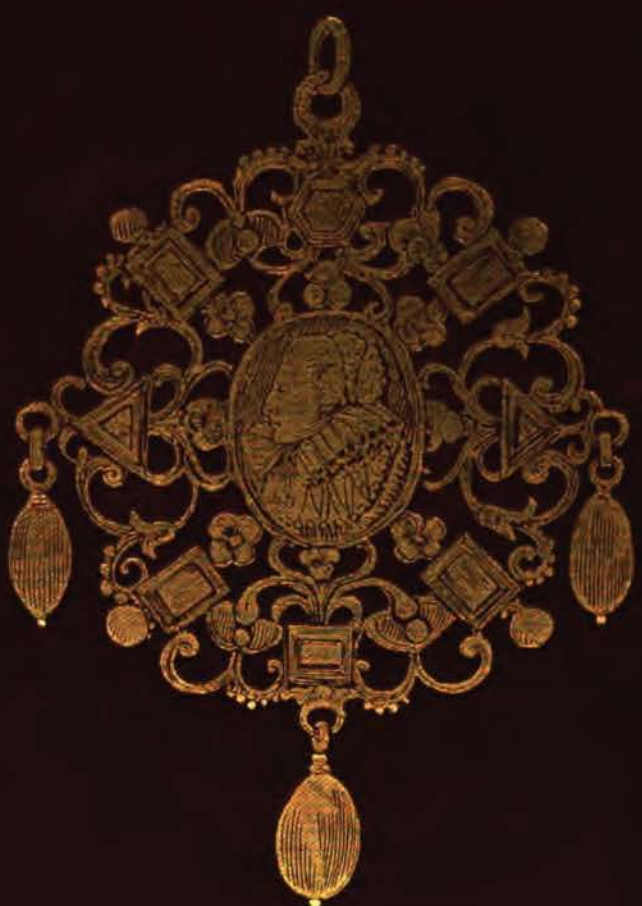
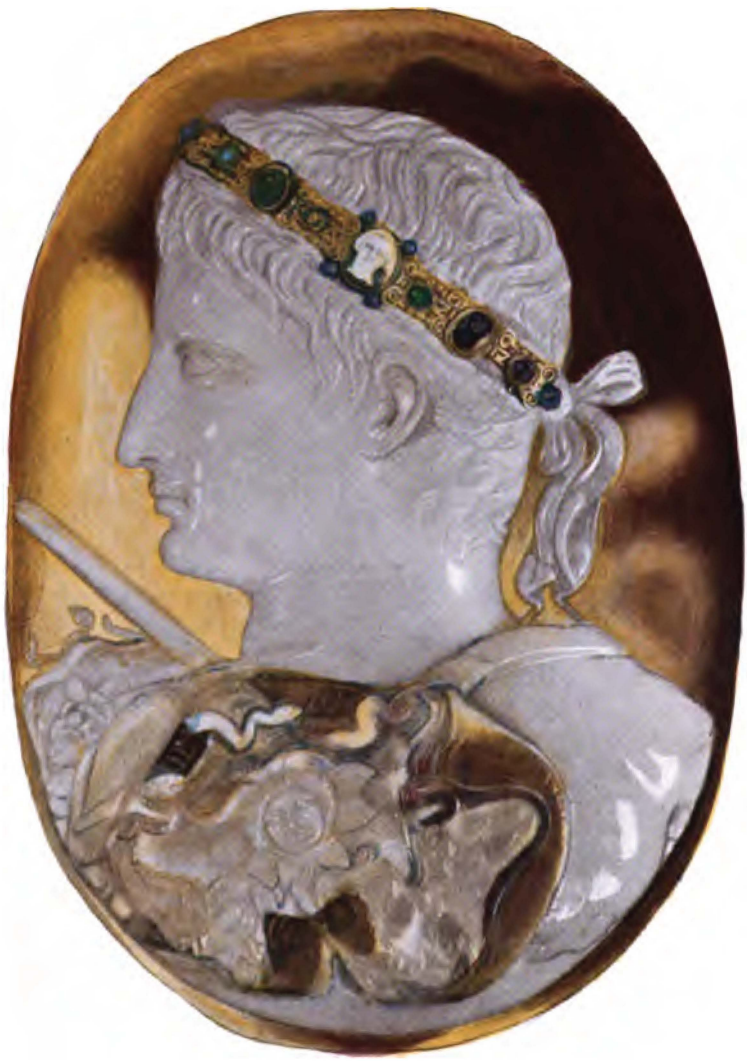
CAMEOS

CYRIL DAVENPORT, F.S.A.





THE EMPEROR AUGUSTUS CÆSAR, WITH ÆGIS AND SPEAR.
GRÆCO-ROMAN SARDONYX CAMEO OF THREE LAYERS.
THE JEWELLED BAND IS A SUBSEQUENT ADDITION.
In the British Museum.

CAMEOS

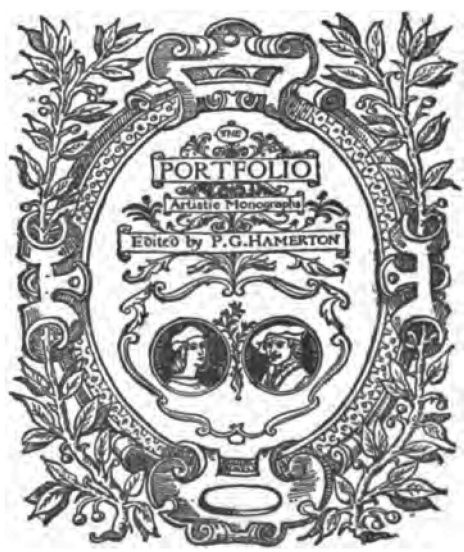
By

CYRIL DAVENPORT, F.S.A.

OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM,

AUTHOR OF "ROYAL ENGLISH BOOKBINDINGS,"

ETC.



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ERRATUM.

In the inscriptions of some of the Illustrations, for GRŒCO-ROMAN read GRÆCO-ROMAN.

CAMEOS

CHAPTER I.

THE MATERIALS USED FOR CAMEOS, AND THE PROCESSES EMPLOYED IN CUTTING THEM.

CAMEOS may, to some extent, be defined as small sculptures executed in low relief on some substance precious either for its beauty, rarity, or hardness.

Such carvings have been made at various times in the history of glyptic art in all varieties of materials and in all kinds of ways. They cannot, however, always be considered as cameos; for instance, although, from the point of view of actual workmanship, carvings such as those which have been so commonly made on boxwood or honestone as models for coins or medals, are cameo-work, yet, from the commonness of the material in which they are made, I think they should come outside such a category. The same difficulty of definition is obvious in many similar cases, and I think it may be fairly laid down as a general rule, that for the purpose of ordinary classification a cameo must have some qualification as a jewel or precious object, either from the value of the material on which it is cut, or because of the excellence of the art work upon it. Take for example the precious stone definition; a very large exception has to be made to that rule at the outset, for the onyx, in which a large majority of cameos are cut, is not a jewel, but possessing as it does beauty and hardness, and other special qualities which render it the ideal substance in which to make such a carving, an onyx, when it is finely cut, should be allowed to rank as a precious stone. The word cameo itself does not help to enlighten us, as the real meaning and derivation of the word are unknown. When, therefore, I use the word without

an adjective in the following paper, I shall mean that the cameo is cut either upon a jewel or an onyx, and in other cases a qualifying word will be given, "shell" cameo, "paste" cameo, or "coral" cameo, as the case may be. The large majority of important cameos, both antique and modern, are cut upon banded onyx, a stone, as I have said, particularly well fitted for this kind of work, and more suitable than any other for showing to advantage a design in relief in one colour on a flat background of another. The onyx is extremely hard and takes a beautiful polish; agate and other forms of silica are also used for cameos as well as most of the well-known precious stones, except the diamond, in which, although intaglios have often been cut in it, as far as I know a cameo never has.

Of the precious, or semi-precious, stones in which cameos have been made the emerald is one of the most beautiful as well as, perhaps, the greatest favourite. Emeralds are usually full of flaws and are liable to be coloured in patches. The green of an emerald was supposed to be good for the eyesight, and Theophrastus mentions that they were set in rings to be looked at by persons with bad sight. Gem-engravers and cutters were in the habit of keeping an emerald to look at when their eyes were tired, and Pliny says that Nero watched the combats of gladiators through one of these stones. It seems likely that Nero's emerald may have been cut concave, as antique stones often were, in which case it would have been accidentally a lens suitable for short sight, *Neroni oculi hebetes nisi quum ad prope admota conniveret.* It is curious if the relief to be found by using this stone as an eyeglass was really due to an accidental form rather than to the colour which was then popularly credited with optical virtue.

The beryl is similar to the emerald, and the aquamarine is also of a green colour, but much paler. Plasma is a dark green stone, which was a very favourite one for gem-cutters both of intaglios and cameos. It varies from a rich soft colour to a dull emerald and is translucent. It is a very hard stone, a form of chalcedony, and is unfortunately liable to stains and spots of a darker or lighter shade; chrysoprase is also a member of the great quartz family, and is a very delicate translucent green.

Of the red stones, the garnet, hyacinthine garnet, and essonite or

cinnamon stone, were all employed for cameos. The colours of these stones vary from the richest blood-red to the violet shade of an ordinary amethyst. Jasper was also commonly used; it is an opaque form of quartz, and occurs both of a deep red colour and of a rich deep green. It is often found in banded agate, with colourless and other layers. Bloodstone or heliotrope is very similar to green jasper, but it has red stains irregularly all through it. This stone was a favourite material for cameos made at Byzantium and in the Byzantine style during the mediæval period.

The red jacinth, a variety of zircon, is a beautiful stone, somewhat lighter in colour than a garnet, and in ancient times was highly esteemed by gem-cutters. The pale pink corundum or ruby is rarely used, but whenever it occurs it is most charming and beautiful, but is very hard and troublesome to cut.

Opal is a vitreous form of silica, and is very soft. A gem cut in this stone should always be kept under crystal or glass, as the superficial polish will otherwise soon wear off. From well-chosen pieces of opal in its matrix, very effective cameos can be made; there is, however, always the danger of too much colour, and most of those I have seen are not in good taste. The play of colour in the opal is different from that found in any other stone, and I believe the cameo-cutter is still to come who will be able to utilise this undoubtedly beautiful quality to full advantage in a cameo. The colours are not actually in the substance of the stone, but are due to the dispersion of the white rays of light by the action of innumerable microscopic prisms which form the surface of the flaws with which the opal is permeated. Ancient cameo-cutters realised the difficulty of producing good work in opal, but the artists of later years have not been so particular, and most of them evidently trust rather to the natural beauty of the stone than to the excellence of the work they execute upon it.

Like many other stones, an opal is improved by some heat, but not too much. If there is any damp in the minute fissures of the stone, the prismatic colours will be dulled, and if it be dried by warmth they will reappear in their original brilliancy. A very little grease will permanently destroy the colour.

Turquoise has been for a very long time rather a favourite stone

for small cameos; it is probably the same stone as is described by Pliny as "callais" or "callaica," and is now sometimes known as callaite. It is a phosphate and hydrate of alumina coloured with phosphate of copper, is soft, and soon loses its polish. Turquoise darkens by age and turns sometimes into a dirty translucent green, but when not discoloured it is a beautiful pale opaque blue. It was largely used by antique and cinque-cento gem-cutters and engravers.

Lapis lazuli was always a favourite stone with the ancients, who employed it in many ways. It is not a precious stone, but as very fine pieces are rarely found of any size, when the colour is particularly dark and fine, it has almost been as much esteemed as if it were. It is spotted and veined more or less thickly with yellow iron pyrites, looking like gold. The so-called "sapphire" of the ancients was probably lapis lazuli. It was very successfully imitated in paste by the ancient Romans.

All the crystalline varieties of quartz are transparent, and those which are amorphous, or non-crystalline, are only translucent. Among the former of these two classes may be mentioned as having been most largely used for cameos, amethyst, varying from rich purple to pale purple, honey or greenish yellow; Cairngorm, brownish yellow, yellow, or smoky grey; rock crystal itself, quite colourless, always very beautiful; and smoky quartz.

Besides these, there are several translucent varieties, all of which have been made into cameos, especially carnelian and sard. Translucent chalcedony can be whitened or thickened by heat, but the colour so produced is not always pleasant; it is thick and opaque. Also some amount of superficial white thickening can be produced by the application of strong acid to colourless agate. Italian artists of the sixteenth century sometimes took advantage of this curious fact, and drew designs with acid on thin slices of chalcedony, afterwards backed with colour and finished with a diamond point. These stones are more curious than beautiful, but they are interesting as showing the remarkable susceptibility of amorphous chalcedony to outside influences. In some cases advantage has been taken of this process to easily add lettering on the groundwork of cameos.

Onyxes are now found in Brazil, and in India, chiefly at Cambay, and among the hills of Malwa; they are also found in the shingles of

the Indus and the Nile. The manner of the formation of an onyx is very curious: it is due to the gradual infiltration of water charged with silicious particles into hollows in trap-rock. This infiltration takes place under varying conditions of temperature and circumstance, so that the silica is frequently deposited in two distinct forms, side by side. One of these forms is amorphous, translucent; the other crystalline and transparent. Curiously enough, the transparent layer appears far more solid than the translucent one; this effect is due to the fact that it appears white as snow does, by reason of the innumerable reflections of the white rays of light from the facets of numbers of microscopic crystals, each of which is quite transparent.

The onyx, again, owes much of its beauty to the remarkable porosity of its amorphous layers, which possess the rare power of absorbing certain foreign substances, and being beautifully coloured by them in various tints. Onyxes are said to be now scarce, but up to the present they have not by themselves been considered as precious stones, their value—except in exceptional cases—being directly proportionate to the quality of the work upon them.

Layers of onyx invariably follow the inner contours of the hollow in which they are formed, as they are deposited from their outer circumference inwards; so that cameo-cutters have always had to face the great initial difficulty of having to modify their design in such a way as to make the best use of coloured strata, which they often find running in a direction not entirely consonant with their own wishes. When the hollow in which an onyx was formed was cylindrical in shape, the resulting stone was often used to make a cup or vase with great effect; such stones, with concentric circles of white and colour, when they were small, were also frequently made into eyes for statues, workers in this curious art being known in Rome as "fabri oculariі." The same cutting of onyx eyes was also made use of for finger rings, when the stones were quite small; the gold setting of these eyes is often made to represent the eyelids, and generally to carry out the idea, but they are cumbersome, and must have been uncomfortably heavy to wear.

The usual natural colour of an onyx is a pale grey, banded with white layers. If, when the stone was forming, there was any trace of a

metallic oxide in the water of infiltration, the pale grey, or amorphous, layer or layers would most probably acquire a tinge of colour. The commonest oxide to occur in these cases has been that of iron, the result being that the grey onyx has become yellowish or reddish. When this has occurred, the stone is called a sardonyx. But the possibility of artificially causing amorphous strata of an already formed grey onyx to absorb metallic oxides was discovered at an early date by Indian, Burmese, and Arabian lapidaries. Pliny acknowledges that in his time it was well known that the ancients improved the colour of their gems by heating them in honey.

If a grey, translucent piece of onyx is steeped in oil, honey, or sugar and water, it will absorb some of the liquid, and if subsequently strongly heated, or boiled in sulphuric acid, carbon will be deposited within the stone, thereby causing it to appear dark—even black. All nicolos are said to have been produced in some such way as this, many experts declaring that such a stone is not found naturally. The white layers of an onyx are not permeated by any solution; they are crystalline and non-absorbent, so they remain white under nearly all the artificial colouring processes. The crystalline layers are themselves sometimes slightly thickened by heat or strong acid, and they can be superficially reddened a little by painting over with a solution of iron in aquafortis, but in either case the effect is slight and a doubtful improvement. Nitric acid will remove such rust stains on white onyx, and will also very markedly pale a nicolo or a sardonyx. No doubt in these cases the acid absorbs the carbon or the iron oxide inside the stone.

A similar process to that used in the case of nicolos is used to produce sardonyx, with the difference that, instead of oil or honey, the stone is soaked in pernitrate of iron. Both these processes are really the same as such coloured stones undergo when in a state of nature, the only difference being that the favourable conditions are supplied more rapidly by artificial means than they would have been if nature had been left unaided. Also, it would be impossible to say exactly what particular proportion of metal colouring was contained in any special stone without destroying it; but, nevertheless, it is supposed that, by long experience, the Oberstein chemists are so skilled that they know to a nicety what proportion of chemicals are required to produce given shades of colour.

Heat alone will often redden and improve the colour of an onyx, especially the kind known as brown Brazilian chalcedony.

There are numerous other colours which can be artificially given to the porous layers of onyx, but none of them has been so much used as the black and the red. No doubt the reason for this is that both these colours have been, to a large extent, found as natural productions, and so they would be the most esteemed, as well as the least likely to be suspected of artificiality.

If a cameo showed a white design upon a blue background, it would be safe to say that it was most probably artificial, for, although there is no reason to consider such a naturally coloured stone to be an impossibility, no such specimens have yet been found.

Blue colour in chalcedony can be produced by soaking in iron, as in the case of the sards, but, instead of heat or sulphuric acid, the onyx must then be treated with ferrocyanide of potassium, which practically deposits Prussian blue in the pores of the stone; the colour, however, soon fades. Green is more troublesome to manage, but it can be produced by soaking the chalcedony in a solution of nitrate of nickel. A stone which is too deep a red can be made paler by the application of hydrochloric acid. The best-known varieties of the onyx stone are the carnelian-onyx, the bloodstone-onyx, the jasper-onyx, and the sard-onyx. Sard itself is more translucent than carnelian, which is always a little clouded. Red carnelian in large pieces is almost invariably artificially coloured.

