

ON THE ART OF POTTERY.

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To compile a paper upon the ART of POTTERY, suitable in all respects to the audience I see around me, is a task of no common difficulty—for, on the one hand, the subject is so vast, a hundred volumes have not yet done it justice; and on the other, should I skim round its outline with that speed which time would compel me to use, I could not but be conscious that the work was ill done, and that I was repeating the words and story which a host of studious gentlemen have already set out at proper length. The Art of Pottery, in these later days, has had at least its share of attention on the part of students and writers. From Brongniart to Meteyard, from Birch to Marryat, the history of the art has been patiently and conscientiously pursued. None of these authors, perhaps, have made very startling discoveries, and I have none of my own achieving to set before you now. Pottery has been a craft steadily progressive from the first. Some secrets, of more or less value, have been lost from time to time; war or bad management has ruined many famous seats of manufacture; Xeuxis or Raffaele has designed the ware, or, again, some 'prentice hand has done his best to vitiate the public taste; fashions have worked their will; an indiscriminating rage for cheapness has had its way; but the art has always progressed. Its history, though lightened by many graceful and romantic legends, is one of success, and the history of success is generally tame. Those who would know from what beginnings our modern pottery has reached its pitch of excellence, will find a score of voluminous tomes

to enlighten them. I think that I should better employ your time, and I hope fulfil your wishes, in going somewhat astray from the beaten track of history, out into the hedges and the copses, seeking what may be gleaned therein of interesting and novel. Since time will not permit me to elaborate, and propriety of place forbids the introduction of merely technical details, I must plead the necessity of the case if my mode of treatment seem to be rather desultory.

Antiquity of the
Potter's Craft.

So far as circumstantial evidence will enable us to decide, the potter's craft is the oldest of the arts. It came next, to all seeming, after the invention of those tools and weapons which are absolutely needful for the support or preservation of the savage life. The shell mounds of Denmark, says Mr. Nilsson, "abound in instruments of hand-made pottery," though no traces of metals exist. So it is found in all other countries. We cannot, therefore, be surprised to note that the "lake-dwellers" had carried the art to some success, even in their oldest seats. Before man had so far advanced as to gain the service of any animal except the dog—before, it may be, he had learned to build himself a dwelling, he had begun to manufacture "crocks." They were of the rudest form, of course; made of unpicked and unworked clay, hand-shaped, and sun-dried. Frequently enough, when the somewhat obvious device of artificially drying their earthen vessels had dawned upon them, the forefathers of our race plastered a wickerwork basket with clay, and burnt it. In the process, the osier or rushes were consumed, and the pot came from the fire ornamented with the cross-markings of the wicker. I allude to this, as shewing once more how extremes meet. Modern imitators of the charming old Dresden statuettes ingeniously counterfeit the lace-work thereon, by draping their figures in gossamer cotton thread

A modern trick likened
to ancient methods.

which has been previously dipped in a mixture of gum and clay. In firing, the thread dries up and vanishes, leaving the clay suspended like lace.

What specimens we can boast of this primeval earthenware, at least in a perfect state, come to us from the graves of its former owners. I do not call to mind any nation of antiquity in whose funereal rites vessels of earthenware had not a most important part. To this happy circumstance we owe what knowledge has come down to us as to the advance of some most interesting peoples in the art. That strange nation of Chaldaeans, to whose patience and intelligence we owe, perhaps, the beginning of science, has left us, of all its antique magnificence, only a few clay hillocks which once were temples, and its curious tombs of pottery. These are of two kinds, the surface tomb and the buried coffin. The former of them is much the rarer, though vastly more frequent than the brick vault, of which some specimens have been found. The surface tomb was made in this manner: a pavement of sun-dried brick was laid upon the bare earth: on this was spread a mat; the corpse they stretched upon the mat, doubled over, and with its right arm bent across the body so that the hand should lie in the little copper food-dish on the left hand side. Earthen pots, dishes, and sometimes a lamp, were strewn about, with various personal ornaments of the deceased; over all, was set down a gigantic vessel of burnt pottery, shaped just like a dish cover, oval, decorated with rings, and panelled at the flat top, something like our doors. These astonishing trophies of the ancient potter's skill are commonly seven feet long, two to three feet high, and two feet six inches broad at bottom. They are made in one piece. The mighty dish constructed to hold Domitian's turbot, which roused Juvenal's satirical ire, was not so large, if we take M. Brongniart's somewhat arbitrary measurement.

Earliest pottery, if perfect, found in tombs.

The second form of Chaldean burial would seem almost more curious, had we not examples of it in other parts of the world. Two great jars of earthenware, three feet deep by two broad, were prepared. The corpse, somewhat bent at the knees, was slipped into one, the other was thrust over its head; the joining was covered with bitumen, and the coffin, so simply formed, was buried in an artificial mound. There is not here any great proof of skill, but the drainage of these mounds, which often held some scores of dead, shows that antique tradition did not exaggerate the practical science of the Chaldees. They are drained by shafts, reaching from the bottom of the heap to the outer air. These shafts are built of earthenware rings, two feet in diameter, by eighteen inches high, mortised one to another with bitumen. Each ring or section of the pipe is concave, better to resist the pressure. The top piece, which narrows to a small opening by convex steps, is pierced with holes. The drain is filled with broken pottery, and is enclosed in the same for a space of a foot each way. It would puzzle all the ingenuity of modern engineers to design a plan as admirably fitted to its intended purpose; to better it is impossible, since the bodies so protected are found perfect at this day, though crumbling to pieces on exposure. A third kind of burial, also hidden under the earth, is described by Mr. Loftus. The vessel used for the purpose was slipper-shaped, very elaborately patterned with figures of armed men, each in the same attitude, on a panel eight inches square. The opening for the ankle, as one might say, was covered with a lid. These coffins, I believe, are only found at Warka, the ruined city which Mr. Loftus had the privilege of introducing to our knowledge.

Enamelled tiles also, and inscribed cylinders such as people are used more especially to connect with Assyria, are almost as universal in Chaldæan ruins. Mr. Taylor

found them at Mugheir, both in the temple and in a house he excavated at that spot. But it should be noted that the Chaldæan sacred places were highly venerated by the Assyrians also. From this fact some uncertainty hangs about the date of matters of ornament.

Terra-cotta cones, of several colours, were employed to decorate the outside of Chaldæan houses. They were arranged in mosaics, of various patterns. To finish the use of earthenware in building, by this most interesting people, I must mention the discovery of a tier of wide-mouthed cone-shaped vases by Mr. Loftus, in the outer wall of a house at Warka. The cone or body of the urn was solid, and the broad mouth lay flush with the bricks above and below. Whether the vessels so singularly placed answered any purpose, or whether they were considered an ornament, passes our knowledge. Greeks, and Romans also, used *amphoræ* in this manner, either to convey sound more clearly, or to lighten the pressure of a heavy roof. The ordinary ware of the Chaldæans, as we find it in the tombs at Warka, was surprisingly elegant, if we believe it to be of the age the discoverer thought. But Professor Rawlinson, an authority of the highest rank, apparently discredits the suggested date of these graceful objects. He seems to consider that pure Chaldæan pottery, extremely rude at its earliest, never reached the excellence attributed to it by the evidence of these specimens.

I have said that the custom of burying the dead between two urns is not peculiar to Chaldæa. That very interesting Island, Corsica, shows us a practice exactly similar. So admirably is the joining of the two jars fitted in these instances, that some have supposed the body was placed inside before the vessels were baked. This suggestion is not without reason. At Susa, the ancient city of Persia, corpses are

Urn Coffins in
Corsica.

found buried in a vessel which they could not possibly have been made to enter through the mouth. There is no doubt that the jar was, in their case, moulded over the body, and pierced to allow the gases to escape.

The famous discoveries at Salona
 In Greece. prove that even the Greeks used this mode of burial at some uncertain date.

