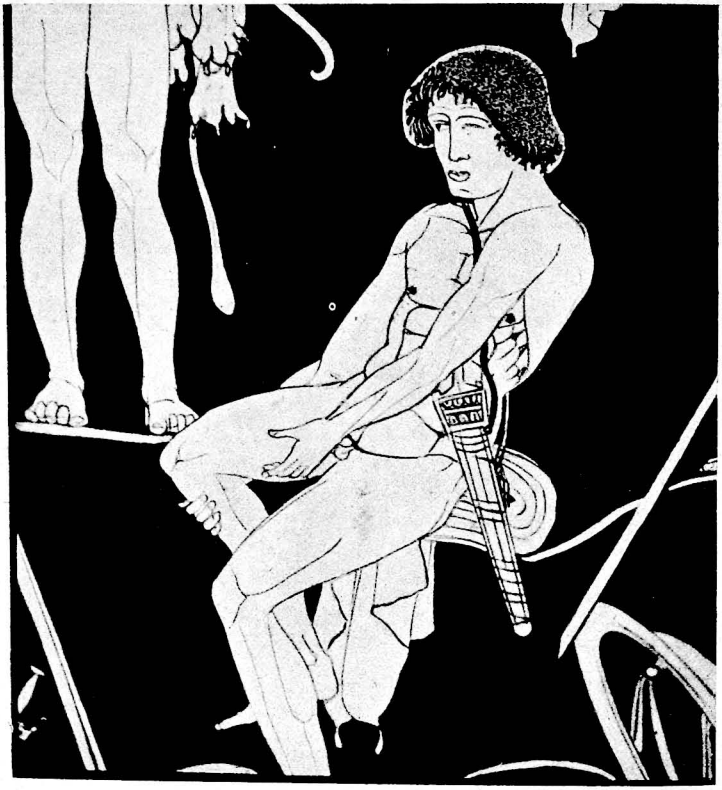

FIG. 396.—Unsuccessful three-quarter face. Enlarged from Fig. 392. About two-thirds of actual size. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

attempts were made with Centaurs (Fig. 397), for whose faces a misshapen appearance would not be inappropriate.

The full face, however, still remains unpopular; it seems to have been used chiefly to express horror or distress. It is seen in pictures of Troilus about to be slain by Achilles (Fig. 389), of Kerkyon in

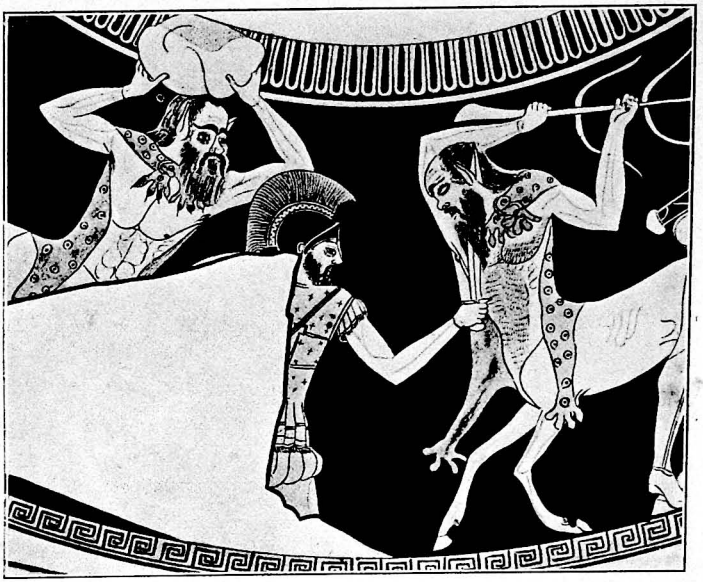

FIG. 397.—One of the fragments of a large Attic vase now in the Villa Papa Giuglio Museum at Rome. The painter of these figures was careful in his delineation of hair, drawing even the eye-lashes. The bent legs of the wounded centaur recall those of the horse in Fig. 68. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

his struggle with Hercules (Fig. 382), of a daughter of Niobe, the victim of Latona's wrath, of a Persian soldier struck down by a hoplite (Fig. 398), of a wounded Amazon wringing her hands in anguish (Fig. 399). Perhaps it has some connection with

old representations of the Medusa's head, which were always given in full face, or the two ideas may have acted and reacted upon one another. Satyrs are

FIG. 398.—Red figure drawing in the interior of a kylix found at Corneto. It has the inscription ΔΟΡΙΣΕΓΡΑΦΣΕΝ — Duris painted (this). Berlin Museum. Half actual size.

occasionally depicted in this way (Fig. 400), a reminiscence probably of the masks worn by those who acted as satyrs in the theatres.[68]

FIG. 399.—This illustration and those in Figs. 391 and 392 represent Attic work towards the end of the best period of vase painting, *i.e.* about 460 B.C. The subject is the slaying of Penthesilea, the Queen of the Amazons, by Achilles. According to the legend he fell in love with her when their eyes met after he had plunged his sword into her breast; a pathetic parable of the lust of domination defeating its own ends, the conqueror realising all too late the misery that he has brought upon himself as well as upon others. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

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MADRAS

In such a period of artistic expansion it was only natural that painters should be dissatisfied with the

FIG. 400.—Vase, signed by Phintias, found in necropolis of Corneto. The nostrils were seldom shown in early Greek work. Compare with Figs. 195 and 200. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

time-honoured treatment of the human eye. The old distinction between male and female eyes, as shown in the Attic black vases, was at once aban-

doned by the painters of the red figures. The pupil was now drawn as a black circular spot enclosed by lids somewhat like those on the black-figured vases (Fig. 401), but the upper segment was larger. The lids soon begin to take a more natural shape, and have an eyebrow added over to

FIG. 401.

FIG. 402.

FIG. 403.

FIG. 404.—Gradual improvement of the eye in profile faces on red figure vases.

them. Then the pupil was rendered as a circle with a dot inside, but the plain circular spot also remained in favour (Fig. 402).

The greatest improvement of all was when they attempted to give some expression to the face by placing the pupil nearer to the upper or to the lower lid (Fig. 403), thus indicating that the eye was meant to be looking upwards or downwards, and not

fixed in that stony stare which is as characteristic of primitive drawing as it is of all primitive sculpture. The old convention, however, still held good, that the eye should be given "in plan" as if part of a full-face drawing; but, having abandoned the fixed central position for the pupil, they soon saw the advantage of moving it more to the front. Then they ceased giving that part of the pupil and those lines of the lids which cannot really be seen in a purely side-face view (Fig. 404), and thus at last they arrived at a result which the world had taken so many thousands of years to achieve—the real true profile eye.[69]

It may seem a small and insignificant detail, but it shows that in visualising the human body painters had at last succeeded in acquiring a real grasp of it as a whole. Hitherto they had had good mental pictures of various parts of it, but these pictures had been separate entities, and had been only loosely and often incorrectly joined together. For instance, the early Egyptians had a clear perception of the appearance of a man's chest as seen from in front, but they supported it on a nondescript waist and a pair of legs seen in profile. They surmounted it with a profile face, which is the view most easily retained by inexperienced minds.[70] In that profile face they inserted a full-face eye, thus showing that they could not grasp the general appearance even of such a small subject as the head. In later times they must have realised the incongruity, but art was then controlled

by priests who were rulers and not leaders. Nor were the people desirous of being led. The Asiatic iron had entered into their soul: how could they have any sense of what was right and reasonable? Their function was to obey and not to think, to do as their forebears had done, and not to criticise the work of their superiors. If Europe had not been able to resist the march of Oriental despotism we should to-day be giving full-face eyes to profile faces. In Rome, when Diocletian the magnificent had destroyed the last vestiges of freedom, it is curious, and perhaps significant, to note that then again in profile faces the full-face eye is seen.[71]

Having triumphed over all the elementary difficulties of their art, Greek painters evidently made rapid strides towards the successful representation not only of men and women, but also of their emotions and ideas. Even of such an early painter as Polygnotus (about 450 B.C., a contemporary of Phidias) it was said that, in his figure of Polyxena, "the whole Trojan war might be read in her eyes." The Greeks had now outgrown their childhood, and had entered into a larger world, where unfortunately we only know of their doings by vague reports, for no single specimen has as yet been found. That they did not hesitate to tackle the hardest problems of foreshortening and of composition is evident from the accounts written by contemporaries, and also from the copies in mosaic that have survived.

There was one branch of painting in which the

Greeks did not excel. The few extant copies of landscape pictures show a stiff and realistic style not unlike scene painting, from which indeed it is said to be derived. Apparently no nation of antiquity had any great love for the natural beauty of uncultivated country, nor any delight in the sombre forms of lofty mountains with their mysterious depths of shade, or in sun-kissed radiant clouds with their equally mysterious vales of light. The visions of such beauty seem to have been denied to them, and were perhaps as unrecognisable as to most Europeans are the beauteous forms of natural rocks and stones, so plainly visible to cultured Japanese. Indeed the love of nature pure and simple apart from its relationship to man is of quite recent growth. It is doubtful whether it is not really a feeling of impatience with our ordinary surroundings that has led to a desire for the representation of lonely forests, wild rugged mountains, or fiercely raging seas. Such pictures, except as a background for the energies of man, would probably not have been intelligible to a Greek, certainly not to an Egyptian or a Chaldean. It may perhaps also be taken as a sign that we moderns are beginning to grasp the idea of nature as a whole, to understand that the life of trees, the formation of rocks, and the strange movements of great waters are equally with man productions of the same mysterious force, and parts of one well co-ordinated scheme.

