

XIV.—*Remarks on a Bronze Object found at Lucera, and on the Worship of Pan Lycaeus, or Faunus Lupercus. By Padre RAFFAELE GARRUCCI. Communicated and translated by W. M. WYLIE, Esq. M.A. F.S.A.*

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Read November 15th, 1866.

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THE very singular, or rather, as regards Italy, the unique bronze relique that I have now undertaken to describe and explain, I consider to be the same that was discovered January 4th, 1800, at the steep pitch of the hill just below the castle of Lucera. This we learn from an account of the discovery given by the Cavaliere Onofrio Bonghi, quoted by Gerhard.<sup>a</sup>

The object in question consists of a disc of copper, perforated in the centre, from the outside edge of which there radiated nine strips of the same metal, fixed on the disc by nails. Of these three only are wide and long, the other six seem to have been short and narrow. The three wide strips are curved over at the ends, and affixed to three rude representations of the human foot and leg up to the knee; through the ancles pass pivots on which wheels revolve. These are six in number, and have only four spokes each. These feet, with their wheels, support the disc, to which are attached eight figures of men and animals composing a scene. The short and narrow strips were added to receive those figures for which there was no room on the disc. To the same purpose also one of the long strips is still applied, which allows us to conjecture that figures of men or animals formerly stood on the other two. Above the legs project goats' heads, each being attached to a quadrangular bronze stem. On either side of this stem are torted rods, or cords, also of bronze, and leaning outwards. Since these three stems and the six torted rods have been broken short off, we cannot say what their height may originally have been, nor what their purpose was; nor whether they supported another disc like the one below.<sup>b</sup> It can only be positively affirmed that the relique has no connexion whatever with the class of *cistæ mysticæ*, a point on which Gerhard seems to have entertained doubts.

Although Gerhard's description does not precisely correspond with the present condition of this relique, yet there are such striking points of agreement that we

<sup>a</sup> Bulletin de l'Institut de Correspondance Archéologique. Rome, 1830, p. 15.

<sup>b</sup> The dimensions of this bronze are here given for the convenience of those who may not have an opportunity of seeing the original:—

can hardly doubt it to be the identical one which was formerly in the Bonghi collection. The discrepancy is this, that, whereas we read in the account given by Gerhard that there were fourteen human figures joined by small chains to the bronze found at Lucera, there belong to that now before us fourteen figures in all, including those of both men and animals, two only of which have been attached by little chains, and the rest fixed on the bronze disc. It would seem, too, that another error exists in this account, which states that three of the figures have the arms, as well as the legs, formed like serpents, whereas two such only have been found, making, with six others, eight human figures in all. If to these we add six more of animals, we shall have the number of fourteen, as stated by Gerhard.

He tells us that "the disc, where the figures are, is pierced in the centre, and at three points of its circumference bars are attached with wheels at their ends, surmounted by goats' heads, and through these perforated ends pass the axles on which the wheels revolve." To this description it was only requisite to add, that these bars terminate in the form of a human leg, the heels of which are pierced by the axles; and that above the heads of the goats rise quadrangular rods, on the sides of which two little bronze cords play on pivots. It is, moreover, well worthy of attention that the circumstance, remarked by Gerhard, of one bar only being attached to the disc, was found to be the case with the relique before us

	Inches.
Diameter of wheels, but they slightly vary	2½
Width of the felloes of wheels	⅓
Diameter of disc	6
Height of tallest human figure	2½
Height of disc from ground	5½
Height from ground to the fractured tops of torses rods	10