They employed but one vessel, sawn in two down its length. The corpse was slipped between, and the coffin put under ground. No special form of jar was used by them, but,

Wood Coffins of like
 fashion in Britain.

apparently, a very large amphora. I would remind you that our forefathers in this island sometimes made coffins after the same model, but in wood. They sawed a tree-trunk lengthwise, hollowed out each piece, and put the body inside. Such have been found in various places in Kent and Sussex, and in Northumberland.

And among Indians of
 Brazil.

An Indian tribe of Brazil, the Coroados, are described by M. Debret as burying their chiefs in great earthenware jars. The body is thrust in sitting, with its ornaments, fans of feathers, and arms. On discovery, it is found to be mummied, whether before interment, or so altered by the circumstances of burial, does not appear. Nor must I omit to mark a curious passage in Pliny's Natural History bearing on this point. In his eulogy upon the "bounteous earth," he remarks that "many people have chosen to be buried in *solia* of earthenware." The common meaning of *solium* is certainly a seat or chair. Frequently used, however, for the sitting bench of a large bath, it came, by *synetuche*, to signify the bath itself. Suetonius uses it to express a marble sarcophagus (Nero, 50). But the remainder of the passage forbids me to believe that a mere sarcophagus was intended, the more especially since such vessels were too common for

notice. Pliny goes on: "M. Varro, for instance, was buried in the true Pythagorean style, amidst leaves of myrtle, olive, and black poplar; indeed, the greater part of mankind make use of earthen vases for this purpose." I will not pretend to say exactly what this means, but I am convinced that it cannot be any allusion to the ashes of the dead. The paragraph will be found, lib. xxxv., cap. 46. Varro himself tells us that both Cato and Cicero expressed their wish to be buried in earthen urns. Cato, we are aware, was an enthusiast in the matter of pottery. He repeatedly upheld the modest and decent service of earthenware against the prevailing extravagance of gold and silver plate.

Assyrian pottery will not detain us long. It very strongly resembles the Assyrian Art. Egyptian, though somewhat more elegant in shape, and thinner. It is likewise brighter of colouring, and made for purposes in which the Egyptian used other materials. Professor Rawlinson will not allow us to suppose that the great Asian monarchy was indebted to Africa for her arts; but the student cannot fail to note an astonishing resemblance between them. At the same time, the old idea of a colonisation from Egypt is quite untenable. The Assyrians used terra-cotta largely in the ornamentation of their houses. As you know, a line of granite slabs, sculptured with the great doings of their monarchs, formed a lofty wainscot to their halls, whilst the short corridors leading from one to another were decorated with colossal bulls, &c. Above these slabs ran a line of tilework, of very graceful and ingenious device, but subdued in tone. Pale blue, olive green, and dull yellow predominated, with white, black, and brown occasionally introduced; red was rare. To this line of Arabesques, if we may follow up Mr. Layard's system of restoration, succeeded a zone of figures, also represented in tilework, rather more highly coloured. These enamels, whilst

reminding us of Chaldaean art, show a vast improvement. The Assyrians also made statuettes in clay, some, if not all of which, were coloured. But the most striking use to which they put their skill in earthenware was the manufacture of those historical tablets set up by the kings to commemorate their successes and their piety. They are hexagonal or octagonal prisms in shape, and vary from a foot and a half to three feet in height. The material is terracotta of the thinnest and finest description, and "they are covered closely," says Professor Rawlinson, "with a small writing, which it often requires a good magnifying glass to decipher. A cylinder of Tiglath Pileser I. (about B.C. 1180) contains thirty lines in a space of six inches, or five lines to to an inch, which is as close as the type of the present volume." I quote from *The Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i., cap. 5. "This degree of closeness is exceeded on a cylinder of Asshur-bani-pals (about B.C. 660), where the lines are six to an inch, or, as near together as the type of the *Edinburgh Review*." That cuneiform scholars, laboriously working out a language dead long since, from inscriptions of which no alphabet remains, do not bless the skill of those ancient scribes, will easily be believed. Besides these cylinders, vast numbers of flat tablets have been discovered, relating to all sorts of subjects—history, astronomy, religion, grammar, and geography. By means of these potsherds we shall probably be able at no distant time to get as accurate an idea of Assyrian manners and life as we possess of Jewish habits.

But the most astonishing use to which Chaldaeans, or Babylonians at least, put their ingenuity as potters lay in the issue of what are supposed to be promises to pay, or, in fact, bank notes of earthenware. Of such extraordinary objects, Mr. Loftus found not less than forty in the ruins of Warka, and they are now in the British Museum. Sir Henry

Rawlinson gives it as his "suspicion," that the "smaller cakes correspond to notes of hand of the present day, the tenor of the legend being apparently an acknowledgment of liability by private parties for certain amounts of gold and silver" received from Government. "The more formal documents, however, seemed to be notes issued by the Government for the convenience of circulation, representing a certain value, which was always expressed in measures of weight, of gold or silver, and redeemable on presentation at the Royal Treasury."* After this example you will readily credit that the Chaldees, Assyrians, and Babylonians were very well acquainted with all possible uses of pottery, and some that might have seemed impossible.

Although the Egyptians were quite well acquainted with the art before our earliest records of them reach, they never attained any great success therein, save for the manufacture of that celebrated body which is often called porcelain. The clay of Egypt is eminently fitted for making coarse, porous ware, but it never could compete with the clays of Europe. The industry of the people, however, and their frugality enabled them to set up and keep a very wide commerce in their ungraceful earthenware. They traded in every direction, underselling the productions of more tasteful but less business-like people. We find the coarse Egyptian ware in every country. It seems probable to many that on the banks of the Nile the secret of the potter's wheel was first discovered. Pliny is most certainly mistaken in giving the honour of this discovery to an Athenian. The Egyptians had not only used it, but had painted pictures of the use of it, before the men of Athens had ventured to descend from the rocky protection of their Acropolis. Sir Gardner

Egyptian Pottery.

* *Athenæum*, March 15, 1851.

Wilkinson, indeed, would have us believe that the Mesopotamian habit of writing upon clay, which we have just been considering, was borrowed from Egypt. The upholders of Asian ingenuity, on the other hand, would assert that even the shapes of Assyrian pottery were original. It is not for us to consider this point. The close resemblance of their ware cannot be denied.

At a very early period glazed tiles were used by the Egyptians. They were only of black and white, and employed as a sort of wainscoting. A chamber in the pyramid of Jakara was thus embellished, whilst alabaster slabs here and there relieved the monotonous effect. They had also learned the art of perfuming their porous ware, and Mr. Marryat tells us that the secret is employed to this day. Such perfumed ware has been several times found in the distant tombs of Etruria, a proof of wide commerce. Here, as elsewhere, we find pottery in intimate relationship with the funereal rites. Besides the common vases, the figures, and the glass vessels, which I shall allude to presently, Sir Gardner Wilkinson found on one occasion a sarcophagus of earthenware. It was "very similar to our tiles, made in two pieces sewn together, small holes having been made in the clay before it was burnt." This vessel represented a human figure, but only the lower half remained. More curious is the so-called porcelain of their own manufacture found in Egyptian tombs. This very elegant substance was really a form of glass, although an authority so distinguished as Mr. Birch does not seem to be fully convinced of the fact. It was made of fine sand, loosely fused, and very thickly coated with silicious glaze. The colour penetrated in some cases almost through the substance. The ground was nearly always blue or green, traversed by figures or lines in white, purple, yellow, or red. Of such material were made all sorts of vessels,

figures, rings and ornaments, which, before the introduction,—before the invention probably,—of true porcelain, commanded a ready sale over all the world. Many of them are ornamented with patterns of considerable taste and intricacy. Hieroglyphic inscriptions, flowers, and the peculiar Egyptian necklace called *usch*, are found not unfrequently. Fish feeding on the young stalks of the lotus is a favourite device. In this, one and the same head is ingeniously fitted to three separate bodies, so as to provide each with a mouth, though one eye does duty for all three. Earthenware also was painted, though not commonly, nor with much skill. Such ornament is seldom more important than the lotus flower, or a few leaves. But Rosellini found a wall-painting at Thebes, in which was depicted a vase adorned with drawings of calves playing in the shade of some bushes. The Egyptians had the art also of coating carvings in cheap stone, with their opaque glass, and thus rendering, at small expense, all the effect of finish which would have been, perhaps, impossible for them to give in the softer substance. Their colours were mineral.

