

REPRODUCTIONS OF ÆGEAN VASES AND LAMPS

On brackets in alcove C are reproductions of Cretan lamp stands, found at Knossos and dated vaguely in the period from 1700 to 1400 B. C. Two portable lamps of about the same period are reproduced in case IV, one from Crete (No. 10) and the other from Greece (No. 20).

*West
Room*

The most important objects in case IV are the reproductions of stone vases. Among them are three (Nos. 14, 15, 16), the originals of which, now in the Museum at Candia, are made of black steatite. The relief work on these vases was once coated with gilt, so as to imitate metal vases with hammered relief. In this connection it is interesting to compare with these vases a fragment of a metal "filler," decorated with a scene of the siege of an Ægean town (case II, No. 14). The first of these three vases, all of which were found at a site called Hagia Triada in Crete, is the Chieftain Vase, so called from its representation of a commander giving instructions to a lesser officer and three soldiers (No. 14). The cup is noted for the simplicity and charm of its decoration, which, in effect, is not unlike a Greek vase painting of the best period. The second vase (No. 15) is a "filler" with four bands of decoration, scenes of boxing and bull leaping. The third vase (No. 16) is the most famous of the three. It is a fragmentary jar, decorated with a procession of singing men, marching with flails on their shoulders. They wear loin cloths, and follow a leader who is dressed in a great capote and carries a long stick. One of the men shakes a sistrum. The vase is notable for a successful effort at perspective. The skilful way in which three and even four heads are represented one behind another is distinctly superior to the technique of Egyptian reliefs, and makes one think involuntarily of the overlapping heads of the horses on the Parthenon frieze.

One point is always to be borne in mind when studying Ægean art—the Ægeans produced all their art except their mural frescoes on a small scale. So far as we can tell, their skill was limited to vases, statuettes and gem cutting. They did not make large statues nor large reliefs.