



FIG. I.—THE COMBAT BETWEEN ATHENA AND ENKELADOS, FROM A GREEK VASE IN THE POSSESSION OF J. GOODEN CHISHOLM, ESQ.

ATHENA AND ENKELADOS, AS REPRESENTED ON
A GREEK VASE.

By TALFOURD ELY, M.A., F.S.A.

"Enceladus mihi carmen erat."—CLAUDIAN.

The amphora which, through the kindness of its owner, my friend Mr. Gooden Chisholm, is now exhibited, once belonged to another well-known antiquary, the late Professor T. L. Donaldson, who for many years occupied the Chair of Architecture at University College, London. We have no record of the discovery of this vase, and it may, of course, like the vast majority of its fellows, have come from the almost inexhaustible stores of the Etruscan cemeteries.

In view, however, of Professor Donaldson's travels and researches in Greece proper, it is not impossible that it may have been found in an Hellenic tomb.¹

In any case an Attic origin is certainly suggested by the brilliancy of the black glaze and the bright red tone of the clay, heightened, no doubt, by admixture of that Cean *miltos* which was at one time an Athenian monopoly. Even supposing that the vase started on its northern journey *via* Etruria, a couple of dozen centuries ago, its technique indicates clearly enough that it ultimately hails from the Kerameikos at Athens. It represents, too, one of the most famous deeds of the tutelary deity of that city, Athena; but of this more anon.

The vase before us is a black-figured amphora of comparatively late style, dating in my opinion from the close of the sixth century, or even possibly the beginning of the fifth. Its height is $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches;² the greatest circumference is $28\frac{1}{4}$ inches; the diameter of the mouth

¹ After reading this paper I was informed that the vase was given to Professor Donaldson by Lady Tite.

² On April 21st I re-measured the vase and found that strictly the above was too high by $\frac{3}{32}$ of an inch; the other measurements proved correct.

is six inches. It is well preserved, and is a good specimen of the later black-figured style.

Its neck, adorned with the anthemion and the lotus, rises sharply from the shoulder, which bears the familiar straightlined decoration called by the Germans "Stab-ornament."



FIG. II.—SCALE $\frac{1}{2}$.

Under the handles which are marked with three divisions, the anthemion and lotus appear again.

On the frieze, or main field, we have on one side (see fig. II.) the bearded Dionysos of early art, drinking-horn in hand, facing a female, doubtless Ariadne. Behind her, on the right, stands a satyr. Behind Dionysos are another satyr and a nymph, both looking towards the central figures.

On the other face of the vase (fig. I.), besides two rather uninteresting draped spectators (the German "Mantelfiguren"), we have Athena and the giant Enkelados.

Beneath the frieze is a meander: then a leaf-like

"lotus-bud" decoration; below this the usual rays, rising from a red band, which crowns the black foot of the vase.

The group of Athena and Enkelados is taken from that Gigantomachia, which, though deprecated as immoral by the Platonic Socrates,¹ formed a favourite motive in Hellenic art of every kind, from the Megarian pediments and the metope of Selinus, to the altar-frieze of Pergamon and Athenion's cameo.

Similar grouping of Athena and a giant is found on four black-figured amphoras at Berlin, while the famous red-figured kylix² of Erginos and Aristophanes, in the same museum, supplies the names³ of both goddess and giant, here Athena, there Enkelados king supreme over sons of Earth, as he is proclaimed by the Latin poets.⁴

The subject was indeed a favourite with the earlier vase painters. Mr. Cecil Smith has kindly supplied me with a list of no fewer than thirteen black-figured vases and two of later style representing this combat, all to be found in the British Museum; while there are four black-figured and two red-figured illustrations of it at Berlin, and in the current volume of the Athenian *Mittheilungen* of the German Institute,⁵ M. Staës describes a black-figured lekythos representing Athena spearing a defeated giant, who is armed with helmet, shield, and lance. This lekythos is one of the vases recently brought to light from beneath the famous mound of Marathon.

Though in the work of art before us the figures are unnamed, there can be no doubt as to their attribution. The type of Athena herself is unmistakable. As for her opponent, though the giant Pallas is occasionally mentioned, this unenviable rôle has usually been assigned to Enkelados⁶ by Greek writers, as for instance Apollodoros,⁷ who informs us that when Enkelados

¹ πολλοῦ δὲ γιγαντομαχίας τε μυθολογητέον αὐτοῖς καὶ ποιικιλτέον. Plato, *Republic*, 378 c.