The objects of real porcelain found in Egyptian graves puzzle all enquirers vastly. That such are met with, and not unfrequently, is quite beyond dispute. It is not one or two, but scores, that have been found. No collection is without them. Can we then believe, as has been suggested, that the poor Arab population which has occupied these tombs as dwellings can have brought them there? Before listening to such a suggestion, it would be necessary to shew that the modern Arabs commonly use such things. This has not been attempted, and scientific explorers who have lighted upon them express conviction that the tombs wherein they were found had not been opened by the Arabs. But, on the other hand, it is the belief of educated Chinese, that porcelain

Chinese Porcelain
in Egypt.

was discovered by Sin-ping, not earlier than the second century before Christ; and, again, it is alleged by Mr. Medhurst that the form of character in which the motto on these vessels is described, did not come into use in China before the third century of our era; and, indeed, that the poems from which some of the little verses are extracted, were not written before the eighth or eleventh centuries. This is a surprising muddle. We must either believe that the destitute *fellaheen* camping in those tombs have a habit of carrying Chinese scent bottles wherever they go, and of leaving them behind,—which is grotesquely improbable; or we must suppose that the established idea in China as to the time when porcelain was discovered is wholly mistaken; and also, which is much the most likely supposition, that English scholars have not yet so thoroughly mastered a most difficult tongue as to be able to fix the date of its archaic forms.

Before touching upon Etruscan, Greek, and Roman pottery,—schools of manufacture that may be said to have formed our modern English taste in art,—I think it will be thoroughly in the spirit of my design to utter some brief words upon American earthenware. Its importance does not merit great attention, but no survey of the potter's art could be at all complete without allusion to the praiseworthy, if eccentric, efforts of the Western aborigines.

In trying to solve that much-contested

American Pottery. problem as to the comparative civilisation
or barbarism of America before the
Spaniards' coming, it may be well to remember that the
potter's wheel was most certainly unknown to its most
enlightened peoples. Some of them, especially the various
Aztec colonies and the Peruvians, doubtless manufactured
vases and other articles, with a skill surprising under the
circumstances. From their graves are obtained such great
quantities of excellent ware, that the people in some parts of

Central America wholly depend upon the spade for their supply of pottery. It is to be had of all sizes, of many shapes, and of diverse quality. Mr. Frederick Boyle, in his visit to Nicaragua, saw antique vases in use by the cottagers which would hold twenty to twenty-five gallons. He himself dug out some of the odd funereal urns, shaped something like a shoe, but round-bottomed, which might contain five to ten gallons. These large articles were made of excellent dark clay, unglazed, but painted in black and red. They were about half an inch thick, and perfectly serviceable. The greater part had a raised ornament of two snakes upon the small or "toe" extremity. In this urn were laid the ashes of the dead, with various personal gear, and several pieces of handsomer crockery, bowls and cups and tripod dishes. Of this there are two sorts; one of a fine black clay, singularly light, adorned with rough patterns, scratched with a pin, and always flat bottomed; the other of coarser clay, glazed with a thick cream-coloured material which may be easily chipped off, and decorated with paintings, apparently hieroglyphical, in chocolate and red; both these vases are decidedly handsome; a large bowl of the cream-coloured pattern covered the mouth of the funereal urn.

Many objects of unusual shape were made in earthenware by the Aztec peoples. Figures, both human and animal, are found in great numbers. The finest collection of these works is in the Museum of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia. There, amongst very many curious objects, are preserved twenty-eight masks in pottery, varying from about half life-size to gigantic dimensions. These are believed to have been worn upon certain religious commemorations. So the Romans, in their *exsequiæ gentiliū*, bore waxen masks of their ancestors, perhaps, as Mr. Marryat seems to think, upon earthenware figures; but this is almost more than doubtful. The *codices*, or picture histories of

Mexico, often represent characters wearing masks. The human statuettes are frequently caricatures. Amongst the unusual shapes for earthenware found in America are flutes and whistles. The latter very common. It is not, of course, surprising that of porcelain there is no trace at all in any part. But I understand M. Brasseur de Bourbourg to enumerate this amongst the Manufactures of the Mayas and the Quichés (*Histoire des nations civilisées du Mexique*). That learned writer probably uses the word loosely. You will remember that authors so judicious as Prof. Rawlinson and Sir Gardner Wilkinson, both employ the word for Assyrian and Egyptian ware. Bernal Diaz also speaks of *porcellana* in America; but this term, now exclusively applied to porcelain, seems at that date to have expressed, firstly, a little pig; secondly, a small covered cup of any material; and, thirdly, a cowrie, or other shell, of the like shape. These latter meanings came from the first, by a supposed likeness of the objects to the back of a pig. It may well be that the old Spaniard meant to speak of some ornamental shells. The Peruvian pottery bears a curiously near resemblance to the Aztec. It is perhaps even more eccentric in its irregular pieces, but less brilliantly painted. As I have already said, the potter's wheel was not known to any American race, though their modellers show an astonishing facility and skill in shaping intricate designs. This ignorance of a very simple but most necessary instrument should be borne in mind by those who discuss the point of progress the Americans had reached. It is not yet so very many years since Mr. Robertson alleged, with the full belief of everybody, that the Western Continent had no history at all until the Spaniards' coming—that its peoples were naked savages—and the testimony of Cortes' historians, in so far as it was known, was put down as simple falsehoods. This we now see to have been absurdly erroneous. But there are not

wanting signs that the world may be tempted to the opposite extreme of believing the Aztecs, the Mayas, and the Peruvians to have been vastly more advanced than Europeans at the same period. This, I take it, would be an error even more preposterous than the first.

It is not without hesitation that I include these three eminent manufactures, the Etruscan, the Greek, and the Roman, in my short and desultory review. If, on the one hand, it may be truly urged that without allusion to them any account of pottery would be as grotesque as the play of Hamlet with the Prince left out, it must on the other hand be recollected that worthily to treat this subject would need a score of times the space I have allowed me. Not the lowest of the Greek arts could be discussed, as one discusses the highest efforts of earlier nations; and pottery was held in great esteem amongst these people, as shall be shown hereafter; but, whatever the difficulties of the task, I could not speak with propriety of modern art without telling somewhat of the schools which guide our judgment in so many points.

Although I follow common custom in placing the mysterious nation of Etruria as before Greece in the rank of discovery, it is not more certain that such was the true order than that Assyrian art preceded Egyptian — scarcely so much so. The belief of antiquity is plain, that the Greeks instructed the Etruscans. Did we possess those books of Etrurian history which the Emperor Claudius compiled, we should know better how the matter was regarded. But all extant authorities agree. Corobœus, the Athenian, discovered the potter's wheel, and Demaratus, of Corinth, introduced the art of pottery into Etruria. We have already seen that half the Eastern world, at least, forestalled the Athenian's discovery; and it may very likely be that Demaratus did to his Italian hosts only that act of kindness which schoolboys call

“teaching my grandmother.” But the historical existence of this Corinthian noble, his exile from Greece, the wealth and numerous suite he brought to Tuscany, are amongst the best attested facts of early Roman history; the main tale, I believe, is not generally doubted. But the adventures of Demaratus himself are no better warranted than the existence of his followers, Eucheir and Eugrammas, who, as we are again and again assured, taught the art of pottery to the Etruscans. The names of these two persons are doubtless untrue, but their meaning, “Clever-handed,” and “Clever-draughtsman,” rather goes to confirm tradition than to weaken it. Strabo says that even the Etruscan alphabet was brought over by these Greek exiles. The Latins would have it that, only one hundred years before the foundation of Rome, the Etrurians were a people ignorant of the elements of civilisation. This view is, of course, quite absurd, and yet I have little doubt that Demaratus did introduce that more elegant, though still rugged art, which formed the second period in Etruria.