By the thinkers of all ages, but especially by the Greeks, this force seems to have been visualised as

taking a human shape, and in no other way, unless we consider the vague conceptions of animism or of pantheism as definite expressions of real thought. The Greek saw Poseidon riding upon the foaming waves, he imagined graceful nymphs swaying in the slim branches of young trees, or he shuddered at the gnarled trunks and stretched-out arms of ancient trees fast hastening to decay. To him the stars were children, diving from the vault of heaven when the great sun-god appeared (Fig. 405). For him the sun and moon were bright immortal human forms rejoicing in their strength and renewing it from day to day, or else from month to month. As to the lesser gods, their existence may have seemed to him analogous to the life of ordinary men. A stream would be the temporal embodiment of such a god or goddess; she might be pictured as a joyous maiden radiant in the sun, leaping from crag to crag. Then when the waters failed the maiden died, or was merged in that great source from and to which all living waters flow. What better expression can we find in art or literature of that illusive mental picture, Personality, than the analogy of a flowing stream? Both of them have puzzled the framers of definitions. What are the essential elements of either of them? Can we say that to-day this is the same stream that we saw yesterday? The banks are still the same, but the waters have moved on, and have been replaced by other waters. Do, then, the banks constitute its personality, so that we still may say this is the same stream? What

FIG. 495.—The "Blacas vase," a crater 12⅜ inches high, from Apulia. 420 B.C. British Museum, E. 466. As the chariot of the sun approaches, the moon rides down behind the hill; the little stars begin to disappear; the dawn with rosy wings attempts to seize the morning star, and he, reluctant to forsake the sky, threatens his fond pursuer with a stone.

Compare this Greek rendering of a sunrise with the treatment of the same subject by a landscape painter. A whole chapter might be written on the differences and similarities of the inspirations producing these two styles. The Greek expression is more ideal than a naturalistic rendering by a great modern master, and yet it is more limited. There is no sense of immensity and mystery; the forces of the universe are reduced to human forms, brilliant and glorious indeed, but not beyond the comprehension of mere mortals. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

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if the waters have moved on, and none have come to take their place? Can we assert that permanent dry banks without the ever-changing waters have any title to be called a stream? Thus is it with man's personality. We know not what it is, nor whence it comes. Without a body how can we conceive of it, and yet the lifeless body is but as the dry banks of a dead river.

We have not yet made any great advance beyond the old conceptions and expressions of the Greeks. And when we come to talk of art and of its influences, of its growth, or of its swift decay, what do we think it is? It is so easy to be misled by words and phrases. We are accustomed to talk about and to believe in the great power of the sea. But the sea has no power. It is merely a helpless mass of water. Certainly it is a wonderful instrument when driven by the wind. And then what is the wind? Merely a helpless mass of air having no power of its own. A powerful instrument indeed, both for evil and for good, when set in motion by gravitation or other forces of the universe. And what are they? Whence do they come, and whither do they tend? Those who can give an answer to this question can also give the full answer to the first question in this book—What is art?

NOTES

THESE notes are not explanatory. They are only intended for readers who wish to enter rather more fully into some of the questions raised in this book.

1, p. 4. These extraordinary outbursts of development are just as frequent and just as unaccountable in animal and in plant life, in the present day and in geologic ages. One of the most striking evolutions is that which took place in the order represented abundantly in most ancient times by the nautilus. This family inhabited shells with plain divisions, or "sutures," between its air chambers, and lived its simple life without much change for untold æons. Then, in the secondary geologic period—only a few hundred thousand or a few million years ago—another family of the same order blossomed out with more complicated sutures, gradually assuming larger and still more complicated forms, with so many varieties that over five hundred species are known to geologists. At the end of that period the whole family suddenly died out, while its humbler relatives still continued to exist, and may be found in tropic seas even at the present day.

2, p. 5. Of course little attention need be paid to newspaper articles which appear from time to time vaunting the wonderful discoveries in America of relics, "probably the most ancient specimens of human handiwork in the world" (e.g. *Black and White*, 28/8/09). American archæologists who have devoted their lives to the study of such

relics are agreed in declaring that no sufficient data have yet been found to warrant any calculations as to their origin or their relative age.

A few books have been published on the subject by enthusiastic theorists, but they do not show any signs of a thorough acquaintance with the facts that have already been ascertained, nor much appreciation of the great difficulties to be overcome before speculative explanations can be regarded as having even a fair amount of probability.

3, p. 7. The dynastic flint-chipping seems to have been a deliberate return to an archaic system, for the blades were first shaped and polished to a smooth surface, and then one side was chipped again to form those wonderfully symmetric furrows which are so characteristic of Egyptian work (Fig. 133). The cause of this retrogression was probably that hankering after worn-out usages and conventions which is noticeable in so many religions.

Flint-chipping—or knapping, as it used to be called in the old flint-gun days—is often said to be one of the lost arts, and people with archaic minds talk admiringly of the unrivalled skill of our forefathers. It is only lost in the same sense that many other arts are lost—that is to say, there is no great reason for practising it. It still survives at Brandon, in Suffolk, and it was worked with great success some sixty or seventy years ago by forgers of stone weapons for the collectors of curiosities. The exposure of the fraud gave great delight to those who mistook all collectors for scientists, and hoped that science could be discredited by such forgeries.

In the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford may be seen some delicate fish-hooks made out of flint by the learned curator, Mr. Henry Balfour.

Very fair representations of animals in flint have been found in Egypt (Fig. 406), and also in Russia. To recognise anything but a casual coincidence in some of them requires almost as great a stretch of imagination as is required by

the collectors of natural and unworked flints which happen to have some resemblance to human or to other forms of life.

4, p. 12. Drawings have been found in the French caves at La Grèze, La Calévie, Bernifal, La Mouthe, Teyjat, Combarelles, Font de Gaume ; all these are in the Dordogne

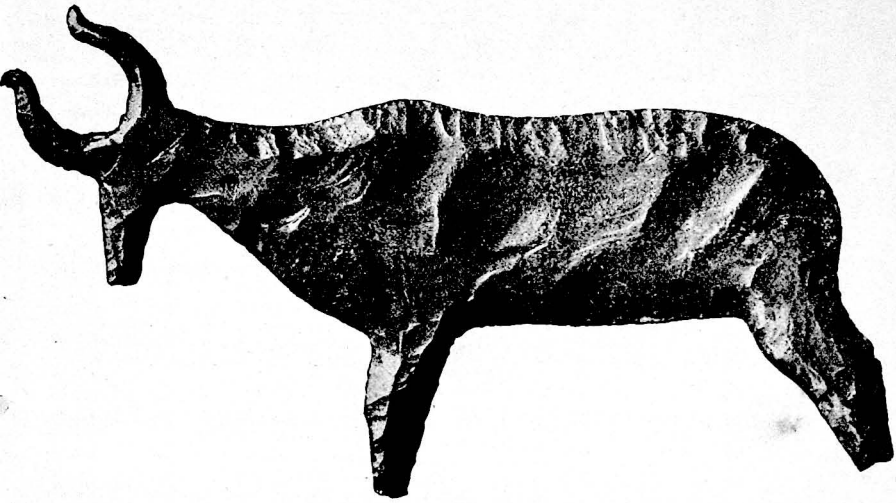

FIG. 406.—Chipped flint animal from Egypt, supposed to represent an antelope. Berlin Museum. Reproduced by permission of the publishers from *Die Umschau*, 1903. ("Aegyptische Tierbilder als Kieselartefakte," pp. 804–6, G. Schweinfurth.)

department. Pair non Pair is in the Gironde, Mas d'Azil and Niaux in the Ariège, Chabot in the Ardèche, Marsoulas and Gargas in the Haute Garonne.

In Spanish caves at Covalanas, Castillo, Hornos de la Peña, Santa Isabel, La Venta de la Perra, La Haza, and elsewhere.

In *l'Anthropologie*, Jan.-Feb. 1912, there is a description of some open-air paintings found at Alpera in the south-east

of Spain. They are of the same age (Magdalenian) as those at Cogul; they contain seventy figures of men, sixteen of whom have bows and arrows.

There are some crude drawings in a cave called La Grotta Romanelli, near Castro, Otranto, Italy, which were thought to be palæolithic, but Professor Pigorini considers them to be of later origin.

5, p. 16. Better drawings of mammoth had long been known, but they were small sketches on bone. This discovery on the walls of a cave of a large representation of a totally extinct animal helped to fix the relative date of the other cave pictures. The mammoth seems to have become scarce before the cavemen's art had arrived at its prime, for no very good paintings of that animal have yet been found. The later representations of it (Fig. 19) seem to have been made by men to whom it was not as familiar as the bison or the horse.