At Oberstein, in Oldenburg, there have been for many years extensive manufactories for the preparation of onyxes for gem-cutters and engravers. These stones were found in great quantities in the neighbourhood of this town, and the works were originally established for the cutting and preparing of the native stones; but of late years the natural supply has considerably diminished, so that the greater part of the work now done at Oldenburg consists of the cutting, staining, and polishing of rough onyxes sent there for that purpose from all parts of the world, wherever they may be found—most of them now, I believe, from Brazil or India. As a rule the onyx is not a large stone, but sometimes large pieces are found among antiques; the largest examples are at Paris and Vienna, but Dr. Billing says that slabs of

true onyx exist as long as eighteen inches. Modern gem-cutters have half their work done for them, unlike their ancient predecessors, who had laboriously to get their pieces of onyx in order themselves before they could begin to engrave upon them. Agate often nearly resembles onyx; it is found in larger pieces, but the layers are neither so true in colour or so marked in shape. There is a cameo cut in agate, 1 foot and a half long, at Rome.

Excepting the very early specimens, of which a few examples still exist, cameos do not appear to have been cut in shell until the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. It is possible enough that they were made, but that they have not lasted. The earlier specimens of shell cameos with backgrounds of another colour to that of the relief portions usually show a grey colour; they were probably cut in some kind of mussel or cowrie shell.

At the period of the Renaissance, and afterwards, cameos were most commonly cut on the cassis rufa (Bull Mouth), cassis tuberosa (Black Helmet), cassis cornuta (Horned Helmet), or the strombus gigas (Pink Queen's Conch shell). Certain parts of all these shells show two layers of distinct colour — the upper one white, and the lower brown, pink, orange, yellow, or grey, of which the grey lasts best. A finely cut shell cameo can be very charming, but it seldom is. There are also bad defects in the material itself, the colour layers being always liable to be badly lined with small cracks. The opaque white layers, too, do not keep their surface well; examples of the sixteenth century usually have a decidedly worn appearance. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that a fine shell cameo cut by a master is by no means to be despised; a Laocoon cut by Fiamingo in this material in the seventeenth century, which was sold last year at the sale of the Marlborough gems, fetched 335*l.*

Cameos have been cut in mother-of-pearl shell (Meleagrina Margaretifera) since the fifteenth century; they were at first made in Italy, but of recent years have been extensively made at Damascus, and are usually coarse and badly executed; but the material itself is not at fault, as there have been a few exquisite heads cut upon it in recent times— one is a beautiful portrait of Napoleon I., which is now in the British Museum.

Ivory carvings in low relief would come under the head of cameos to some extent, but not as they are generally understood; and, indeed, the work of this kind, which has been done from a very early time, forms a subject of itself. In the same way, amber has been utilised both in Greece and Rome for small carvings. Several specimens of this kind of work were found at Præneste; and of later Roman workmanship there is, in the British Museum, a charming little box ornamented with groups of boys in relief.

At a very early period, ostrich eggs were cut in low relief, the backgrounds being artificially darkened; and, in modern times, white and green cameos have been cut in emus' eggs, which supply very excellent layers of those colours; but the work done upon them has been of a very inferior kind, as far as I know.

Malachite has been made into cameos in a few cases, but the softness of the stone and the crudity of the colour render it an unfitting material for such delicate work. Both coral and lava are at the present time used for small jewellery cameos, the work upon them being, however, very rarely good.

"Filippo Santa-Croce, dit Pippo," as well as his sons, all late Italian artists, cut small cameos on nuts and cherry-stones, but this kind of work rather takes us away into the mysteries of wood-carving. Glass has been sometimes cut as cameos, but as a rule it has only been moulded from casts made from cameos. In the case of some of the vases made in this material, and cut in low relief, they take rank among the very finest specimens of the art, and, in spite of their being made of a comparatively common material, they are certainly most beautiful. The glass which was used for such pieces as this is of a beautiful quality, and was cut in an exactly similar way to that which would be used in the case of an onyx, but, of course, glass is not so hard; it is, however, quite hard enough to repay even the finest possible workmanship of a gem-cutter, and will also take a beautiful polish—the great objection to it is its fragility. A vase can be easily made in glass of a size which would be impossible to procure in fine stone.

There is always great interest attached to the inquiry as to what tools and methods of working were used in ancient times by exponents

of the small technical arts. To a certain extent most of these arts can be executed by very simple means, but such proceedings usually involve a high degree of skill, immense patience, and a large expenditure of time. Modern appliances have enormously increased the ease with which most of the technical processes of such arts can be executed, but with this greater ease and quickness of production a greater absence of true art feeling goes unfortunately hand in hand.

An ancient cameo-worker may well be imagined looking at a piece of onyx with some degree of dismay, at the almost impenetrable block that he would have to fashion roughly into shape, before he could commence his art-work upon it. He would realise that this rough work would cost him as much time and trouble as the subsequent carving of the design itself, with the added annoyance that his labour expended upon it would never be appreciated. The ancient Assyrian and Egyptian makers of cylinders and scarabæi chose the softest stones available, in order that they might be more easy to cut. Early carvings of this kind are often found in such materials as steatite, syenite, or serpentine, and these can be easily cut with flint or obsidian flakes, or even with hard-metal chisels or gouges. The use of soft stones for small carvings is a characteristic of an early stage of the art, and, when harder stones are found used in any quantities, it is probable that either some more powerful process—such as the use of a drill—had been invented, or, at all events, that the cutting power of corundum, emery, or even diamond itself, had been discovered.

The highly convex form both of the Egyptian scarabs and the bossed gems which immediately succeeded them, were convenient to make by filing down larger pieces. The engraving on the flat bases of such stones was, no doubt, done by a fine-cutting stone point, possibly flint. Herodotus mentions arrows headed "with a stone brought to a point, the same sort by which they (the Ethiopians) engrave their seals." Both Theophrastus and Pliny mention naxium, or emery, as being the best material known for polishing marble or for rubbing down gems. There are many varieties of corundum, a species of mineral which comes next to the diamond in hardness. It is really a crystallised alumina, and in the form of emery is a very powerful cutting agent, and will polish even a diamond. Actual

points of diamond may have been used at an earlier date than is usually assigned to them, the possibility of splintering this stone easily by a hammer into small useful points may have been known to the workers in flint at an early date, and many antique cameos and intaglios show fine-cut lines which appear as if they were done with a diamond point; undoubtedly they could have been more easily done by that means than by any other. The invention of the wheel for cutting gems was probably introduced from the East, but it does not appear to be known whether it was brought forward as an original idea, or whether it simply came into being by a natural process. A drill, worked either by hand or by a string and bow, is indeed one of the earliest inventions of mankind, and the primitive drill required only a simple adaptation to render it effective for cutting hard stones instead of producing fire from soft wood.

The different methods which have been used for cutting hard stones can best be traced by a microscopic examination of the surfaces of antique intaglios; for, although such surfaces were usually highly polished, and consequently many of the cutting marks became erased, still a great many signs are left which are sufficient to show whether the cutting has been done by means of a splinter of diamond or something analogous, or by a drill working small circles one after the other. Work marks of this kind are seen with more difficulty in a cameo, because it was easier to polish, and is therefore more worn away in this process. Construction marks often show clearly on the back of a gem, as here the same trouble has not been taken to erase them. Of course, if the cameo is a small bust or figure cut in the round for the purpose of affixing to a cuirass or dress of any kind, this remark no longer applies, as such carvings were often as highly finished at the back as they were on the front, the reason being that a greater brilliancy and play of colour could be produced by hollowing out the stone at the back in some agreement with the contours of the front, and these remarkable hollowings are not unfrequent. These stones are also curiously pierced at the back, for facility of attachment to any substance.

The backs of antique cameos are often left rounded and roughly cut, but they have always been polished, and this condition of the back,

irregular, but polished, is one mark of an antique, because in Renaissance and in modern times, when the preparation of the rough stone was, and is, done by "another" workman, the backs are naturally well cut, flat, and finished. This parcelling out of the work, which is, indeed, the fatal blot in most of the small technical art of to-day, presupposes a great increase in the efficiency of the tools used. Although the state of the back of any particular gem may, to a great extent, be studied as an index to its age, it is not to be supposed that a clever cinque-cento forger could not easily have imitated the ancient manner; but, as a matter of fact, he did not think of it, but expended his great skill only on the face of his cameo.

A close examination of ancient gems—both cameo and intaglio—will show that several of them have been laboriously scratched out with a hard point, and others cut or filed away by means of some small round-headed instrument. This last appearance is, doubtless, due to the use or a drill, worked at first by hand, and subsequently, very likely, by a string and bow. By the use of such a drill, much more powerfully mounted with a treadle, gems were cut during the Renaissance and in modern times. If the drill used is small enough, an intaglio or cameo can be cut and finished by its aid alone, and numbers have been so made, but as a rule the finishing touches in all cases are more effectively and surely given by the diamond point.

A modern lapidary has a very powerful instrument in his delicate lathe fitted with strong treadle. He possesses a large assortment of tiny saws and points of iron, some fine, some broadly ended, like knitting-needles. These are made to revolve very rapidly by means of the treadle, the stone being fixed by wax to a wooden handle and held in the hand of the artist, who applies it to the cutting point as he may wish. The introduction of this instrument considerably altered the conditions under which cameos were made. The circular saws made it easy to cut off large flat pieces, and accordingly, in Renaissance work, large margins are often found; the ancients found much trouble in cutting away large pieces, so, as a rule, their margins are very narrow, the design coming near up to the edge of the stone.

Iron points or saws, however, would not by themselves touch the surface of a piece of chalcedony, however quickly they might revolve,

so it is necessary to increase their cutting qualities by some further device: this is found in the addition of oil and diamond dust.

The power of the iron points when used with diamond dust and oil is increased to an extraordinary degree, and the harder the stone is that has to be cut the better, because it presses the minute particles of diamond into the iron point to such a degree that this point very quickly becomes, as it were, a diamond file, and when it has reached this state it reacts on the hard stone and cuts it away rapidly. A cameo-cutter will begin, on his already prepared slab of onyx, by cutting away all the superfluous upper layers, down to the background layer, with his circular saw; then he will mass the design out by means of the largest points possible, gradually getting to the finer work with finer points, until at last he ceases using the lathe, and goes over the whole of his work very carefully with finishing touches with a diamond point.

The polishing of a cameo is a very important and difficult process. Such a gem must be very highly polished, and yet it must show very fine detail. Polishing tends to destroy detail, so it becomes necessary to go on finishing and polishing, again and again, for a long time, until at last single lines like hairs have to be polished one by one. A very skilful cameo-cutter will not, therefore, quite finish his work before he begins the polishing, but will leave the final delicate lines to be cut newly on the polished surface and again polished themselves.

The process of polishing is done in a similar way to that of cutting, in the same lathe, but with different tools and accessories. The stone is cemented as before on the end of a stick, and moved about in contact with the revolving point as found necessary. The points used for polishing are no longer of iron, but are made of some softer material, such as wood, lead, ivory, or copper, and instead of oil and diamond dust they are usually fed with oil mixed with one or other of the usual polishing powders, the choice of which depends upon the hardness of the substance to be polished: tripoli (powdered flint), rotten stone (powdered alumina), crocus (oxide of iron), rouge (oxide of copper), or putty powder (oxide of tin). For very hard stones, however, diamond dust and oil may be still necessary.

Unfortunately the repolishing of antique gems has been largely done both during the Renaissance and in modern times, with the inevitable

result that to an expert the stone is spoilt. A fine antique cameo, finished and polished by a great artist, will certainly not bear a subsequent polishing without losing much of that finished detail which distinguishes a first-rate gem from one of an inferior kind. But to the ordinary observer, no doubt, such a repolished gem would appear much improved and for commercial reasons the process has been very largely practised. I see no reason, however, for objecting to judicious repolishing of a flat background, the harm is done when the raised sculpture is meddled with.

To set against this disastrous repolishing of antique gems may be mentioned the artificial scratching of modern forgeries to make them look old. It must be admitted that a modern skilful workman can copy any cameo, old or new, with such perfection that it would be impossible for any one but an expert to say which was the original and which was the copy. But a gem copied to-day from an old model would naturally be in a fine state of polish, and to counteract this it was discovered by some ingenious Italian workman of the last century, that if he gave his brilliantly polished gems to turkeys and made them swallow them, the trituration of the gizzards of the birds gave to the stones the exact signs of wear which were wanting, and numbers of such treasures are to be found included in the collections shown in most of the great museums in Europe.

The small lathe working with a treadle, and cutting hard stones by means of iron points fed with oil and emery or diamond, is the most powerful cutting instrument known, and it would only be used for very hard stones. All quartz stones would be most easily cut by it, and jewels also, but it would be unnecessary for cutting anything like a shell cameo. Such work is best done by means of small steel scrapers or engraving tools, made in such shape as may suit the fancy of the operator or the exigencies of his design. The polishing of such pieces can also be well done by a polisher's wheel fitted with buff. Wherever a large background is to be cleared, however, the small circular saw will slice off large pieces with less difficulty than any other instrument.

Helmet shells, however, as well as onyxes, do not always have their colour layers quite flat, so that a saw, which will cut out flat pieces only, must always be used with great caution, for in all cameo-cutting the one irremediable fault is to cut away too much.

The oil and diamond dust used on iron points for cutting cameos do not prevent the workman from seeing how his work progresses, because they are both so transparent. In some ways cameo-cutting is easier than intaglio work, because, in the case of the latter, impressions for comparison have constantly to be made while the work is in progress, as the object is to make a fine impression; but the cameo, only being made for the sake of its own beauty, which should not be microscopic, the artist can quite well judge of the progress of his work by the eye alone.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY CAMEOS AND GLASS PASTES.

AMONG the gems from Mycenæ which are shown in the Gold Room at the British Museum is a remarkable little figure of a recumbent lion cut in amethyst. It is only the back of a seal, however, the seal itself being engraved with small spirals; but it is a very early specimen of cameo work.

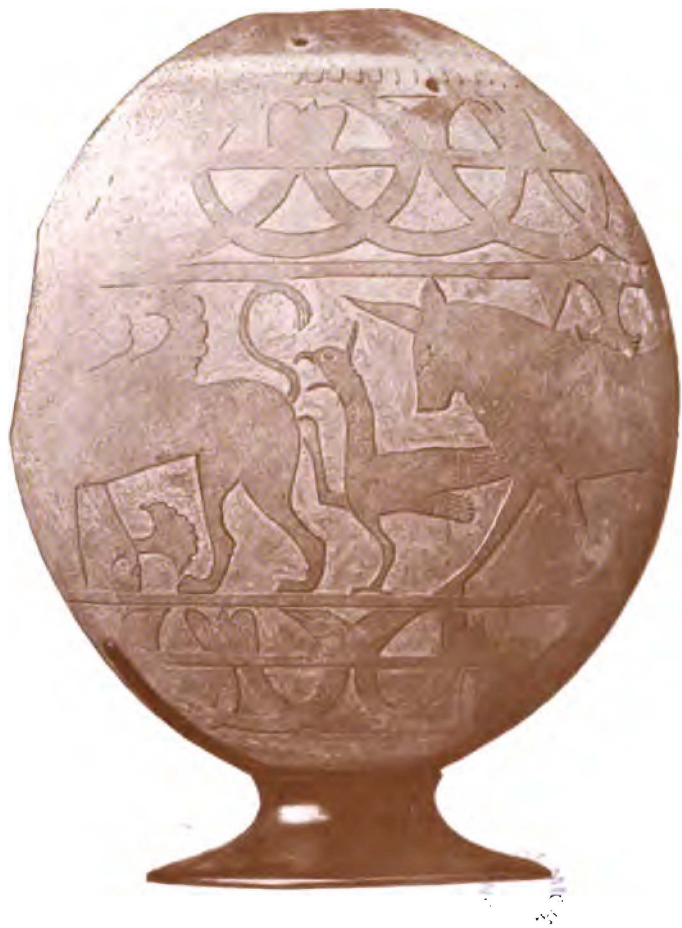
There is little really known about Mycenæ or its inhabitants. Remains of Mycenæan civilisation are, of course, found in the Peloponnesus, but also in several of the islands of the Ægean Sea; and the date of this civilisation is so remote that to fix any date is almost pure guess-work. Some of the works of art which were made by this wonderful people are of such a nature that time alone has little or no effect upon them. The little amethyst lion, for instance, is quite as fresh now as he was, perhaps, some four thousand years ago, although the Greek temples which were built at the same time have long since crumbled into ruins. In all the smaller Mycenæan works of art there is found a prevalence of animal forms.

It is supposed by some antiquaries that the Mycenæans, or some of them, migrated into Italy about the sixth or seventh century B.C., and eventually became the race known as the Etruscans. Such a theory is certainly plausible, and undoubtedly the characteristics of early Etruscan work are almost identical with Greek work. So marked is this similarity that, without knowing where the treasure was found, it is almost impossible to distinguish between the work of the two nations. Greek and Etruscan scarabs are almost the same; many of them are cut closely after the Egyptian model, and others have their backs beautifully carved into the semblance of lions or other animals, the finest remaining

CAMEO CUT IN TRIDACNA SQUAMOSA SHELL.

PROBABLY PHŒNICIAN WORKMANSHIP. FOUND AT CANINO IN ETRURIA. 6TH OR 7TH CENTURY B.C.

In the British Museum.



CAMEO CUT ON OSTRICH EGG. PROBABLY MADE BY PHŒNICIANS WORKING IN EGYPT. 6TH OR 7TH CENTURY B.C.

In the British Museum.

ANCIENT ROMAN GLASS CAMEO, BLUE WITH YELLOW DOTS, IMITATING LAPIS-LAZULI.
In the British Museum.

BUST OF PARIS. WHITE AND BLUE GLASS CAMEO.
FORMERLY THE BASE OF THE PORTLAND VASE.
GRŒCO-ROMAN WORKMANSHIP.

In the British Museum.

specimens of such work being now at the Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg. The Greek and Etruscan scarabs are mostly cut in hard stones, carnelian especially, and there are other examples found in crystal and obsidian. Greek cameos of the early centuries are well represented in the Cabinet des Médailles at Paris. Some of them are good, but they are neither remarkable for their excellence nor for their originality. There are also some at Vienna, which appear to be small copies of existing architectural sculptures on buildings.