The third period, when the great painted vases were produced, which we now regard with as much astonishment as delight, was distinctly Greek. Though, perhaps, none exactly resembling these are found in Greece itself, the origin or model of them all has been discovered in several places there. In the Dodwell Museum at Rome is a small broken vase, disinterred at Corinth, the city of Demaratus. It is of pale clay, the bowl painted in three or four colours, with chimæras, sphynxes, and griffins, after the Egyptian manner; and the neck bears a number of fighting figures in black. Each warrior has his name above him in Greek characters. Few persons, after looking at that fragment, have any longer doubted whence the pseudo-Etruscan art arose. I am not aware that any persons longer uphold the originality of these great works.

There is, however, a pottery earlier than the Greek intermixture, not at all unworthy of respect. This indeed was not original, but modelled after the Egyptian, with chimæras, sphynxes, and griffins, such as prevailed in Archaic Greek ware. It was either painted in black and red, on a yellow ground, or black, not painted, but of black clay, with animals and arabesques in basso-relievo. These vases are so unquestionably Egyptian in model, that eminent antiquarians have contended they were imported from the Nile. After these specimens of the native art, we come, as I think, directly to the influence of the Greek exiles. This is shown in the sudden appearance of a red or yellow ware, with stiff Egyptianesque figures in black. There is little of the ease and grace which we are accustomed to call Greek amongst them, but neither was there in the parent art at that time. Eucheir, and Diopus, and Eugrammus did not change the fashions of the ware in a day; nor, probably, did they themselves know much better, seeing that the Corinthian model is far from graceful. But the colonies of Greece in Italy spread fast, and a constant intercourse was kept up across the Adriatic. Taste in the mother country marched with wondrous strides, the colonies advanced almost as fast; and to Greek influence, though not, it may possibly be, to Greek hands, we owe those magnificent creations which have been a marvel and an envy to all later potters. The Greek city of Nola was the seat of the manufacture, and nowhere but in Greco-Etruscan settlements is it found in full perfection, save in the rarest instances.

But, as I thoroughly admit a native though not original art of no mean character, so I believe that the Etruscans employed their acquired skill to purposes seldom sought after by their masters. Clay was extensively used by them for statues and portraits, vastly more commonly than by the Greeks. Besides those large figures of the dead, which are

found in Etruscan tombs, they made statues of gods and men of terra-cotta, as well as of marble and bronze. How admirably clever were the Etruscan sculptors in bronze, we can ourselves observe, in admiring the she-wolf of the Capitol, or the boy playing with a goose at Dresden. Veii, before its destruction by Camillus, had four thousand public statues, of which a great part were fictile. The city was famed for its modellers, one of whom, Volcanius, was summoned to Rome, by Tarquin the Elder, to construct the figure of Jupiter for the Capitol. This statue, we are told, was painted over with *minium*, a red mineral colour. The far-famed *quadriga*, or four-horsed chariot, which stood on the pediment of the Capitol, was of the same manufacture. The *Hercules fictilis* also was wrought by an artist of Veii, Volcanius, as Pliny says. Up to the latest times the *dii fictiles*, probably of Etruscan origin, held a place of great respect. The temple of Veientian Juno, on the Aventine, was amongst the wealthiest in Rome; and this statue also was of clay. But at a later date, as I shall show, the custom of modelling statues in terra cotta was known to, and much practised by, the Greeks.

A more curious proof of the general use made by this people of earthenware, is seen in their coinage of clay, if, indeed, we are not mistaken in so recognising the singular objects discovered at Todi and elsewhere. There is no information at all procurable as to the employment of these things. Schoolmasters, perhaps, made use of the same material, as a sort of substitute for our copy or account-book. The most useful, though not the most elegant object yet found in the tombs, has been described as an inkstand. However this be, the vessel bears on it the Etruscan alphabet, both in characters, and expressed in syllables. Upon very many vases, mural paintings, arms, and other objects, are found writings in the ancient tongue of the country, some-

times upon the vases which are now generally admitted to be manufactures of the Greek colonists. Before the discovery of this remarkable object, some thirty-five years ago, the learned were wholly in the dark as to the value of these letters. By its aid they have generally satisfied themselves, I believe, that the characters are of the same root as the Greek, though older than any extant in that tongue. I would be understood to speak with great diffidence on this point; but Dionysius of Halicarnassus says that the Etruscans resembled no other people either in language or manners; and his authority is of peculiar value, seeing he wrote a lengthy work upon their history, now lost. Strabo, on the other hand, says that Demaratus brought over the alphabet with his suite of potters. The subject is very difficult, and does not fortunately come within the limit of this paper. But we are told that the Greek alphabet for the most part came from Egypt with Cadmus, and the Etruscan arts may yet prove to be, as Strabo gives it in his opinion, all Egyptian, or Archaic Greek.

I come now to that people to whom we owe, if not the very beginning or initiation of art, certainly its highest development. Amongst the numberless excellencies of this most favoured race, their taste and skill in the potter's craft stands in the first rank. Here, as in other arts, we may envy and imitate, but cannot rival. But it must be noted that the Greeks took every means to encourage excellent workmen. Flaxman was accused of degrading his noble profession when he undertook to model for the potter Wedgwood. There have been many critics found to deny the drawings attributed to Raffaele, which lie in the Santa Casa at Loretto, solely on the ground that so great a painter *could* not have designed the ornaments for pots and pans. But Xeuxis, who was probably a greater man than he, did not

Greek Potters.

disdain to paint vases,—as some read it, to “throw” them with his own hands. Specimens of his work, we are told, existed at the city of Ambracia, in Philip’s time. But it should be added, on the other hand, that the Greeks were in the habit of raising statues to their great potters, and striking medals in their honour. We may, perhaps, even understand that the most famous works of every year were publicly exhibited at the great festivals. There is nothing improbable in such a custom. Pictures were shown there, poems recited, plays acted. Herodotus even, as you know, read his history, or, perhaps, a part of it, to the people assembled for the Olympic games. But some little uncertainty is thrown upon the display of fictile works by the fact that the prize in athletic contests was a vase, and the strong probability that such prizes would be set out for public admiration beforehand, as is our custom at this day. However it be, the Greeks looked upon the potter’s craft, in its artistic forms, with great respect. Homer alludes to it several times in the *Iliad*, and even addressed a poem to the Samian potters. If we believe the story as told in the great poet’s life, ascribed to Herodotus, he composed this lyric in gratitude for the shelter afforded him by the warm kilns of these primitive artificers one cold, wet night. Kilns capable of sheltering a man testify to no mean business. But we must not place too much reliance on a mere story like this. The poem is an extravagant address to Athené for protection of the Samian potters.

I have already mentioned their claim to the discovery of the wheel, which was advanced by several cities, most especially by Athens and Corinth. In these two spots arose the more important of the home schools of pottery; for it is to be remarked that the native Greeks never, so far as we know, acquired such wondrous skill as did several of their colonies, who engrafted the taste of their fatherland upon the

style of the people they settled with. Mr. Birch opines that in Asia Minor high art in pottery first arose, amongst the Greek colonies of Corun. Neither Athens nor Corinth struck out, at first, an original style of art, any more than Etruria. Egyptian influence was paramount for a length of time. The earliest unpainted vessels are not to be distinguished from those of Egypt, and the first fictile vases we discover have been energetically claimed as real products of the Nile dwellers; but the chain of progress is not anywhere broken. From the pale red body, adorned with grotesque animals and disproportionate arabesques in brown, to the glossy background of Xeuxis' time, bearing exquisite human figures of several tints, we may watch the gradual advance. The first style, perhaps, was the Athenian, in which the ground was yellow, or pale red, decorated with designs in brown outline, too large generally for the piece. The Corinthians, as might be expected from their position, were even more Egyptianesque than the men of Athens. They used the chimæra and other ornaments of the like source, such as the lotus flower, the sphynx, and arbitrary patterns. One notable distinction of the Corinthian school was the introduction of flowers on a yellow ground.