6, p. 37. The long-disputed question about the actual existence of a pygmy race in Africa is now definitely set at rest, and the belief in the former presence of such a race in Europe is continually receiving fresh confirmation, since not only single skeletons, but also groups of forty or fifty have lately been found. Most of the palæolithic skeletons are those of people of ordinary size; some are even beyond the average of the present day.

The existence of the steatopygous type (Fig. 276) in prehistoric times can only be inferred from the numerous figurines found in various parts of Europe and in Egypt.

7, p. 39. *Korrespondenz Blatt.* (Sep.-Dez. 1909, p. 85–8) of the *Archiv. für Anthropologie; Organ der deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie, und Urgeschichte,* 1910, *Band IX., Heft* 1/2 *Brunswick.*

8, p. 41. For some account of the origins of modesty,

see *Die Anfänge der Kunst;* Grosse, 1893. An American translation was published in 1907.

9, p. 43. Dr. Lalanne has lately discovered three human figures carved in high relief on the rock in the shelter at

FIG. 407.—Baked clay image in relief found at Moussian, Persia; probably five or six thousand years old. The images found in this part of Asia are not steatopygous.

Laussel. One is male, and about nine inches long; the other two are female (about twenty inches long), very similar to the

nude figurines found in Chaldea (Fig. 407) and throughout the whole Mediterranean district. One of the females holds a horn resembling those held by figures carved on the dolmens of a later period in France. A detailed report was given in *l'Anthropologie*, Jan. 1912, and photographs of them appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, 13th July 1912.

10, p. 57. M. Salomon Reinach gave me this account of his experience with a grown-up man. "A Turk in Asia Minor had a pretty horse; I drew the horse's head, but the Turk protested that my work was bad because his horse had two eyes and two nostrils. My drawing was a profile."

11, p. 89. The Director of the Royal Natural History at Vienna tells me that Dr. Rudolf Pöch will give copies of these pictures in a large work which he will shortly publish about his travels in South Africa.

In the *Transactions of the South African Philosophical Society* for 1906 there was an article by Dr. L. Peringuey on "Rock Engravings," and in vol. xviii. (1907–9) there was a "second note." Both were illustrated with several plates.

12, p. 92. *The Twenty-third Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, 1904) gives a very detailed account of the religious customs of the Zuni Indians. In Plate 58, p. 245, there is a coloured representation of the altar of Uhuhukwe, showing the various tokens and images used in these ceremonies.

13, p. 96. S. Reinach's *Cultes, Mythes, et Religions*, vol. i., p. 135.

14, p. 101. Miss J. E. Harrison in the *Annual of the British School at Athens*, vol. xv., p. 327, gave a good résumé of the opinions of anthropologists on this subject. "It is not so much about the family and the domestic hearth that the beginnings of the arts cluster, as about the institu-

tion known as the 'Man's House.' Here, unencumbered by woman, man practises and develops his various crafts. . . . Even after marriage, when he counts as an elderly man, he returns to the 'Man's House' to keep in touch with civilisation and the outside world."

15, p. 101. "In the beginning man went forth each day—some to do battle, some to the chase, others again to dig and delve in the field—all that they might gain and live or lose and die. Until there was found among them one differing from the rest, whose pursuits attracted him not, and so he stayed by the tents with the women and traced strange designs with a burnt stick upon a gourd.

"This man who took no joy in the ways of his brethren —who cared not for conquest and fretted in the field—this deviser of the beautiful—who perceived in nature about him curious curvings, as faces are seen in the fire—this dreamer apart, was the first artist."—"Ten o'clock," James M'Neill Whistler.

16, p. 112. *The Native Races of South Africa* (1905), G. W. Stow, p. 113.

17, p. 113. Prof. Breuil has lately been spending some months in the mountains of Andalusia examining some cave paintings discovered by Col. Willoughby Verner. A preliminary report was published in *l'Anthropologie*, but another season will have to be devoted to the cave before it is exhausted.

18, p. 126. The spiral has been said to be the original form of the meander (the fret or key) pattern, for its curved lines would naturally take that form if reproduced by plaiting or embroidery. Consult Dr. Haddon's *Evolution in Art*, 1895, for the résumé of the theories on this subject.

A curious parallelism of designs is found on the ceiling of a tomb at Thebes (Fig. 408), which certainly seems to show

that the Egyptian decorators considered the spiral and the meander as interchangeable decorative units. Vases have been found in Crete ornamented with a very similar combination of spirals. It seems to be a natural deduction to suppose that some day the meander will be discovered also in Crete. Indeed it is quite possible that it may have been used earlier still, for it is not likely that the cavemen's spirals

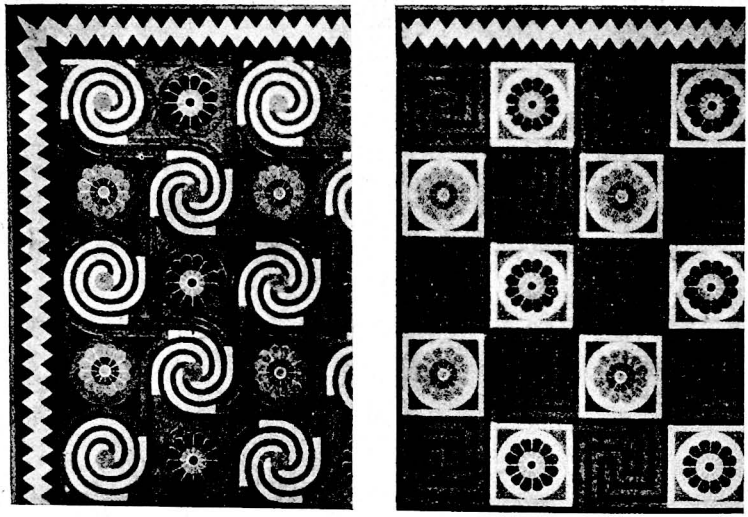

FIG. 408.—Designs painted in brilliant colours on the ceiling of an eighteenth-dynasty tomb at Gournah, near Thebes.

died away without having any influence on the designs of their successors.

19, p. 138. It has been said that their fellow-men would not have consented to serve as models for fear of becoming subject to the possessor of the picture, but such a belief would have worked both ways, and would surely have induced some artists to do their utmost to secure good

pictures of those over whom they desired to have power. The absence of such pictures seems more easily explained by the general inconsistency of human nature. Man never acts entirely on the principles he professes to believe, but carries them out to their logical conclusion only when they do not clash too much with his other interests.

20, p. 143. Owing to this habit of procrastination, I have not been able to give any reproductions of the very interesting coloured plates in Herr von Stern's *Pre-mykenische Kultur*, published by the Archæological Society of Moscow. The president promised to send it to where I was staying in Italy two years ago. My postal order was not cashed for nearly a year, and the book itself has not yet arrived, though I am told by my Russian acquaintances that it will come some day.

21, p. 154. Year after year, sheet upon sheet, these fertilising films have covered and preserved the relics of man's work, thus forming those mysterious volumes in which are hidden the records of the land. In no other country has the archæologist such an extensive and trustworthy basis for his calculations as to the age of various strata and of the objects found in them.

Unfortunately very few relics have as yet been recovered from these deposits, for they are some sixty feet or more in depth, and are generally waterlogged. Even when the difficulties of making excavations in them shall have been overcome, it seems unlikely that very many remains can have withstood the annual soakings to which they have been exposed for unnumbered centuries. Still there is just a chance that some day, deep down below the present surface, discoveries may be made which will enable archæologists to form a more accurate estimate of the age of those relics which are now found so abundantly in ancient graves and dwelling-places just beyond the reach of the waters of the Nile.

22, p. 156. I do not think that the basket was originally made to serve this purpose, for, until American machine-ground flour was available, Indian dough must have been very limited in quantity. In fact, it almost seems as if their flour had formerly seldom or never been collected and then made into dough. A small quantity of corn was roughly ground and immediately moistened with water and spread out on two hot stones in order to bake it. The resultant wafer bread was not nice. The Indian women still grind their corn with a large pebble worked up and down on a flat sloping stone, very similar to the old grinding-stones found in Egyptian graves.

23, p. 162. It is rather strange that in Egypt the passage should have always been horizontal, while in other countries vertical passages (see Fig. 223-*bis*) were more common. A great deal has been written about the shape, size, and number of these perforations, but I have not been able to find any classification of them with respect to their horizontal or vertical direction.

24, p. 164. It may seem inconsistent that, after having said that Egyptian pottery was probably made by the women, I should in this passage talk about the potters as if they were men. But whenever any sphere of work becomes "industrialised"—that is, organised as a means of gaining a living independently of the other duties of life—then women appear to be at a disadvantage, and it passes out of their hands as a specially feminine branch of work. Spinning, weaving, baking, even clothes-making have become masculine pursuits, and all material progress seems accompanied by a diminution in the extent of woman's sphere of usefulness in her own home. Even in quite recent times modern customs or inventions have lessened the value of women's home-work. A man is no longer dependent on a woman for most of his little luxuries and comforts; in fact he is often better off and more comfortable—as regards mere material comfort—without a wife than with one.