Etruscan jewellery, except for the scarabs, shows few signs of cameo work. It consists rather of the most exquisite gold work ever yet produced, set with cloisonné enamels, glass pastes, and rough gems.

In the British Museum is a Greek scaraboid, the back of which is cut in a rounded form, and on which is a head of a satyr in low relief. It is probably work of the sixth century B.C. On the base is an intaglio representing a bearded citharist holding a lyre. It is cut in steatite, and round the edge of the intaglio are the words ΣΤΡΙΑΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΣΕ; so Syrias, the engraver of this cameo, was not only one of the earliest artists to have made such work, but he was almost certainly the first to sign it.

In the same collection is a small intaglio with rounded back on which is a cameo figure of a seated slave; this is cut in sardonyx. On the base is cut a design of a warrior with a large shield, supposed to be Capaneus. It is also Greek work, and is assigned to the sixth century B.C. Yet another Greek scarab, assumed to be of the same date, is now at Paris; but the flat base in this case bears upon it, instead of the usual intaglio, a sphinx beautifully carved in the white layer of an onyx. M. Babelon considers this the earliest existing specimen of a true cameo.

At Kertsch were discovered several rings, on the stones set in which is small raised work. Among these, one of the most beautiful is a carnelian set with a swivel, the back being cut into the semblance of a sleeping lion. The beginnings of cameos as small pieces of decorative sculpture are to be found in the scarabs made at a very early date in Egypt. These scarabs are, however, usually considered to form a class by themselves. They were, in fact, primarily seal stones, the backs of which were ornamentally cut into the figure of the sacred beetle. They were made of several sorts of stones, as well as porcelain and clay, and are also found cut in granite, basalt, hematite, steatite, serpentine, carnelian,

and many other kinds of stone, both soft and hard. The taste for scarabs as seal stones spread largely, and they were plentifully made in Assyria, Greece, and Etruria. The back of the beetle in time showed a tendency to become less decidedly marked, and by degrees the backs of intaglios are found to be rounder and rounder, until at last the actual beetle form disappears, leaving only a bossed back. On this bossed back is sometimes cut a design in low relief, and, in its turn, the tendency to flattening shows more and more, until the back of intaglio is quite flat. But still the influence of the scarab is not quite gone, as it still shows in the oval form so long prevalent for seal stones, and which is a distinct survival of the original shape of a seal made from the flat base of an ancient scarab. A gem of this shape is therefore called a "scaraboid."

On some of the Etruscan scarabs a white line shows across the engraved face; whenever this effect is seen, the stone is an onyx. This stone was afterwards used especially for cutting designs in relief so as to show in two colours, of which the white layer always forms an important part. The possibility of so arranging the rough cutting of such a stone as to show this colour effect to full advantage does not appear to have been generally appreciated by ancient lapidaries until towards the end of the first century B.C. The stone itself was, however, liked and valued long before this time, and there are isolated instances of its use in horizontal layers in the same manner as afterwards became its characteristic style.

The method of cutting an onyx in the direction of its colour layers, instead of across them, is probably first seen as a regular plan in the curious little ring stones cut into the semblance of eyes, in which case a flat coloured piece is sometimes left to do duty as a pupil.

But, however the suitability of this flat manner of cutting an onyx came to be thought of, it was certainly well known during the few centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, about which time the great value of intaglios as seals began also to be of less importance, and the sacredness of a seal became less decided. In the first century B.C. the onyx cameo began to take a high position as a much-esteemed article of personal adornment or possession, and its appreciation quickly increased with the more and more beautiful workmanship brought into the art by Greek gem-cutters.

Following, to some extent, the fashion of the small seal ring intaglios, the smaller cameos were sometimes used in the same way, but never to any great extent. The larger cameos were, no doubt, used as fastenings for cloaks or shoulder brooches ; but they were always very interesting as wonderful works of art only, and also because they often bear portraits of great personages. In regard to cameo portraiture in onyx, if there can be any certainty as to the person represented, it is always most valuable, because of the marvellous quality of permanence in the material in which it is cut. No existing form of portraiture is so strong and, at the same time, so delicate and beautiful as that to be found on a first-rate antique onyx cameo. Such portraits were cut by masters in their art, and are comparable with the finest art of any age, or executed in any medium.

A coin, however finely cut, cannot compare with a fine cameo, because at best it is only stamped, it has no master's touch upon it, and the exquisite beauty of the stone is wanting. Also there may be many specimens of the coin, undistinguishable one from the other, but the cameo is unique.

Ordinary sculpture compared to such a gem appears coarse, and no painting, except the very crude wax encaustic, has anything approaching the lasting qualities of an engraved gem.

Antique cameos, if not actually broken, are nearly always in perfectly good condition in all material particulars ; indeed, it may be said that, short of being hammered to pieces or broken by a fall, there are few things made by mankind which will retain their original surface, colour, and beauty longer than a cut or engraved gem. Time alone affects them but little, if at all—a thousand years more or less leave no trace either on the polished surface or in the delicate colour layers ; at the same time it must be admitted that cameos have, as a rule, been carefully kept by their owners. They are very rarely found buried, and the history of most of the finer specimens is known almost from the beginning.

The shapes of cameos vary more than the shapes of intaglios : the reason for this is that in the one case the lapidary is desirous of so using the stone as to utilise certain of the layers and colour pieces in it, to enhance the effectiveness of his design. This, of course, has very often necessitated some peculiar shaping out of the stone itself. The intaglio-cutter, on the other hand, has had no need to trouble himself as to any

colour layers, but has simply had to see that his piece of stone was large enough for his purpose. Some cases exist where both styles are used, an intaglio in the centre surrounded by a wreath or ornamental border cut as a cameo.

Another interesting development is found in the case of the cups, vases, and dishes cut in onyx with designs in relief. Some of these, made in ancient times, still exist, and others have been made, not so finely, by more recent workmen. The older ones are very rare, there are but few of them, and they are always very highly valued. Most of them are cut in hard stone, but the most beautiful of all are cut in glass; these last may have been made at Alexandria, where there was an important glass industry during the few centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era.

Instances of the use of low relief in sculpture are found so universally that it would be impossible to trace the actual beginnings of such a method of decoration.

In architecture and metal work it is of the highest antiquity; the temples and other buildings of the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians abounded with such sculptures, but minuteness, one of the essential characteristics of a true cameo, was here wanting. Early specimens, however, still exist of small cameo rosettes made of terra-cotta, gilded, which were used to ornament cups and vases at a very remote period. Shells and eggs were cut in low ornamental relief certainly as early as the seventh century B.C., some of which still exist. The eggs came from the delta of the Nile, and are supposed to have been engraved by Greek or Phœnician workmen. All these early dates are very problematical. I expect that each of these specimens should rather be considered as a separate piece of work, and not in any way as representing a class; at the same time both eggs and shells are in themselves very fragile, and it may be argued that for every existing specimen of such things left, with any carving upon it, thousands have been destroyed. The curious cameo head cut in the joint of the shell (*Tridacna squamosa*) is probably Greek work of the sixth or seventh century B.C.

But the cameo in its fullest development existed during the time immediately following the general discovery of the wonderful adaptability of the onyx to such work. This stone is so curiously formed in colour

layers alternating with opaque white, that it is possible to find pieces which enable a skilful workman to show a very elaborate design in white upon a colour background, and *vice versâ*. No doubt such an artist often has to modify his original design considerably, because of the limitations which he finds in the stone as he works it. The onyx soon became the favourite material in which the most skilled Greek artists cut their cameos, and continued so from about the first century B.C. until the fourth century, when Constantine went to Byzantium. Towards the latter half of this time, however, the Greek artists of the earlier time had passed away, and they were not replaced by others of equal skill. Roman workmen, doubtless, took up their work; but, however that may have been, the later-cut gems are much inferior in all respects to those made at an earlier time.

The taste for engraved gems was probably largely fostered by the magnificent treasures brought home by Pompey from his wars with Mithridates, king of Pontus, in the first century B.C. These treasures were displayed at Rome for three days during the Triumph of the successful general, and among them were numbers of splendidly cut stone vases, and gems of all kinds. The vases are often mentioned as especially rare and valuable objects, and many of them were made in murrhine, now supposed to have been fluor-spar, but other authorities think it was some kind of agate. Pompey offered the treasure of Mithridates to the Capitol, and shortly afterwards Julius Cæsar presented six cabinets of gems to the temple of Venus Genetrix.

Pliny says that Scipio Africanus was the first Roman who had a sardonyx gem, probably a cameo, and that from his time onward they were highly esteemed.

Seneca mentions one Paulus as having in his possession a ring on which was a portrait of Tiberius, cut in relief. This, undoubtedly, must have been a cameo, but in ancient times such small cameos were rarely made, the majority of them being much too large to use in a finger ring.

But, although it is generally supposed that the taste for cut gems was suggested to the Roman collectors by the sight of the treasure of Mithridates, yet it is curious that, before this time, there was in Rome a very large production of glass paste—that is to say, imitation intaglios and cameos made in glass. Similar pastes were, indeed, made at Mycenæ

at a much earlier period, but these were only rosettes as far as is known, and had no pretension to the art level which was aimed at by the Roman pastes.

It is quite possible that all the very early pastes made during the second century B.C. were only imitations of intaglios, but certainly among the numerous specimens of such work that still exist, there are numbers of imitation cameos as well. It may be that cameos never became very popular or very largely made until the peculiar suitability of the onyx for such work was discovered, and that all glass cameos date from a subsequent period. From other work made by them, it is clear that in the first and second centuries B.C., the Roman glass-workers were extremely skilful, and, although probably numbers of their gems are really copied from originals cut in stone, there is little doubt that they were quite capable of making original designs for themselves in wax or clay.

"Paste" is ordinary glass coloured with different metallic oxides, or left plain. The ancient Roman paste is very hard, and will scratch our modern lead glass easily.

The process by which the ancient glass pastes were made can never be actually known, but it was probably very much the same as the way they would be made now. Numbers of small pieces of coloured glass, in globular shapes, are constantly being dug up in Italy, and it may be that these were pieces made ready for melting into moulds for imitation gems. Also, impressions from intaglios, made in fine clay, are not uncommonly found, and, as such impressions would be exactly what is wanted for making glass pastes, it is very likely that they were, indeed, the moulds used for that purpose. The glass pastes usually have a rough surface if they have not been subsequently finished by hand, and are still as they were when they left the mould; and this surface is exactly such as glass will assume if it is cast in a clay mould, especially when it is not of a very good quality. The Roman glass used for this purpose is usually full of flaws and bubbles, and generally of a very inferior kind, although very hard. It has probably been overheated, and, to some extent, become devitrified by time and damp.

A very delicate impression can be made from an engraved gem, or a wax or terra-cotta model, by means of tripoli powder mixed with a

little plaster-of-Paris and water. This mixture will dry hard, and glass in a state of semi-fusion can easily be pressed into it. The glass can be sufficiently melted either in a furnace or by means of a blow-pipe, but, as it will not run into a mould by itself, it has to be squeezed in by some cold hard point, or a knife-blade.

In the case of a cameo, a piece of white glass can be first squeezed into the hollow of the actual design, as cleanly as possible, and then over it some coloured glass should be fused, chosen according to the tint desired, and equally pressed down. When the glass has gradually cooled, it can be lifted off the mould, and it ought to show a fine replica of the original design. Such a cameo can be afterwards finished by means of a lapidary's drill to any desired extent, and it can also be polished. All the finest glass pastes have been either finished in this way or by means of a diamond point.

Imitation cameos can also be made, as they sometimes were in ancient times, by building up the differently coloured layers of glass, one by one, and sticking them together either by slight fusion or by Indian glue. Another method used in bygone times was to paint, as it were, a design in drawn-out melted glass upon another glass plaque. This process is really a glass-blower's work, and with a little practice it can be wonderfully well done, but at best it is clumsy. It might conceivably be the easiest way to make a large glass cameo, applying the white as nearly as possible in the relief required, and then cutting it away and finishing it as an ordinary cameo.

Dr. Archibald Billing describes yet another way of making a cameo, but he does not say he has tried it himself. It consists in fusing white enamel glass on to a carnelian base, and then treating it as one onyx. All these processes show how highly valued a real original cameo cut in onyx must have been, so that it was a lucrative profession even to imitate them by processes which must themselves have been expensive and also have necessitated the co-operation of highly skilled mechanics.

The colouring of glass by means of metallic oxides was well understood by the Romans, and the same colours are found among the fragments of Roman glass, as can be seen in the vitreous enamels exhibited to-day at our Royal Academy. If a paste is wanted to imitate

an emerald or a carbuncle, both of which are usually flawed, it should be dipped while hot into cold water, and the flaws will be excellently developed. Small white paste cameos were sometimes set in the bezel of thick glass finger-rings by the ancient Romans, and they also wore them set in gold and lead.

On the Tara Brooch, an Irish piece of jewellery of much later date, are instances of cameo heads made in glass. This art—although, as found on the Irish brooch, it belongs to a different age from that we are now considering—no doubt derives directly from it. Roman designs in jewellers' work can be traced through the Gothic tribes right up to Ireland, and it is curious to find instances of paste cameos in early Celtic art; they are, however, very rare.

As a rule, fragments of ancient Roman paste are small, and belonged to small intaglios or cameos, but sometimes they were made of a very large size. What these large plaques were used for can now only be a matter of conjecture, but among the collection of such fragments at the British Museum there is one showing the knees of a figure in white glass on a pale green ground, which must have measured at least thirty inches in height when it was perfect, supposing it to have been in one piece. There is another fragment, white upon a dark red ground, which was probably about the same size. The most usual colours for paste cameos seem to be green on red; white on black very commonly; green and yellow on blue; and for single colours blue, both dark, light, transparent, and opaque; reddish yellow; yellow; and dark brown. Now and then a fine and beautiful piece is found, but usually they are very coarse. Paste imitating lapis lazuli is often found, and some of the pieces made in it are among the finest existing. In the Ceramic Gallery at the British Museum is a splendid head of Jupiter Ammon, measuring about six and a half inches in diameter; it is a circular plaque of strong, dark, translucent glass, overlaid with pale opaque blue. Another fine piece is a rectangular plaque, measuring about eight and a half inches square, representing a youth shown in three-quarter length; he has a mantle over his shoulder, and is holding a flat dish in one hand, and a sheaf of corn in the other; his name, BONVS EVENTVS, is inscribed above. This paste was at first roughly cast, and then, like a few other important pieces, it has been subsequently

cut, finished, and polished as a hard stone, which glass practically is when treated in this way. It is now a true cameo in every sense of the word; the dark blue glass is specked all over with yellow marks, like the pyrites in the actual stone, of which it is a near imitation.

An especially fine blue paste cameo portrait of Augustus is in the collection at Vienna; it is signed in Greek characters by Herophilus, one of the sons of Dioskorides, and is now in a rich mediæval setting.

The most usual colours in which glass pastes of a very fine character appear to have been made was a dark blue ground and a white layer over it, the white layer being subsequently cut as a cameo. Numbers of small fragments of such carvings are met with among the *débris* of all sorts of other glass-work so often found in Italy; some of these pieces show exquisite work. Perhaps the finest existing specimen of the kind is a large vase at the Museo Borbonico at Naples, and in England we have the Portland vase and the Auldjo vase, both broken but well restored. These splendid pieces must always have been very highly valued, but no doubt the ordinary gem pastes were made for the common people, and sold at a cheap rate. Pliny calls them "the glass gems of the rings of the populace." Ancient pastes frequently have remains of their old settings attached to them; these are usually of some cheap metal, and show that they were most commonly used for pendants, probably from necklaces.

The art of making paste gems was revived at the Renaissance period, and soon became very popular, but also was to some extent corrupt and fraudulent. Not only were imitations of ancient pastes made and sold as antiques, but new pastes were backed with slices of real stone, the junction being hidden by the setting of the ring or pendant. When the test of the file was applied to the back of such a gem, of course it proved it was a stone! The beautiful iridescence which commonly encrusts ancient Roman glass which has lain a long time in the damp earth was also cleverly imitated by the Renaissance forgers, who discovered that a judicious application of the proper acid would quickly and easily produce something of the same effect, which is usually superficial. The actual reason of this iridescence appears to be that the alkali which was

in the glass becomes absorbed away from it, either by solution by water or driven off by heat, in which case small flakes of insoluble silica project in microscopic pieces on the surface, and catch and break up the rays of white light into their component prismatic colours.

A purchaser and collector of antique pastes must, then, be much on his guard, for, if it is difficult to tell a true antique gem, it is certainly equally difficult to tell a true antique paste. To cut a stone cameo is a troublesome, difficult, and expensive process, and takes a long time, but a blow-pipe, a few pieces of glass, and a little clay are neither difficult to manage nor to procure, and a very little experiment made with these simple materials would give any one an insight into the methods of working used for glass pastes, which would be invaluable if he ever thought of collecting them. I tried to make a glass cameo the other day, a white head on a dark purple groundwork, and melted the glass with a strong gas blow-pipe, probably over-heating it, as, when the glass was removed from the mould, it showed a beautiful iridescence, quite like that produced in Roman glass by centuries of burial.

At various times there has been much mystery made about the composition of antique glass. Both the chemist Homburg, who reproduced the French royal gems in paste, as well as those of the Regent Orleans, about the beginning of the eighteenth century, and also James Tassie, of Pollockshaws, near Glasgow, during the latter half of the same century, pretended that there was a great secret in the making of the glass for imitating antique gems. Both these glass-workers must have known quite well that there was no secret at all, and no doubt they said there was in order to prevent others from taking up the subject, to their own possible detriment. The only trouble really lies in the fact that the old glass is very bad and full of all sorts of imperfections, and the surface is also very rough ; the difficulty now is to get the glass to be so inferior and also to make the impression, even from clay, so bad as to its surface.