After the few remaining specimens of this class, we find a series in which men began to appear, side by side with the earlier decoration. They are extremely rude and stiff, archaic in design, as it is usual to describe them. Of this class is the famous vase of the Dodwell Museum, which has been already spoken of as the prototype of Etruscan pottery. By this time, which is probably five to six hundred years B.C., the pale ground of earlier days has changed to a bright red, and the figures and ornaments to black. Then came the fashion of leaving white the faces, and parts of the dress in some figures. And so the art marched on, always growing more beautiful and perfect, until several tints—crimson, blue,

vermilion, and purple, were worked in. The colour of the ground was revolutionised once more, for it became black, and the figures changed to red. This was in the days of Grecian glory, when the grandest sculptors and painters handled the potter's tools. With the glory of Greece the art kept pace, and did not survive its decline. The treasures of Asia, poured into Hellas, ruined the simply beautiful manufacture of earthenware. With the loss of freedom came, all at once, the ostentatious luxury of a military *noblesse*. The potters made one effort to hold their ground against a flood of gold. They brought out a new ware, still black in body, but with figures in white, and glazed. It was of no use. The grand pottery of Greece died about 250 B.C., killed by the spoils of Persia.

But I must add that, in regard to these painted vases, there has been no light question amongst scholars as to the use or purpose of them, at the best. They are rarely or never found to bear traces of usage. I notice that M. Millin, in his *Dictionary of Art*, asserts that the Etruscan specimens have at no time served for use, so far as can be judged. We moderns obtain large vases from China and elsewhere, and employ them merely as furniture; but the Greek houses were not fitted to receive anything of the sort, nor to show it off if received. Winckelmann, however, an authority beyond doubt, alleges that many vases he had seen have proved to be one-sided, the painting on one face being very imperfect by comparison. This same inequality is even found to occur in some of the *anochoæ*, or wine cups. This would seem to be almost conclusive testimony to the ornamental use of them in some shape; and indeed we know, by the mural paintings uncovered at several spots, that the exterior of houses, both Greek and Roman, was adorned with vases, as are Italian villas to this day. The objection to this idea is that the painting is nearly in all cases so

minute it could produce no effect at all from the ground. Nevertheless, as a question of fact, I would point out that the Temple of Castor and Pollux at Athens was certainly surmounted by fictile urns, on which were represented the various athletic struggles that were practised at the games of which they were patrons. I have already said that a painted vase was the prize in such contests, filled with oil from the olive trees in the grove sacred to Athene, or of the Fates. Of such vases we have been so happy as to find one still existing, which is thus described by Mr. Birch:—"It is of pale, salmon-coloured clay, on which the figures are painted in a blackish brown colour, while the parts not painted are of a pale black leaden glaze. The subject represents, on one side, Pallas Athene standing between two columns of the *Palæstra*, surmounted by cocks, the birds sacred to Hermes and the Games. She is dressed in a talaric tunic, and armed with her ægis and shield, the device, or *episemon*, on which is a dolphin; in her other hand she holds her lance. Inscribed on the vase is a perpendicular line of Greek, reading from right to left:—TON: AΘENEΘEN: AΘAON: EMI: "I am the prize from Athens." On the other side is a man driving a *biga*, or *synoris*, and urging the horses with a goad, whilst jingling bells are attached to their necks. There can be no doubt but that this is one of the very *amphoræ* described by Pindar, when he sings of the Theïcus, son of Ulias of Argos. As a prelude to future victories, "sacred songs twice proclaimed him victor in the sacred festivals of the Athenians, and the fruit of the olive tree came over in the splendid vessels of earth burnt in fire for the manly people of Juno." It held the holy oil from the olive grove of the Moiræ, or Fates. When discovered, it was filled with the burnt ashes of its former owner, and also with several small vases, which probably held the oil, milk, and other substances found upon the pyre. Its age is at least as early as the sixth century B.C.

To return to the use of vases, it seems most probable, since these objects were certainly not made for use, that they were set up on high, at a reasonable elevation, in the grounds and on the roofs of the houses of wealthy men, waiting their death. In regard to the numbers of earthen vessels found in Greek and Etruscan tombs, I must not omit a curious remark of Winckelmann, viz., "that no author anywhere alludes to the habit of placing vessels in the grave, other than the urn containing the ashes of the dead, although a painted vase by Xeuxis and other great artists must have had fabulous value." This singular observation, together with the inviolable sanctity of the mountainous Etruscan graves throughout Roman times, and the inexplicable scenes depicted on many vases, have led some to think that these beautiful works were connected with the initiation to religious mysteries, were presented to the neophyte on such occasions, and were buried with him. It is to be observed, in connection with this, that the Etruscans did not need a cinerary urn, seeing they buried their dead in place of burning them. The rifling of the graves of Greece and Italy is due to the greed and fanaticism of Christians and Barbarians. Whilst the hollow earth around was full of earthen treasures, ancient vases fetched such a price in Rome that a dish of gold was cheaper. It was, I think, Julius Cæsar who paid six silver talents for a specimen. We have other evidence besides of the value set upon these things, even at the time of their manufacture. Many of the finest works discovered are found to have been broken and most carefully mended by the owners at some time, before they were committed to the earth.

The Greeks did not employ terra-cotta to such an extent as did the Etruscans. The *dii fictiles* of Italy were not used by them. But of figures on the façades of temples, made in this material, we have many instances. The temple of Zeus, at Elis, was adorned with a representation of the race

between the horses of Pelops and Ænomaus. That of Pallas, at Athens, had the birth of that goddess modelled upon the front façade, and the contest between herself and Poseidon upon the back. In pottery adapted for the common use of life, Greece did a large trade. Some of the amphoræ exported to Thrace and the islands were of enormous size. The celebrated *bas-relief* of the Villa Albani, figured by Winckelmann in his History of Art, represents Diogenes seated in the mouth of a *pithos*, or tub, the material of which is evidently earthenware. Alexander stands in front of him, and a little dog vehemently barks at the world's conqueror from the top. The *pithos* has been broken, and is held together by clamps. If we are to suppose this illustration as at all true to fact, the Greeks must have manufactured giant works indeed. Diogenes could stand upright in the mouth of his tub. I have read somewhere, but the passage has slipped my memory, that such vast objects were moulded upon wood. Tiles were amongst the earliest objects of earthenware manufactured by the Greeks, and their excellence in this branch of art has never been surpassed. Enamelling was not then known; but the exceeding beauty of their moulded tiles and cornices excites our admiration to this day. Vitruvius lays it down that the spout for carrying off rain water should be modelled in the shape of a lion's head; and of such gurgails several specimens have come down to us. Cornices, adorned with the *helix*, or honeysuckle ornament, the lotus flower, and mingled lines of red, blue, brown, and yellow, seem to have been common at the earliest period. During the time when burial prevailed in Greece, the grave was paved with flat tiles, and arched over with tiles adapted for the purpose.

Another use of earthenware was for the manufacture of flower-pots. Theophrastus, I quote from Mr. Birch, observes,

Flower-pots.

incidentally, that 'southern wood' is a plant difficult to raise, and commonly propagated from slips in pots. Our custom of growing flowers at the window is as old as the oldest historical times. It has been suggested, with great plausibility, that many of those utensils commonly classed as lamps, which bear as many as twelve or twenty branches, were really used for growing some sort of plants, as we grow hyacinths.

