



467. NUMISMATICS. Early Christian  
Numismatics, and other Antiquarian Tracts.  
By C. W. King. ILLUSTRATED. London, 1873.  
8vo, cloth, SCARCE. ....\$3.50

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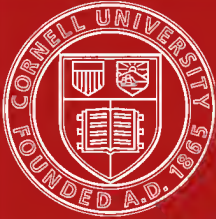
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# EARLY CHRISTIAN NUMISMATICS,

AND

## OTHER ANTIQUARIAN TRACTS.

BY C. W. KING, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF 'ANTIQUE GEMS,' ETC.



"Cæsaris vexilla linqunt, eligunt signum Crucis;  
Proque ventosis draconum quæ gerebant palliis,  
Eligunt insigne lignum quod Draconem subdidit."

PRUDENTIUS.

LONDON:

BELL & DALDY, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

A.262418

LONDON :

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS,  
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS



“ Constantine, decus mundi, lux aurea sæcli,  
Quis tua mixta canat mira pietate tropæa ! ”

OPTATIAN.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE little treatise which gives its title to the present volume originated in an application made to me by our Regius Professor of Divinity to point out to him any history of the introduction of Christian types upon the Roman coinage. The only book of that nature to which I was able to refer him was Dr. Walsh's brief essay 'On the Coins, &c. illustrating the Progress of Christianity in the Early Ages,' published so long ago as 1828; and which, so far as I have been able to ascertain, remains the only work in any language that takes for its exclusive subject this truly interesting and fertile province of Numismatics. But its errors and incompleteness rendered it a very unsatisfactory guide to the enquirer, who consequently was obliged to trace out for himself the progress of Christian

symbolism in coin-types by the aid of that invaluable, but, at the same time, bewildering, series, engraved by Bauduri in the plates to his 'Numismata Imp. Rom. a Trajano Decio usque ad Palæologos'; by hunting up amongst the multitude of reverses the dispersed examples that offered any indication of the nature sought for—a task of considerable labour.

Our repeated conversations upon various particulars in this research had the effect of turning my attention to the whole subject, and to the method in which it might most intelligibly and comprehensively be treated. Coins, especially Roman imperial, had always been a favourite study with me, and (as a matter of course with the English collector) those of the late period, supplying the information required, were those most abundantly brought under my notice through their perpetual disinterment in all parts of Britain.

The foundation for any treatise of the nature contemplated had been already laid by that *Coryphæus* of Christian archaeologists, the learned and laborious Father Garrucci. As it would be a mere impertinence in another to attempt to remodel what he has already done so perfectly in this line, I have commenced my work with a close translation of his memoir 'Des Signes de Christianisme qui se trouvent sur les Monnaies de Constantin, &c.' supplemented by notes and remarks suggested by my own experience as a collector, or by my reading in the authors of

the times with which we are concerned. Garrucci has confined his enquiry to the period of the *earliest* introduction of the badges of Christianity upon the coinage, and consequently it did not fall within his plan to carry the investigation farther down than the elevation of all the sons of Constantine to the rank of *Augusti*. Beyond that period, the absence of all competitors in the field has emboldened me to pursue the history down to the extinction of the last traces of the Roman Empire. “Dans le pays des aveugles le borgne est roi” is a maxim which will, I hope, secure a favourable reception for this first attempt. It is certainly most interesting to mark how the momentous change in religion shows itself in these impartial and imperishable records of their times—the coins of the empire—first by symbols sparingly and timidly introduced, mere accessories to old established types, then by allegories more plainly avowing the Faith, and lastly by direct representations of Divine personages, which finally banish every other decoration from the field. The study of these aids to history will probably inspire others, as it did myself, with a higher estimation of the character of the celebrated author of this revolution—a character to which moderns are inclined to do too little justice, by the natural revulsion from that extravagant praise of which for so many ages it had been the theme. These medals, with their modest and inobtrusive confessions of

faith, are in themselves the best testimony to the wisdom and moderation of their issuer in carrying out that mighty change to which he was urged by mature conviction of its necessity. But the first Christian Cæsar, bred up amidst trials and dangers of every sort, carried successfully through all by the support of men of every creed, and a true patriot above everything else, had fully obeyed the Apostle's precept, "to try all things, hold fast to that which is good." Before openly renouncing the religion of his fathers, he had carefully weighed the pretensions of the other novel doctrines then disputing men's minds with the Catholic, "cum limatius superstitionum quæreret sectas, *Manichæorum* et similium," as Ammian incidentally informs us, in a very remarkable passage (xv. 13). And when his decision was finally made, even then his consideration for the prejudices of others is manifest in his selection of coin-types in which no opinion could find reasonable grounds of offence. His "Invincible Sun," so acceptable to the numerous Mithraicists of the age, could not scandalise the equally numerous Christians, who easily recognised their own "Sun of Righteousness" in the allegory, as Chrysostom himself interprets the heathen title: his "Mars the Defender" expressed the military genius of the sovereign equally with the ancient patron deity of Rome; his other coin-devices are the emblems of "Glory," "Hope," "Tranquillity," and "Peace"—the unanimous aspi-