Tassie's gems are often very good indeed, and many persons would undoubtedly consider them to be real stones, especially if they are well set. In the case of the intaglios, however, the rough surface can be easily detected in the concave parts ; the flat part and the back have usually been lathe-polished, so that their surface is like that of a stone, but the hollow

parts are not so polished, they are left as they came from the mould, and betray their origin very clearly. Tassie's paste is not full of flaws and holes like the antique paste, but it often shows striations, like some of the ancient glass. No doubt so skilful a workman intended this effect to appear, and it may have been done purposely to imitate the similar appearance now and then showing in old work.

Tassie made large quantities of glass gems, and obtained for them low, but doubtless remunerative, prices. He sold intaglios from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*, and cameos from 10*s.* 6*d.* to 42*s.*, and these pastes, unless exceptionally fine, can be bought now for much the same price.

A catalogue of Tassie's work was made by Rudolph Raspe in 1791. His colours were very like those used by the ancient Romans, the blues especially being almost identical, but Tassie's reds are much more brilliant; his glass is usually beautifully transparent. Fine specimens of his cameos are highly valued, but they were not altogether so successful as his intaglios. Both in ancient and modern paste cameos showing a white design upon a coloured ground there has evidently been a difficulty in making the white glass keep within the bounds allotted to it, it always has a tendency to spread, and this, of course, spoils the clear outline it ought to have.

Josiah Wedgwood made a large number of cameos in jasper ware during the latter half of the eighteenth century; he invented the so-called jasper ware himself, and used it freely for his smaller productions. It is very hard and fine, and will take a high polish.

The parts of these cameos which are in relief, when of a different colour to the background, were separately moulded and then affixed to the coloured body. They are sometimes made in the black "basalt" ware and sometimes all white, and in these cases are made in one piece; but the majority are in white jasper on a pale blue ground. Among the smaller cameos of classical designs with ornamental borders there occur frequently other colours, always pale, green, purple, or yellowish. Most of these are said to have been designed by John Flaxman; they were probably intended to be used in small jewellery, brooches or rings. Sometimes they are on a black ground, but rarely, and also rarely the parts in relief are gilded.

The most important of the cameos made by Wedgwood are the

very fine series of medallion portraits of contemporary celebrities, white upon blue, said to have been modelled by Flaxman. These are often in high relief, full or three-quarters face, but usually in profile. They were made at Etruria after 1780, and are, I think, the finest things made by Wedgwood. Wedgwood made a copy of the Portland vase in jasper ware, black, white, or white upon colour; but, although this reproduction is now of considerable value, I do not consider it is at all a satisfactory production.

Late Roman, or Byzantine, Onyx Cameo Vase, known as the "Vase de St. Martin d'Agaune," with gold and jewelled Byzantine foot and collar. At St. Maurice in the Rhone Valley.

CHAPTER III.

GRÆCO-ROMAN AND MEDIÆVAL CAMEOS.

THE period during which the art of cameo-cutting in hard stone was most largely and successfully followed may be roughly said to have been from the first century B.C. until the third or fourth century A.D., and it was during the earlier part of this time that the remarkable Græco-Egyptian work was done, the most typical and finest example of which is the Tazza Farnese, now at Naples.

Under the patronage of Augustus Octavianus Cæsar, second Emperor of Rome, the taste for cut gems of all kinds, which, as stated before, is said to have been started by the great admiration excited by the treasure of Mithridates brought to Rome by Pompey, rapidly developed. The rich and luxurious patrician of the early Roman Empire could not exist without his dactyliotheca of cut jewels, preferably cut by the most famous Greek artists of the time.

The cameos of this early period were often large, in distinction to the intaglios, which as a rule were very small. Such cameos were used as phaleræ or other ornaments, or fastenings for dress or armour, and the utmost skill is displayed upon them both as regards the design and the very difficult and tedious process of cutting and polishing such hard substances as onyx or crystal.

No doubt these cameos are nearly all cut by means of a lapidary's drill, and finished by the diamond point. Intaglios were frequently cut by such a point alone, and it is by no means impossible to cut a cameo entirely by a diamond; but it would be an unnecessarily slow and laborious process, and was probably never done except as a *tour-de-force*, as one which was made by Sirletti.

Such very large cameos as those at Paris and Vienna, representing scenes from the life of Tiberius, were too big even for purposes of dress; they were probably set in frames and used as wall ornaments. The same thing may be said of the large Marlborough gem in the British Museum. The cups and dishes explain themselves, and so do the vases, on all of which at various times cameo-cutters have exercised their utmost skill.

Murrhine vases are often discussed and mentioned in ancient records. They were shallow vessels, probably cut out of fluor-spar, but they do not appear to have been cut as cameos, unless, indeed, they were like the cup of St. Denys, which by some authorities, with small justification, is considered to be a specimen of this stone.

Small cameos were, moreover, largely used for decorating church plate, reliquaries, and sacred vessels. The shrine of the Three Kings of Cologne is thickly encrusted with them. The finest work, however, is found on the larger pieces.

The Greeks were the cameo-cutters *par excellence*, and the finest of the so-called Roman work is done by Greek artists, who were tempted by the large profits which were to be made by the prosecution of this art in the Imperial City. The finest technique reached its fullest development before about 70 A.D. The successors of Augustus were all more or less lovers of rich treasures of art, but, like other arts, that of cameo-cutting had its good periods and its bad periods, and for the succeeding three hundred years the workmanship varied considerably in excellence.

As a general rule, after the third century the art declined at Rome, and was then very likely done largely by Roman workmen instead of the more skilled Greeks. Constantine the Great put a final stop to the Græco-Roman art when he moved his court and the Imperial treasure to Byzantium. From that time a new style began, and Byzantine art, founded on decadent Roman art, rapidly developed on lines of its own, and became a very powerful and widely spread art-influence all over the Christian world.

The signatures found on antique cameos are of much interest. Such gems are not so numerously signed as their cousins the intaglios, but there are several instances still existing. One of the earliest, except that of

Syrias already mentioned, is an exquisite small cameo, now at Naples, representing Zeus in a quadriga hurling thunderbolts at two giants with snake legs, one of whom is killed. It is signed ΑΘΗΝΙΩΝ. The same signature exists on some beautiful pastes, which were apparently made from a cameo cut by this artist. Fragments of one of these pastes are in the British Museum, and pieces of another are at Berlin. The subject is a beautiful one and splendidly treated. It shows Eumenes II. in a biga, driven by Athene. Unfortunately, even by piecing all the known fragments of the impressions of this gem together, the complete design cannot be restored, the lower portion being still wanting.

The signature ΠΡΟΤΑΡΚΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ is on a cameo at Florence, which represents Eros playing on a lyre, and mounted on a lion. This artist signed several other gems in the same way.

Herophilus, one of the sons of the celebrated Dioskorides, an engraver of intaglios, signed a portrait cameo of Tiberius, which is now at Vienna, ΗΡΟΦΙΛΟC ΛΙΟCΚΟΥΡ. Another son, Hyllus, also signed cameos; one by him is now at Berlin, it is marked ΥΛΛΟC ΛΙΟCΚΟΥΡΙΔΟΥ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ, and represents the laughing head of a young satyr.

In the British Museum is a fragment representing a sea-monster carrying a rudder, it is an onyx cameo, and is signed ΛΛΕΞΛ; and at Florence is a sardonyx signed ΑΥΛΟΥ.

The engraver Epitynchanus signed a cameo portrait of Germanicus, now in the British Museum, ΕΠΙΥΤΥΓΧΑ, and there are numbers of other instances of signed cameos among the collections at Vienna, Naples, and Paris.

Boethus, Philemon, Scylax, Sostrates, Diodotus, and many others signed their work, and all used Greek characters.

When these signatures are in relief there is no doubt they are contemporary with the gem on which they appear, but when they are in intaglio it should be remembered that they may have been added subsequently.

Attalus, king of Pergamus, possessed a large collection of gems, and had, moreover, a special court engraver, and so had the contemporary kings of Syria and Egypt during the second century B.C., and M.

Æmilius Scaurus in the next century is supposed to have been the first Roman to make a collection.

With regard to the settings of small cameos as jewellery, there are numerous instances of their use as ring stones, and, although they make uncomfortable seals, they were sometimes used in this way. There are, luckily, still existing two ancient necklaces, both belonging to the later Roman period, which still retain their original form in almost perfect condition. That in the Cabinet des Médailles at the Bibliothèque Nationale was found early in 1809 on the site of the ancient town of Nasium. There were several other pieces of jewellery found at the same place, but no other had any cameos upon it. The supposed date of this jewel is about the third century, and the work on the stones is not of a high order; but the interest lies in the setting, which in all probability is of the ordinary style which was prevalent in that as well as in the two preceding centuries.

There are six oval pendants, of about the same size, each set in an open-work gold frame, with a large flat ring at the top. The workmanship of the gold is not remarkable either for design or execution, but it is rich and effective. The pendants are divided from each other by five long cylindrical beads of gold, hexagonal, with a waved wire soldered along each face. The clasp is missing. The two centre gems are cameos, and represent Minerva and Julia Domna. These are both cut in sardonyx. The whole effect of the necklace is heavy but decorative, and characteristic of late Roman work. As a rule, old gems have come away from their original settings, but pieces of metal sometimes still adhere in places. Many such ornaments have been found among the *débris* of the old catacombs at Rome, as they were often buried with their owners.

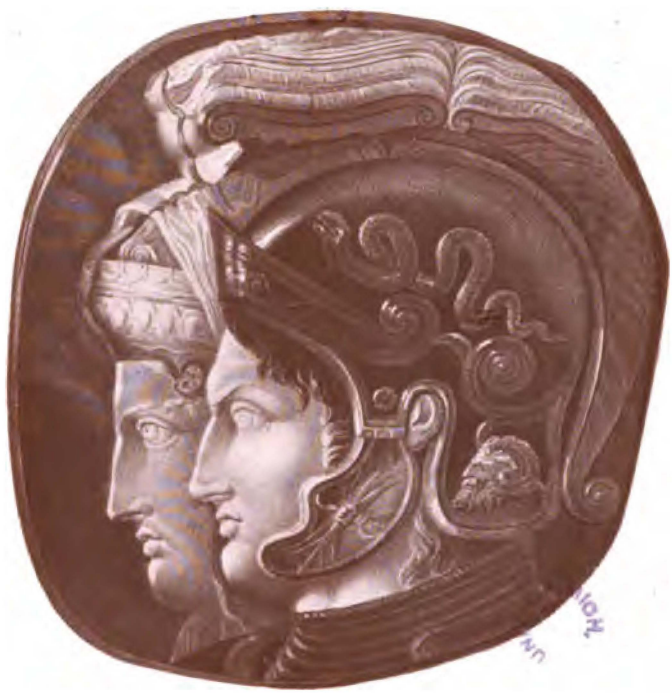
Phaleræ were usually worn in pairs; they are small sculptures cut in hard stones in high relief. Although it is rather a strained definition, they are usually counted as cameos, partly because of their smallness and partly because they are generally cut in stones which are often used for cameos. They were worn as ornaments on state occasions on the front of the cuirass or robe of Roman emperors or great generals, and can be seen represented on several of the statues of such personages when dressed in their full robes. One of the finest of these phaleræ was

SARDONYX CAMEO DISH, PROBABLY OF ANCIENT GRŒCO-EGYPTIAN WORKMANSHIP. KNOWN AS THE "TAZZA FARNESE," AND FORMERLY IN THE COLLECTION OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

Now at Naples.

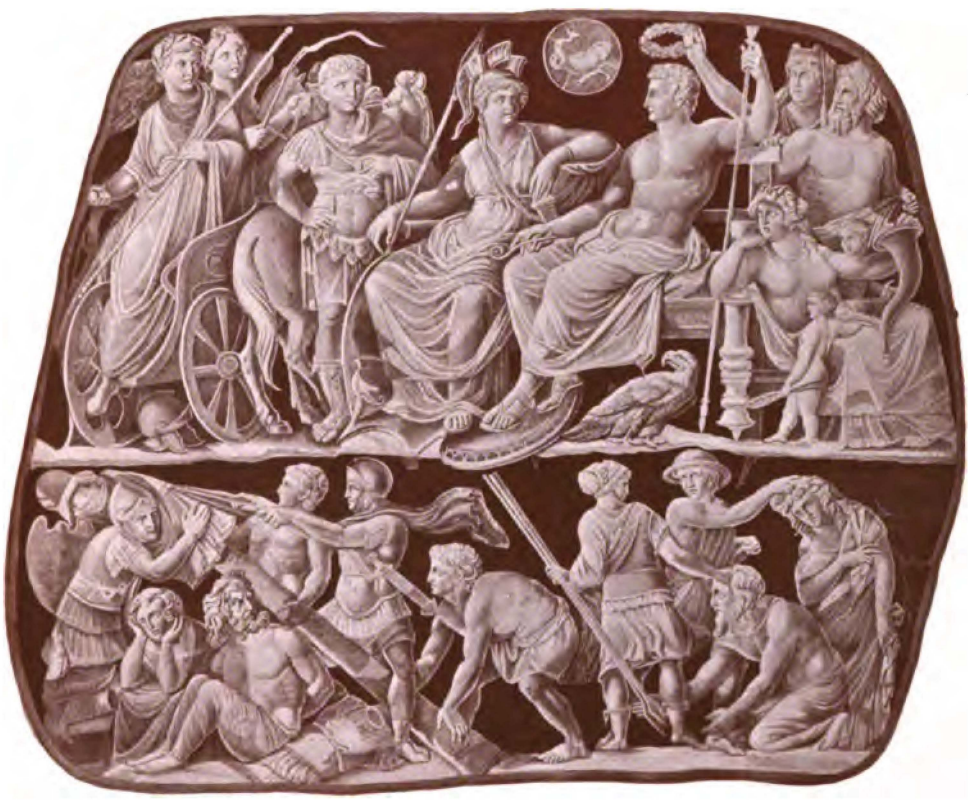
THE "GONZAGA" CAMEO. ANTIQUE CAMEO CUT IN A SARDONYX OF THREE LAYERS. THE HEADS ARE PROBABLY PORTRAITS OF PTOLEMY II., KING OF EGYPT, AND HIS FIRST WIFE ARSINÖE.

At the Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg.



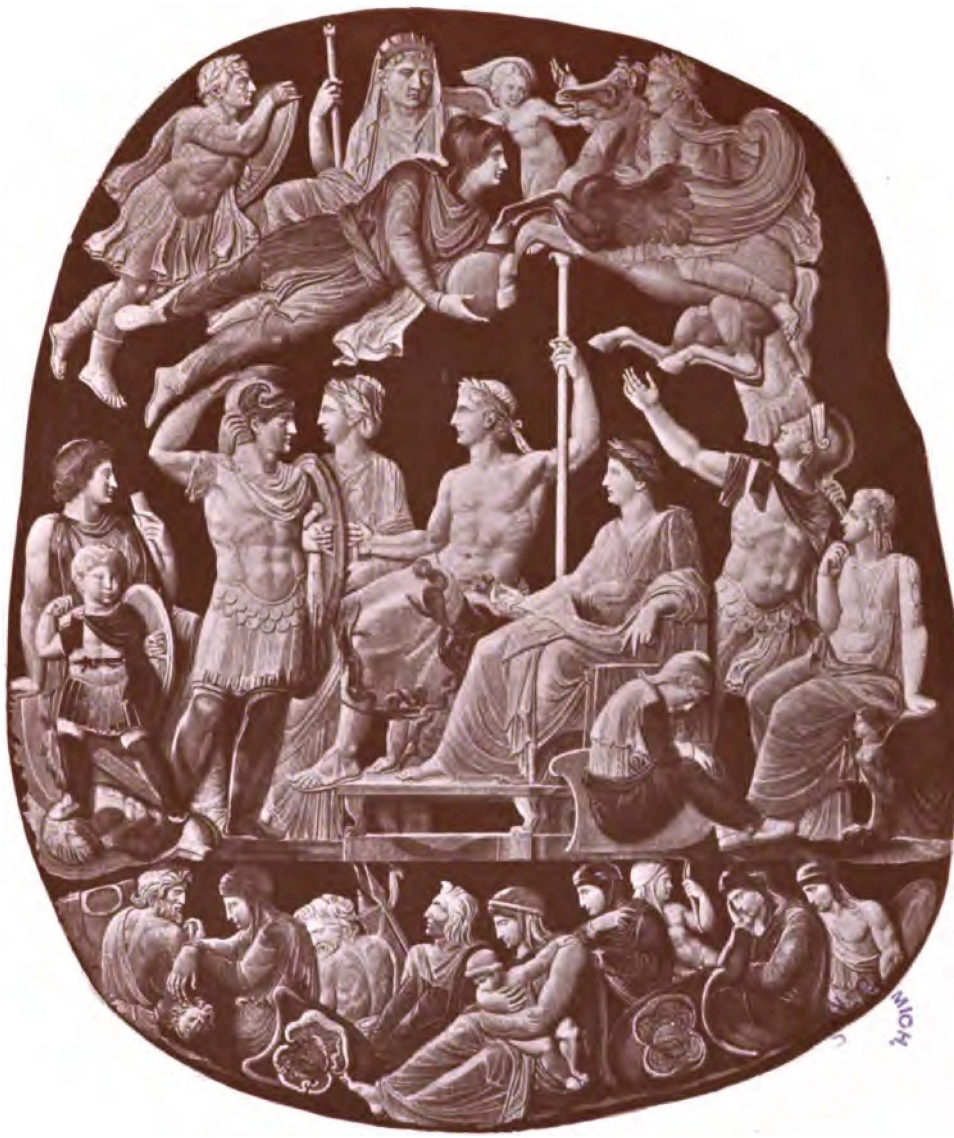
Antique Cameo cut in a Sardonyx of nine layers.
The Heads probably represent Ptolemy II., King of Egypt,
and his second Wife, Arsinöe.