And although terra-cotta was not held in such esteem for statuary by the Greeks as by the Etruscans, their sculptors, from Xeuxis' time, were in the habit of modelling their ideas in clay. And, after the invention of casting statues in terra-cotta, by Lysistratus, copies of a master-piece in sculpture were commonly reproduced, as by the workers in plaster of the present day. Some few statues of the same material are known to have existed, as in the shrine of Ceres and Proserpine at Tritœa, and in the temple of Bacchus at Athens. But original or finished work of the sort was probably rare; nor have any specimens of the period come down to us, so far as I have been able to learn.

The pottery of Rome need not detain us long. Like all other arts of that military people, it was borrowed. They had no style, although there is a very marked manner about the productions made under their dominion, which pass by the Roman name. It is creditable, however, to the taste of the world's conquerors that they were not beguiled from the admiration of finely painted earthenware by the mere glitter of gold. When Mummius brought home the finest Corinthian vases, he established a taste which never was lost. It is true that the production of such things had then almost ceased. I have already commented on the fact that whilst millions of tombs abounding in fine vases were all about them, the Romans never seem to have desecrated the ancient graves.

Roman Potters.

Up to the latest times of Paganism the manufacture of painted urns was carried on in Italy. These were manufactured, like other articles of trade, without regard to the private circumstances of the purchaser. They held the ashes of the dead, and were scarcely of a higher class of art than the ornamental works of our undertakers, though necessarily more elegant. Of the Roman use of earthenware for portraits, statues, and small figures of various sorts, I have spoken under the head of Etruria, whence such things mostly came. But after the decay of that school of art, Greek sculptors adapted themselves to the Roman taste. Gorgasus and Demophilus, indeed, in B.C. 491, adorned the temple of Ceres at Rome with their talent. During the reign of Augustus this building was burnt, but the terra cotta figures escaped, and we are told that they were reset in the wall with great reverence. Numa, who held the potter's craft in such respect as to include it amongst the *Collegia* of Rome, had passed a curious law forbidding the size of earthen figures to exceed three feet, but it soon grew obsolete apparently. Up to the very end of the Republic, terra cotta statues were much regarded. Possis, a Greek sculptor, made a figure of Venus for Julius Cæsar, which attracted general admiration. Of these works comparatively few remain. Two fragments of very large size have been discovered at Pompeii, but a substance so fragile could not hope to escape destruction, except under such circumstances as have preserved for us so many funereal vases and ornaments.

Pliny tells us the names of those places most famous for their pottery in his time. The wares are Samian and Arretian for "the service of the table," and Surrentum, Asta, Pollentia, Saguntum in Spain, and Pergamus in Asia Minor for cups, but for cups only. He mentions also that a wide commerce was established by these places. "Their

Samian Ware.

productions had become known to all countries, and were conveyed to every quarter of the earth." That this was not idle talk, we see by the enormous quantity of imported ware that turns up in every land where the Romans had rule. The commonest manufacture we thus find has been universally identified as the Samian, of which Pliny speaks, of red material, highly glazed, and covered with raised ornaments. The only points, however, which justify us in calling it Samian are its colour, and the frequency of its appearance. No Museum is without specimens, for over all Europe vessels of this sort are constantly turning up. They were originally made in the Island of Samos, as the name indicates, and were Greek, though not of the great times of Greece. But the secret of colouring pale clay with red ochre was not one difficult to divine, and the manufacture of Samian ware was probably carried on in every province of the Empire. We have not hitherto discovered in England any furnaces or other needful appliances for its making, but in France, Germany, and Italy such remains are not uncommon. Their productions were bowls, or *patera*, suitable for dining purposes. They were made in moulds of baked clay, and the interior was smoothed and rounded on the lathe. The extreme beauty of this ware, both in shape and decoration, is a proof what good taste prevailed in all quarters of the ancient world, even in the decadence.

Aretine Ware.

The manufacture of Aretium, in Etruria, which is also mentioned by Pliny, we find in other countries, but much less frequently. It is a higher class of ware than the Samian, darker in tone, with ornaments better moulded, and more carefully finished, but very similar to it at a casual glance.

Other Romano-British Ware.

Were I to enumerate, even thus briefly, all the manufactures of pottery which are classed as Roman, I should occupy

a long time, and perhaps to very little purpose. Our own best established seats of manufacture at this early time were at Upchurch, on the Medway, where a deep black ware was made, the colour being due to the smoke of green wood, thrown upon the furnace, and at Caistor, in Northamptonshire, whence we obtain a brown glazed ware, adorned with hunting subjects, figures, and arabesque patterns, in white glaze.

With the decline and fall of Rome, all art and science vanished. He who looked upon the world at that time might have thought that those great spirits who had led on mankind to the knowledge of the beautiful, the useful, and the true, had utterly lived in vain. No trace of Homer's influence remained. The great discoveries by which Archimedes blessed the universe were all forgotten. From the immortal trophies of Praxiteles men drew no more benefit than from Cæsar's warlike genius. Chaos came again. Knowledge of all useful and lovely things was as though it had never been. It came to pass that men stared in superstitious terror at the works their own forefathers had created. The painted vases of Etruria were vessels sacred to the fiend. The Samian potsherd was a medicine cup, of wondrous power; and whatever human industry, and taste, and skill had at any time invented, to improve the savage rudeness of primeval art, all passed away and was forgotten.

It would be a long, a wearisome, and a wholly useless task to discuss Mediæval Pottery. the supposed differences between one barbarous school of these "dark ages" and another. Such questions have an interest, like any other difficult problem. But for our purpose it is sufficient to remark that a sort of graceless and tasteless pottery continued to be made in Europe all through mediæval times. The specimens are

rare, and consist only of jugs, rude tankards, and "pilgrim-bottles" for slinging on the hip.

Our own forefathers of this time cannot claim any credit at all for advancing that art which is now almost concentrated in our hands. They gave themselves up, as we learn from many sources, to the carving of wooden vessels and the chasing of silver. Although there are extant many specimens of an earlier date, it cannot be said that pottery, as an art, was attempted in England before a late period of Queen Elizabeth. (See Marryat, page 55.)

But in the meantime other nations had been earnestly trying to recover somewhat of the old excellence. Under the blighting influence of nobles and priests Europe had not, perhaps, the strength to make great efforts in any line; but, fortunately for us, that Moorish race to which we owe so much, held a firm footing in the Mediterranean. At a happy moment,—if I may so speak, in the interest of civilisation,—the attention of the Pisans was attracted to the doings of a Moorish Emir, named Nazaredeck, who kept thousands of Christian captives in his rocky fortress of Majorca. The men of Pisa fitted out an expedition A.D. 1113, and, amongst other exploits, triumphantly sacked the Emir's palace. From thence they brought a number of enamelled tiles, well known to us under the name of Azulejos, such as are still the admiration of visitors to the Alhambra. These trophies were put up in many public places, such as church walls and the façades of public buildings. Probably with them were taken, and conveyed to Italy, not a few of the beautiful Moorish plates and vases.

The rude potters of Pisa looked at them in amaze, and generations passed before a serious imitation was attempted. The earliest allusion to enamelled earthenware is almost as

late as the fifteenth century. Luca della Robbia, one of the greatest, was also the earliest potter whose name has been thought worthy of preservation. He is claimed by many Italians as the founder of the Majolica School of Pottery, with which the conquest of Majorca is pronounced to have been quite unconnected. But Luca della Robbia was, after all, a sculptor. His admirable works are statues of terracotta, thickly coated with various enamels. He may possibly have worked at Pesaro, though I am not aware that any record of the fact exists; but it can scarcely be upheld at this day that he materially forwarded the manufacture going on there. But, to avoid entering on such details as this, what I wish you to remember is, that we owe our revival of pottery, as of most other arts, to the Saracens first, and then to Italy.