rations of every creed. Such wise impartiality in the all-powerful victor is the more to be admired when we take into consideration the insidious influence in the other direction, to which the declining years of his life were necessarily exposed—an influence the true spirit whereof is to be seen in the insulting and sanguinary laws on religion passed soon after by the priest-ridden Theodosius.

There is another pleasing feature in this investigation: these medallic records bear convincing testimony to the great emperor's love for the arts, although then so sadly on the wane. The large variety of the types on both sides, the ingenuity displayed in their conception, the even poetic feeling that manifestly inspired some in the list, the admirable workmanship of such whose intrinsic importance demanded special care (and which puts to shame the best productions of modern mints)—all combine to render the Constantinian series a garden of delight, and a refreshing halting-place for the numismatist about to plunge into the barbarism that speedily ensued.

The coins of the Lower and of the Byzantine empire, though generally with little to recommend them in the way of art, are yet interesting from the occasional gleams of taste discoverable in the invention of their types, but more instructive by their affording a faithful mirror of the transition in style and taste from the antique into the regular mediæval.

Their variations in workmanship curiously indicate the vicissitudes of the empire: they manifest the utter prostration of all things under the immediate successors of Justinian, and the sickly rejuvenescence of power and the arts under the influence of the Comneni. Of yet greater interest is it to observe how they become the models for the respective coinages of Europe whenever the different tribes of barbarian usurpers have settled down into any semblance of civilised life; and this consideration, if pursued by one better acquainted with Continental Numismatics than myself, would, as my own limited experience assures me, lead to very extensive results of much historical value.

To the discussion of Christian coin-types an appropriate supplement is found in the history of the *Medals* commemorating the Saviour Himself, and of the wondrous Emerald (fit comparison to the Sangraal) which they all claim for their ultimate source. These medals, ever and anon turning up to the bewilderment of all, to the deception of the unwary collector, and the immense profit of fraudulent dealers, were briefly treated of in my memoir "Upon the Vernicle of the Vatican," which dealt more particularly with the *pictures* and *engraved gems* of the like nature. The subject has now been rendered complete in all its bearings by the most obliging permission of Mr. Albert Way to supplement it with his essay on the medals specially considered—a tract full of that



immense and accurate research which characterises every one of his contributions to archæological knowledge.

The remaining essays completing the volume made their appearance at long intervals in the 'Archæological Journal.' Some amongst them met with considerable approbation at the time, and copies of them have frequently been solicited, long after my "short" supply of them was exhausted. I have therefore reasonable grounds to hope that their republication (with the large additions supplied by the intervening years) may be acceptable to such as take an interest in the matters of which they treat. They include, however, one newly written essay, that "On the Portraits of Commodus and Marcia," which was but lately suggested to me by discovering the existence of an intaglio (by means of a cast casually acquired), which readers qualified to judge will probably agree with myself in accepting for the key to a long disputed question in glyptic history.

Some excuse may perhaps be required for the number of notes appended to the text, many of which, as far as the subject is concerned, had more suitably been embodied in it. But the unexpected length of time occupied in getting this small number of sheets passed through the press has given space for the growth of a crop of "pensées d'escalier," which my readers, let me hope, will prefer having

out of their proper place to not having at all. In a science like archæology, based so largely upon materials supplied by the perpetual accidents of time and place, a field no sooner appears exhausted than fresh suggestions or discoveries necessitate the renewal or extension of one's previous labours.

C. W. KING.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE:

*January 1873.*



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## DESCRIPTION OF THE LITHOGRAPHS.

(All drawn to the actual size.)