25, p. 170. The Cairo Museum, after having recorded all necessary particulars, sells its superfluous specimens, a system which might well be adopted by many other museums. The result would be beneficial to the buyers, because then they could be fairly sure of the genuineness of their specimens. It would be advantageous to the museums, because then they would not have the prices absurdly raised against them by ignorant but wealthy curiosity collectors. It would assist science, because all casual discoverers would be encouraged to bring their finds to the museums and not to the dealers, thus ensuring a better record of many important details which are generally not recorded since they do not add much to the money value of the specimens.

26, p. 173. Without daring to express any opinion on such a very technical question, one cannot help thinking that although these conclusions may be right, they are based on insufficient data. Even apart from the difficulty of estimating what proportion of foreign types should be found in the burial-places of nations which have been successfully invaded, it seems by no means certain that these foreign types would be so persistent as to leave widely-spread evidence of their coming. The conclusions arrived at on this point by Dr. Boas are very startling. If it be true that the descendants of dolichocephalic individuals may, after one or two generations become brachycephalic, and vice versa, all the arguments based on skull and bone measurements will have to be reconsidered.

27, p. 190. See Dr. G. Schweinfurth's article in *Die Umschau* (Frankfurt a. M., 1903, p. 806).

28, p. 193. These zigzag lines are seen clearly in Fig. 187. Similar lines drawn horizontally are frequently found on vases without any other decoration (Fig. 129), but comparatively seldom on boat vases, and then they are generally placed above the boats (Figs. 119 and 120). That

position, however, would not necessarily indicate that they were not intended to represent water, for, in primitive drawings, the relative position of objects seems to be considered of little importance.

It is unfortunate that there are so few representations of water in Chaldean art; the only ones that I am acquainted with merely indicate running water by a number of wavy lines. In Assyrian art these wavy lines are generally topped with little spirals when rivers or lakes are pictured. In Prof. Petrie's Exhibition in 1912 there were some first-dynasty clay jar sealings from Tarkhan, showing rows of spirals and crocodiles. If it could be proved that the spirals were intended to represent water, they would form a very interesting parallelism with the Assyrian system, but as the spiral is the common hieroglyph for a lake, and also for one hundred, more evidence will have to be forthcoming before it can be classified as a pictograph of water.

29, p. 205. A few cylinder seals have been found in twelfth-dynasty deposits (about 2000 B.C.), but so little is known of the period between the sixth and twelfth dynasties, that it is impossible to trace development or degeneration with any accuracy.

30, p. 217. References to the prowess of the kings do certainly occur in Egyptian literature, but they dwell more on the great numbers of the enemy than on their valour or skill.

31, p. 218. It may only be a coincidence, but it is rather curious, that the spiral in palæolithic France should have apparently represented cattle (*pecunia*), and in Egypt one hundred, while in Polynesia at the present day it is the sign for a sum of money.

32, p. 220. The flat band was in Greek times generally carved to represent a sort of hairy fringe, but in those grand sculptured lions in the North Egyptian Gallery of the British

Museum (Plate xxxvi. in the *Guide*) the band is still quite plain. It may be that these sculptures were executed by a Syrian or Babylonian artist. One of them was made for Amen-hotep III, and the other was dedicated to him. This king married the daughters of several rulers of Western Asia, and his son, Amen-hotep IV (afterwards called Akhenaten), seems to have been greatly influenced by foreign artists, though at present it is not known whether that influence came from Syria or only from Crete.

There are so few good representations of lions in Egyptian work that their development cannot be traced. The concentric semi-circles indicating the hair of the mane (as in Figs. 145 and 159) are not found later than the first dynasty. Then there is a gap of two thousand years, quite barren of any representations of lions which would show the progress or decay of this specially Egyptian mode of rendering the hair. In the papyrus of Ani (nineteenth dynasty) the lions' manes (British Museum facsimile, Nos. 7 and 10) are drawn in the Chaldean manner with pointed locks of hair (Fig. 246), which is also the style adopted in Cretan (Fig. 340-*b*), in Assyrian, and in Greek work.

33, p. 239. In some books (*e.g.* Girard's *Peinture Antique*) the Egyptians are said to have shown some knowledge of perspective. That statement seems based on very few and very inconclusive examples, such as rows of soldiers, in which occasionally the perspective is not altogether wrong.

The usual way of rendering figures on a more distant plane was to draw them of the same size as the other figures, and to place them in the upper part of the picture.

34, p. 247. This word affords a good example of the difficulty (see p. 274) of recognising the names of the people and places mentioned by different writers. The name of this heretic king is spelled—

Akhenaten by Petrie.
Akhunaten by King and Hall.

Akhounaton by George Bénédite.
Akhnaton by Weigall.
Ecknaton by Spiegelberg.
Ikhnaton by Breasted.
Chueneten by Woermann.
Khu-en-Aten by British Museum.
Khouniatonon by Maspero.

On the other hand, sometimes the difference of a single letter will show that the person named is widely removed from his apparent namesake.

35, p. 247. Birch. *Ancient History from the Monuments.* Egypt (not dated, S.P.C.K.), p. 109.

36, p. 257. A small fortified camp had to be constructed before any other digging could be done. When the statues and other antiquities were being transported by boat, M. de Morgan and his fellow-workers were sometimes obliged to take cover behind the packing-cases in order to escape the bullets of marauders. He has published an interesting little book relating some of these incidents.

A good account of the troubles of archæologists in Asia is given by the venerable explorer Dr. Pumpelly in the reports of his excavations in Turkestan, published by the Carnegie Institute (Washington) in 1905 and 1908. His discoveries were very numerous, but do not throw much light on the evolution of art in that country. The inhabitants of the buried cities he explored do not seem to have belonged to the same race or to the same phase of civilisation as the Elamites. Apparently they developed independently, and at a later period.

37, p. 271. The idea of fruitfulness rather than of beauty may be the motive of that drawing. The same motive is often found in Egyptian wall-paintings (Fig. 409) of much later date, but all these trees are mere diagrams, without any play of light and shade in their foliage. Indeed,

in a country where there are no woods or forests, an appreciation of tree-life seems scarcely possible. Even in countries

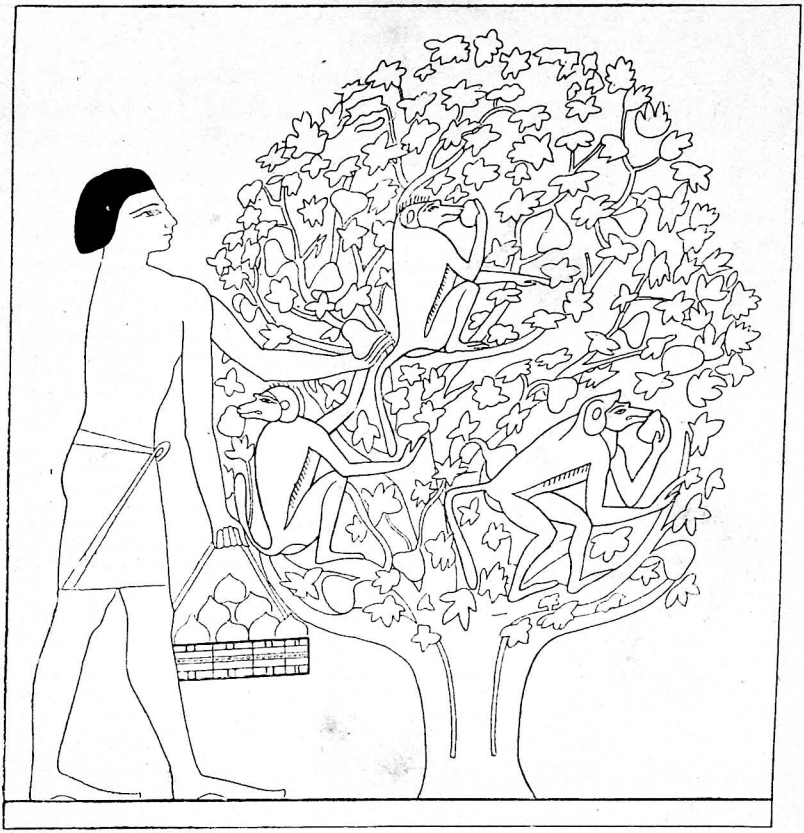

FIG. 409.—Part of a painting in a twelfth-dynasty tomb at Beni Hassan. I do not remember its style of colouring, and I have not been able to obtain any good copy of it. The one given in Lepsius' *Denkmäler*, II., Pl. 127, does not seem very satisfactory.

where trees grow wild and free the idea of their beauty and mystery has only in recent times found actual expression.

38, p. 272. These vases have been examined by expert potters from the Sèvres porcelain manufactory. Their opinion is that the work was certainly done on a slowly rotating wheel. That very ancient machine known as the potter's wheel was probably not invented by any single race, but evolved at different times in different countries in accordance with their conditions and requirements.

