IX.—*Remarks on a new Torso of a Youthful Dionysos.* By VICE-ADMIRAL
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THE Torso of Dionysos, shown in the accompanying plate from two photographs by Mr. Robinson of Tunbridge Wells, is of much interest, both from its state of preservation and character, and, also, from being an entirely new representation of the god; but more particularly from its possessing such decided characteristics of the Praxitelean school as to lead to the inference that it must be a copy of some celebrated statue of the god by this great master, of which no other copy or description has come down to us, or any representation on coin, or vase, as far as I have been able to ascertain.

The statue seems, however, to agree with one of Dionysos, by Praxiteles, which he made for the town of Thebes, the place of his mythical birth;^a but not described by Pausanias, although briefly described by some others, and regarded as a work of great merit, and specially for its faithful representation of the soft fleshy character of surface and limb peculiar to youth verging upon the age of puberty; and such as will be seen, from the drawings of the torso, to be a marked character and aim of the copyist. With what success I leave to the better knowledge and judgment of others. But, with a rather long experience and practised eye in the contemplation of ancient sculpture during many years' service and exploration in Greece and Asia Minor, I am induced to consider it must be a copy of a statue of one of the great masters in the purest time of the art, and also one of the purest popular conceptions of the god of the vine.

Dionysos too was a favorite subject for the conception and chisel of Praxiteles, as were also his attendant fauns and satyrs.

^a "Called the Theban or youthful Bacchus, by Praxiteles." Dr. Smith's *Class. Dic.*—See Dionysus.

TORSO OF A YOUTHFUL DIONYSOS.

FROM AIDIN (ANCIENTLY TRALLES), ASIA MINOR.

SCALE, ABOUT ONE-SIXTH LINEAR.

This torso differs entirely from a newly-discovered statue of Dionysos or Bacchus, that was found in Rome in 1880, both in regard to the age intended to be represented, and also in design, as the latter represents the god when verging upon manhood. And as it measures 1·77 metres in height, it seems to have been intended for life-size when attaining manhood height, that is about 5 feet 10 inches, or a little under 6 feet.

This torso of Dionysos in my possession is, however, intended for a youth of about thirteen or fourteen years of age, and when attaining about 4 feet 2 inches in height; since the height of the torso is about $32\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the nape of the neck to the lowest part of the right leg—upon which the body mainly stood—the left leg being placed at ease across it in front. The toes of this leg no doubt rested on the ground close in rear of the right foot. But both feet of the torso are, unfortunately, wanting.

This position of the legs, to form an easy attitude and pose, necessarily required the body having some other support, such as a column, as sometimes seen, or the trunk of a tree, such as we see to have been the case in this statue; for the left arm rests upon one branch of it, whilst the left hip leans against another branch, the broken ends of which are still projecting beyond the body of the torso, as seen in the plate.

This leaning attitude, but varied in treatment, was a very favourite and happy adoption of Praxiteles, as shown in the Faun at Rome, supposed to be a copy from the great master, and of which several other copies exist.

The Apollo Sauroctonus in the Vatican, and the Silenus in the Louvre, are other modifications of this attitude in statues attributed to Praxiteles.

In all, the supporting leg is that opposite to the support, whether the right or the left; whilst the leg at ease is always retired behind the other, as in the Faun and Sauroctonus. But in this youthful Dionysos the leg at ease is crossed in front of the supporting leg, giving thereby a very easy and graceful pose to the figure, and an attitude very rare amongst ancient sculpture.

But this youthful Dionysos is otherwise new in design and treatment of the god, in thus representing him fondling in his arms a huge bunch of grapes with its stem and leaves.

This idea is, however, particularly appropriate to the age at which he is supposed to be represented; whilst the god in babyhood was supposed to have had the grapes dangled before him by his earliest nurse, Hermes, in preparation for the duty assigned to him in the future by the gods, or by his father Zeus, as the

deity to preside over the cultivation of the vine. The idea and design are evidently unique, and indicate the mind and genius of a master.

That it is Dionysos is shown by the nebris or fawn-skin with which his body is tightly clothed as far as the hips. The hind legs of the skin are tied in a knot over the left shoulder, to support it, whilst the two fore legs and facial portion hang gracefully down the left side of the body and thigh, the upper margin of the skin crossing the breast and back under the right arm, thus leaving this portion of the right shoulder bare for the display of the soft, delicate, fleshy muscles of youth.