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1.—Coin of Antoninus Pius. The Phoenix standing in its glory; with a legend **AIΩN**, “the Age (in which we live),” plainly setting forth the sense in which the device was to be taken. The letters **L-S** in the field give the date, the sixth year of the emperor’s reign, **L** being the ancient hieroglyph for “year.” This piece is the base billon (*potin*) of Alexandria, into which the Ptolemaic stater of silver had gradually degenerated. Its composition, in which the alloy so largely preponderates, supplied a curious simile to the late Egyptian author of the Gnostic Gospel, the ‘Pistis-Sophia,’ § 293:—“Now, therefore, my Lord, hear me: I will speak unto Thee four thoughts which have been caused in me. The first thereof is concerning the word which Thou spakest: Now therefore the Soul giveth in her defence and her seals unto all the Rulers that be in the regions of King Adamas; also the Soul giveth honour and glory unto all that pertain to the Kingdom of Light. Concerning the word, therefore, that Thou spakest unto us aforetime touching the *stater* (tribute-penny); when the stater was brought unto Thee, and Thou sawest that it was of silver and of brass, Thou didst ask: Whose is this image? and they said: It is of the king. But when Thou sawest that it was of *silver* and of *brass*, Thou saidest: Give the part which is the king’s unto the king, and the part which is God’s unto God.” (From the Lewis Collection.)

2.—Denarius of Salonina. The empress seated, holding forth the olive branch, symbol of pacification, and bearing the sceptre that indicates her dignity. The legend **AVGusta IN PACE** is explained at p. 48. My explanation is strongly corroborated by the letters **MS** in the exergue, hitherto unnoticed in the

descriptions of this type, and equally unknown to me at the time of writing it, the present specimen (which is fresh from the die) having subsequently come to my knowledge. Exergual mint-marks on the denarii were not invented before Diocletian's monetary reform; in the present case, therefore, these two letters must stand for some title, and "Memoriae Sanctae" not merely gives a most appropriate sense, but is supported by the **VN.MR**, "Venerandae Memoriae," upon the apotheosis coins of the first Christian *emperor*. (British Museum.)

3.—The Apotheosis of Constantine, described at p. 53. On another coin with the same obverse, the beatified emperor stands wrapped in his toga (probably a copy of his monumental statue), with the legend above-mentioned in the field. Third Brass from the Woodbridge find. (Lewis.)

4.—Second Brass of Constantius II., struck at Treviri; also a favourite reverse with his brother, Constans (p. 68). (Trinity College Library.)

5.—Third Brass of Constans, with the Phoenix on its funeral pyre (p. 67). (Trinity College Library.)

6.—Second Brass of Constantius II. (p. 65). Struck at Siscia; the numeral III in the field denotes its value. (British Museum.)

7.—Third Brass of Constantine; exhibiting the labarum (p. 41). From the Woodbridge find. (Lewis.)

8.—Second Brass of Magnentius with the "Chrisma," or Name of Christ in monogram (p. 69), proclaimed by the legend for "The Salvation of our lords, the Augustus and the Cæsar (Decentius)": struck at Treviri. (Trinity College Library.)

9.—Solidus of Ælia Flacilla, wife of Theodosius (p. 69). The **CONOB** in the exergue is the regular mark of the gold coinage of the period, and for many years subsequently, to denote the quality of the metal as "obryza," *refined*. The word is constantly used in the Byzantine laws as equivalent to our "standard currency." Its derivation is unknown, but I suspect

it to be Celtiberian, the source of many Roman terms connected with gold-mining. (Hunter Cabinet, Glasgow.)

10.—Solidus of Pulcheria (p. 69). The legend, "Votis vicenlibus, multis tricenalibus," announces the completion of twenty years of a reign, and the vows offered for the addition of another ten years to its duration. This refers to her brother Theodosius II., in whose name this princess really conducted the government. (Hunter.)

11.—Solidus of Petronius Maximus, displaying the orthodox Augustus "bruising the head" of the Old Serpent of heresy (p. 70). The **R.M.** in the field is the mint-mark of Rome. (Hunter.)

12.—Gold medallion of Basil the Macedonian, and his son Constantine VIII., associated. The reverse furnishes a very characteristic specimen of the "Rex Regnantium" portrait of the Saviour (p. 72). (British Museum.)

13.—Bezant of an emperor of Nicaea, whose name is lost through the faulty striking of the piece. The types are the Coronation of the Prince by the hand of the Virgin; and, for reverse, her Son enthroned, holding the book of the Gospels, and giving His benediction. The style exhibits the degradation to which monetary art had fallen by that time (thirteenth century), this piece being a fair example of its class. It may be mentioned here, for the benefit of the unlearned in these matters, that "bezant," from "Byzantinus," became the mediæval name for the gold of the Eastern Empire at the time when it constituted the only gold currency known in Europe—a period of nearly five hundred years. • "Solidus," *entire*, came to designate the principal gold piece after the later emperors had begun to issue largely its *halves* and *thirds* ("semisses," "trientes"), as a remedy for the ever-growing scarcity of silver. The bezant also went by the name of "Money of St. Helena," in virtue of the sacred portrait forming its regular impress. (Lee.)