The first improvement must have been the exchanging of the original mat basis for a slab of stone or wood; then a pivot was inserted beneath to steady it; then it was raised slightly from the ground and supported only on its pivot; then it was raised still higher, and a second wheel added on the ground level so that it could be turned easily by a man's foot while his hands were engaged in shaping the clay on the upper wheel. Thus swifter rotation became possible, and large vases were more easily constructed. Pottery-making became a trade requiring more muscular exertion and more regularity of work than could be given to it by women. Therefore they had to abandon it, for, until a race begins to decay no work interfering with the production and rearing of children will be commonly undertaken by the females.

39, p. 276. This incongruity of titles does not necessarily detract from their value: it only shows how men cling to old ideals long after they have become useless or even pernicious. In certain savage states where the ability to steal was a sign of superior intelligence, the king was saluted as "Oh, great thief!" If these tribes should some day cease to consider stealing as a royal road to wealth, they will nevertheless continue to address their kings as "thieves," and perhaps humbler individuals will aspire to the title of "cheat," or "pickpocket." The widespread poverty of invention as regards titles is shown at the present day in republican America, where the working-men could think of no better name than "Knights of Labour" for the members of their association.

40, p. 284. The occurrence of a Greek cross on ancient objects used to be considered as determinative of the limit of their date, but it is now known to be much more ancient than was formerly supposed possible; in fact, a cross surrounded by a circle has been found in a palæolithic cave. The svastika, or fylfot, so common on early Greek pottery (Figs. 371, 373, and 376), and at one time considered as proving a connection with India, has been found in the ancient deposits

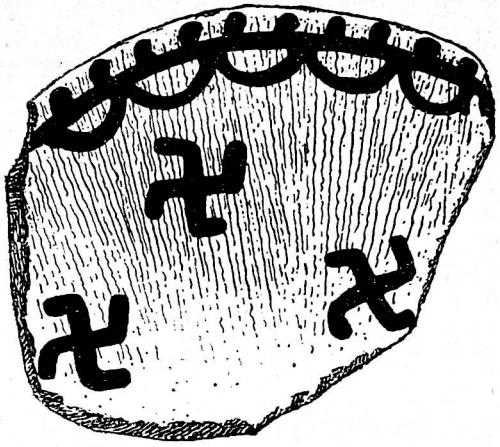

FIG. 410.—Fragment of yellow pottery with black designs from Moussian.
(See p. 272.)

at Moussian (Fig. 410). Maltese crosses, arrow heads, chequers, hearts, and other elementary units of decorative designs have also been found on the painted pottery of that remote period.

41, p. 288. Prof. Ed. Meyer has published a monograph, *Sumerier und Semiten in Babylonien*, 1906, on this subject. The artistic side of the question has received much more attention from him than it used to receive from the older historians. Their ignorance of the collateral proofs of the

sequence of events in ancient times is partly due to the difficulty of obtaining good photographs or drawings of a sufficient number of examples, but even now some of the older men talk contemptuously of artistic evidence, and often make ridiculous mistakes when they happen to allude to it.

42, p. 288. Many fragments of pottery have been found with a hole pierced for suspension so that they could be used as amulets. This cannot easily be confused with one made for rivets, or bands, with which to mend the broken vases. These pathetic signs of the value attached to crockery in ancient days are not at all uncommon.

43, p. 298. See *Meroe*, by Garstang, Sayce and Crowfoot, 1912, p. 27. In Plate xiv. there is a photograph of an incised drawing of a full-face sun-god delivering prisoners to a profile Ethiopian king. It was found on a granite rock at Gebel Geili, ninety miles east of Khartum. Its date is not yet ascertained, but it is supposed to be shortly before or shortly after the beginning of the Christian era. At that time there was apparently a struggle between the Egyptian profile manner and the local full-face system of representing figures. It will be very interesting if more examples can be found showing the progress of the struggle down to modern times. A curious instance of the duality of style in those days is seen on a stele (*Meroe*, Pl. xxv.) having on one side a relief of a goddess in the stilted Egyptian style, with only one breast (see Fig. 182), while on the other side a similar goddess is depicted with two breasts in a naturalistic and apparently local style.

44, p. 312. It may be due to other causes, but it is certainly remarkable that the Assyrians should have represented the Gilgames lion as quite small and incapable of offering much resistance. The keen delight in struggling with a noble foe does not seem to have been natural to them any more than it was to the Egyptian Pharaohs.

When sufficient material evidence has been accumulated to enable us to form a better conception of the ideals and the economic conditions of the ruling races in former times, many chapters of ancient history will have to be rewritten, and some of the deeds described will lose their halo of false glory.

Our imaginations have been overfed with descriptions of the delights of conquest and the benefits of plunder. Historians seem to pay no heed to the sufferings of the mangled cattle ; they would only have us listen to the grand roaring of the ravening animals, the noble lions of their romantic pages. But in truth the human beasts of prey are more often like wolves and jackals skulking around to snatch weak helpless victims from unguarded or decrepit flocks. I do not wish to disparage those predatory chieftains, not even when they rob by the power of the purse instead of by the power of the sword. Probably it is necessary for the welfare of the world that there should be beasts of prey. After all, it is chiefly a matter of proportion. It might not be good for the sheep if there were too few wolves, and it would indeed be bad for the wolves if there were too few sheep. Certain classes of men can no more be expected to assist in producing wealth instead of stealing it than wolves can be expected to eat grass.

45, p. 318. I do not mean that all those low reliefs are coarse and brutal. Very fine results were achieved by Assyrian sculptors in their low-relief representations of lions and horses. The lion, certainly, was not such a magnificent animal as the African species, but it seems to have been a fierce and active fighter when brought to bay. Artists, evidently, had many opportunities of storing their minds with vivid impressions of its appearance under many varied conditions, and probably they were keenly interested in the slaughter of animals which at one time were so abundant as to be a serious danger to the inhabitants of the country.

Among those crowded sculptured tablets inordinately glorifying the slaughter both of man and beast, we find

one strange exception—one of the earliest expressions of a sense of pity for a creature in distress. In a hunting-scene where great mastiffs are chasing the wild onager (Fig. 411), a mare seems to have slackened her pace, and she turns her head sadly towards her foal galloping frantically in a vain effort to escape from a fierce pursuing hound. That dark carnival of sordid brutality which constitutes the history of the Assyrian empire is illuminated by a solitary spark of tenderness and sympathy—

"Fair as a star when only one is shining in the sky."

More examples may be discovered when the great gaps in our knowledge of that period have been somewhat reduced in number and in size; but even if no more are found, it is a joy to see that unnamed sculptor's tentative expression of an idea which still has all too little influence on the actions of mankind.

45*a*, p. 325. Instead of instituting comparisons between the two sexes, and attempting to prove woman's equality with man, or even her superiority, it would be better to acknowledge that all wide differentiation of the sexes is an attribute only of the higher animals. Broadly speaking, the higher the class of animal the greater is the difference between the male and the female both in appearance and in habits. It is even noticeable in the different races of humanity, the female having as a rule less resemblance to the male type in civilised nations than among savages. The trouble is that under all frankly competitive systems, whether martial or commercial, woman cannot develop along her own lines, but is continually worsted in her rivalry with the physically more active and concentrative sex.

46, p. 326. In Chaldea we have strange evidence of this reluctance among the rich to accept the duties of motherhood. As an unmarried woman had no good social status, associations were formed, under the guise of religion, to

FIG. 411.—Low relief from the Nineveh palace of Ashur-bani-pal, the king who, about 660 B.C., "by the will of Ashur and Ishtar, took the great city of Susa and for a month and a day swept the country of Elam." The modelling of the wild asses (Onagers) is the greatest triumph of Assyrian art; possibly, however, it was not the work of native Assyrians, but of foreign artists from Asia Minor, where the Greeks had long been settled and had probably inherited some of the old traditions of the Cretans and the Chaldeans. British Museum. About four feet in length.

To face p. 520.

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allow women to be nominally married and yet retain their virginity. They ruled their husbands' houses, and provided them with concubines whose children were considered as legitimate. Thus into the ruling classes a foreign and perhaps inferior element was introduced which probably contributed to their downfall.

Among the males in highly civilised communities the desire or the necessity for keeping their wealth intact has generally resulted in late marriages or few children. The natural consequence is the elimination of the sexually fittest from the upper classes, since the progeny of those who have many children gradually sink in the social scale. There is a survival of those who are fittest—to conserve property. History does not seem to show that they were fit for many other purposes, therefore in times of stress they were unable to defend their hoarded wealth.

47, p. 328. Minos is a strangely unaccountable figure in the ancient legends; a self-made man, cruelly exacting human sacrifices, and yet so famed for justice that he was made the judge of all the dead in Hades. It is still more difficult to imagine what could have been the origin of the story about his son. The Greeks were very practical and observant people, and possibly this myth records their recognition of the fact that the sons of self-made men are often so objectionable, having their father's failings but not his better qualities. It is one of the many evil consequences of excessive wealth, and yet men still pretend that they seek it for the benefit of their children. The evil done to the community by excessive wealth was certainly recognised by the Greeks, although their attempts to mitigate it were not very successful. Some day the civilised nations of the world will realise that just as slavery was more demoralising to the free than to the slaves, so unequally divided wealth is more injurious to the rich than to the poor.