² See Overbeck, *Atlas der griechischen Kunstmythologie*, v., 3 a.

³ A small vase is mentioned by Lucien Bonaparte as inscribed ΕΝΚΕΑΔΟΣ and ΑΘΕΝΑΙΑ, *Museum etrusque*, No. 1606, Pl. XXXV.

⁴ Claudian, *Raptus Proserp.*, III, 351.

Others, however, assigned this pre-eminence to Porphyryon or Alkyoneus.

⁵ p. 51.

⁶ Zeus is opposed to Enkelados in the *Batrachomyomachia*, 285. But this poem may be as late as the second century B.C. Cf. Euripides, *Hercules Furens*, 908, and *Ion*, 209, 210.

⁷ I., 6, 2.

attempted flight the goddess hurled on him the whole island of Sicily.

In the monuments, however, he is represented as attacked with more ordinary arms, as the spear, Athena's characteristic weapon, which she brandished even when first leaping forth from the brain of Zeus.¹

In earlier forms of art, among which our vase must be reckoned, the giants are depicted simply as heroic warriors, wearing the usual equipment of the Hellenic hoplite; a conception due to the influence of Epic poetry;² thus Hesiod describes them as

τεύχεσι λαμπομένους, δολίχ' ἔγχεα χερσὶν ἔχοντας.³

A more sensational garb, consisting of the skins of wild beasts, was for the most part reserved for a later time, when the prevailing passion for novelty supplied these sons of Earth with serpents in place of legs, and provided some of them with ample wings. Even the conservative Aristophanes would appear to have countenanced this innovation, to judge from a suggestion in the *Birds*⁴ that winged Porphyryions should be sent against Heaven, clad in the skins of leopards. Perhaps then the close of the fifth century may be taken for the introduction of the new conception as to the type of the giants, especially if we compare a gem described by Mr. A. S. Murray,⁵ on which a giant wears a wild beast's skin in addition to the chiton of the older style.

Even on one of the Selinuntine metopes dating from the latter half of the sixth century, a giant seems to be clad in both chiton and beast's hide.⁶

In our black-figured vase, however, the giant, whom we may call Enkelados, is of course represented in the old-fashioned way as a Greek heavy-armed foot soldier, a sober equipment that reminds us of Athenian bas-reliefs

¹ Σίσιας' ὄκυν ἄκοντα, *Hymni Homericæ*, XXVIII, 9 (Goodwin's edition). Later writers brought the Gorgon's head into play against the giants; and Claudian (*Gigantomachia*, 101-103) by way of novelty makes Damastor use as a missile the body of a brother giant whom Athena had thus turned to stone.

² See Ernst Kuhnert in Roscher's *Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*. s. v. *Giganten*.

³ *Theogony*, 186, Gaetling & Paley

consider this line spurious, as probably added by a rhapsodist from *Iliad*, XVIII, 510. I cannot see the necessity for such alteration of the text.

⁴ 1249, 1250.

⁵ Introduction to *Catalogue of Engraved Gems in the British Museum*, p. 26; and No. 553, Plate F.

⁶ This metope belonged to the temple, usually designated "F" on the eastern hill at Selinus. See Friedrichs-Wolters, *Bausteine*, p. 83.

of the sixth century,¹ and is almost without exception² adopted by the vase painters in their representations of giants.

So Enkelados wears a Corinthian helmet with lofty crest and upright plume, a chiton, and a cuirass. His right hand wields a spear, on his left arm he bears a large oval shield decorated with disks of white.

His mighty adversary wears the close-fitting Attic helmet, above which towers a tall crest. Her left arm supports an Argolic buckler, adorned with ivy; her uplifted right thrusts downwards the massive spear. The aegis with its fringe of threatening serpents forms her breastplate, beneath which a chiton, girt up for warfare, reaches but halfway below the knee, instead of flowing down to the feet, as in her more peaceful mood.

Her flesh is of a grey tint, the white having in great part fallen off from the black glaze on which it was laid. For in no Attic ware, except the famous François vase, was the white placed directly on the clay.

Athena tramples on the heel of her kneeling opponent, who twists his body round to deliver an ineffectual spear thrust, while vainly raising his shield against the stroke of his resistless foe.