## DESCRIPTION OF THE WOODCUTS.

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*Title-page.*—The Old Serpent, transfixed by the Banner of the Cross (p. 58), typifying, as the legend sets it forth, “The Public Hope.” Emblazoned on the banner, the practised and (what is greatly to the present purpose) *unprejudiced* eye of my draughtsman has distinguished the word **DEO** in what, upon the previously published specimen, appeared only three unmeaning circles. The appositeness of this inscription to the sense of the device gives the idea a still further claim to the praise I have already bestowed upon it, before this very interesting discovery was made. The head on the obverse presents the boyish, not to be mistaken, features of Constantine II., with title **CONSTANTINVS AVG.** This coin is the Wigan specimen (described at p. 25), and has recently passed into the very choice cabinet of Mr. Lewis, Fellow of Corpus Christi College. (Drawn to *twice* the actual size.)

*Page iii.*—Medallion of Constantine: gold, 125·7 grs., probably intended for a double *solidus*. Some numismatists wish to explain the uplifted face, the gesture of *adoration*, as one of *command*, and as a mere plagiarism from the copper coin of Alexander the Great, struck in Roman times; but the testimony of Eusebius, quoted at p. 54, is amply sufficient to establish the sense in which Constantine *designed* it to be received. One cannot help suspecting that it is actually this devout attitude of the Christian Augustus that Julian had in view when he pictures him as keeping his eyes fixed steadfastly upon the Moon, “of whom he seemed to be desperately enamoured” (p. 55). It is indeed possible this may only be a sneer at Constantine’s partiality for Byzantium, of which city the *Crescent* was the ancient cognisance; yet it is more probable the shaft was aimed at the religion he professed, and gloried in by representing himself



thus upon his finest coinage. Long before, the heathen had taunted the Jews with their "adoring nothing save the clouds, and the power of the heavens," and with their "wagging their long ears at the skies," as Juvenal and Petronius express it. And again, the scrupulous care displayed so conspicuously in the arrangement of Constantine's wavy *chevelure* in the portrait before us, and the extreme sumptuousness of the diadem with which it is encircled, go far to justify the satirical remarks of old Silenus in the text (p. 56) upon his coxcombry in that particular, and his womanish fondness for splendour in apparel.

The *technical execution* of this head is a lesson to every modern die-sinker; the relief is not too high for convenience in a current coin; the surface is kept quite flat, yet has all the forms modelled upon it with wonderful effect, in the style practised by our T. Simon in his portraits of Cromwell, the glory of the English mint, but which none of his successors there have had either the ability or the taste to copy. The weight of this piece exceeds that of our sovereign by no more than a couple of grains, yet how immeasurably superior is it in boldness and the expression of life! The execution of this medallion strikingly exemplifies, at the same time, a very curious anomaly in the history of Art. Although the *head* does not yield in any requisite quality to the finest of those that preceded it in the imperial series, yet the figure of the *Dea Roma* on the reverse is altogether out of drawing, and carelessly finished in the details. The same discrepancy between the heads and the full-length figures cannot fail to strike the intelligent numismatist as conspicuous in the coinage from Severus downwards. The ability for modelling portraits from the life seems to have survived at Rome, and even in the provinces (as the coins of the Gallic and British usurpers plainly manifest), long after figure-drawing had fallen into utter decay.

The mint-mark **S M N** shows this coin to be the production of the mint of Nicomedia, a favourite residence of Constantine. As Eusebius was bishop of that city, his testimony as to the significance of the gesture acquires still more weight, since from his position at court he must have been acquainted with all the circumstances of its emission.

The woodcut, as excellent a facsimile of an original as the art

has ever produced, is drawn to the actual size of the medallion, which belongs to the British Museum.

*Page x.*—Serapis, lord of the universe (see p. 105). Sardonyx, enlarged. (Wood.)

*Page 93.*—Shield-devices of the Constantiniani, copied from the picture of cohort-bearings preserved in the ‘*Notitia dignitatum utriusque Imperii.*’ This work, drawn up under Arcadius and Honorius, contains drawings of all such distinctive figures then used in the Roman army. They are highly interesting, as being regularly *heraldic* in their nature, showing rules based upon *tinctures* and *differences*, equally with variation in the actual figures: pointing out the real source of that science. The Christian meaning of the present device is placed beyond dispute by the appearance of a very similar one (but containing three doves only) in a Christian ring, figured by Fortnum in his curious and comprehensive essay on the subject, published in the ‘*Archæological Journal,*’ xxviii. p. 273.

*Page 94.*—The Douglas Vernicle (p. 97).

*Page 113.*—Clepsydra, of the primitive form, supported by two genii. Banded agate in the author’s collection, drawn to double the actual size.