The Germans, however, were but a short way behind them. The secret of German Pottery. glazing earthenware was discovered by a potter of Alsace in 1278, A.D., and the art flourished at one time on either side of the Alps. Nuremburg rivalled Pesaro in the beauty of its plates and vases, whilst surpassing its enamelled tiles. The first efforts of France were distinctly due to the Italian im- French Pottery. portations, both of ideas and of workmen.

But at the moment when the great mother seats of manufacture were falling to degeneracy, arose in France a man whose romantic story, indomitable persistence, and tragic fate, have earned him wider fame than even his most admirable work—Bernard Palissy. To him we owe, perhaps, looking back with the impartial eye of criticism, no great discoveries in chemistry, nor rules of art, but we owe something almost greater, the recognition of nature's simple beauty. The neo-classic fancy of his day exacted from the tradesman certain forms and ornaments; but the graceful taste of the artist

found, in the common life of ponds and meadows, a suggestion better worthy his regard. Palissy had not the skill nor knowledge which long experience had brought to other schools. He could not rival Pesaro in colour, nor Delft in glaze. But he did a noble work, for all the grotesqueness of his newts and snail-shells. In the long period of his adversity, in the brief passage-time of his success, and in the weary blank of that captivity in which he died, Palissy held out to future craftsmen one unvarying pattern of noble life.

I must also say one word of Henri
 Henri II. Ware. II. ware, that sumptuous production of
 a period and manufacture long unknown.

I think there can be no doubt at all that this singular earthenware was made at a time contemporary with that just spoken of. Neither before nor since has anything like it been produced. The material differs from the Majolica; there are but a few specimens known to exist, and they are only in the cabinets of the wealthy; the prices paid for them by the few who possess them is almost fabulous. I copy here the following brief notice of this ware, and its prices, from the *Art Journal*, 1865.

“Ceramic Art has no more curious history than that connected with the ware distinguished by the name of Henry II. of France. It is at once most artistic and varied in design, fine in fabric and unique in manipulation. Its variety is excessive, proving that it must always have been *poterie de luxe*; the arms, or monograms upon it, are of royal or noble houses; while, as no two pieces are alike, and all of elaborate design, it is self-evident that the highest ability was brought to bear upon them. The utmost research has only succeeded in proving the existence of fifty-two pieces; of these, twenty-five are in France, twenty-six in England, and one in Russia.

The mystery that enveloped the history of this manufacture seemed, till lately, impenetrable; nothing was known of the place, or the persons by whom, it was constructed.

M. André Potier, of Rouen, in 1839, was the first to call it Henry

II. ware, from the emblems found upon it, but he considered it to be the work of Florentine artists.

MM. Thoré and Fainturier attributed it to Ascanio, a pupil of Benvenuto Cellini; another, because a G was found repeated on the ewer belonging to Mr. Magniac, assigned to it a still more remote period—namely, Girolamo Della Robbia. After many years of research, French writers on Ceramic Art came to the conclusion that it was made in the neighbourhood of Tours, as the larger number of pieces came directly from this town. It was also conjectured that the pottery must have originated with some artist unconnected with the ordinary trade, some one probably who had worked in metal, for its mode of ornamentation resembled the inlaying of goldsmith's work. As the badges and monograms of Francis I. and Henry II. most frequently appeared upon it, it was thought to have been fine Sévres, constructed for royal use, a luxurious experiment in fictile art.

Suddenly and unexpectedly, the clouds which hid this chapter of history from our view were cleared by a provincial antiquary, M. Benjamin Fillon, of Poitiers, who, while prosecuting his researches among ancient family documents, was enabled to prove from among them the facts so long desired.

This pottery was manufactured at Oiron, near Thouars (Deux Sévres), the district already presumed from other causes; and it was made to please a wealthy lady, Hélène de Hangest-Genlis (who died 1537), widow of Artus Gouffier, and mother of Claude Gouffier, Grand Ecuyer de France, a man celebrated for his tastes in Art. Their secretary and librarian was Jean Bernard, who furnished designs for ornamental bindings; and it is not a little curious that, long before this was known, it was stated that metal stamps similar to those used by bookbinders must have been employed in decorating these works, for the great peculiarity of the coloured ornamentation consists in its not having been painted, but inlaid with coloured clays, cut to fit stamped spaces made in the surface for their reception.

A potter named Francois Charpentier, assisted in the work. Many of the ciphers, therefore, must now connect themselves with the family of Gouffier, the arms of William Gouffier being the central ornament of a salver in the South Kensington Museum; and his initials being placed round the ewer in the possession of H. Magniac, Esq., the finest and most important work in existence of this manufacture.

It will be at once felt that this curious discovery completely accounts for all the peculiarities of this unique ware, and singularly

corroborates the shrewd conjectures of the students in ceramic history.

It may be interesting to some of our readers to know the history of the twenty-six pieces of this ware now in England; what they have cost at the various sales, showing the increased prices they have attained, from whence obtained, and to whom they belong. With the exception of the candlestick recently purchased for the South Kensington Museum, and Mr. Malcolm's exquisite biberon, all the following pieces were exhibited at the Loan Exhibition in 1862.

OWNER.	OBJECT.	WHENCE OBTAINED.
H. Magniac, Esq. ...	...Ewer ...	...Odiot Col., 1842, £96.
Sir A. Rothschild ...	...Ewer ...	{ Strawberry Hill, 1842, £20.
Do. ...	...Ewer ...	...De Monville sale, £140.
Do. ...	...Candlestick ...	...Préaux Col., 1850, £208.
Do. ...	...Hanap ..	{ De Bruge Col., 1849, £20.
Do. ...	...Tazza ...	...Préaux Col., 1849, £44.
Do. ...	...Bouquetière ...	{ Bought at Tours, for £48, about 20 years since.
Do. ...	...Cup Cover ...	...Unknown.
A. Fontaine, Esq. ...	...Candlestick ...	{ These three pieces were bought in France by Sir A. Fontaine, about 120 years since.
Do. ...	...Biberon ...	
Do. ...	...Salt-cellar ...	
Baron L. de Rothschild...	...Biberon ...	{ Bought of Madame De- launay, price unknown.
Do. ...	...Salt-cellar ...	{ Strawberry Hill, 1842, £21.
Duke of Hamilton ...	...Tazza ...	{ Préaux Col., 1850, £20; Rattier Col., 1859, £280.
Do. ...	..Salt-cellar ...	...Rattier's sale, 1859, £80.
H. T. Hope, Esq. ...	...Ewer (no foot)	{ De Bruge Col., 1849, £16.
Do. ...	...Ewer ...	... Do. 1849, £20.
M. T. Smith, Esq. ...	...Ewer ...	{ Bought as Palissy, in 1850, £10.

OWNER.	OBJECT.	WHENCE OBTAINED.
South Kensington Museum	Dish	{ Espouliart sale, 1857, £140.
Do. ... ..	...Tazza	{ Bought at Poitiers for 50s.; cost Museum £180.
Do. ... ..	...Candlestick ... ..	...Purchased in 1864, £750.
Do. ... ..	...Tazza and Cover	{ Préaux sale, 1850, £60 Soltikoff sale, 1861, £450.
Do. ... ..	...Salt-cellar	{ Soltikoff sale, 1861, £268.
S. Addington, Esq. ... ..	...Salt-cellar ... ..	...Rattier's sale, 1859.
G. Field, Esq. ... ..	...Salt-cellar ... ..	...Unknown.
J. Malcolm, Esq. ... ..	...Biberon	{ Pourtales sale, Paris, £1,100."