Now at Vienna.



Græco-Roman Cameo cut in a Sardonyx of two layers.
Probably representing the Triumph of Tiberius.

Now at Vienna.



THE "AGATE DE TIBÈRE." GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO CUT IN A SARDONYX OF FIVE LAYERS.
In the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO
CUT IN SARDONYX.
A SATYR.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO
CUT IN WHITE AND RED STONE.
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO
CUT IN SARDONYX OF TWO LAYERS.
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN SARDONYX CAMEO.
CRETAN GOAT TETHERED.
In the British Museum.

THE EMPEROR AUGUSTUS CÆSAR.
GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO IN DARK ONYX.
IN GOLD AND ENAMELLED
RENAISSANCE SETTING.
In the British Museum.

LIVIA.
GRŒCO-ROMAN
CAMEO
IN PALE ONYX
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO OF OMPHALE,
SET AS A PENDANT IN RENAISSANCE
GOLD AND ENAMELLED SETTING. ON
THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STONE IS A
CAMEO HEAD OF HERCULES, OF
ITALIAN 16TH CENTURY WORKMAN-
SHIP.
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO IN DARK ONYX OF TWO LAYERS. IN RENAISSANCE SETTING OF GOLD AND ENAMELS.
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO CUT IN PALE ONYX OF THREE LAYERS. MINERVA WITH ÆGIS.
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN PORTRAIT CAMEO ON DARK ONYX. IN ANTIQUE GOLD SETTING.
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO CUT IN SARDONYX. A MŒNAD.
In the British Museum.

lately among the Marlborough gems; it is a large head of Medusa, cut from a block of chalcedony. It is magnificently modelled, and the exquisite finish of the face and hair has never been surpassed. It has curious hollowings out from the back towards the front of the stone. These depressions to some extent follow the contours of the face, and they are supposed to add brilliancy and lustre to the general effect of the work when seen from the front. This head is supposed to belong to the time of Trajan or Hadrian. The gem fetched 1850*l.* at the sale of the Marlborough collection last year. There is another fine specimen of this work at the British Museum, which also belonged to the Marlborough collection. It is a small imperfect figure of the Empress Marciana in apotheosis, and is cut in pale yellow chalcedony.

The smaller busts which now and then are found cut in the same high relief, were probably intended to be finished and completed in gold or silver. They were very probably meant to be used as tops of sceptres or rods of office, or perhaps as ornaments for some of the imperial insignia.

There are several beautiful cups and dishes still existing which are ornamented with cameo work. Such vessels were undoubtedly highly valued in ancient times, as they appear to have always been noted in inventories and lists whenever there was any excuse for doing so.

Mithridates is said to have had some two thousand cups of this kind, all of which were carried away by Pompey, and from Pliny onwards they are frequently alluded to. There is not, however, any certainty that they were always cut in relief. Many were in murrhine, others in crystal, and it is possible enough that such vases were valued because of the beauty of the stone itself rather than for the work done upon them. Indeed, in many cases—for instance, when cut in fluor-spar—it is conceivable that cameo work would be ineffective, and even might spoil the appearance of the cup or vase, which being largely due to a beautiful violet colour, would possibly look better left plain and highly polished. In the case of an onyx, where the parts in relief can be shown in another colour to the rest of the vase, the matter is different, and such a cup as that of St. Denys certainly looks far more decorative with its relief work upon it than it ever could if left plain.

Under the successors of Charlemagne, there appears to have been some revival of the almost forgotten art of the cameo-cutter, the work done then being largely executed in rock crystal, cups and ornaments of various kinds being made in this beautiful stone. Some of these are in relief and very effective.

The remarkable cup known as the "Cup of Solomon" belongs to this period, and is supposed to be Persian work. In the centre is a crystal medallion in relief of Chosroes I., surrounded with curious medallions of crimson glass, rosettes, and lozenges of green glass. It is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, and is supposed to have been made about the sixth century.

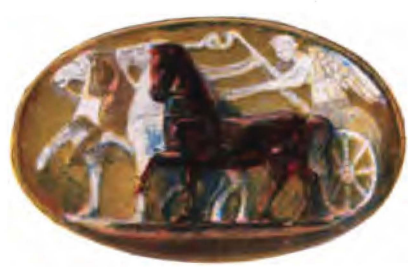
Byzantine cameos are not uncommon, they range over a considerable period; in fact, this style of art dates, roughly, from the fourth or fifth century until the Renaissance, and its influence was very widely spread, and is not unfelt even at the present day.

There was at Paris, in the thirteenth century, a corporation of lapidaries and workers in crystal; they made cameos in hard stone and in glass. The imitators of ancient gems, in glass, became in time so troublesome, and took away so much of the profit from the more legitimate original workers, that these latter, in 1584, recast their constitution so as to exclude the glass-workers; and, after that date, the *Pierriers de voirre* were no longer permitted to belong to the confraternity of "Lapidaries, Jewel-cutters, and Engravers of Cameos and Hard Stones," the title under which this society was henceforth known.

The cameos of this time are curiously coarse, and appear as if the art of cutting them properly had been somehow lost; but, in the fourteenth century, French and Italian lapidaries began to improve gradually, preparing as it were for the Renaissance, and some fine work was made by them.

The lapidaries of Persia and India have been very skilled for ages, but their work in cameos is rare, and even when it exists it appears as if it had been suggested by Western originals. Ancient stones from India were nearly always pierced as beads, and this piercing often shows still, the stone itself, however, having been flattened on both sides, so as to allow of the proper cutting of a cameo or intaglio upon it. This piercing has often been fraudulently done on mediæval and modern stones.

GRÆCO-ROMAN SARDONYX CAMEO
OF THREE LAYERS.
IN RENAISSANCE SETTING
OF GOLD, ENAMELS AND GEMS.
In the British Museum.



VICTORY IN QUADRIGA.
GRÆCO-ROMAN CAMEO IN A SARDONYX
OF FIVE LAYERS.
In the British Museum.

There are so many cameos of the Græco-Roman period of world-wide celebrity, that I think it would be unwise to pass them over without particular notice; I shall, therefore, briefly describe the more important of these gems in something of their chronological order. There is some difficulty, and always will be, as to the proper representation of a fine cameo by any known colour process. Probably it would be best done by means of a metal plate specially inked for each print, but I do not know that this has ever been tried. For an ordinary book, the cost of such a process would, I fear, be prohibitive, at all events at present. Furtwaengler, in his recently published book on gems, has not attempted colour; and even without it his work is very costly. There is also an unfortunate fact in connexion with the delicate red colour seen in so many sardonyxes. This tint shows very darkly in a photograph, and often very delicately on the original stone, so that, however skilful the operator may be, an entirely wrong scale of light and dark results. Most good photographs of cameos are, therefore, largely touched up and altered by hand, a process which, although no doubt advisable from a popular point of view, is utterly to be condemned from that of the antiquary. The colour plates which are given in this monograph are, therefore, only to be taken as being as good as possible; and the impressions given by them as to colour will be best corrected by a comparison with the beautiful originals, all of which can be seen at one or other of our great national collections.

The "Tazza Farnese" is a very beautiful and early cameo of exquisite Greek workmanship, the chief design being curiously mixed up with Egyptian ideas. In the foreground is a sphinx with a white head, its body being left in a dark layer; the rest of the group are, probably, only meant for divinities protecting the land of Egypt, and watching over its productiveness. It is cut in the form of a shallow circular dish, measuring about eight inches in diameter, and without a handle. The under side of the dish is cut into a magnificent head of Medusa, badly spoiled by the hole cut in the middle for the attachment of a stem. The head is splendidly designed and cut, and is in the centre of a scaly ægis with snakes. It was once in the possession of Pope Paul II., and after his death became the property of Lorenzo de' Medici, and is now one of the glories of the Museum at Naples, one of the

richest of all the great collections of antique gems, the finest of the other collections being at Paris, St. Petersburg, London, Florence, Dresden, and Berlin; and, of course, numbers are still safely kept in the treasuries of cathedrals and churches all through Europe.

The beautiful "Gonzaga" cameo belonged once to a member of that family at Mantua, and was given by the Empress Josephine to the Czar Alexander I., in memory of a visit he paid to her at La Malmaison, when the allies entered Paris in 1814. It is now in the Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg, and measures about six and a quarter by five inches. It bears two portrait heads in profile—a young man's head with helmet and ægis, and a young woman's. These heads have been variously attributed; M. Ernest Babelon thinks they are intended for Alexander Bala, king of Syria, and his wife, Cleopatra Thea; but the masculine heads on this, and also on the Vienna cameo, are now with tolerable certainty considered to be portraits of Ptolemy II., king of Egypt, who was strangely called by his epithet of "Philadelphus," because he *killed* his two brothers! He married twice, and each of his wives was named Arsinoë: the first was the daughter of Lysimachus, and her portrait is probably that which appears on this gem; the other was his sister. The heads of Ptolemy, as shown on his coins, have a strong resemblance to the head shown on this cameo, as also on that at Vienna.

The stone on which the cameo is cut is a sardonyx with three layers; the background is dark, nearly black, and the two heads show on it in creamy white, the helmet and ægis of the King appearing in a palish red-brown layer. On the crested helmet is a winged serpent, and it is also encircled with a wreath of laurel. The richly worked scaly ægis shows phaleræ of Medusa's head and another, probably meant for Phobos.

The cameo is a magnificent specimen of Greek work of the finest period, the modelling of the heads and the grouping is exquisite, and the management of the coloured layers of the stone is masterly in the extreme. Of the cameos showing two heads in profile I think this is the finest existing; the objection to most of such profiles, which was a very favourite form, is that they are very apt to merge into each other unless there is some slight colour layer between them. In this case both profiles are cut from the same white layer of stone.

The Vienna cameo, also bearing two heads of the Emperor Ptolemy and his second wife, Arsinoë, measures about five by four and a half inches and has been badly restored. It is cut on an unusually fine sardonyx of nine different colour layers. The heads upon it appear a little older than those on the St. Petersburg cameo, they are both splendidly handsome profiles and show distinctly from each other as they are cut in different white layers, between which is a very delicate brown layer which has been managed by the gem-cutter with most consummate skill. The heads are, unfortunately, placed too low on the stone, which causes rather an unpleasant effect. The king's helmet is particularly fine, with rich embossing and large ear-pieces. The modelling and workmanship on this cameo are equally fine with those on the St. Petersburg gem, and the stone itself is much finer, but I think that the low position of the heads is certainly a great defect. The portraits are not universally admitted to be those of Ptolemy and Arsinoë, but I think the probability is that they are so.

Pliny describes the treasures of Mithridates as being of the utmost magnificence, and among them are particularly mentioned vases and cups of rare stone, as well as carved and engraved gems of all kinds. It is supposed that the sight and possession of this rich treasure incited the Romans to make themselves masters of more of the same kind, and that the taste for such rare and luxurious possessions really dated from the successful general's return from his Asiatic expedition laden with works of glyptic art more splendid than had ever been seen in Rome before.

Of all this treasure there is now really nothing left, but, among the pieces which have the reputation of having once been in the possession of the Pontine monarch, the celebrated cup of St. Denys is one of the most remarkable. This cup is also known as the "Coupe des Ptolemées," but there is no reason for such a name further than that Tristan de Saint Amand supposed it to be one of the cups which adorned the triumph of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt. The cup was kept in the treasury of St. Denys during the middle ages and was mounted on a Byzantine gold and jewelled foot, now lost. It was used by the Queens of France as a drinking-cup on the day of their coronation.

It is cut from a singularly beautiful block of onyx showing several layers of different colours: brown, of two or three shades, grey and creamy

white. It measures about five inches in height and is closely covered with small designs cut in relief. It has two handles of irregular shape, round which are twined sprays of vine with grapes in very low relief. In spite of the earlier date usually assigned to it, I think the cup, judging from the style of the work upon it, is Roman work of the first or second century, certainly not earlier.

On one side is a square table in the centre supported on sphinxes, on the table are several cups and drinking-vessels and a statuette, at the foot are masks, a goat, and a panther lapping up wine from an overturned vase. In the field are other Bacchic masks, a vase with a serpent issuing from it, and other smaller objects. The whole scene is contained between two tree-trunks closely entwined with a luxuriant grape-vine, among the branches of which are masks, two birds, a panpipe and other objects, a large curtain being looped across over the table. The design on the other side is very similar, but not quite so ornamental. The table here has flat legs with claw feet. On the table, which has a second tier, are several cups and vases and a statue of Demeter. At the foot, on the ground, are masks and a goat. The scene, as before, is contained between large tree-trunks encircled with grape-vines; on the branches hang four large masks, and across, over the table, is a festooned curtain.

The cup is by some authorities considered to be a specimen of murrhine. There is another vase similarly carved, now at Brunswick; on it there is a representation of some of the mysteries of Eleusis, but there is considerable doubt as to its antiquity.

The cameo portrait of the Emperor Augustus, which formerly belonged to the Strozzi family, of Florence, and which is now in the British Museum, is, I think, altogether the finest specimen of such work existing. The stone is as nearly perfect as it can be, and the design of the head is superb, the technical execution of the cutting and polishing leaving nothing to be desired. It measures about five by three and two-eighths inches, and is cut on a sardonyx of three layers. The Emperor is shown in profile, and wears a diadem, which is cut plain in the original stone, but is now overlaid with a jewelled band. The hair is white, a peculiarity due to the exigencies of the stone, and wavy, and in front of the face shows a portion of a spear. The handsome ægis is scaly, and is left in a light brown layer of the onyx, and in front of it is a large

JULIA, DAUGHTER OF AUGUSTUS, AS MINERVA,
AND LIVIA AS DIANA.
GRÆCO-ROMAN CAMEO OF FOUR LAYERS.
In the British Museum.

cameo head of Medusa. The head is that of an extremely handsome young man, and it is supposed to be the finest portrait of Augustus existing.

A beautiful cameo of two profile heads, one wearing a helmet, is supposed to represent Julia, only daughter of Augustus, and Livia, his third wife. It was formerly part of the collection of the Earl of Carlisle, and probably belonged to Cardinal Ottoboni, at the end of the seventeenth century. It is cut in a sardonyx of three layers; the foremost head, that of Julia, is in the character of Minerva, and wears an ægis cut in a light brown layer, and a mantle fastened on the shoulder by a round brooch. Her helmet is dark brown, and curly light brown hair escapes from under its lower edge. Livia is shown entirely in white, but, unfortunately, the white layer of this otherwise exquisite work is unpleasantly spotted. It measures about three and a half inches in height.

Another portrait of Julia belonged to the same collection as the preceding, but is much larger, measuring nearly six inches in height, with the background. It is, unfortunately, only a fragment, and when perfect must have been one of the finest single portrait cameos existing. It is cut on a beautiful stone of three layers; the richly waving hair and diádem are shown in dark brown, and the dress in pale brown. The head is set on a new background, but it is skilfully done, and is not very apparent. The most unfortunate break is at the lower part of the neck in front, the bust having been chipped off at some time or other. The head, even in its damaged condition, is full of dignity, and the colour of it is charming.

The great cameo now at Vienna, representing Tiberius descending from his chariot, is thought by M. Babelon to have been possibly cut by Dioskorides. It certainly is the finest of the very large antique cameos as far as the technical workmanship is concerned, and in many points there is a great resemblance between it and the still larger one at Paris, representing the apotheosis of Germanicus.

The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem are said to have possessed this cameo in the thirteenth century, and from them Philippe le Bel, king of France, obtained it, and gave it to the monks of Poissy. From these holy men the treasure was stolen during the civil wars of the sixteenth

century, and was sold to Rodolph II., emperor of Germany, for a sum equivalent to about four hundred thousand francs. Pieresc mentions it in a letter he wrote to Jérome Aléandre at Rome, in 1620. He describes it as representing Augustus as Jupiter, and "Rome" as Juno, the other figures being explained as other notable persons in the characters of other of the Olympic divinities. It was then in the Imperial collection at Vienna. It measures about nine by seven and a half inches, and is cut on a beautiful sardonyx, the figures being in white on a dark ground.

The design is divided into two horizontal parts. The upper division shows Augustus seated, as Jupiter, holding a sceptre in his left hand, and a lituus—a kind of crooked staff, usually carried by the augurs—in his right. Under the chair is the eagle of Jove. On the right hand of the Emperor is sitting a beautiful female figure, with a triple-crowned helmet, and holding a spear in her right hand, and resting her left upon the buckle of her girdle. This figure is supposed to typify the city of Rome. Behind the Emperor stands another beautiful female figure, with a turreted coronet and a veil. She is placing a laurel wreath upon his head, and by her stands a bearded man, probably intended for Neptune. Seated in front is a female figure crowned with ivy, and holding a cornucopia; at her side are two children. This figure probably signifies Abundance and Fertility. In front of the Emperor is another group. The figure of an old man descends from a chariot, the horses of which are guided by a figure of Victory; this figure, clad in a toga, is probably a portrait of Tiberius, who is holding a sceptre in his left hand. Between the successful general and the figure of Rome, is a young warrior, probably Germanicus, who served as one of Tiberius' generals. The lower division shows a group of captive barbarians, Germans and Pannonians, erecting a monument, probably intended to celebrate their own defeat.

Suetonius tells us that Tiberius returned from his wars in Germany or Pannonia in the forty-second year of the reign of Augustus (A.D. 12), and that he then celebrated his triumph. He is said to have descended from his chariot and to have knelt at the feet of his father, who presided at the triumphal celebrations. Very shortly after this triumph Tiberius himself became Emperor. Over the head of Augustus is the sign

Capricornus within a circle. This was the sign under which Augustus was born, and he used it on his coins, so that this mark is a strong reason for supposing that the figure of Jupiter is actually a portrait of the great Emperor.

A later scene where Tiberius takes the place of Augustus, and Germanicus that of Tiberius, is seen on the large Paris cameo, which, in a way, may be considered as a companion to this one, the two taken together forming almost a consecutive history.