*Page 122.*—Clepsydra, in its perfected state, furnished with dial-face and indicator. The quadrant placed on the top might lead us to suppose the instrument a common sun-dial, but the *dolphin*, which has the appearance of being so contrived as to mark the hour by its own progression, indubitably declares the *hydraulic nature* of the motive power. This instrument continued in use in the Roman law-courts so long as these courts continued to exist. Its employment there furnished that late poet, Symposius, with the subject of a very neat enigma:—

“ Lex bona dicendi, lex sum quoque dura tacendi;  
Jus avidæ linguæ, finis sine fine loquendi;  
Ipsa fluens dum verba fluunt, ut lingua quiescat.”

*Ænigm. lxx.*

But I strongly suspect that Haroun-al-Raschid’s “*horologium ex aurichalco*” (referred to at p. 119) was a true *wheel-clock*, set in motion by either a weight or a spring. The terms, “*arte*

*mechanica mirifice compositum,*' would hardly have been applied by Eginhard, a man of considerable education, to so old-fashioned a contrivance as a water-clock, the principle of which, moreover, is not properly described as a "mechanical contrivance." The Arab horologe, so wondered at by the receiver and his court, doubtless soon got out of order, without possibility of repair, and was forgotten in the dark and troublous times of Charlemagne's successors. (Drawn to double actual size, from one of Stosch's casts.)

Page 123.—Horse's Head, and Two Gallic Shields: device taken for his signet by Q. Cornelius Lupus. Sard in the Waterton Collection. (Drawn to double actual size.)

Page 129.—The Mars of Treviri: placed upon a Third Brass coin of Constantine, now in the collection of Mr. Lee. (Double of actual size.)

Page 130.—Combat between Romans and Gauls: a picture the genuine antiquity of which is established by the exact correspondence of its details with archæological facts only recently brought to light. The most striking of these is the peculiar sword in the hands of the Gaul, and his manner of using it, which so exactly illustrate my quotations in the text (p. 131). Such adherence to historical accuracy was totally unknown to the cinquecento artists (who alone could dispute this gem with the ancient); they would have equipped every barbarian alike with a regular Saracenic falchion. As there was always a significance in every particular of a gem-design, it is certain that the *duplication* of the two parties carried its meaning along with it to the contemporaries of the engraver. Hence we may safely conclude this subject to commemorate the triumph of the two Consuls with united forces over some confederation of as many Gallic tribes: examples of which are so common in the history of the Republic that it is impossible to signal out any particular one as the occasion of the monument before us. Sard, from the author's collection. (Drawn to double actual size.)

Page 149.—Primitive *Thorax*. (From Stosch's casts.)

Page 150.—The Laocoon Group, from a drawing made by Mr. A. Mulready upon the indications supplied by the Tywardreth seal. In an alternative sketch, in accordance with my own view

of the traces in the wax, he makes the second serpent attack the *throat* of the father, who is grasping it close to the head, exactly in the same way as he seizes the first serpent in the unrestored portion of the work. This action has two strong arguments in its favour: it is the natural one of a man attacked by biting animals to seize each by the throat in order to choke it off; and so is it invariably represented in that often repeated ancient subject, the Infant Hercules attacked by two serpents in his cradle. The law of symmetry is likewise more strictly observed by thus giving the same action to both hands of the father, whilst the sons are similarly experiencing one and the same fate, that of violent compression in the serpentine coils. The latter, it must be borne in mind, is the mode of death of the child Opheltes, another favourite scene with ancient artists; he is *pressed* to death, not *stung* by his assailant:

“Præcisum squamis avidus bibit anguis Opheltem,”

as Statius describes it. I am indebted to the kindness of Sir E. Smirke for the loan of this admirably executed cut, which was drawn under his direction to serve as an illustration to his supplementary notice of the Tywardreth seal published in the ‘Archæological Journal.’ I embrace this opportunity to add that an eminent sculptor, in a very recent conversation with me upon this gem, was of opinion that the first restorer of the arm misunderstood the original action fully as much as did Bernini, who erred in the opposite extreme. The arm drawn close to the face (as Montorsoli restored it) interferes with the effect of the head: the arm extended at full length (Bernini’s) is too weak, and inconsistent with the requirements of the material. The action given by the sculptor himself to the figure of Laocoon was that of *pushing* away the serpents with both hands, so that the right hand came almost on a level with the right breast, separated from it by the length of the fore-arm only. This action improved the massing of the group, and imparted yet greater energy to the dying struggles of the father.

Page 151.—The Laocoon Group, engraved in a gem used in sealing a deed belonging to Tywardreth Priory. (Drawn to twice the size of the original.)