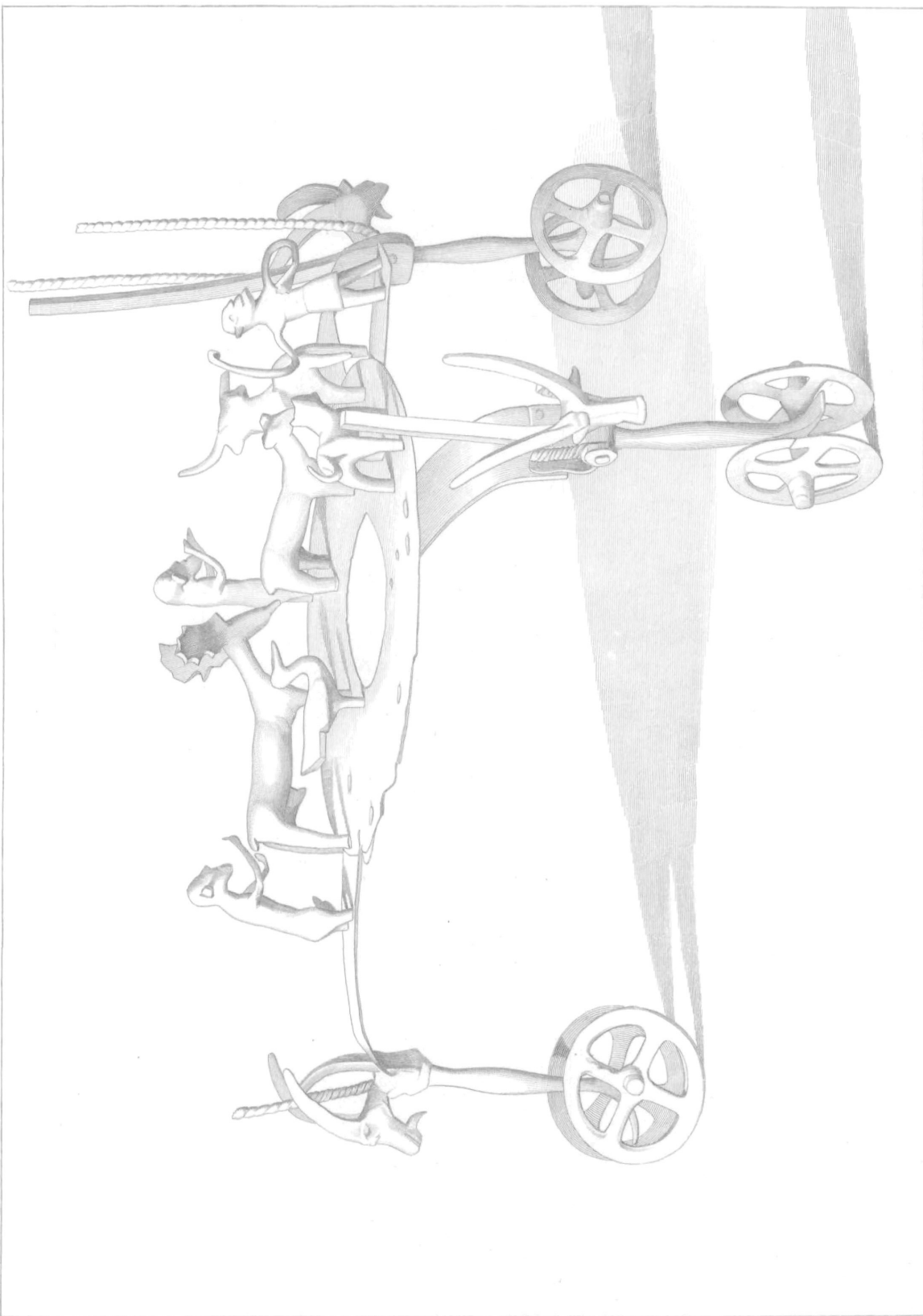
None of the figures have feet, but are stuck into the disc, like pegs.

It is hard to account for the oval aperture in the centre of the disc, unless we can suppose it left to receive a lamp or incense vessel.

Such objects of antiquity are certain to present some inexplicable feature. In the present case the wheels stand in such triangular fashion that they cannot possibly run together. The point of each axle probably stood originally 10 inches distant from that of the next set of wheels.

The whole group stands fairly within a circle of 8 inches radius.