The largest antique cameo existing is now at Paris. It is an irregular oval and measures thirteen by eleven inches. The work upon it is not of the very highest order of excellence, and many of the figures are very flat, a fault commonly seen in large onyxes, and one which, of course, the artist is powerless to correct, if he at all requires the coloured layers to fit in with his design. It is probable that this stone is really much too large, as is also that at Vienna, for the proper exhibition of the art of the cameo-cutter. I should think that the limit of size for a perfect cameo has been as nearly as possible reached in the British Museum cameo of the Emperor Augustus, formerly in the Strozzi collection. But, no doubt, very large cameos will always command much admiration for the almost invariable beauty of the stone on which they are cut, as well as for their rarity and great value. Such large cameos, moreover, cannot even have had the limited use which smaller examples certainly had for purposes of dress, they must have been kept much as we now keep pictures, in some sort of frame as wall ornaments. This cameo actually had such a frame of gold, elaborately set with gems and enamels, but its very interesting history informs us that this setting was destroyed and melted up at Amsterdam in 1804, when a miscreant named Charlier broke into the Sainte-Chapelle, where it was then kept, and carried it off. Many other treasures went at the same time, among them the "Coupe des Ptolemées." When the cameo was brought back to France minus its setting, it remained so for some time; but in 1806 a pupil of David, Auguste Delafontaine, made for it an utterly incongruous framework of chased and gilded bronze in which it was kept until 1832, when it could no longer be endured, and so the cameo was taken out and kept by itself as it now is.

It is cut in a fine sardonyx with five layers, brown, white, reddish, white again, and dark red. The subject cut upon it is arranged in

three stages, dividing the stone horizontally. The centre division is the largest, and contains the most important group.

The Emperor Tiberius is seated on the same chair as his mother Livia, and in front of them stands the Roman General Germanicus, who is taking leave of his sovereign before going off to the war in Germany.

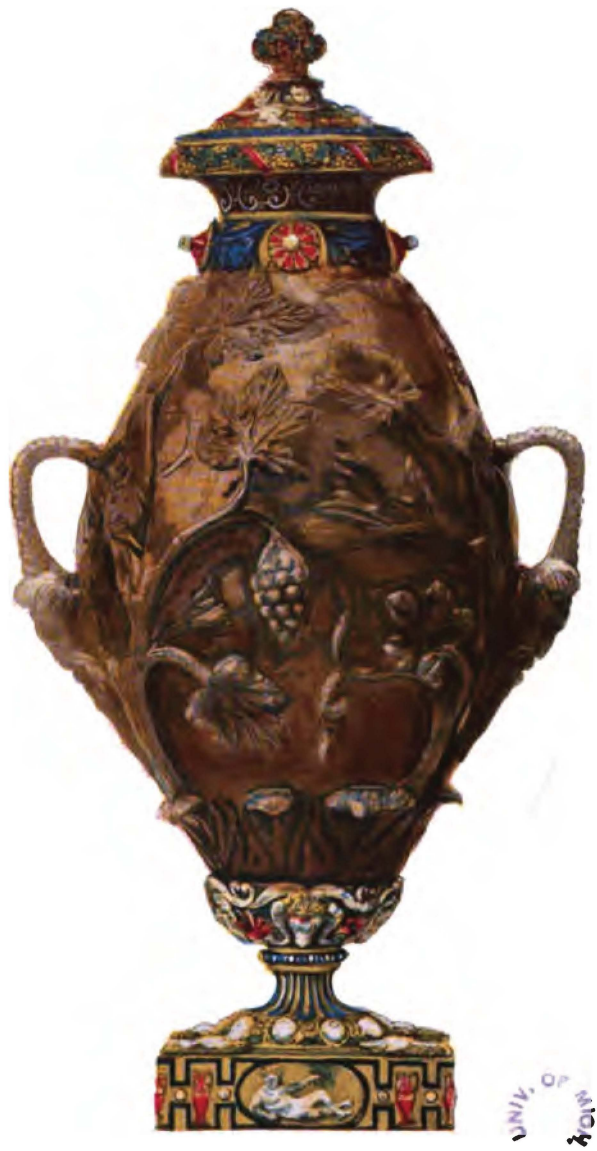
On the upper part of the cameo is a celestial group of floating figures, among which is Germanicus, crowned with laurel and mounted upon Pegasus. He is received by the shade of Augustus, wearing a radiated crown; and among the other figures is one which probably represents Nero Drusus, father of Germanicus.

At the lower part of the stone is a narrow space, in which are shown some of the barbarians whom Germanicus had already conquered in his various campaigns. Among these will be seen Germans, with long beards, and Parthians, wearing the Phrygian bonnet.

This cameo is usually known as the "Agate de Tibère," and a good deal of its history is known. It is first noticed in the inventory of the Sainte-Chapelle in 1341, and is mentioned as "Unum pulcherrimum Camant in cujus circuitu sunt plures reliquiæ." It was probably taken to Byzantium from Rome, and thence to France after the Crusades. There is a tradition that it was pawned to Saint Louis of France by Baudouin II., emperor of Constantinople in the thirteenth century.

It belonged to Philippe de Valois in 1341, who sent it, probably for safe custody, to Pope Clement VI., at Avignon; and about the end of the same century Pope Clement VII. restored the gem to Charles V., who sent it back to the Sainte-Chapelle in 1379, set in a new mounting, with the inscription, "Ce Camaieu bailla a la Sainte Chapelle du Palais, Charles, cinquième de ce nom, roi de France, qui fut fils du Roi Jean, l'an 1379." During all these travels, which indeed testify strongly to the great value set upon this stone, it received some slight damage, pieces of the higher relief being in places chipped off. It also narrowly escaped destruction by fire in 1630.

M. Ernest Babelon thinks this cameo may be the work of Dioskorides as an old man; and, considering the similarity of work, design, and subject as shown in these two remarkable gems at Vienna and Paris, it is likely enough that they may be the work of the same artist at different stages of his career.



GRÆCO-ROMAN VASE WITH CAMEO ORNAMENTATION, CUT IN CHALCEDONY. THE FOOT AND LID ARE OF GOLD AND ARE RICHLY CHASED AND ENAMELLED, THEY WERE ADDED IN ITALY DURING THE 16TH CENTURY.

In the British Museum.

An exquisite chalcedony vase, of oblong form and Græco-Roman workmanship, has recently been bequeathed to the British Museum by Baron Ferdinand Rothschild. The early history of this vase is not known, but it belonged in 1897 to the Duke of Devonshire, and was in that year exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition of Enamels. With the foot and lid, it is eight and a half inches in height, and is cut in a honey-coloured stone of great beauty. It has two handles, in the form of heads of Pan, bearded and with long re-curved horns; and on the body of the vase are branches of vine and grapes cut in relief. At the base are acanthus leaves.

Of its kind this vase is the most beautiful known. There is no other with which it can be compared. In shape it resembles the cup of St. Martin at St. Maurice d'Agaune, but it is much smaller and also much earlier. The foot, collar, and lid are of gold; they were added in Italy during the sixteenth century. The goldsmith's work, and the enamelling and jewellery on the mounts, are of their kind most excellent. The designs on the mounts carry out the Bacchanalian ideas suggested by the vine of the vase itself, figures of satyrs, Bacchus, grapes, and rams' heads.

One of the most beautiful cameo vases in the world is that known as the Portland vase. It is made of transparent dark blue glass, covered with a layer of opaque white glass. It measures ten inches in height. The surface is exquisitely cut with figure designs as a cameo, and it is probably work of the first century made by some Greek artist of the first rank. It was found in the earlier half of the seventeenth century, in a marble sarcophagus in the Monte del Grano, near Rome. The sepulchral chamber is supposed to have been that of Alexander Severus, who died in the fourth century, but the vase is undoubtedly earlier work than that. It was filled with ashes.

It once formed part of the Barbarini collection, and became successively the property of Sir William Hamilton and the Duchess of Portland, and was deposited in the British Museum by the fourth Duke of Portland in 1810. There have been many curious suppositions as to the manner in which this remarkable piece of work was made. The antiquary, Montfaucon, thought it might actually be a stone, and in the Dictionary of Greek and Rome Antiquities compiled by Sir William

Smith it is described as being of blue glass, with figures in white, moulded separately, and afterwards affixed to the surface by a partial fusion. Of course, in a case like this it is impossible to say positively how a certain effect has been produced; we can only judge by our own standards of work, and there is no doubt in my mind that by far the easiest way to make such a cup is simply to coat the groundwork with a layer of white glass, not by any means a difficult thing to do, and then to cut it by means of an ordinary lapidary's lathe and drill. I have no doubt this is the way both the Portland and Auldjo vases were made. In both cases the final finishing touches were probably added by means of a diamond point. The handles terminate in masks of Pan, and they were added after the layer of white glass was affixed to the body of the vase. The figures illustrated on the vase are not quite surely identified, but they probably represent, on one side, Thetis consenting to become the bride of Peleus in the presence of Poseidon and Eros, and on the other side, Peleus and Thetis on Mount Pelion.

While in the old Blacas room at the British Museum, the Portland vase was wantonly broken by a scene painter, William Lloyd, in 1845. It has, however, been admirably put together again; the base has not been replaced, but is now shown separately—on it is a delightful cameo of Paris.

The Auldjo vase came to the British Museum in different ways, some fragments of it were bequeathed by Miss Auldjo in 1859, and others were separately acquired. It is an oinochoe with a beautifully moulded lip and a handle, and was found at Pompeii in the house of the Faun: it measures about nine inches in height. Like the Portland vase it is made of dark blue glass overlaid with a white layer, and is cut in the same way as a cameo, the design, however, not being of so ambitious a character. It is ornamented only with a beautiful spray of vine, bearing grapes. Also like the Portland vase, it has been broken, but not wantonly; enough was left to show the original shape, and it has been well restored. There are several fragments of similar workmanship among the collection of glass pastes in the ceramic gallery at the British Museum, but none of these is nearly large enough to warrant any attempt at reconstruction.

At Naples is a splendid amphora with pointed foot, measuring twelve

and five-eighths inches in height, also of blue glass with white over-layer. It was found in 1839 at Pompeii. On it is a beautiful design of garlands and vines, and two groups of boys treading grapes for making wine, and playing on musical instruments. Below is a line of sheep and goats. It is known as the "Vase des Vendanges," and this and the Portland vase represent the finest work in glass done at any period.

One of the largest antique cameos in the world, measuring eight and three-quarter inches in length by six in height, was recently acquired by the British Museum at the sale of the Marlborough gems, of which collection this gem was one of the greatest treasures. It is cut on a fine sardonyx of three layers, and has been badly broken, the pieces being, however, well joined together and the missing portions restored in silver gilt. There are two imperial heads facing one another; that of the Emperor is quite magnificent, that of the Empress is not so fine. These heads bear the attributes of Jupiter Ammon and Isis, and on two medallions in the setting, at the two upper corners, are the names, "Didius Julianus Augustus" and "Manlia Scantilla Augusta." Didius Julianus Augustus was Emperor of Rome towards the end of the second century. He bought the empire, which the Pretorians had exposed for sale, but would not pay up, so he was very shortly put to death. His wife Scantilla urged him to this disastrous purchase.

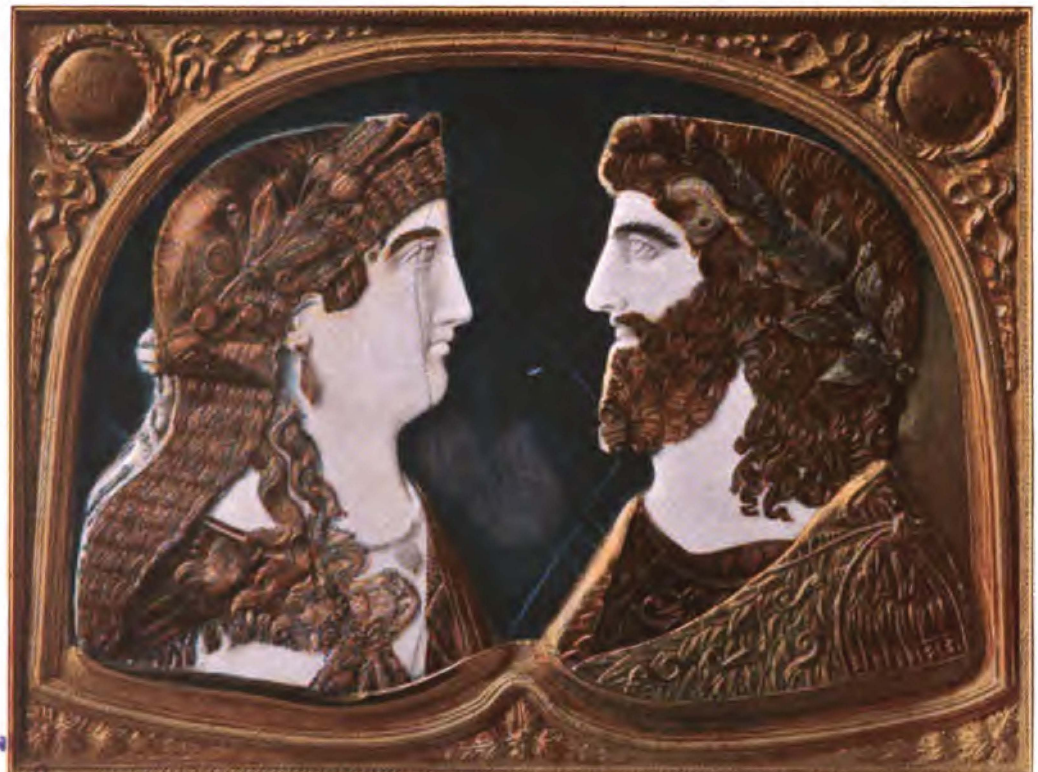
It is, however, very unlikely that the two heads shown on this cameo are really portraits of these two unworthy personages. They are much more likely to represent the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and the Empress Faustina the Elder, his mother-in-law. There is certainly a strong resemblance between the busts of Marcus Aurelius and the head shown on this cameo. Also there is an intaglio at St. Petersburg representing these same two personages, the design of which strongly resembles that of this cameo. It is especially gratifying to us as a nation, that our already fine collection at the British Museum should have been so fortunately enriched by the acquisition of this magnificent gem. On the Emperor's temple is a ram's horn, and a laurel wreath encircles his brow. His hair is luxuriant, wavy, and curled, and he wears a curled beard. His mantle and ægis are both largely restored. The hair, eyebrows, beard, and mantle of this figure are cut in the brown layer of the stone. The Empress wears an ilex wreath, with wheat-

ears, pomegranates, and poppy-heads; she also has a small plain tiara and long earrings. Her hair is closely waved and tied at the end. Her dress is simple and fringed over the shoulder. Her hair, eyebrow, earring, and part of the dress are cut in a brown layer. The flesh of both heads is shown in the creamy white of the same central layer, and the background is very dark. The modelling of both heads is excellent, but that of the Emperor appears to me to be the finer.

At the back of the silver setting is an inscription which reads, "Ingens anaglyphicum opus olim Saunesiorum ducum nunc vero pretio acquisitum in Fontesiano cimelio asservatum." The Marquis de Fuentes was known as a collector of gems in the earlier half of the eighteenth century, and was at one time Ambassador from Portugal at Rome. The Duke of Marlborough probably acquired the gem from him. It is figured in the catalogue of the Marlborough gems published in 1780, engraved by Bartolozzi from a drawing by Cipriani.

There are a few other hard stone vases and cups which can challenge comparison with that of St. Denys; among these, one of the finest as well as the most interesting is that known as the vase of St. Martin, which is now kept at the Treasury of the Abbey Church of St. Maurice d'Agaune, in the Rhone Valley. The legend concerning this vase is that St. Martin on one occasion went to the martyr's field at Agaune for the purpose of doing honour to some other saints, and after praying there for some time he dug his knife into the ground. Immediately from the place sprang a fount of holy blood, which St. Martin collected carefully in two vases which he had brought with him in contemplation of some such answer to his prayers; but when both these receptacles were full, the holy liquid still continued to flow, so the saint prayed for help in this dilemma, and immediately an angel brought him this vase, still known by his name and still kept in the same place. It is an upright oval stone with foot and collar of gold, the entire height being about eight and a half inches.

The conical foot as well as the collar are of fine Byzantine workmanship, with cloisons filled with red glass inlays, and richly ornamented with rows of jewels; beginning at the foot, these rows consist of large pearls, emeralds, sapphires, and small pearls, the jewels cut *en cabochon*.



GRÆCO-ROMAN SARDONYX CAMEO OF AN EMPEROR AND EMPRESS
IN THE CHARACTERS OF JUPITER AMMON AND ISIS.
THE SETTING IS A LATER ADDITION.

In the British Museum.

The same sequence of jewels is on the collar, but the upper portion of this is covered by a piece of parchment, corded and sealed with a large piece of wax impressed with an episcopal seal. The onyx vase itself is cut as a cameo with a subject which is not yet explained.

A lady, seated, holds her finger to her lips in token of secrecy, and a waiting-maid is near her with a wine jar, both figures being thickly veiled. Next is an old man with a long beard, seated and holding a long staff; he is turning away from the first group, and near him is a female figure seated on the ground. There is another female figure seated and one standing up holding a sheathed sword; behind this last is a trophy of arms, with large shield and helmet, and lastly two horses. It is generally supposed to represent some episode of the siege of Troy. The stone is a dark one, and the design is not cut with any reference to the coloured layers in it.

The handle is broken, but the upper part is retained by the wax at the top. The workmanship of the vase would tend to show that it is late work, and it may have been made shortly before the exodus to Constantinople, or even made there. It is remarkable for its size and the beauty of the stone, as well as for the fact that it still retains its original mounting. The shape resembles that of the small "Rothschild" vase, but it cannot compare with it for delicacy or beauty of workmanship. There is no attempt to utilise the coloured layers of the stone to enhance the beauty of the design.