Although the plate shows the statue from two points of view, neither is the one evidently intended by the original sculptor as the best, and upon which the harmony of the composition was balanced.

This point of view is intermediate, or more nearly a front view, with the two legs seen as far apart as practicable with their positions, and with a nearly equal portion of each arm, and showing the picturesque arrangement of both hands in their strikingly natural grasp of the huge bunch of grapes.

The fingers of the left hand and a portion of the edge of the bunch of grapes are much injured, as if the part had been crushed by some superincumbent weight; such as might be the result if the torso had been built into some middle age or Turkish building, and, from being the more prominent part, was thus made the pivot of support for the blocks resting upon or against it in the building in which I have no doubt it was so utilised at Aidin, near the ancient site of Tralles on the Mæander, whence it came into my possession about twenty years ago. But not having a convenient place for it, the torso has been for a long time stored in one of our dockyards.

That it was so utilised in some modern building, in accordance with a very common practice, was evident from the coating of semi-crystalline mortar which adhered to a large portion of its surface, more particularly the front, as if that part had laid upon a bed of it. A part of the back seems, however, to have been exposed to the atmosphere, from a sort of stalagmitic crust that coated it, as if derived from the rain after it had percolated the superincumbent masonry.

The removal of this more or less thin rough coating, that hid the delicate undulations of surface, has been a labour of much patience and care, so as to restore the developed muscle and soft flesh without injury to the original lines and curves representing these features, or other details.

This semi-crystallized mortar was no doubt made from fragments of marble blocks broken up *in situ*, that once formed part of some ancient building at Tralles

on the Mæander (Gusel Hissar or Aidin) by the lime-burners, who no doubt resorted to these ancient sites in the Middle Ages, as they have been in the habit of doing in recent times throughout the east. I have myself seen them in operation at several ancient cities near the coast of the Levant, or near large modern towns where important buildings were being carried on. These modern lime-burners of the Levant belong chiefly to a village near Salonika, and resort to all parts of it in the pursuit of their trade.

The mortar thus resulting from the fragments of crystalline marble, and the use of it when fresh, probably account for its semi-crystalline character, and have made it in parts to appear as if blended with the marble of the figure. But the true surface of the latter was easily detected, by the difference in hardness between the pure and false, under patient manipulation with the very fine emery cloth with which I removed it.

Tralles was a place of such repute for its sculptors^a after the time of Alexander, when it rose to a place of commercial importance immediately after the conquest of the Persians, as to establish for any such work as this torso a certain estimation and surety that, if not a copy of a work by Praxiteles, as seems most probable, it is at all events a conception and production in imitation of the great master's characteristics, and of a time when a high school of the art flourished there before the grosser representation of him as Bacchus crowned with the fruit of his favourite vine came in, that so universally characterised the god in later times of the art.

Dionysos too was extensively worshipped in Asia Minor at that time, as was natural from the vine being then probably as largely cultivated as it is in the present day, forming in fact the staple produce of many districts; more for its food as raisins than for making wine, there being many fine qualities and varieties well known to the local and foreign markets.

DETAILED MEASUREMENTS OF THE TORSO.

	Inches.
Height of Torso from top of neck to lower part of right leg .	32½
Length of right thigh from below patella to pubis and hip, which, according to the canon given by Vitruvius, measures one-fourth of the figure, ^b	12

^a It was also the residence of Anthimus of Tralles, one of the architects of Agia Sofia.

^b The proportions of the human figure—Josh. Bonomi, 1855.

The breadth across chest, from shoulder to shoulder, also one-fourth	Inches.
	12
Length of right leg below patella	5
Length of left leg below patella	9½

As the whole length of the leg must have measured one-fourth, or 12 inches, there would be 7 inches wanting to right leg and 2½ inches to left leg; although this rule of Vitruvius was not absolute with sculptors of the best period of the art; and, judging from the length remaining of the left leg, and length required for the instep and heel, it was not precisely followed in this statue.

To arrive at the original height, we have :	Inches.
The Torso as it is	32½
Part wanting to right leg, about	7½
Allowing one-eighth for head, about	6
Part of neck wanting, about	1½
Allowance for bent attitude	2½
Whole height of youth	50