48, p. 333. In *The Works of Man*, by L. March

Phillips (1911), there are some very suggestive passages on this subject. He has shown the far-reaching effects of environment, strengthening his arguments by a careful analysis of the artistic work of the Egyptians. It would be much more satisfactory if writers on art would generally adopt this plan instead of merely expressing their own admiration of the art products they discuss. Vague assertions about the beauty or grandeur of such works are of little value when unsupported by definite reasons and accurate comparisons.

49, p. 349. The powers of Europe are continually becoming more and more dependent on their financial resources. To maintain their strength they must have command of money, and yet money itself is becoming a mere artificial device—a paper convention—a matter of book-keeping. For what is money but a claim? The best definition of it is "A debt due by the community." In old days wealth consisted in actual goods—weapons, houses, cattle, corn—things that could be utilised although they could not be easily transferred. Then wealth became reckoned in gold, a handy form for transference, and also utilisable as long as men and women desired to use it, and there was not enough to satisfy them all. Now gold, being practically indestructible, has accumulated enormously, while the uses for it have diminished, thus its value or "ratio of exchange" has sunk. We can no longer buy a sheep for eight pence as in the good old days. Still it is a convenient intermediary for transferring wealth, and it will remain so as long as men cling to the superstition that it is really valuable even apart from any actual use that can be made of it.

For two thousand years or so gold and silver were almost the only means of transferring wealth to any distance, and they became accepted as standards of value all over the world. Being thus accepted they soon obtained legal sanction, and men bound themselves by law to pay their debts in gold or silver. Then silver became too plentiful; it

lost its legal status and dropped to half its value. Some day the same disaster will befall the owners of red gold. Meanwhile its value is being undermined by cheques and other forms of paper money, so much more suited to the requirements of commerce. During the last hundred years trade has experienced greater changes than in all the previous twenty centuries. Its systems of transference have also been revolutionised, but its method of estimating value is legally still the same. A man or a nation is bound to pay or to receive certain sums of gold, no matter whether they still represent the same value that they had when the contract was first made. Thus England has lost a large percentage of the capital advanced by her to other nations, although nominally the amount is still the same. Germany has lost many millions by storing gold in her war chest at Spandau, for besides losing the interest on it, she cannot buy as much with it as she could have bought forty years ago. The further fall in the value of gold will be disastrous for all the creditor nations, sweeping away their painful savings, and depriving them of a large part of that artificial power which they had acquired by their money claims, those "debts due by the community of nations."

Many years ago I wrote an article for the *Contemporary Review* forecasting the rise in prices and the disasters it might cause, but Sir Percy (then Mr.) Bunting, after hesitating some time and consulting Lord Avebury and Lord Welby, came to the conclusion that there was not much fear of any great trouble, and that anyhow the public was not interested in the question of the variation in the value of gold. I still think that it will be one of the most potent weapons in the warfare of the future, a warfare that will become more and more purely commercial, just as the tyranny of the future will be the tyranny of the money bags, which Carlyle prophesied would be infinitely more sordid and insidious than any tyranny the world had ever known.

50, p. 355. A portion of a seal impression found at

Knossos (Fig. 412) roughly indicates a boat with rowers,

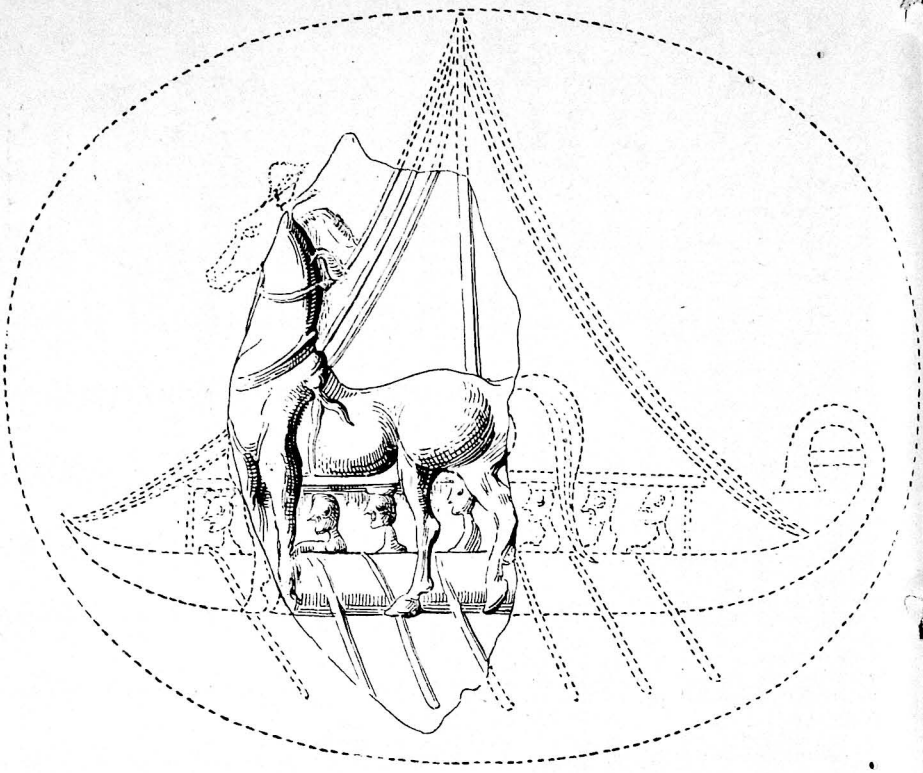

FIG. 412.—Seal impression from Knossos. Scale 4 : 1. Between this representation of a horse and those in the caves of France there is a strange gap, for not a single drawing or carving of a horse has yet been found among the relics of the whole period (of still undetermined length) separating them. Before the discovery of this seal and of the cave drawings the eighteenth-dynasty Egyptian reliefs offered the earliest known representations of horses. They are very conventional and evidently derived from other sources still unknown. They are seldom as good as this Cretan horse, although indeed its designer drew the fore and the hind legs from two different points of view, a mistake often made by his palæolithic predecessors.

but the horse is so much larger than the boat that it was

evidently considered as the most important part of the design. Ships are a difficult subject for an artist who has no practical knowledge of them; even in modern drawings the details are very often incorrect. I cannot help thinking that the Cretans did frequently attempt to depict them; some day we may find evidence of such attempts either in Crete or in the Ægean Islands. Most of the drawings hitherto discovered date from the period when the hardy sailors "of the western isles" had firmly established the prosperity of their country. The results of their success seem to have then been appropriated by a class to whom the joys and perils of a sailor's life were utterly unknown, and therefore not represented in their art.

Do we not find a rather similar state of affairs in Great Britain at the present day? To what extent do ships enter into the mental picture of our own lives? How much do we know or care about our sailors? A man may live all his life in London without ever realising that it is the greatest seaport in the world, and without ever seeing an ocean-going ship or sailor.

51, p. 361. A frame may be noticed scratched round one of the vases; apparently some spoliator intended to cut out this portion of the fresco. It is sometimes difficult to decide whether to blame such men for the destruction they have wrought, or to be grateful to them for saving some small samples from perishing by neglect. I fear that the former verdict will be given by posterity. The paintings would not have perished if the tombs had either not been opened or had been properly covered up afterwards. Too often it was the greed of acquisition which prompted their efforts; in satisfying that greed they destroyed far more than they preserved. For an account of such destruction by Champollion, see W. H. Yates' *Egypt* (1843), vol. ii. p. 422.

52, p. 365. The Ptolemaic system can hardly have been thought of at that time, but the Egyptian and Chaldean

astronomers started with the assumption that the heavenly bodies revolved around and above their world.

53, p. 367. To those who believe that geometric decorative designs are generally if not always evolved by degeneration from the shapes of natural objects, it is very puzzling to find a special and well-developed geometric style suddenly appearing in Crete, apparently without any forerunners. A number of experts still hold that natural objects had no influence in determining the elementary forms of geometric designs, but M. Ed. Pottier has now renounced that view after a careful study of the pottery from Elam. He has given a long account of his investigations in the *Mem. de la Délégation en Perse*, vol. xiii. pp. 27–103. There has been some controversy about the derivation of the rosette, Goodyear ascribing it to the seed vessel of the lotus, and Riegl to the flower seen from above. Irregular rosettes have already been noticed in very ancient work (Figs. 133 and 134), but Fig. 310 shows the earliest known instance of the form so common in later times in Egypt, Assyria, and Greece. A rather similar design is found on the fillet binding the hair of Nefert (Fig. 166), but it really is a round patch with white lines crossing it, possibly representing the stitched lines on appliqué work.

There are but few indications of the Cretan designs having originated in Egypt; they have much affinity with the ancient Elamite work. Further exploration of the interlying districts will lead to very interesting discoveries, showing the course of the evolution of the Kamares pottery. The excavations made in Southern Russia by E. von Stern and other archæologists will have an important bearing on this question, but as most of their reports are written in Russian, and are also not easily obtainable, we shall have to wait until someone will devote himself to that special branch, and will present his results in a condensed and intelligible form.