The details of his chiton, cuirass, and helmet are carefully marked out by incised lines; as are the scales of Athena's aegis, and the chequers and crosses of her richly embroidered robe.

Purple is employed for beards and some parts of the dresses. These are represented by dark lines in fig. I.

The story of the contest between the gods and the giants is most concisely told in the *Bibliotheca* of Apollodoros.³

"Earth, wrathful as to the Titans, becomes the mother of giants, unsurpassed in size, and irresistible in strength, who were terrible to look on, with their full long hair hanging down from head and jaws, and for legs had scaly serpents.⁴ They were brought into the world in Phlegrai, or, as others tell, in Pallene.

¹ e.g., the stèle of Aristion.

² A single instance of a snake-footed giant (on a late oinochoe), is mentioned by Heydemann, *Erstes Hallisches Winkelmannsprogramm*.

³ I., 6.

⁴ It must be remembered that Apollodoros wrote as late as 140 B.C.

"They hurled against heaven rocks and blazing oaks. Conspicuous above all were Porphyrion and Alkyoneus, who was immortal if fighting in the land of his birth. He it was that drove off from Erytheia the oxen of the Sun.

"Now an oracle had declared that no giant could be slain by the gods unaided, but that by a mortal's help the giants would meet their end. Earth, hearing this, fell to seeking a potent herb, to prevent their perishing even by a mortal hand. But Zeus forbidding Dawn, and Moon, and Sun to show this herb, got the start of her, and culled it himself. Then, through Athena, he called in Herakles to help, who in the first place shot Alkyoneus with an arrow. When, however, the giant fell to the ground he gained fresh strength. Then, at Athena's advice, he was dragged outside Pallene, and so died.

"Porphyrion rushed to battle against Herakles and Hera. But by the arts of Zeus he was inspired with passion for Hera, and she invoked aid against his violence. Then Zeus struck him with the thunderbolt, and Herakles despatched him with an arrow.

"As for the rest, Apollo shot Ephialtes in the left eye, Herakles shot him in the right. Eurytos was slain by Dionysos with his thyrsus; Klytios, they say by Hekate; but rather by Hephaistos, striking him with red-hot iron.

"Then Athena cast the island of Sicily on Enkelados, as he tried to make his escape; and she flayed off the skin of Pallas to use as a shield in the fight. Polybotes again, chased by Poseidon, made his way to Kos; but Poseidon broke off and threw upon him a portion of the island, that which is called Nisyros. But Hermes, wearing the cap of Hades, fought and slew Hippolytys, and Artemis slew Gration, and the Fates slew Agrios and Thoon, whose weapons were maces of bronze. As for the rest, Zeus struck and slew them with his thunderbolts; and as they were perishing, Herakles sent his arrows upon them all."

This version of a widespread myth was written by an author living late enough to combine various traditions.

Thus, like the vase-painter Nikosthenes¹ and others,

¹ See his Krater, B 364, in case 40 of the Second Vase Room, British Museum.

Apollodoros represents deities acting in concert,¹ and as a triad²; while on the other hand he also gives us a series of metope-like pictures of single combats, each between one deity and one giant.

An example of this last conception is afforded by Mr. Chisholm's amphora.

Of the fifteen vases representing Athena and Enkelados now in the British Museum (which through the courtesy of Mr. Walters I have been able to examine), five are amphorae, but the treatment of the subject in these does not correspond with that now in question.

Among the rest, in the black-figured style we may note,

1. An oinochoe³ on which Athena with both hands thrusts her spear into a heavy-armed opponent.
2. A hydria,⁴ on the shoulder of which are no fewer than three groups of a goddess contending with a giant, the group to the right being the most akin to the motive of our amphora. On this hydria Athena wears neither ægis nor shield.
3. A large kylix⁵ with a fine group of Athena and Enkelados. Here, as on the oinochoe just mentioned, the goddess faces the spectator's left, a very unusual position.
4. On the outside of another kylix (No. 432 in the same case H), Enkelados is represented as of giant size compared with Athena. This accentuation of the size of the giants as compared with their opponents is very rare in ancient art.
5. On the other hand the alabastos, No. 676, in case 28, represents Enkelados as a tiny figure.
6. No. 370 is a small two-handled cup of such poor execution that it is hidden away in a cupboard at the bottom of case H. It is, however, interesting as representing Athena and Enkelados contending on equal terms.