As regards the animals figured in the group, a celebrated palæontologist sees in the bull an unmistakable representation of the *bos primigenius*; and of the *cervus alces* in the stag. To this it might be added that the caprine heads, which project over the wheels, rather resemble those of the *capra ibex*. If we could venture to consider so rude a work of primitive art a basis sufficiently solid for so interesting an attribution, this relique would become of great importance to Italy. It would show that the *urus*, the elk, and *ibex*, frequented the forests of the Apennines at the period when this bronze was in the hands of its unskilled artist.—W. M. W.



BRONZE OBJECT FOUND AT LUCERA.

when it came into our possession. In a later work of Cavaliere Gerhard<sup>a</sup> the designs of nine of the figures from this bronze occur, five of which, included in the preceding enumeration, are now lost, the remaining four being a stag or buck; three nude human figures, including one of two sitting on cords; to which must also be added three, of which he gives some description, and which still exist, namely, an ox, and two animals taken by him for wolves, but which in reality are a dog and a sheep.<sup>b</sup> With so many points of agreement existing I can scarcely see the need of adducing further proofs to show that the object before us is the actual one described by Gerhard. I have only to add, that it was purchased at Naples, where Signor Bonghi lived, and in whose house I formerly saw it. Mr. Wylie, F.S.A. is the present possessor of this rare treasure.

The representation appeared to the learned Gerhard so enigmatical that he deemed it better not to determine its ancient purpose, and for the same reason he abstained from attempting any explanation of the meaning of the composition. Nor would it be my wish to appear more venturous if, at the invitation of my friend Mr. Wylie, I presume to offer a conjecture of my own in a matter so difficult, and so new to me. Accomplished students in such studies will tolerate this mere conjecture. I pretend to no more.

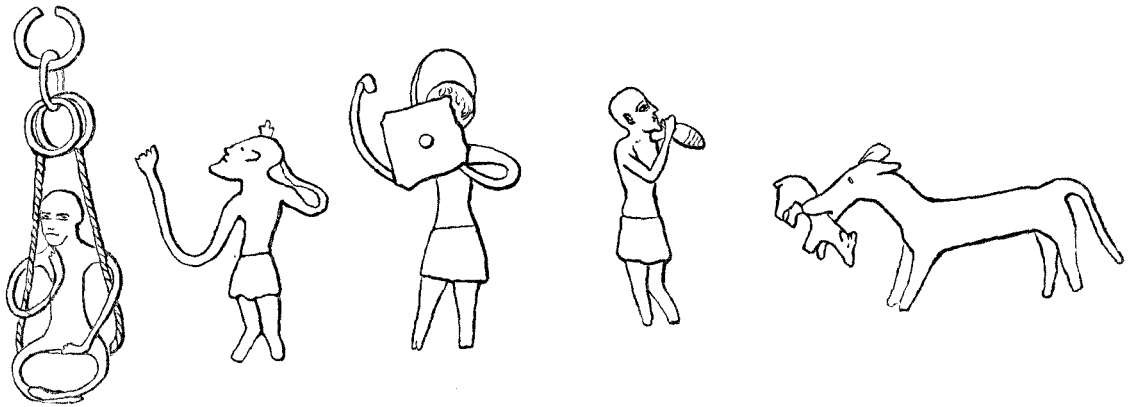
Proceeding to the composition, we will examine the fourteen figures described by Gerhard, of which now nine only remain. (*See Plate XIV., and woodcut page 280 post.*) The five figures that are now lost, or missing, we will complete from the designs edited by Gerhard.<sup>c</sup>

It is quite evident, as I observed before, that the number of figures would have required a larger disc, since it had become necessary to make up the want of space by projections from the disc, and to use, for the same purpose, the bronze strips which connect it with its supports. Moreover the presence of the bull, the sheep, the stag, the goose in a certain degree, and especially of the dog which accompanies them, give an undeniable idea of a pastoral scene, and justify the supposition that some more domesticated animals, perhaps of the winged tribe, are wanting. This idea is further strengthened by some holes on the disc, where the figures may have stood.

