

No. 109,982. In the National Museum, Naples.

During explorations in Pompeii in 1874 there was found a most beautiful piece of mosaic work, which from its wonderful & unique formation & workmanship has caused much excitement. It is a mosaic table of square shape & little more than a foot square, fixed in a strong wooden frame. It served as the top of the pedestal in the Masonic Lodge at Pompeii. The ground is of a grey green stone in the middle of which is a human skull, made of white grey & black colours. In appearance the skull is quite natural & the beauty of its execution is such as to render it a model of anatomical precision & truthfulness. Above the skull is seen a level of coloured wood, the points being of brass, & from the top point by a white thread is suspended a plumb. Below the skull is a wheel with six spokes & on the upper rim of the wheel is a butterfly with wings of a red colour edged with yellow, the eyes being of blue. The outline of the entire piece is symmetrical so that the skull wings & wheel through the protrusion of the plumbline become halved, and looking sideways the objects correspond with each other.

On the left is an upright spear the bottom of which is of iron resting on the ground. From this there hangs attached to a golden cord, a garment of scarlet, also a purple robe, to which some signification may be surmised, whilst the upper part of the spear is surrounded by a white braid of diamond pattern. To the right is a quarled thorn stick from which hangs a coarse shaggy piece of cloth in yellow grey & brown colours, which is tied with a ribbon, & above it is a leather knapsack. Evidently this work of art is symbolical & mystical, at all events it appears to have some reference to the Royal Craft; & as a proof of this last supposition it certainly has reference to some secret craft in the old Roman Era. The antiquity of the origin of the "K.K." (Kings Craft) Royal Craft & of the Brotherhood & its fellowship with ancient secrecy & mysteries becomes at last certified by this wondrous piece of mosaic art as acknowledged by affirmed known facts.

(From S. Russell Forbe's "Ramble in Naples.")

N.B. The accompanying photo

gives an extremely poor idea of this fine piece of mosaic, but no better can be had. Perhaps some Brother may be able to put in the colours as per description.

(signed)

A. J.

Copyright Worcestershire Masonic
Library and Museum Trust