Early in the fourth century the Emperor Constantine the Great, who became a Christian because he thought he saw a cross in the sky, moved his court to Constantinople, for some time called "Roma Nova," and took with him all the Imperial treasure. Soon after his death the two towns became jealous of each other, and eventually Rome became the capital of the western dominions and Constantinople of the eastern. But the Christian religion had by now taken a strong hold, and the artists of Constantinople not only soon rivalled their Roman brethren in the beauty of their work, but curiously altered their classical subjects so as to fit the new order of things. Hercules turns into David, Perseus and the Gorgon are replaced by David and Goliath, Venus and Leda both become Virgin Maries, and Heads of Medusa turn into the Holy Face of St. Veronica. At Durham is a cameo clearly showing a head of Jupiter, but round it are

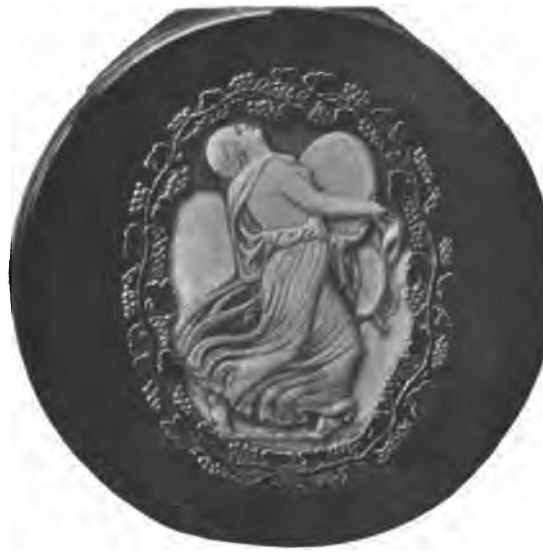
the words " Caput Sancti Oswaldi." Jupiter with his eagle becomes St. John, and so on.

Christian attributes are also found added to existing jewels, as in the case of a piece of small sculpture supposed to represent the Emperor Constantine. This small bust is cut in chalcedony, and on the head was a diadem of gold, traces only of which are now left. On the front of the cuirass was originally a head, probably of Medusa, which has been cut away, and in place of it has been engraved a cross within a circle. To the bust a gilded piece of drapery is fixed, following out the lines already existing in the stone, and arms with silver hands are also added; in the right hand is a chaplet and in the left a cross of silver with two transversal branches. The height of the bust with its drapery is about six and a half inches.

Græco-Roman White and Blue Glass Cameo Vase, known as the "Vase des Vendanges." Now at Naples.

It was used as the top of the cantonal bâton of the Sainte-Chapelle, and for a long time was kept there, but now it is in the Cabinet des Médailles at the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. Although it is now usually supposed to represent Constantine, it has also been considered to represent some other of the Roman Emperors of about his time.

It most likely formed the top of a consular sceptre, such as shown on carved ivory diptychs; these have variously shaped tops, but now and then they are distinctly seen to carry portrait heads, such as this one. The sceptres were sent out to the consuls as emblems of their power held directly from the Emperor.

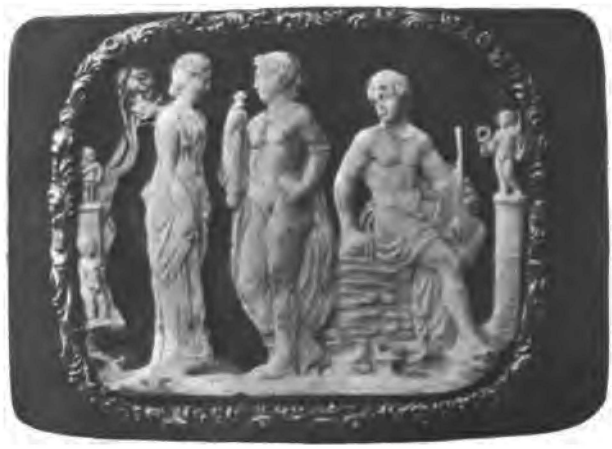


MODERN HORN SNUFF-BOX, WITH GOLD AND ENAMELLED MOUNTS. IN THE LID IS SET A 16TH CENTURY PALE ONYX CAMEO.

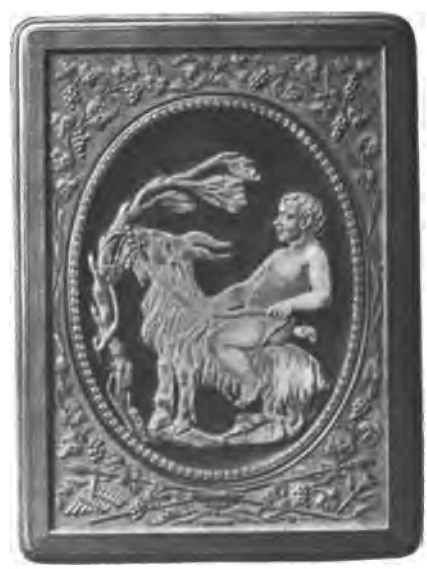
In the British Museum.

MODERN SNUFF-BOX OF LUMACELLI, WITH ENAMELLED GOLD MOUNTS SET WITH OPALS. IN THE LID IS SET A GRŒCO-ROMAN ONYX CAMEO OF THREE LAYERS IN HIGH RELIEF.

In the British Museum.



MODERN HORN SNUFF-BOX WITH GOLD MOUNTS
IN THE LID IS SET A GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO
ON DARK ONYX.
In the British Museum.



MODERN GOLD AND ENAMELLED SNUFF-BOX
WITH GRÆCO-ROMAN CAMEO CUT IN
A PALE ONYX.
GIVEN BY PIUS VI., IN 1797, TO NAPOLEON,
WHO GAVE IT TO LADY HOLLAND.
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO IN ROCK CRYSTAL.
PROBABLY ONE OF A PAIR OF PHALERÆ.
In the British Museum.

GRŒCO-ROMAN CAMEO CUT IN
ROCK-CRYSTAL.
In the British Museum.

Cameo cut in dark Onyx. The Entry into the Ark.
From the Collection of Lorenzo de' Medici,
whose name is cut upon the Doors of the Ark.
Italian. Late 14th Century.
In the British Museum.

Portrait of Queen Elizabeth
cut in dark Onyx.
Italian. 16th Century.
In the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Double Cameo Pendant in Gold
and Enamelled Setting.
Hercules, and Omphale on the
other side. Presented by the
Emperor Charles V. to Pope
Clement VII.
Italian. 16th Century.
In the British Museum.

Shell Cameo. Male Portrait mounted in Enamelled Gold as a Pendant.
Italian. 16th Century.
In the British Museum.

White and Grey Shell Cameo.
Ganymede and an Eagle.
Italian. 16th Century.
In the British Museum.

White and Grey Shell Cameo.
Hercules killing Cacus.
Italian. 16th Century.
In the British Museum.

Cameo cut in Cyprea Shell.
A Centaur. White and Grey.
Italian. 16th Century.
In the British Museum.

Onyx Cameo.
Winged Female Head.
In Gold and Enamelled Setting.
French. 16th Century.
In the British Museum.

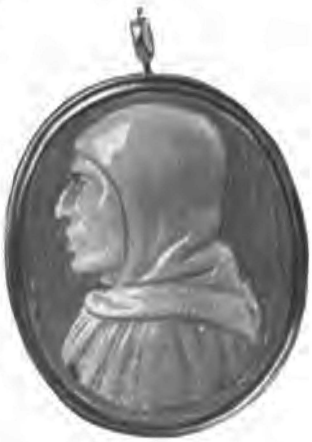
Diana. Cameo cut in
Sardonyx of three layers.
French. 16th Century.
In Gold and Enamelled Setting.
In the British Museum.

Cameo cut in pale Onyx
of three strata.
The Genius of Rome holding
a Figure of Victory.
Italian. 16th Century.
In the Victoria and Albert Museum.

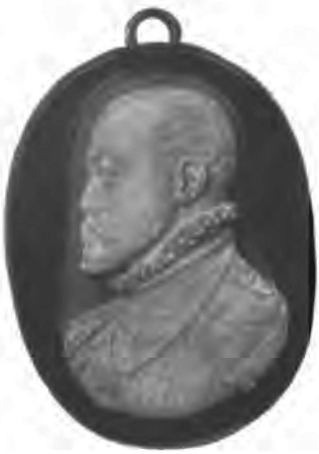
Portraits of Francis I., and his Queen,
cut on a double Sardonyx.
The Queen is on the Reverse.
French. 16th Century.
In the British Museum.

AGATE CAMEO IN GOLD SETTING.
LATE ITALIAN WORKMANSHIP.
In the British Museum.

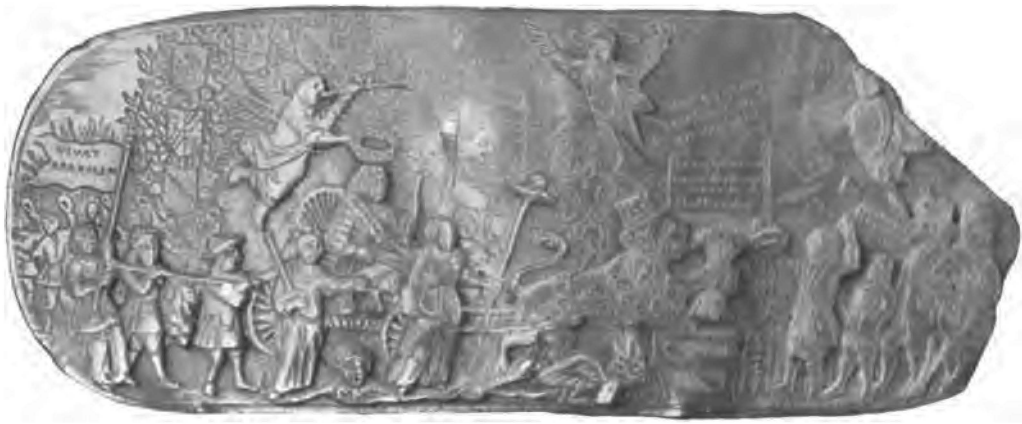
PORTRAIT CAMEO,
CUT IN PLASMA, OF
ALEXANDER DE' MEDICI.
ITALIAN. 16TH CENTURY.
In the Victoria and Albert Museum.



PORTRAIT OF
JEROME SAVONAROLA.
CUT IN PALE ONYX.
ITALIAN. 15TH CENTURY.
In the Victoria and Albert Museum.



PORTRAIT CAMEO OF PHILIP II. OF SPAIN.
CUT IN GREY ONYX OF TWO STRATA.
ITALIAN. 16TH CENTURY.
In the Victoria and Albert Museum.



CAMEO CUT IN PEARL SHELL, REPRESENTING THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY OF WILLIAM III. INTO THE HAGUE. DUTCH. 17TH CENTURY.

In the British Museum.

IVORY CAMEO. HERCULES AND THE NEMEAN LION. ITALIAN. 16TH CENTURY.

In the British Museum.

CHAPTER IV.

RENAISSANCE AND LATER CAMEOS.

THE Renaissance of the arts generally which took place in the fifteenth century affected very strongly the beautiful art of gem-cutting and engraving, both in cameo and intaglio. The marked depression which for some centuries had signalised the arts both of the intaglio and the cameo-cutter took a sudden upward tendency, and a school of artists arose, among whom were several whose names rival those of their Greek predecessors. The technical skill of the finest cutters of the Renaissance was quite equal to that of the ancients, and the tools and appliances at their command were better. In the matter of design, however, their fertility and originality were not so marked; but whenever they simply copied an antique, which they very often did, the workmanship is so equal in quality, that to distinguish new from old is very difficult.

As we have already noted, the general tendency of the designs on gems and cameos of the antique period was classical and mythological. Numbers at all times were, of course, portraits, but even then it was not infrequent that presentments of living personages were represented with the attributes of one or other of the deities. In Byzantine and later times the general character of the designs on cut stones altered from the mythological to the scriptural, and besides purely Christian designs some very curious changes took place in the characters represented on such gems. Then, again, in the fifteenth century began yet another change; this time, however, it was not to any new style, but a frank reversion to the ancient classical ideas. The artists of the Renaissance evidently felt their tastes more in accordance with the ancient subjects than with the scriptural which were commoner at their own time, and they not only copied the old gems, but designed new ones illustrating

the same scenes and persons in like manner. Portraits, as before, find a large place, and on cameos the large majority of these are in profile. Alexander the Great was a popular subject, as also were the twelve Cæsars, and among the deities most largely represented may be mentioned Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Hercules and Omphale, Bacchus, and Venus and Leda. Cameos are not so often signed as intaglios, but still many of the greater cutters or engravers of these gems did sometimes sign them. Cameos were probably used largely as dress ornaments. They were worn much as we should now wear brooches, on the shoulder or in the front of the dress, or, in the case of the smaller ones, as pendant jewels on necklaces, or in rings. On some of the larger cameos such use may be seen, notably in the Strozzi Augustus, in which is a large cameo of Medusa on the ægis, and on the large St. Petersburg cameo, which shows heads of Medusa and Phobos—both also affixed to the ægis. Not only do they show in contemporary pictures, but there are numerous inventories in which mention is made of them. In the inventory of the treasure belonging to Charles-le-Téméraire, in the fifteenth century, is an item describing a shield probably ornamented with damascene work with a cameo bearing his badge in the centre, "Ung bouclier de fer garny d'or et au milieu ung camahieu d'un lyon entre trois fusils." They are often worn as ornaments for hats, and Charles-le-Chauve even used one as a seal, an impression of which still exists.

King Réné of Anjou was a remarkable patron of art of all kinds, and he did not neglect to appreciate the charms of engraved gems. There is a fine reliquary, with many cut stones inserted in it, now kept at Saint Nicholas-de-Port, near Nancy, which he is said to have engraved himself. King Réné is known to have designed and cut medals, which process is a form of cameo-cutting in very low relief, so it is quite possible that he made those on the reliquary. He also caused his own portrait to be cut as a cameo.

The Emperor Charles V. was a lover and collector of cameos. The engraver, Leone Leoni, of Arezzo, cut a fine one of him with his son on one side and another of his Empress on the other side, this being the earliest recorded instance of the making of a double cameo, a fashion which was not uncommon during the Renaissance, and sometimes shows an antique backed by a modern piece of work. The stones on which

these double designs are cut usually have two rather thick white layers near to each other, divided by a thick dark layer.

The peculiarity of unnecessary under-cutting is often seen in Renaissance work, but never without good reason in antique. Renaissance workmen were undoubtedly extremely skilled in the use of their tools, and the best work of that period has never been exceeded from a technical point of view. The under-cutting of a design is essentially the kind of clever work that a master of his craft would be likely to do, but it is doubtful whether the effect is especially good. Many antiques also show this peculiarity in a lesser degree; but in a large number of such cases, where the exigencies of the stone do not necessitate such treatment, it is likely that the gem has been recut by some Renaissance workmen, and to a large extent spoiled.

A true signature on a cameo is likely to be in relief, in accordance with the rest of the work; and, undoubtedly, when a gem is so signed, it is contemporary work, but, when the signature is cut in intaglio, some doubt may always exist as to whether such lettering has not been a subsequent addition.

Cameos, however, have not suffered so much from false signatures as intaglios have, for the excellent reason that they have always been appreciated rather for their own actual beauty than for the name of the artist who is said to have executed them. Most of the finest cameos have been cut by anonymous artists, but as to intaglios it is different, as many of the finest of these have been engraved and signed by known masters.

Several Renaissance cameos show a narrow raised border round the edge of the design cut on the same level and of the same colour as the upper layer in which the design is cut. This manner of framing the design is often considered to be a sign of cinque-cento work, but it is not really so, the same plan having been frequently followed both in ancient and mediæval times.

One of the earliest patrons of the art of gem-cutting at the revival of the arts in the beginning of the fifteenth century was Cardinal Barbo, afterwards Pope Paul II. He made a large collection of engraved gems, which he kept in silver-gilt boxes. He is said to have been killed by

his gems, inasmuch as on a certain great occasion he wore so many of them on his fingers that they gave him a chill, which, being neglected, caused his death. He collected both antiques as well as gems cut in his own day; and, after he died, most of his jewels went to enrich the already fine collection made by Lorenzo the Magnificent, the greatest patron of the arts that ever lived.

Of all the numerous patrons, largely ecclesiastical, of the fine arts which sprang up, in Italy especially, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Lorenzo de' Medici is by far the most celebrated, as he was the most powerful and the richest; he was also probably a real lover and judge of first-rate art for its own sake. Other collectors have frequently become so only because they were rich enough, and felt it advisable to follow the fashion. Such collectors have, as a rule, been severely punished in being unscrupulously cheated by fraudulent dealers, both in ancient and modern times.

The finest cameo that was in the collection of Lorenzo de' Medici is, perhaps, the Tazza Farnese, which is now in the museum at Naples. Several of the gems which belonged to him have the words "LAVR MED" engraved upon them. This lettering is, of course, an addition to the original design, but it is usually finely cut, and is not in any way a disfigurement. It may be seen on an exquisite fourteenth-century cameo representing the entry into the ark, which is now in the Gold Room of the British Museum. The words will be found engraved in tiny letters on the doors of the ark. The cameo is a beautiful specimen both of Renaissance cutting and designing as well as setting, and it was acquired in 1890, by the Trustees of the Museum, as part of the choice collection of the Earl of Carlisle.

The Medici collection is now dispersed chiefly between the museums of Naples, Florence, and Paris. Among those in the Cabinet des Médailles of the Bibliothèque Nationale is a fine cameo portrait of himself.

As a rule, Renaissance cameos are not of great size, neither is there any special gem of great reputation. The general level of the work is very high at its best, but there is no distinguished work like the Augustus or the cameos of Ptolemy. One of the best known cinque-cento gems was sold last year at the Marlborough sale for 2000*l.*; it represents the marriage of Eros and Psyche, and shows a charming procession

GRÆCO-ROMAN CAMEO HEAD OF MEDUSA
CUT IN AMETHYST.
PROBABLY ONE OF A PAIR OF PHALERÆ.
In the British Museum.

