

ITALIAN FABRICS

After the destruction of the Athenian Empire at the hands of Sparta, Athens lost control of the potter's trade. Some of it went to the north, where, on the shores of the Black Sea, particularly at or about Kertch in the Crimea, a large industry in polychrome vases sprang up (case IX, No. 131). Most of the trade was shifted to the west, to Italy. Wares made in the west were never so artistic as those made in Hellas. The potters were given to fantastic shapes (case XIII, No. 95), and the decorations, when not crude, lost themselves in a welter of detail and elaboration (case XIII, No. 94). As the Romans conquered Magna Graecia, painted ware disappeared and was replaced, as has been said, by molded or stamped pottery, which was easier to make and could be produced in great quantities.

*East
Room*

LAMPS

CASES XIV AND XVI.

The Romans were fond of molding clay. They made plaques and pendants of clay (case XVI, Nos. 51-60) and they used clay as well as bronze for lamps (case XIV). Lamp making must have been an important part or branch of the potter's craft. Many of the lamps have upon them the maker's name stamped, and for some the molds still exist. The earliest form of lamp is open. When made of clay, it is a simple saucer, with the edge pinched into a lip to support the wick (No. 2, which comes from Cyprus). This open form is said to be Semitic in origin and development. Later and normally the lamp is covered, except for a small air hole, and the top, added by non-Semitic peoples, comes to be decorated at first with linear ornament, later with figures, such as a running warrior (No. 31) or a chariot (No. 33) and various animals, or figures of gods—Jupiter with the eagle (No. 7), Eros (No. 9), Hercules (No. 34), Venus (No. 35) or erotic scenes such as Leda and the swan (Nos. 15, 16). The forms of the lamps are sometimes curious—No. 36 is molded in the shape of a bull's head; No. 12 is a crude "candelabrum;" No. 49 required a wick not much thicker than a thread. Irrespective of the size, a lamp may have several nozzles (No. 13 has nine). By the shape of the nozzle, volute (No. 25), grooved (No. 47), plain (No. 10), heart shaped (No. 34), it is possible to date lamps made within the imperial period. Lamps called "delphiniform" (No. 14) are of the first century B. C.