54, p. 378. This whole design has a remarkable resemblance to a portion of a drawing of the Hathor cow looking out from a mountain above a papyrus grove (Fig. 413). That "full face" representation resembling a sun-flower is very uncommon, and does not seem to be quite natural; it would be very instructive if we could find several other instances of this variation either in Egypt or

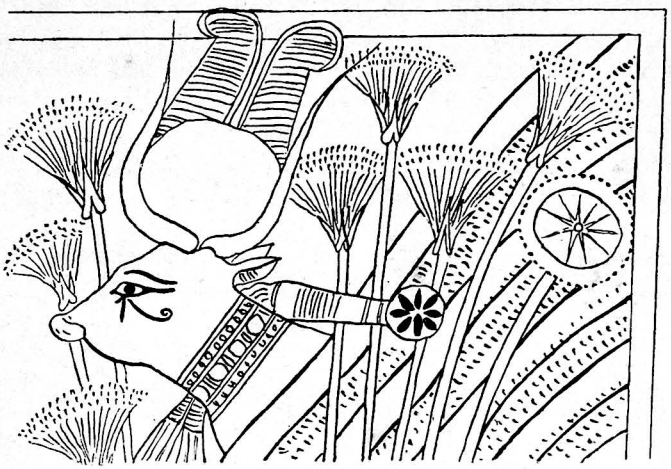

FIG. 413.—Tracing of part of a painting in the papyrus of Ani (No. 37), showing the goddess Hat-hor looking out from her mountain to receive a deceased votary on his way to the land of the dead. This drawing is of about the same date as the Cretan vase—fourteenth or fifteenth century. Half actual size.

Crete. The papyrus flower is really a feathery tuft, rather like the tufts of some of our marsh reeds, or of the Indian grass of our gardens. In very early times (fifth dynasty; see Note 57) it had become so stylised that it cannot easily be distinguished from the stylised lotus, and has therefore given rise to much controversy.

The slanting lines in the papyrus picture represent the mountain; they are quite different from the conventional

zigzag lines drawn by the Egyptians to indicate water; possibly the zigzag lines on the vase were also copied from this mountain picture.

55, p. 381. Hundreds of plain steatite vases of very excellent design have been found in Crete without any trace of gold leaf on them. Gilding seems generally to mark the beginning of a decadent period, when wealth and ostentation extend their baneful sway. The Greek potters adopted the same device in the fourth century when their art had passed its prime.

56, p. 387. Tattooing has recently come into fashion among certain members of the male sex, but criminalogists say that this is due to an atavistic tendency. It has always been popular among sailors, and they also show a fondness for wearing earrings, yet no one would accuse sailors of being womanish in the bad sense of the word. That peculiar inclination may be due to their having a larger share of the *etwas weibliche* which Goethe considered such a necessary ingredient in a man's character. A seafaring life certainly seems to produce those qualities, neatness, patience, tenderness for the weak and suffering, which are justly thought to be generally characteristic of the female sex. It is rather odd that soldiers, who are not supposed to have those qualities so well developed, should share with females a fondness for feathers and for brightly-coloured clothing. Why this should be so would be an interesting study for a psychologist.

57, p. 391. The hunting cat and the papyrus flower seem to show Egyptian influence, but this may have been exercised through the medium of drawings on papyrus sheets, which, being portable, were probably often brought to Crete. It is quite possible that the real origin of these crafts will be traced to Chaldea, where metal working and enamelling had flourished for ages. The discovery of

Maltese crosses on the earliest specimens of Elamite pottery might seem to show that the apparently un-Egyptian cross on the golden head-dress from Dahshur (Fig. 339) was derived from an Eastern source. It is formed of four lotus or papyrus blooms arranged in the wheel form so common on the early Elamite ware (Fig. 206).

There is such a lack of purely decorative designs in Egyptian work previous to the eighteenth dynasty that it

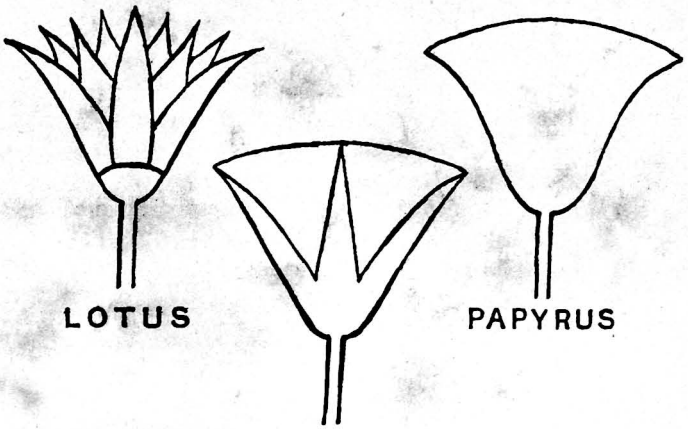

FIG. 414.—The middle figure seems as if it might well be used for either lotus or papyrus. The papyrus often had a number of dots at the top. See Fig. 340-*a*. For other shapes of the lotus flower see Fig. 181.

is unsatisfactory to speculate on the origin of the few specimens hitherto unearthed. An instance of the slight results achieved by such speculations is seen in the discussions of Professor Goodyear and Dr. Riegl (*Stilfragen*, p. 49) about these lotus and papyrus flowers. They thought it could be definitely proved that the bell-shaped outline (Fig. 414) was used only for the lotus bloom, but Egyptologists still call it papyrus. The reopening of Ptah-hotep's tomb in 1895 was expected to throw some light on the subject. It revealed a

painting of men carrying bundles of bell-topped stalks, which Mr. Griffiths in his report (*Egyptian Research Account*, 1898) calls papyrus stems for making boats, but the two men, who are actually gathering the stalks, are apparently pulling them up from a pool full of unmistakable lotus. Plant outlines are so easily stylised and confused that until numerous and definite examples are found it seems impossible to decide which flower the artist wished to represent.

58, p. 392. The discovery by American archæologists of an iron spearhead in twelfth-dynasty (2000 B.C.) deposits throws back the beginning of the iron age to a much more remote period than has hitherto been generally assigned to it. (See *Buhen*, published by the University Museum, Philadelphia, 1911, Pl. 88.) It is a large, well-formed weapon of very modern appearance. There is not, however, much scope in a spearhead for variety of shape; I have bought a very similar one from a native of Assouan.

The iron ore of Central Africa seems to be more easily reduced to a metallic form than the ore of Europe, so that iron may have been used in the southern parts of Egypt when it was still unknown elsewhere, except in those small quantities, which are occasionally found native or fall as meteorites. Its origin being so mysterious, the metal was regarded by the northern nations as something uncanny or perhaps holy. Even now one feels a thrill in handling a piece of meteoric iron which has reached this world after passing through those boundless realms of space so inaccessible to us even in imagination.

59, p. 396. The migrations of the Hottentots and Kaffirs from Central Africa to the southern districts seem to have resembled those of the European tribes into Greece and Asia. The firstcomers fraternised with the Bushmen; there was plenty of room for both races. Then more Northerners came and had to fight their way against their own kindred as well as against the aborigines. Stow, in his

Native Races of South Africa, gives a sketch map of these wanderings, showing the complicated eddies and cross-currents formed by the general stream towards new territory.

60, p. 402. "When Greek art was developed it became a truer record of the natural and popular belief than the literature. For the painter, and still more the sculptor, was usually the servant of the State, executing State commissions; he could not then break away from tradition, but must embody in his work the popular view about the divinity, however he might refine and idealise" (*Cults of the Greek States*, L. R. Farnell, 1896, vol. i. p. 10).

61, p. 412. The strangely persistent influence of soil and climate on invading races, modifying them continually until they reproduce the original type, has been noticed in many lands, even in the United States of America. The white races there are said to be beginning to conform to the hatchet-faced type of the Red Indian. It suggests a curious subject for speculation. Perhaps in the commercial warfare of the future we shall see a revival of the methods of the redskins. From the jungle of their skyscrapers the financial chiefs of "predatory wealth" will issue forth to torture and to scalp the world.

61*a*, p. 429. When Praxiteles was asked which of his own statues he liked best, he is said to have replied, "those which the painter Nicias has coloured for me."

62, p. 438. Some of the fine Hittite slabs recently discovered at Carchemish show men with slender waists similar to the Cretan. The results of the British explorations there will probably be published in 1913. Slender, girdled waists are also seen on Hittite seals.

63, p. 447. The authors do not state whether this date is based on the long or the short chronology, or whether it

was computed independently by estimating the length of time required for the formation of such thick deposits.

64, p. 456. A lady tells me that one of her schoolfellows used always to draw people with triangular bodies. When asked for a reason the little girl replied: "My figures are dressed; yours look as if they had not any clothes."

65, p. 469. In Roscher's *Lexicon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, vol. i. p. 2135, Hercules is said to have been given a spear or sword occasionally, but they were dropped in the fifth century. Even when he wears a sword he is seldom shown as using it. A critical classification of all the various representations of Hercules might give interesting results.

66, p. 472. These "traits réservés" are chiefly seen in the ware made at Rhodes, perhaps the stepping-stone between Chaldea and Greece. M. Pottier says that it is a technique derived from large-scale painting, such as that on the terra-cotta slabs from Caere now in the British Museum. He thinks that the method was imported from Asia Minor.

