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Right Hon. Lord Cawdor & Charles Heathcote Tatham

To cite this article: Right Hon. Lord Cawdor & Charles Heathcote Tatham (1800) VIII. Letter from C. H. Tatham, Esq. Architect, containing a brief account of the grand antique Bacchanalian vase, Philosophical Magazine Series 1, 7:28, 363-365, DOI: [10.1080/14786440008562597](https://doi.org/10.1080/14786440008562597)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14786440008562597>

Published online: 25 Jan 2010.

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P. S. That the existence of a daily flux and reflux in the atmosphere has not been hitherto generally admitted, may be in part owing to the want of frequent observations upon instruments with a sufficient range of scale. It is, however, more probable, that the lunar weekly flux or reflux, as either prevails, may have the greatest share in preventing the detection of the contrary semi-diurnal movement; for, at Calcutta, where the range of the barometer is at all times inconsiderable (if we may judge by one year's observations), and where the weekly lunar influence can scarcely be traced, a manifest regular daily tide has been detected by the diligent observations of Francis Balfour, Esq. in 1794, which took place, as follows, during the month called April:—Beginning from six in the morning, the barometer rose for four hours, then fell during eight hours; then rose four hours, and fell eight again; which took place daily, and, with very little exception, uninterruptedly.—(See the Register in the Asiatic Researches.)

VIII. *Letter from C. H. TATHAM, Esq. Architect, containing a brief Account of the grand antique Bacchanalian Vase, late in the Possession of the Right Hon. Lord Cawdor, now at Woburn Abbey.*

SIR,

September 15, 1800.

THE attention of the amateurs of the fine arts having been lately excited by the sale of Lord Cawdor's noble collection of antiques, and particularly of the celebrated Bacchanalian vase, formerly an object universally admired in the Lanti Palace at Rome, the following brief account of it may not be unacceptable to your readers.

The forms of all antique vases, whether bell-shaped or the tazza, are supposed to have been first taken from the calyx of the lotus; the latter representing the plant in a flatter form, as it appears when fully blown, and the former in the more early stage of inflorescence.

The lotus is a celebrated water-plant, well known in Upper Asia, which, from its structure, and its reputed quality of

being generated by heat and moisture, was selected by the antients as the symbol of the generation and procreation of the human species; it was therefore deified and held sacred, and became the model from which, as it is thought, they copied the form of their principal vases.

The grand Bacchanalian vase in question (see a geometrical elevation of it, Plate X.) is of the lotus form, bell-shaped, and was most probably consecrated to the god Bacchus, as may be concluded from the finely-sculptured Bacchanalian masks, and other features that accompany it: it must therefore have been used either as a laver or symbol only of this part of the heathen mythology, and for no other use; for it is certain that no wine was ever poured into it.

This superb monument of antique decoration was dug up, some centuries ago, among the ruins of Adrian's villa, together with the fragments of three other vases of nearly similar dimensions; all of which appeared, by the situation in which they were found, to have occupied the same particular spot of that once extensive and magnificent emporium of art. It was then removed to the villa Lanti, near Rome, where for many years it attracted the notice and excited the admiration of both the traveller and the artist. This, and one at Warwick castle, which is somewhat more decorated, are the only complete vases, of the same dimensions, extant; and are unquestionably the most magnificent and nobly-sculptured specimens of antique decoration of this kind ever discovered.

The Lanti vase was brought from Rome about twelve years ago, at a considerable risk and expense, by the Right Hon. Lord Cawdor, on whose classical taste and judgment it must ever confer the highest credit. The removal of this grand work of art from that city, caused great jealousy among the superintendants of the Vatican Museum, then forming under the auspices of the reigning pontiff, the late Pius the Sixth; who, it is well known, in his resentment on this occasion, threatened several persons concerned in the removal of the vase, with the gallies.

The dimensions of the vase are: diameter of the mole, six feet three inches; height, with its present plinth, six
feet

feet nine inches. It was originally in one piece of Parian marble.

It was purchased at the public sale of Lord Cawdor's museum in Oxford-street, the 6th of June 1800, for seven hundred guineas, and is now in the possession of the Duke of Bedford, who has caused it to be removed to Woburn Abbey, where it is to be placed in an appropriate situation, in the centre of an extensive and beautiful greenhouse, designed and executed for his Grace by Mr. Holland.

I am, Sir,
Yours, &c.

CHARLES HEATHCOTE TATHAM.

To the Editor of Philosophical Magazine.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

New Observations concerning the Inflections of Light, accompanying those of Newton, but differing from his, and appearing to lead to a change of his Theory of Light and Colours. Cadell and Davies; 1799. 134 Pages, with Eight Copperplates.

THE author of this essay has carefully repeated those experiments by which Sir Isaac Newton effected his analysis of light. The experiments have produced to his observation, phenomena materially different from those which appeared to Newton. He seems to have observed the phenomena with very accurate attention. He concludes from the whole, that Newton has erred in believing every ray of common light to be composed of seven differently coloured, primigenial, elementary rays. On the contrary, this author infers from his observations, that *all light is originally of one uniform white colour; that its diversity of colours, in inflexion, is occasioned by the bendings, separations, and other changes of its parts in passing through a transparent medium, or under attraction by the edge, angle, or side of an approaching body; and that, by consequence, the Newtonian Theory of light and colours is not fundamentally true.*

The apparent accuracy of these observations; the logical