Page 164.—Death of Laocoon, a facsimile of Bartoli’s copy of

the picture in the Codex Vaticanus of Virgil. These pictures are the most ancient examples of similar illustrations to a text that have yet been discovered: the excellence of their composition and the strictly classical character of all the adjuncts and costumes prove to the experienced archæologist that they cannot have been *designed* (and, to all appearance, *executed*) later than the close of the second century. To give a single but most convincing argument. In the MS. illuminations dating from the Lower Empire, like the Codex Romanus (the pictures from which also Bartoli has engraved in the same work), the warriors are always figured according to the Frankish equipment, which was identical with the Anglo-Saxon. They wear no body-armour, but have the "Phrygian" leathern cap, and round shield with large conical *umbo*. But the Vaticanus exhibits them covered with the classical *thorax*, and carrying the long flat oval shield ornamented with legionary devices, and the *Athenian* metal helmet on their heads—the exact counterparts of the soldiers on the triumphal arches and columns. Again, the *temples*, wherever introduced with the details of their decoration, ceremonies, and sacrifices, are pictured with a certainty and intelligence that breathe of a period when the ancient worship was still in its full glory.

This picture, in the original, includes two scenes. In that on the left hand, it shows the temple of Neptune, and Laocoon standing at the altar in front of it, making ready to sacrifice the young steer, as the poet describes him, whilst in the distance the twin serpents are perceived ploughing their way towards him over the deep. The other episode is the one represented in my woodcut, with only the omission of the background.

*Page 171.*—The Laocoon Group, from an admirable gem-copy by a cinquecento artist. The right arm of the father, it will be noticed, is considerably more elevated above his head than upon the Tywardreth seal; and this action most probably represents that in the then existing restoration by Montorsoli. An architectural background is introduced, in accordance with the taste of that age. This is the gem of the French cabinet published by Mariette as an undoubted antique—a circumstance which has at least the value of proving that it was no recent addition to the collection. (Drawn to double the actual size.)

*Page 222.*—Celt of Green Jade, engraved on both sides with Gnostic inscriptions. The upper figure shows the actual dimensions of the stone, the lower is considerably magnified for the sake of rendering the minute legends more conveniently legible. I have to express my gratitude to the Council of the Archaeological Institute for the loan of these cuts, as well as those of the medals inserted at pp. 286, 302.

*Page 263.*—Niobe attempting to shield the last of her sons from the shafts of Apollo the Destroyer (see remarks at p. 166). This design, which belongs to the archaic period of gem-engraving, has all the appearance of a copy from some celebrated piece of statuary of still earlier date. The subject formed one of the regular decorations for temples of Apollo. Propertius, describing the dedication by Augustus of the “*Aurea Phœbi porticus*,” calls Cynthia’s particular attention to the folding-doors as “a splendid work in Libyan ivory: the one pictured the Gauls beaten down from the summit of Parnassus (when they attempted to plunder Delphi); the other deplored the slaughtered children of the daughter of Tantalus.” (Black agate, drawn to double the actual size: Demidoff Collection.)

*Page 265.*—Heads of Hercules and Omphale (or Commodus and Marcia in those characters), united in a Janus bust. The novel conceit suggests of itself the character of a “*strenæ*” in the gem, so appropriate is it to a present intended for the Calends of the “*Deus Bifrons*.” (Drawn to double the actual size from the cast of a gem formerly in the Hertz Collection.)

*Page 286.*—Large Brass Medal, belonging to the King’s Cabinet in the British Museum.

*Page 302.*—Medal of white bell-metal, resembling silver, in the collection of Mr. Albert Way. Specimens of this medal are known to me that retain traces of thick gilding, which may account for Hottinger’s assertion of their existence in *gold*.

*Page 324.*—The Good Shepherd, carrying the Lost Sheep on his shoulders, according to the usual type, but with the unusual addition of the *Chrisma*, twice repeated, in the field; with the

object of more clearly setting forth the meaning of the allegory. But the special interest of this intaglio (one much superior in execution to its class) lies in the fact of its proceeding from the North of India, and the probability of its being a memorial of the Christianity anciently planted in that region. Colonel Pearse, who has recently added this treasure to his large and unique collection of Indian glyptics, informs me that he has come upon vestiges of the religion, to be recognised unmistakably by the peculiar orientation of its burial-places, in provinces (near Ramalcandy, for instance) very remote from the Malabar coast, to which its planting, according to common supposition, was confined. (Sard, drawn to double the actual size.)

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### CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

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*Title-page.*—The actual coin has traces of an A in the field, under the P of SPES: probably a mint-mark, for which no room was left in the exergue. The vertical line of the Monogram also has a portion of the curve completing the letter.