67, p. 481. For an account of the brushes used see Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, vol. i. pp. 19–24. The Greeks obtained perfection of their outline work by carefully making corrections on the still moist clay; they do not seem to have practised certain strokes until they could make them without a flaw; they preferred to vary and improve their drawings. The Egyptians had perhaps a better mastery in the mere manual execution of such work, but it was obtained by continual repetition of the same sort of stroke. Thus their stereotyped system encouraged art in one way, but killed it in another.

M. Van Gennep has remarked that the Kabyle potters get their brushes from the clotted clumps of hair found on

the muddied skins or tails of their cattle. Perhaps the cave-men's brushes were made in the same way.

67*a*, p. 488. The plumes on the helmets of full-face figures were always drawn double. According to Mr. G. Murray's theory, this would indicate a deliberate attempt to show both sides of the plume, but since his time the idea of deliberate intention has been rather supplanted by the view that these representations are a reproduction of the ordinary

FIG. 415.—Painting on an Ionian amphora. Similarly designed animals are found on Mycenean gems. (*J. H. S.*, 1901, p. 159.) On the lion gate at Mycenæ each animal had a head, but, as Mr. Murray pointed out, the effect on the beholder must have been much more impressive if it gave the idea of one animal facing him and guarding the gate than if it was only considered as two animals facing one another.

memory picture. The plume would seldom be seen absolutely "end on." As the warrior approached, the spectator would see sometimes one side of the plume and sometimes the other. The double representation would therefore seem quite natural, while an absolutely front view would not be recognised at all.

The representations of animals with two bodies and only one head (Fig. 415) would seem to afford a much better proof of Mr. Murray's theory.

68, p. 492. An exception to this general rule in early

drawings is found on a vase by Duris representing a procession (Hartwig's *Meisterschalen*, Pl. 45). Several of the figures are given full face, and some are turning their heads to look at the men behind them.

FIG. 416.—Terra-cotta tablet found at Angelona, in Laconia, in a hillock containing various other vestiges of a sacred enclosure. It is thought to be sixth-century work, but it is much more crude than most of these votive offerings to deceased persons. Stone tombstones have been found in Sparta showing much better execution but a similar arrangement of the figures. About one-third actual size.

That strange Chaldean fancy for depicting profile sitting figures with a full face seems to have an echo or a survival in those crude Hero tablets (Fig. 416) of Greece. The Hero enclosures and monuments appear to have their roots in remote antiquity, and may possibly be connected with traditions derived from Asia Minor and Babylonia.

69, p. 495. Lange mentions a sarcophagus from Kameiros, Rhodes, now in the Greek and Roman department of the British Museum, as showing the earliest example of an accurately-drawn profile eye. The painting used to be considered early sixth-century work, but Mr. A. H. Smith, the Head of that Department, tells me that it is now assigned to the fifth, and is probably not any earlier than the vases with true profile eyes, *i.e.* about 460 B.C.

Ears have not received the attention they seem to deserve from artists and archæologists. That the latter should neglect them is perhaps natural, since the ear is so frequently damaged in carved work and so frequently scamped

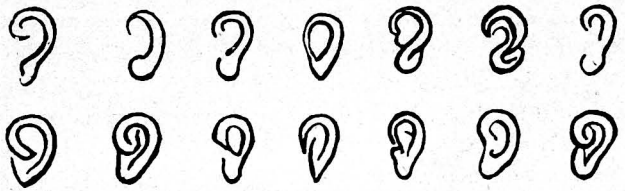

FIG. 417.—Progressive renderings of the ear. Copied by M. Pottier from various Greek vases for his *Catalogue des Vases antiques du Louvre*, III., p. 855.

or hidden in paintings. Fig. 417 shows the course of its development on Greek pottery.

We have already noticed the strange position and size of the ears in many of the Egyptian sculptures and drawings. It may be due to an exaggerated insistence on racial differences (the Central African Bushmen have very small ears), but I have not been able to ascertain that any accurate system of comparison and classification has yet been attempted. The anatomists' "auricular index" is of no assistance in such determinations.

70, p. 495. This seems rather a moot question as regards human faces. Only a few and very indefinite palæolithic drawings of the human full face have yet been discovered, nor do they usually occur in primitive efforts at other

periods. On the other hand, children and some savages delight in full-face representations, and when the rough Roman soldiers drew pictures on the walls of conquered towns they gave full faces to their figures. These three instances may, however, be due to the "artists" having reproduced their "memory picture," not of actual people but of drawings they had seen. Some persons can call to mind a drawing or photograph of a face more readily than they can recall the appearance of the face itself. I do not know if this peculiarity is at all common.

71, p. 496. Even before Diocletian's time there are occasional instances of this return to the primitive type. In the arch of Claudius (41 B.C.) there is a profile relief with a full-face eye (Brunn-Bruckmann's *Griechischer und Römischer Sculptur*, No. 403). In Mrs. A. Strong's *Roman Sculpture* (1907), Pl. 49, there is an illustration of the Trajanic frieze (about 100 A.D.) which was inserted into the arch of Constantine. It shows a well-rendered face of a Dacian, but the Roman soldier who is attacking him is in much lower relief, and has an almost full-face eye.

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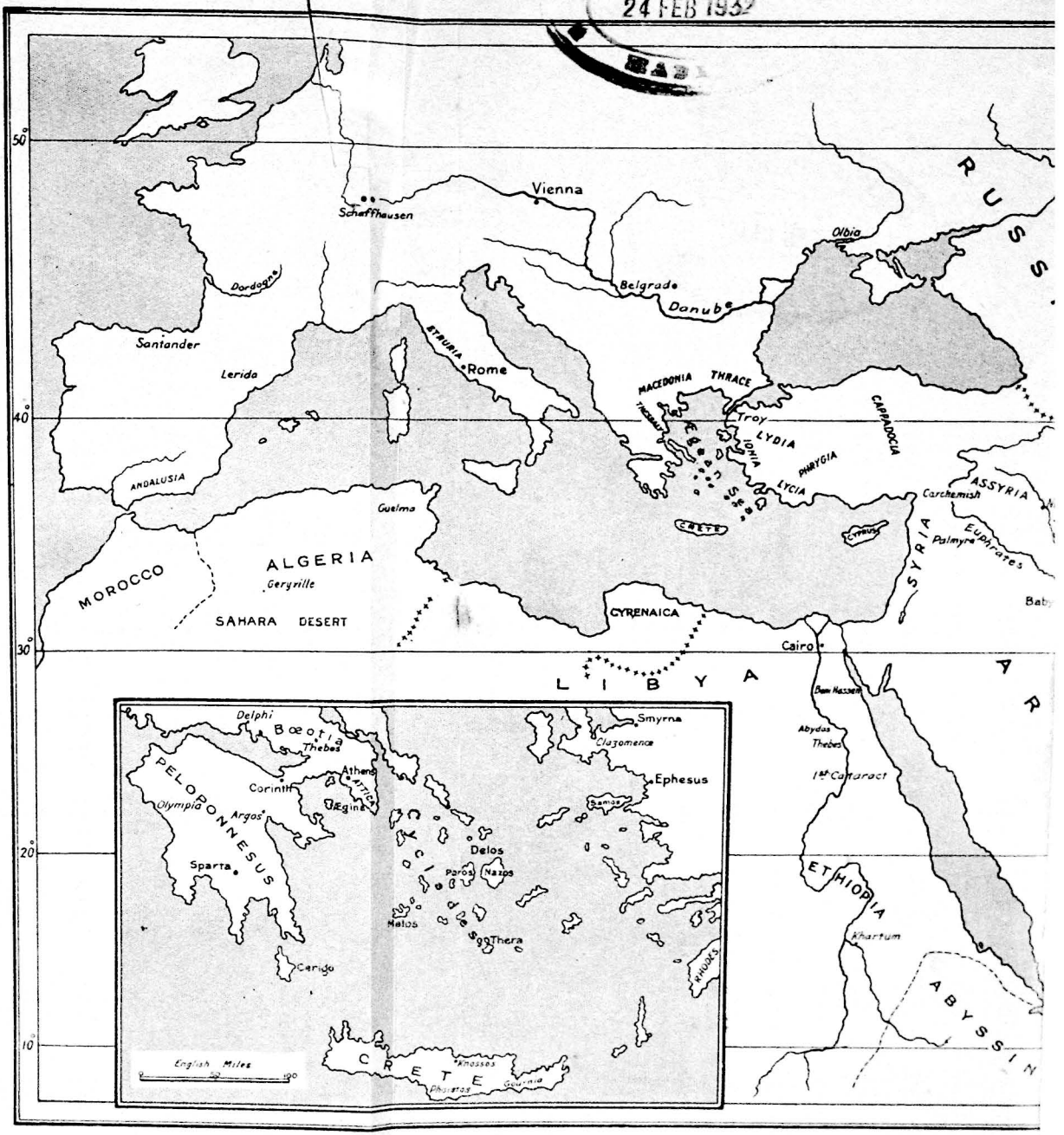

SKETCH MAP SHOWING THE CHIEF PLACES MENTIONED IN THIS BOO