<sup>a</sup> Etruskische Spiegel, vol. i. pl. xviii.

<sup>b</sup> [Gerhard does not notice the goose, which, together with one human figure partly clothed, complete the series of nine as we have it at present ]

<sup>c</sup> See the wood-cut overleaf, which gives figs. 5, 7, 10, 11, and 12 of Gerhard's plate in Etruskische Spiegel.



In an attempt to explain this representation we think it better to confine our research to a scene either sacred, or rural, relating to pastoral life.

Having arrived thus far, that we may not err in our selection, let us consider the conditions of the human figures that are introduced. Properly speaking, here we cannot recognise shepherds in their pastoral state by any known sign. Instead of this, however, we have indications of personages who belong to a very different condition. The figures divide themselves into two classes, one being altogether nude, the other girt about the loins, but otherwise nude. One of these figures, published by Gerhard (*see woodcut*), is represented blowing the *murex* or *buccinum*, and another, likewise published by him, is represented helmed, and defending himself with a kind of square shield on his left arm, while he is raising his right, which must have brandished some weapon now wanting. The two remaining figures are in very similar attitudes. One of these, partially clad, has lost the implement once raised in his right hand. The other is nude, and must have been sounding some instrument, judging from the hand that approaches the mouth, and the round aperture therein. The cause of this brandishing of weapons by the two armed figures seems in the one case to be the wolf, which we see in the act of seizing a lamb in his mouth and carrying it off.<sup>a</sup> The other figure, with sword and helm, manifestly indicates some more powerful armed enemy coming to carry away the herds. The two figures sounding the instruments seem to have given the alarm.

This scenic representation would not, of its own nature, quit the pastoral class,

<sup>a</sup> By one of the strange freaks which archæological fortune occasionally plays, this missing portion of the group seems to have found its way into the British Museum, where I believe I recognised it among other *disjecta membra* of this collection.—W. M. W.

and might even be compared with similar compositions described by the ancients ; but such a supposition would not, I fear, suffice to interpret all its peculiarities.

The fact I first call attention to is that certain of the figures have merely a cloth round the loins, while others are not only entirely nude, but are represented in such fashion as would indicate some meaning quite out of the common way. Now the ancients only ascribed such unusual representations of generative force to the God Inuus, either as Faunus, or Priapus,<sup>a</sup> and, if we would fathom the meaning of the composition, we shall arrive without difficulty at the conviction that this relique is of a sacred character—an offering at the shrine of the God Faunus Lupercus. The whole composition, in fact, receives a wonderful light from this point of view, and the various attendant details find a satisfactory interpretation. Let us show how far this is the case.

The festival of the Luperci, or *Lupercalia*, consisted of a lustral sacrifice to Faunus Lupercus to propitiate him to keep the wolves away from the flocks, of which he was termed protector and keeper. The shepherds, throwing off their dress, and girding round their loins the skins of the immolated victims, after the manner of Pan whom they worshipped,<sup>b</sup> ran about armed with rods,<sup>c</sup> or scourges, or with strips of the skins of goats. This was a pantomime of the god, whose attribute of driving away the wolf they wished to express. Afterwards, in Rome at least, a Lupercal priesthood, in whose charge the festival was placed, was allotted to the shepherds, and the Roman youths ran about girt with skins, flapping with thongs the women, who believed they would thereby become prolific, or obtain an easy delivery.<sup>d</sup> Sacrifices were offered to Faunus Lupercus not merely to stay contagion in the flock, but also that he should render it prolific.<sup>e</sup> Hence is it that the Latins term him Inuus,<sup>f</sup> and that he is compared with the Arcadian Πάν Λυκαῖος, also called Ἐφιάλτης. His double rôle, of protecting the flock and rendering it fruitful, explains itself to me in this pantomime of nude figures, by the representation of the exaggerated generative principle, and the

<sup>a</sup> Livy, lib. i. c. 5. "Lycæum Pana venerantes . . . . . quem Romani deinde vocarunt Inuum." Arnobius adv. Nat. iii. 23. Hieronym. in Isaiam, lib. v. c. xiii. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Plutarch, Q. R. 68. Justin, xliii. 1, § 7. Val. Max. ii. 2, 9.