CAMEO HEAD OF MEDUSA
CUT IN EMERALD,
WITH GOLD, ENAMELLED
AND JEWELLED SETTING.
ITALIAN RENAISSANCE WORKMANSHIP.
In the British Museum.

of four childish figures, beautifully designed. The background is very dark, and the figures are cut in a coffee-coloured layer.

On the background the words ΤΡΥΦΩΝ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ are cut in intaglio; they are, no doubt, added as having been likely to enhance the value of the stone. The workmanship of this gem is considered to be equal to any antique work. It went to America.

During this fifteenth century, the dark layers of the onyx were often used so as to show portraits of negroes' heads; a curious fancy, and one which is rather difficult to explain. The painters of this time seem also to have had a liking for painting negroes. It may possibly have been due to the fact that great personages were fond of having negro servants about them as their favourite attendants; but no doubt some onyxes lend themselves remarkably well to the production of such heads.

In the sixteenth century the production of gems and cameos became very general throughout Italy, and, unluckily, a great deal of work was actually done on gems already engraved with ancient work. There is, unfortunately, almost no end to the long list of sins these skilful Italians committed, with regard not only to complete, but also as to partial, forgeries. They often engraved known and valued names on old intaglios, thereby largely increasing their market value; and, as to cameos, they were regularly retouched and repolished. Many of the collectors of the time seem to have encouraged this school of imitation, and to have preferred a new, signed "antique," to having a great name unrepresented in their collection. Fulvio d'Orsino was one of these unscrupulous collectors; he had a large collection, many pieces of which, purporting to be old, were made for him by contemporary artists.

Many engravers of this art-loving period found much favour in the eyes of kings and princes; among these, Matteo del Nasaro, of Verona, was fortunate in attracting the notice of Francis I. of France, who gave him a pension and an appointment at the court. Matteo cut a celebrated bloodstone with a design upon it of the Descent from the Cross, in which he managed to get the red stains so as to represent drops of blood in the proper place. This idea was also taken advantage of by other artists, and it is sometimes well managed, but Matteo appears to have made a special selection of chance markings which could be used so as to improve his designs. He set up a lapidary's shop in Paris in 1531, and had

many pupils, who continued his business after his death. He was at one time Chief Engraver to the Mint at Paris, and admired his own work so much that he would rather give away one of his gems than accept a small price for it, and he is said to have broken a fine stone because some patron would not accept it as a present.

Catherine de' Medici brought a fine collection of gems and cameos with her to the Court of Henri II. of France. Giovanni Antonio de' Rossi is supposed to have been her especial cameo-cutter.

The setting of the Renaissance cameos, rich from the beginning, reached perhaps its most decorative period during the sixteenth century. Benvenuto Cellini is said to have made several of these settings—two attributed to him are now at Paris—but, like the cameos themselves, the greater number of the settings are by unknown artists. They are usually delicate goldsmith's work, most beautifully executed and enriched with jewels and enamels, many of them with pendants of pearl clusters or gems.

Our English Queen Elizabeth liked her portrait taken in all kinds of ways. She sent for Julien de Fontenay to perpetuate her features in cameo, and, although they are not signed, it is quite possible that some of those now at the Victoria and Albert Museum are by this artist. Julien de Fontenay, who is supposed to be the same artist who is known as "Coldoré," is mentioned in the Lettres Patentes of December 22, 1608, as the king's valet and engraver of precious stones. His cameos are signed "C. D. F.," and are all heads. He probably cut most of the existing cameos of Queen Elizabeth, of which there are a considerable number both in England and abroad, mostly cut in onyx, but in one case, now at the Victoria and Albert Museum, in a beautiful turquoise. Coldoré cut portraits of both Henri IV. and Louis XIII. His nickname probably came from some peculiarity in his dress.

The French setters of cameos of the sixteenth century were very happy in their work, as well as the Italians. Many of their pieces are exquisite specimens both of the small and peculiar designing needed for such work, as well as brilliant examples of technical skill in gold-work and enamelling. Small cameos of this time are often made in shell with a grey ground; but, although they are often very delicate and charming, they do not last well, the surface being almost always much abraded.

But the white portions of a shell cameo often show a creamy softness of colour which is wanting in the hard white which is common in an onyx. These shell cameos were largely made in France and Italy, and they continued to be made there in considerable quantities until about the end of the seventeenth century. Those with a grey ground usually last better than those with a reddish-coloured ground.

During the seventeenth century there was a lull in the production of cameos. After the death of Henri IV. of France there was little work of the kind done in that country, while the output for Italy distinctly fell off; there was instead a considerable amount of gem-cutting done in Germany. Such Italian work as was made is not remarkable in any way, neither are any names of note known among the engravers of that country.

In the eighteenth century much work was done, particularly by Italians, among whom were several excellent workmen and artists. Flavio Sirletti was a very skilled gem-cutter, and is considered to have nearly reached the ancient Greek perfection of technique. He and his sons signed their gems with their name cut in Greek characters. His work is very delicate and beautiful, and he cut some gems with a diamond point alone, for the express purpose of proving that such a method was possible.

His work is said to be frequently taken for antique. Giovanni and Carlo Costanzi, both of Rome, were also excellent workmen. Giovanni Pichler, of Florence, a member of a gem-cutting family, cut some gems with a diamond point alone, at well as Sirletti. His work also is said to be often considered antique, but neither of these great artists is supposed to have purposely cut imitation antique cameos or intaglios with a fraudulent purpose. Pichler cut a beautiful cameo of a female head and broke off a corner. He then allowed a dealer to invite some well-known connoisseurs to inspect a "new gem," and show them the stone. It was unanimously declared to be a fine antique, when Pichler astonished all present by producing from his pocket the missing portion, and declaring himself to be the real author of the work. He signed many of his gems with his name in Greek characters. There are innumerable names of gem-cutters of this time, but they were nearly all workers in intaglio so far as is recorded; the cameo-cutters appear to have been rarer.

Jean Laurent Natter, of Nuremberg, was a celebrated engraver and cameo-cutter of the eighteenth century. He was particularly skilful in imitating antiques, and he does not appear to have been quite so scrupulous about the misuse of his undoubted skill as some of his equally able contemporaries. He studied first at Venice and afterwards at Rouen. Natter made a catalogue of the gems belonging to William, second Earl of Bessborough, in 1761. It is said that not only did he make the catalogue, but also many of the "antique" gems which were included in it. This collection was eventually acquired by George, fourth Duke of Marlborough, and formed an important part of his collection. Natter sometimes simply signed his name on his work in Greek characters, but he also sometimes used a Greek word, ΤΔΡΟΤ, because "Natter" in German means a serpent. The signing their names in Greek characters, which was so usual among the Renaissance gem-cutters, is an interesting tribute to the ancient Greek engravers, and a sure acknowledgment that, although the later artists were not only very skilful, but were fond of showing it in many unnecessary ways, they still had a great admiration for the earlier work, and did all they could to equal it. Natter wrote a valuable treatise on the various methods of engraving and cutting gems in ancient as well as modern times.

Alessandro Cesare, or Cesati, called Il Greco, was remarkable for the excellence of his draughtsmanship. Such cameos of his as I have been able to see, although undoubtedly very skilfully made, are not altogether pleasing, as they have a singular appearance of hardness. The finest of his heads is said to be one of Phocion, which was in 1750 included in the collection of Sig. Zanetti, of Venice.

Luigi Marmito, of Florence, is known to have cut a fine cameo portrait of Socrates; but, like so many of his fellow-artists, he ended by openly becoming a producer of false antiques, such a profession being far more lucrative than any other connected with engraved gems.

An unusually large cameo of late date was cut by Giovanni Antonio dei Rossi, of Milan. It measured seven inches in diameter, and consisted of a portrait group of Cosmo I. and his family.

Louis Siries was a favourite jeweller of Queen Maria Theresa. Most of his work is now to be seen at Vienna. He signed his name in Latin, and was particularly celebrated for his hard-stone vases.

ONYX CAMEO PENDANT
IN GOLD AND ENAMELLED SETTING.
BY ALESSANDRO CESATI, CALLED IL GRECO.
ITALIAN. 16TH CENTURY.
In the British Museum.

DARK ONYX CAMEO PORTRAIT
OF LUCIUS VERUS.
ITALIAN. 16TH CENTURY.
In the British Museum.

Madame de Pompadour was herself a gem-cutter, and under the able tuition of Jacques Guay she made several intaglios signed with her name. I fear it is not recorded that she ever made a cameo. Guay, however, did so, and made portraits in this manner of Madame de Pompadour herself, Marie Antoinette, the Dauphin, and Louis XVI.; and his work was so highly esteemed that he was appointed engraver to the king. The signatures on his gems are somewhat puzzling. The letters in these engraved signatures are particularly well formed and cut, and Guay himself was very illiterate indeed—so much so that, in fact, he could scarcely write legibly. It is therefore considered that he could not have made these inscriptions himself, but must have had them cut for him by some other artist more skilful in this particular. Like so many favourites of princes, Guay died in poverty and obscurity.

In the nineteenth century the decline in appreciation of cameo work on hard stone as a living art became very marked, although there may still be a few rare workers left. No doubt, for the present, the cameo has been finally relegated to the domain of the collector. The style of dress which now reigns among us has no place for cameo jewellery, antique or Renaissance, set or unset. Such gems inevitably find their way either to one or other of our large museums, or to some one of the few rich men of taste who collect them. The large private collections themselves are more or less doomed, at some not very distant time, to be things of the past. Every year sees one or other of the notable collections made by private individuals absorbed into some museum, whence nothing ever emerges.

From the public point of view this absorption of beautiful and rare objects into museums is, however, an unmixed advantage. Private collectors are naturally chary of showing their valued treasures, which undergo certain risks and some slight damage whenever they are lent or even shown to any one. In museums, where the necessary space can nearly always be provided to show such collections properly, they can be studied to great advantage. Both cameos and intaglios look best when they are arranged openly, without being crowded; they should also be lit from the back so as to show the beautiful colour of the translucent stones in which they are usually cut, and each gem should have an explanatory label clearly written. These requirements are not usually found in private

collections, and for these reasons it is well that those responsible for our national collections should always keep watch over the art sale-rooms and spare no cost or effort to acquire fine or rare specimens whenever they come into the market.

Few of the later English gem-engravers touched cameos. Reisen, a German resident here, Smart, Simon, Wray, a native of Salisbury, Seaton, Brett, Charles and William Brown, Edward Burch, librarian of the R.A., and his pupil, Marchant, assistant engraver at the Royal Mint, as a rule worked only at intaglios, but most of them now and then tried their hands at cameo work. Marchant made some glass pastes, and was the last great gem-engraver to do so.

Napoleon I. admired cameos, and several were cut for him ; and Louis Pichler, second son of Antoine, so celebrated a little earlier, was engraver to the Court of Francis I. of Austria. He wrote a treatise on the engraving of gems. Bernardo Pistrucci, a Roman by birth, found an asylum in England, and came over to London early in the nineteenth century. Lord Maryborough was his first patron, and eventually appointed him to be chief engraver to the Royal Mint. Pistrucci realised large sums for many of his gems. A celebrated cameo showing heads of Augusta and Livia brought him 800*l.*, and it was afterwards sold at the Herz sale for 30*l.* He designed the beautiful group of St. George and the Dragon, which is still used for the reverse of our sovereigns. He also executed several well-known and justly admired cameos. One of these was double, showing a young head of the Princess Victoria on one side and another of the same lady as Queen on the other. The stone, as is usual in these cases, shows a dark layer between two white ones. Pistrucci wrote his autobiography, and some very interesting particulars about his work are given in it. Among others is the curious story of a small cameo head of Flora, which is now part of the Payne-Knight collection at the British Museum.

It appears that Pistrucci cut this head, which is much under-cut, and has a wreath of roses, for Angiolo Bonelli, a well-known dealer. The gem is broken from the back of the head towards the throat, but whether this was purposely done, or whether the stone here shows its natural shape, is nowhere stated. It is said that under the setting, on part of the broken edge, are Pistrucci's initials or mark, but no one has ever been

able to find them. The dealer, Bonelli, gave Pistrucci about 5*l.* for this stone. Some time afterwards, when Pistrucci was working at a wax model of the head of Sir Joseph Banks at his house, Mr. Richard Payne-Knight, a very well-known antiquary and a great collecter of small works of art, came in and triumphantly produced the Flora cameo, for which he had just given Bonelli 500*l.*, as a newly discovered and beautiful antique.

Pistrucci at once stated that he had cut the gem himself, and in proof of his assertion pointed out that the roses in the wreath were of a kind not known in ancient times, and in this statement Sir Joseph Banks supported him, but Mr. Payne-Knight to the last believed in the antiquity of his Flora, and left it to the nation along with his other gems.

One of the choicest private collections of gems in Europe is that made originally by William, third Duke of Devonshire, during the first half of the eighteenth century. Successive owners have added, piece by piece, to this collection, and while most of the other large collections—Arundel, Bessborough, or Marlborough—have, one after the other, come under the auctioneer's hammer, the Devonshire gems still remain intact. The collection was lent to the South Kensington Museum for exhibition some few years ago.

A very interesting, and partly successful, attempt was made by the jeweller, Hancock, about 1855, to make up some of these gems into useful pieces of jewellery. Hancock is said to have had his choice of the stones, and to have been instructed to make a complete parure with them. The set was worn by the Countess of Granville, wife of the British Minister to the Court of Russia, and she wore them at the coronation of the Czar, Alexander II.

The centre-piece of the diadem is an exquisite antique cameo of Victory in her car. It is cut on an onyx, showing layers of grey, brown, and white, and in very low relief, owing to the thinness of the colour strata. An artist of the cinque-cento has cut a river god in cameo at the back of this gem, which is beautifully set in an enamelled Florentine edge. In the diadem also is a fine cameo portrait of Queen Elizabeth, set in its original gold enamelled locket form. At the back are two miniatures—one of the Queen, and the other of the Earl of

Leicester, both by Hilliard, the Royal miniature painter. The cameo is ascribed to "Coldoré" (Julien de Fontenay), who is known to have made portraits of Elizabeth for Henri IV. The beautiful setting of this gem, the design of which is sometimes attributed to Hilliard himself, has been taken as a theme for the setting of the whole diadem—gold, enamels, and brilliants.

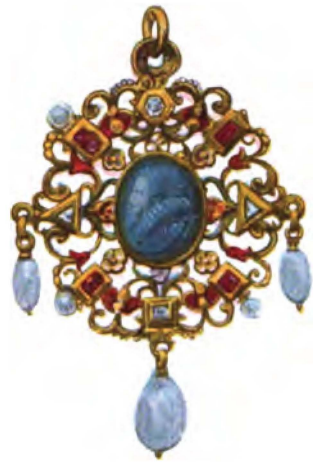
There are some fine antique cameos in the comb: one bears a head of Leander, another shows a Centaur with a Bacchante on his back, and a third, the finest of these, represents a Faun.

On the bandeau is a large emerald with a full-face head of Medusa, considered to be antique. Gems cut in this manner were most likely always intended to be worn on dress of some kind; if not on armour, like the phaleræ, they may have been used as ornamental fastenings.

The necklace alone has some resemblance to the manner in which small gems were probably worn in ancient times. It is a gold chain with pendants from it, alternately cameo and intaglio, and ancient necklaces of this kind have been found—there is one at Paris—and no doubt numbers of the small stones mounted as pendants were really set in the same way originally. Among the cameos on the necklace is another of Queen Elizabeth, also attributed to Coldoré, in high relief. There is a cameo portrait of Edward VI. on a fine sardonyx, and in the centre an antique head of Tiberius, with an Arabic inscription.

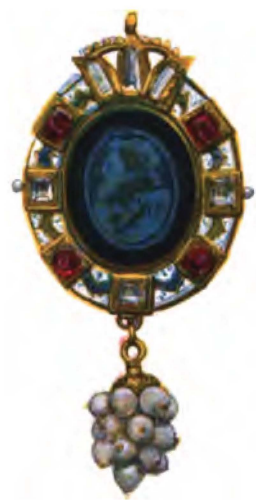
The stomacher has on it an antique cameo with a group, the subject of which is not known, and another of Clotho, and of Renaissance work, one of Europa, and another of Minerva; and on the bracelets are some more small cameos among the intaglios.

The collections made by Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, in the seventeenth century, and by William, second Earl of Bessborough, in the eighteenth century, were both acquired by George, fourth Duke of Marlborough, who added considerably to them himself. This collection was probably one of the most important ever brought together, and included several gems of world-wide renown. The collection was at first sold entire, but in June 1899 the gems were finally dispersed, several of the most famous pieces having been fortunately acquired by the nation, others going across to America, and a few going to enrich some of the private collections which still exist in England.



PORTRAIT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH
CUT IN A TURQUOISE,
PROBABLY FRENCH WORKMANSHIP.
IN ENGLISH GOLD, ENAMELLED
AND JEWELLED SETTING
AS A PENDANT.
16TH CENTURY.

In the Victoria and Albert Museum.



PORTRAIT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH
CUT IN A NICOLO, PROBABLY
FRENCH WORKMANSHIP.
IN ENGLISH GOLD, ENAMELLED
AND JEWELLED SETTING
AS A PENDANT.
16TH CENTURY.

In the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Besides the Devonshire collection, perhaps the two finest now in private hands in England are in the possession of Sir Francis Cook, at Richmond, and of Sir Charles Robinson, in Harley Street. Both these collectors have brought their gems together according to their own taste—they have not purchased any ready-made collection as an entire thing. Sir Charles Robinson is not only a large collector of works of art himself, but the nation is largely indebted to his taste and knowledge for the acquisition of numbers of art treasures now at the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington, with which he was for many years officially connected. Among Sir Francis Cook's collection are one or two remarkably fine antiques of large size, and an exquisite onyx cup.

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