*Page 62, line 16,* for “an X” read “a X” (Greek).

*Addition to Note at page 305.*—Since this Note was printed, I have met with a fact that completely settles the question of the ownership of the type, reading SECVRITAS REIPVBLICÆ. It occurs on coins of Helena struck at the London mint; which mint was given up before the dedication of Constantinople, A.D. 330. See De Salis' memoir on “Roman Coins struck in Britain,” in the ‘Archæological Journal,’ xxiv. 149.





## EARLY CHRISTIAN NUMISMATICS.

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SIGNS OF CHRISTIANITY FOUND UPON THE MEDALS  
OF CONSTANTINE AND HIS FAMILY,  
WITH A CONTINUATION ON THEIR DEVELOPMENT  
UNDER HIS SUCCESSORS.<sup>1</sup>

ON the 6th of the calends of November (October 27th), A.D. 312—all historians are agreed upon this point—Constantine, under the protection of the Cross, succeeded in destroying Maxentius in the vicinity of the Milvian Bridge, and made his triumphal entry into Rome, where he caused himself to be represented with this victorious emblem in his hand. “Constantine was admonished in a dream to paint on his soldiers’ shields the heavenly sign of God, and so to give battle. He does as he is commanded, and with the letter X placed transversely, having one extremity bent round, he marks their shields with Christ. Armed with this sign, his army draws the sword.” This is the express statement, in the very words, of Lactantius, preceptor to the emperor’s eldest son, and very probably an eye-witness of the fact (‘De Mort.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Des signes de Christianisme qui se trouvent sur les monnaies de Constantin et de ses fils, avant et après la mort de Licinius. Par R. Garucci.’—*Revue Numismatique* for 1866.

Persec.' c. 44). From that moment no doubt can exist as to Constantine's public profession of faith in the doctrines of Christianity. No obstacle, therefore, could intervene to prevent the engraving upon the coinage and even on the armour of the emperor, the figure of the cross, and Christian monograms.

It is not to be supposed that the association in the imperial dignity of Licinius, who was a pagan, had the power to deter him from such public profession, since from that time forwards the two princes came to an agreement to protect the Christians; they sanctioned the religion, and gave orders that these should be suffered to practise it without molestation, and publicly. From such a disposition the natural result was that they should be pleased to grant their sanction to the outward symbols of a religion which they had recognised as lawful, in order that the Almighty God to whose favour they ascribed their empire and their victory might not be incensed against them, but rather vouchsafe them the continuance of his protection and favour. It is in the first-mentioned sense that Constantine wrote to Elaphius: "The Supreme Deity might be moved to anger against myself, to whom by his heavenly will he hath granted the government of all earthly things." In the second sense are the directions of Licinius to the governors of Bithynia: "So that the divine protection over us, which we have experienced on so many and important occasions, may continue through all time with our own prosperity to the public welfare." A little before, he had used the terms, "That the Supreme Deity may in all matters show us his accustomed favour and good will."

We know still further that after having conquered Maximinus in 313 he returned thanks to God, to whom he acknowledged himself indebted for the victory: "Licinius upon his return to Nicomedia returned thanks to God, through whose aid he had conquered." In the same strain, in the inscription placed upon his triumphal Arch, Constantine declares that he had been stirred up by God to deliver the senate and Roman people from the tyrant and his accomplices: "Quod instinctu Divinitatis . . . tam de tyranno quam de omni ejus factione uno tempore justis rempublicam ultus est armis." Whether the *Divinity* in question were the true God of the Christians or the deity invoked by the pagans makes absolutely no difference in the matter, for in either case the Christian symbols that represent the Divinity were equally sanctioned, and that by the two Augusti. As far as Constantine is concerned, a private motive rendered him disposed to favour these ideas, and this motive was his own conversion to Christianity—a conversion which had been prepared by his mysterious vision, confirmed by the Cross which he had taken for his banner, through the power whereof he had gained his triumph, and which the senate, according to the account of Prudentius, consented to adore:

. . . . "tunc ille senatus  
Militis illustris titulum Christique verendum  
Nomen adoravit quod collucebat in armis."