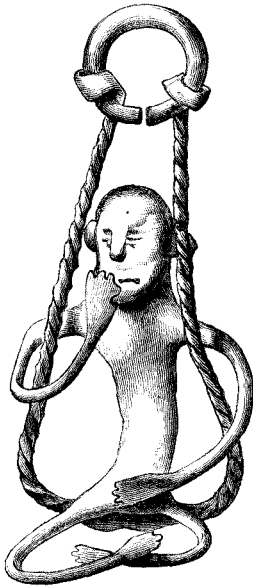
<sup>c</sup> Prudentius contr. Symm. ii. 861. Plut. loc. cit. Festus voce Creppos. Schol. Juvenal. ii. 142. Plut. in Cæs.

<sup>d</sup> Ovid. Fast. ii. 425, v. 102. Minuc. Octav. c. 24.

<sup>e</sup> Rutilius, Itin. lib. i. 235 : "Dum renovat largo mortalia semina fœtu  
Fingitur in Venerem pronior esse Deus."

<sup>f</sup> Arnob. adv. Nat. iii. 23. Serv. ad Æneid. vi. 776.

weapons, now missing, which the figure with a skin covering round the loins is supposed to be raising in his right hand, in the act of striking. The other figures girt and nude, although in a different attitude, are not opposed to this interpretation. First, the figure sounding the *buccinum* or *murex*, besides that it may be explained as a person blowing the *tuba pastoralis*,<sup>a</sup> reminds us of the instrument



fabled to have been found by Pan,<sup>b</sup> who is said to have taught its use. Nor is there more difficulty about the helmed figure with the shield, since this may represent Pan, "*nemorum bellique potens*."<sup>c</sup> For need was that the divinity should not only defend the herd from ravening wolves, but also from the hostile forager.

Lastly, as to the three heads of goats, we know the close relation of these to the divinity, since the goat was offered in sacrifice to him. It is fabled, too, that in the war against Jupiter by Typhon, when the gods fled and transformed themselves, some into one animal, some into another, Pan assumed the form of a goat.<sup>d</sup>

There only remain the nude figures,<sup>e</sup> sitting on the cords, with legs crossed, and in the act of placing the right hand on the mouth, and covering with the left the fore part of the body, where, however, there is no indication of sex. These figures, therefore, seem altogether opposed to the exaggerated forms just described.

This two-fold symbolism of concealing the organs of speech and sex, as expressed in these figures, may be capable of an interpretation in conformity with the character of the most ancient Italic traditions. These prescribe secrecy as to the name and nature of the tutelary spirit, the attributes of which, nevertheless, it was the custom to personify. Thus may be explained how at the same time in some of the figures the productive energy and protecting power are represented, while

<sup>a</sup> Varro, R. R. ii. 4 ; iii. 113. Propert. iv. 10, 29, "*pastoris buccina lenti*."

<sup>b</sup> Hygin. Poet. Astron. c. xxviii. *sub voce* Capricornus.

<sup>c</sup> Val. Flacc. Argonaut. iii. 48. Theocrit. Syrinx.

<sup>d</sup> Eratosth. c. xxvii. Schol. Arati, p. 39, ed. Oxon. 1672. Hygin. Poet. Astron. *ubi supra*.

<sup>e</sup> The woodcut in the margin represents the sitting figure now detached from the bronze, but still extant. The other, which is now lost, is given in the woodcut on the previous page, from *Etruskische Spiegel*. These sitting figures were possibly suspended from an upper portion of the relique which no longer exists.

we learn from the mysterious figures seated on the cords in mid-air that silence as to name and sex must be preserved.