But in England, at this time, we were dependent upon Flanders and Holland for all such pottery as lay beyond the rudest forms of manufacture. The unrivalled excellence of Delft, in all those shapes which should be called useful, as opposed to the ornamental merely, long commanded the English market. But the wide manufacture of stone ware in Flanders and Germany displaced the less durable ware of Holland about the middle of the sixteenth century. If I be right in counting the "long beard," or Bellarmine, as a product of Flanders, there can be no doubt at all that England very largely imported from the low countries. Mr. Chaffers, in his history of pottery and porcelain, has gathered together a surprising number of allusions to this vessel from old authors. It was turned out of different sizes, from the great gallon tankard to the six-inch pint pot. But in all cases, a grotesque head, with furious eyes, open mouth, and long beard, adorned the neck. This was popularly believed amongst our forefathers to be a representation of Cardinal Bellarmine, the injudicious minister of King Philip II., who

Flemish Pottery.

attempted to convert the Dutch by forcible means to the Roman Catholic faith. We have no distinct record, that I am aware of, whence these articles were exported to England; but there can be no doubt that they came from Flanders, where this grotesque head was an ornament almost universal on the ware, whether of high or low class. Mr. Chaffers quotes from the Lansdowne MSS, a petition of William Simpson, merchant, begging her Majesty Queen Elizabeth to grant him the monopoly of importing "drinking stone-pots," which trade was wholly in foreign hands. He promises, should the request be granted, to set up a manufacture of such articles "in some decayed towne of this realm, whereby manie a hundred poore men may be sett to worke." Whether this petition was granted we have no means of knowing.

But others besides Mr. Simpson had noticed what a great field for profit lay unexplored in England. Saving the doubtful Elizabethan ware I have spoken of, our native potters had not yet attempted anything more elaborate than the well-known "butter pots," and the three handled "tigs" of Staffordshire. The impetus towards more elaborate manufactures was given by a certain Dwight, probably of Dutch origin, though this is not at all established. He commenced his work at Fulham, and certainly achieved considerable success. There are pieces of his manufacture still extant, as old as the year 1640. But Mr. Dwight seems to have lost temper and courage in the effort to make porcelain, and gave up his more ambitious efforts. At the end of this century, Staffordshire began actively to improve its wares. The brothers Ellers, from Nuremberg, discovered such qualities in the Burslem clay beds as induced them to set up a manufactory on the spot. They do not appear to have been so successful in gaining popularity as in working clay; and when a shrewd rival named Astbury had discovered their secrets,

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they left the rude Burslem potters in disgust, and set up in the more refined neighbourhood of Chelsea. Astbury carried on his work with great success. He discovered the use of Devonshire clay, which had hitherto been employed solely for making pipes. By this means he vastly improved upon old models, and prepared the way for Josiah Wedgwood.

In this hasty and imperfect review of the potter's art, it would be foolish to attempt any critical survey of Wedgwood's achievements. My friend, Miss Meteyard, has lately told the story of his life and works in two exhaustive volumes. It was said of Augustus that he found Rome a city of brick, and left it a city of marble; so might it justly be told of Wedgwood, that he found pottery a handicraft in England, and he left it a fine art. All that lay in mortal power he achieved, to outdo the grand productions of ancient times; and if the effort failed, it was not the fault of Wedgwood, but the misfortune of our times, which give us potters superior to those of old, but not the artists to assist them. I cannot refrain from quoting, at this point, an excellent passage from a work too little remembered at this time, Lord Lytton's thoughtful and suggestive survey of *England and the English*, published nearly forty years ago. He says: "There have, for some time past, been various complaints of a deficiency of artists, capable of designing for our manufactures of porcelain, silk, and other articles of luxury in general use; we are told that public schools are required to supply the want. It may be so, yet Wedgwood, Rundel, and Hellicot the watchmaker found no such difficulty, and now that a Royal Academy has existed for sixty-five years, the complaint has become universal. One would imagine that the main capacity of such institutions was to create that decent and general mediocrity of talent which

appeals to trade and fashion for encouragement. In truth, the complaint is not just. How did Wedgwood manage without a public school for designers? In 1760, our porcelain wares could not stand competition with those of France. Necessity prompts, or, what is quite as good, allows, the exertions of genius. Wedgwood applied chemistry to the improvement of the material of his pottery, sought the most beautiful and convenient specimens of antiquity, and caused them to be imitated with scrupulous nicety; he *then*" (the Italics are the author's) "*had recourse to the greatest genius of the day for designs and advice.* But now the manufacturers of a far more costly material, without availing themselves of the example of Wedgwood, complain of want of talent in those whom they never sought, and whom they might as easily command, if they were as willing to reward." These remarks are at least as sound at this moment as when freshly written.

I have detained you longer than I had intended, but, standing here in Liverpool, it would not seem fitting to let fall this subject of pottery without an allusion to the efforts of our townsmen in the art. Liverpool did not enjoy the services of an Astbury, nor profit by the genius of a Wedgwood; but it is a fair boast of our old town, that she was amongst the earliest to attempt the improvement of the rude English style. At a time when the catalogue of the Museum of Practical Geology, published under orders of Government, confessed utter ignorance of the Liverpool earthenware, I had in my possession specimens which proved the excellence of that ware, before the German Ellers had regenerated our Staffordshire potteries. Those specimens are now in our Museum. The Liverpool ware was generally coloured in blue and white, but leaves in flower pieces were painted green or yellow. The export trade to the Colonies was considerable,

as we learn from the *Daily Pocket Journal* of 1754. The principal pot-works lay towards the lower end of Dale Street, formerly called the Town's-end. Here Alderman Shaw carried on his extensive factory, which lay at the corner of Fontenoy Street, and extended to Chorley Court. Shaw made, upon occasion, large pieces of considerable merit; but his usual manufacture was of the common delft style for domestic use.

There was, however, another pottery in Liverpool, situate in Harrington Street, at the back of Lord Street, where Mr. John Sadler, the son of a printer, discovered the art of printing upon earthenware. His attention seems to have first been drawn to this idea about 1750, and in 1756 he fully succeeded in carrying it out. In my library are the affidavits which Mr. Sadler had drawn up with the view of patenting his invention, which came to my hands from his only surviving daughter many years ago. I was the more glad to receive these documents, since it had been usual to attribute this most valuable discovery to Dr. Wall, the accomplished gentleman who established the China Works at Worcester. In Liverpool was printed the far-famed Queen's ware, which Wedgwood used to send from Staffordshire by waggon in the plain body, for Mr. Sadler's manipulation.

There were several other pot-works in Liverpool at this time, but I shall here allude only to that of Mr. Chaffers, which stood on Shaw's Brow, at the bottom of Dale Street. This enterprising man, after adventures almost romantic, discovered an unworked seam of soapstone in Cornwall, and immediately commenced the manufacture of china about 1760. Such success did he attain that Josiah Wedgwood confessed himself outdone by this Liverpool rival. He died, however, in the midst of his prosperity, and the works fell into decay.

But the fame of our ware did not suffer in the hands of Seth Pennington, who also had a manufactory on Shaw's Brow. His productions are so excellent that they have been often sold for Oriental china, of which they are a close and admirable imitation. Mr. Pennington had secrets of great value. A Staffordshire house offered him a thousand guineas for the recipe of a certain blue colour, and was refused. Nearly on the spot we are standing was the "Bank," or manufactory of Pennington, situated, and it was only when the foundation stone of the building we are now in was laid that the last remnant of the Potteries in Liverpool was taken away, in the removal of one of the ovens where they fired the ware.

The last of the potters on this celebrated site was Mr. Zachariah Barnes, who died in 1820. There must be many here can recollect the Herculaneum pot-works, occupying the space now covered by the Dock that bears their name. This manufactory, after the brief career of Mr. Abbey, was carried on by Staffordshire workmen, imported from Burslem. The enterprise came to an end in 1841, after passing through several hands. Since that time Mr. Goodwin, formerly a potter at Lane-end, has attempted to revive the art amongst us, in a bank situate at Seacombe, on the other side of the Mersey; but this also, I believe, is now closed.

LIVERPOOL, *March 1, 1871.*