The myth of Athena and Enkelados did not so frequently employ the pencil of artists in the red-figured

¹ Compare Athena, Herakles, and giant on a paste. *Catalogue of Engraved Gems in the British Museum*, No. 674.

² Thus Athena forms one of a triad

on three amphoræ, Nos. 145, 208, and 251, in case D.

³ No. 483 in case 40, Second Vase Room.

⁴ No. 338, in case 44.

⁵ No. 434, in case H.

style. The British Museum, however, possesses two examples, both of first-rate importance, viz., a hydria of the best period,¹ and the magnificent krater,² from Altamura, in Southern Italy, which occupies so prominent a position in the Third Vase Room. On the former, Athena, while spearing Enkelados with her right hand, seizes his helmet with her left, an action not, as far as I know, to be found on earlier vases, but leading up to the scheme of the Pergamene group. Enkelados falls helpless back, his right hand still grasping the spear, his left the shield. His face, perhaps for the first time, appears in full.

On the great krater also Athena grasps her opponent by the head, while he strikes at her no longer with the spear but with the sword.

In his monograph on the giants³ the German savant, Maximilian Mayer, gives a catalogue of no fewer than sixty-two black-figured vases representing Athena and Enkelados, besides seven in the red-figured style, and this enumeration is certainly not exhaustive.

It will now be well to mention, as far as possible in chronological order, other instances of the same general type, lying outside the province of the vase-painter.

The oldest sculptural representations of the war between gods and giants that have come down to us are certain specimens of the Megarian school, belonging to the sixth century, viz., the group that once decorated the pediment of the Treasury of the Megarians at Olympia, and the two metopes from a temple in the outer city of Selinus, a joint colony of the Sicilian Megara and its parent state. Sadly mutilated as these are, we can see that the combatants were arranged in pairs, though we cannot learn much as to Athena and her opponent.

Far more instructive is the famous Pergamene Frieze, in which one of the most important episodes is the triumph of Athena over her earth-born foe. Though, as Mr. Farnell has remarked,⁴ this is not a scene of mere single combat, Athena is at the moment represented as subduing a single giant whom we may call Enkelados.

The combat is, however, even more unequal than those we have considered before.

¹ No. 189, at the bottom of case 47, in the Third Vase Room.

² No. 800, on pedestal 8.

³ *Die Giganten*, pp. 309-311.

⁴ *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, III., 332.

Vainly striving to remove the grasp of the goddess from his hair, the youthful giant leaves his naked breast open to the deadly fangs of Athena's attendant serpent. The left arm of the goddess supports her shield, but she wields neither thunderbolt nor spear.

More observant of tradition in this respect, yet showing the influence of the Pergamene school, is the bronze in the Museo Kircheriano, published by Mr. Hamilton Smith, in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*.¹

Here again goddess and giant balance each other in the composition of the group; but her right hand is uplifted to strike, while he still offers a bold front to her attack.

With this may be compared a paste in the British Museum in which Athena "armed with helmet, shield, and short spear, advances, treading down anguipede giant, who attempts to strike up at her with a *pedum*."²

The story of Enkelados and his brother giants, though a favourite with the authors and the artists of ancient Hellas, is not so likely to commend itself to the modern Englishman with his ideas of fairness in fighting.

The gods were immortal; and out of all the numerous representations of their struggle against the giants, I remember but a single instance of a god even appearing, for the moment at least, to get the worst of it. This occurs in the Pergamene frieze,³ where a giant has seized a god round the waist and lifted him off his feet, round which serpents coil, while the giant bites deep into his arm.

Elsewhere the Olympians are always the victors, and their earth-born opponents have no chance of success.

Now indeed "Great Pan is dead!" But in the heyday of Greek literature and Greek art there was no thought of a "Gotterdammerung"—no dread of a time when the poet of the Nativity should proclaim the hopeless downfall and banishment of the whole host of Hellenic deities:

"From haunted spring, and dale
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting genius is with sighing sent."⁴

¹ IV, 90.

² *Catalogue of Engraved Gems in the British Museum*, p. 100.

³ It is in the group designated by the letter I. I have described it in the *Antiquarian Magazine* for September,

1882. In the group in Wilton House, quoted by Dr. Furtwangler in the *Archäologische Zeitung* for 1881, the god is not in so helpless a position.

⁴ Milton, *Hymn to the Nativity*.