Hence it seems to me a highly probable conjecture that the festival of the Luperci is here represented—I mean, not the Latin, but the old Italic Luperci—the pantomime of which scarcely seems to have been fully represented in the festival of Latium.

I conceive the relique, as thus explained, to have been votive; and that at the foot of the hill, where it was found, there must have been a cave sacred to Faunus Lupercus or Pan Lycæus, to whom it had been dedicated by the Italic race that inhabited Lucera.

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NOTE.

As translator of Padre Garrucci's paper on the Lucera bronze, I would ask leave to say a few words in explanation of my part in the matter.

It will, perhaps, be remembered by some of the Fellows present that our lamented friend the late Mr. J. M. Kemble read a paper here in December 1855 "On some remarkable Sepulchral Objects from Italy, Styria, and Mecklenburg"<sup>a</sup>—in fact on these very archaic bronzes, an example of which is now before us. So important did Mr. Kemble deem the subject, that he especially recommended it to the study of the Society of Antiquaries. After Mr. Kemble's decease this paper was republished in his *Horæ Ferales* by our Director Mr. Franks, and we may infer that it has been rendered better known on the continent in this shape, since Dr. Lindenschmit has lately made public recognition of its value.<sup>b</sup>

Last winter, at Rome, I became possessed of this Lucera bronze through the kind intervention of my friend the Padre Garrucci, and that accomplished scholar added still further to the obligation by, at my request, writing for the Society of Antiquaries the present elegant classical paper. Padre Garrucci has, I think, adduced very satisfactory reasons for considering the bronze relique to have been a votive offering at the shrine of the sylvan and pastoral deity Faunus Lupercus. This probability, too, seems heightened by the fact that the district of Lucera was famous of old for its flocks of sheep and the superior quality of their fleeces.

<sup>a</sup> Archæologia, vol. xxxvi. page 349.

<sup>b</sup> Alterthümer unserer heidnischen Vorzeit, Band ii. Heft 3.



Horace tells us of the

. . lanæ prope nobilem  
Tonsæ Luceriam,<sup>a</sup>

and Lucera is said still to maintain its reputation in this respect. Among such a shepherd-race we should expect the worship of Pan or Faunus to have prevailed. I only wish my translation had rendered more ample justice to its Italian original.

In the British Museum there exists a cognate bronze object, brought from Italy by Mr. Payne Knight, and supposed by him, perhaps correctly, to have reference to the worship of the venerated goddess Demeter, or Ceres. To this relique Mr. Kemble alludes in his paper, with a manifest leaning to Mr. Payne Knight's conviction. Could he have seen the group now on the table, his views would probably have been still further strengthened. One group appears to throw light on the other, and if in this we may recognise an allusion to some primitive form of Lupercalia, it is not unreasonable to refer the other to the Ambarvalia, or rather to some earlier rite of the goddess of agriculture, on which the Ambarvalia was subsequently founded.<sup>b</sup>

Bronze reliques of this class are exceedingly rare, and, beyond doubt, belong to a very remote antiquity, whether we are to attribute them to the early Greek colonists,<sup>c</sup> or to the aboriginal Italic races. They would not indeed be out of keeping with the taste for imitation and scenic representation evinced by the Oscan people, and which found expression, even in late Roman times, in the popular *Fabulæ Atellanæ*.<sup>d</sup> Such of these mystic groups as have hitherto occurred in Italy, have all been discovered, I believe, in the southern region which formed the home of the ancient Osci.

I am happy in this opportunity of submitting a matter of such interest to the experience and judgment of the Society, and of endeavouring to further the wishes of my esteemed friend Mr. Kemble.

It may be as well to state, for public convenience, that the University of Oxford has done me the honour of accepting this Lucera bronze, which henceforth will find a resting-place there in the Ashmolean Museum.

W. M. WYLIE.

<sup>a</sup> Carm. iii. xv. 13.

<sup>c</sup> Compare Herodotus, ii. 48-51.

<sup>b</sup> Virgil, Georg. i. 339.

<sup>d</sup> Livy, lib. vii. c. 2.