In addition to this, it appears to me that the fact of the *interposition of the Deity*, which the emperor admits in order to give lustre to his victory, is far


from being an unimportant circumstance ; it is a thing without precedent in all the honorific inscriptions engraved previously to his reign ; for it is as a matter of course the *emperors* and not the *Deity* whom we see glorified in such inscriptions ; it is to them that the victories are attributed, whereas in the present case all the glory of it is referred to God, who has guided, stirred up, and directed the emperor. This is a confession altogether in the Christian style, and in the same spirit as that which Constantine ordered to be engraved upon the base of his statue.<sup>1</sup> Lactantius, living at the time of these events, expresses the same idea when he calls this triumph and this victory the triumph and the victory of God : “ Let us therefore celebrate the triumph of God with rejoicing, the victory of the Lord with frequent praises.” And before this he had used the words, “ For God raised up princes who should destroy the wicked and bloody rule of the tyrants, and should provide for the welfare of the human race.”<sup>2</sup>

After having made these preliminary remarks to explain the dispositions of the two emperors Constantine and Licinius, I shall proceed to the description of the coins bearing their images, and those of their


<sup>1</sup> Euseb. ‘Hist. Eccl.’ ix. 9. To be given in another place, where the erection of this statue is discussed.

<sup>2</sup> The scarcity of the coins with this religious badge, and the very limited number of the mints producing them, show that the introduction of this profession of faith was due to the zeal of individual mint-masters, or even die-sinkers, who ventured upon taking such liberties, though only with the currency of the populace. Their zeal was more tempered by discretion than that of the unlucky Dracontius, who was killed by the Alexandrians for pulling down an altar which had been *recently* (i.e. on the news of Julian’s accession) erected in the mint of which he was master (Ammian. xxii. 11).


sons, upon which we meet with the symbols of the Christian faith.

**1. IMP. CONSTANTINVS AVG**—Bust armed with cuirass, the head covered with a helmet, in the middle of which is a broad band, upon which appears in relief the monogram  between two stars; upon the right shoulder a spear, on the left arm a shield, upon which is figured a horseman, who transfixes with his lance a barbarian prostrate at his feet.

*Rev.* **VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC. PERP**—Two Victories supporting a shield placed on a pedestal; on the shield **VOT. PR**, on the pedestal **1**; in the exergue **B. SIS**. This medal was first published by Angelo Beneventano, in whose possession it was at the time. Afterwards it passed into the hands of Fulvius Ursinus, where Baronius having seen it caused it to be engraved for his ‘*Annales Ecclesiastici*,’ an. 312, p. 510. A similar specimen has been inserted by Sada in his ‘*Dialoghi dell’ Agostini*,’ p. 17. Tanini possessed a third example in his own cabinet; and a fourth came to the knowledge of Garonni, who gives an engraving of it in the ‘*Museum Hedervar*,’ Nos. 3996, 3971. These authors are all agreed as far as relates to the type and the description, excepting that Sada omits the **IMP**, and prints **PRINCI**; whilst Garonni leaves out the **VOT**; but as to the monogram between two stars there is no diversity either in description or drawing. In spite of all this, there is room for believing that the monogram is not composed of **X** and **P**, but rather of **X** and **1**, with a little dot on the extremity or at the side of the **1**, a mark which

modern authors, as well as their predecessors, are in the habit of figuring in the form of the equivalent character **P**. I have cited here no more than the actual testimony of writers who had the medal before their eyes, omitting all those who merely describe it upon their authority. Of less rarity is the medal which bears types almost the same, but differing in one point, which is that the monogram is engraved upon the globose part of the helmet, whilst upon the band in the centre appears the crescent of the moon,<sup>1</sup> accompanied by a few dots, or else the dots alone, placed one over the other. The monogram is represented by the older numismatists as well as by the modern under the form of , which is not quite correct.



The following is the description of the two best preserved specimens of this type that have come to my own knowledge.

2. **IMP. CONSTANTINVS AVG.**—Bust armed with cuirass, with shield decorated with the horseman overthrowing a barbarian, spear upon the shoulder, and helmet with the double monogram  upon the convex part; the lunar crescent and a single dot upon the band in the middle.

*Rev.* **VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC. PERP**—Two Victories holding up a shield, placed upon a pedestal; upon the shield the legend **VOT. PR**; on the pedestal the letter **X** in relief; in the exergue **B. SIS.** (Paris, *Cabinet des médailles*).

<sup>1</sup> Which well illustrates the joke of Julian, quoted further on, about his uncle's extraordinary affection for that luminary. The dots are intended for *stars*.

In a second specimen, struck at another mint, the emperor's bust is clad in the *paludamentum*; and on the reverse the pedestal is decorated with a festoon; in the exergue we read **TT**. In this example the monogram is more distinctly figured.


Upon another die from the same mint, bearing **ST** in the exergue of the reverse, the distinction is clear and striking between the monogram  and the star .

Eusebius ('Vit. Const.' 31) assures us that Constantine was accustomed to wear the monogram engraved upon his helmet, and the medal before us comes to confirm and put out of doubt what the historian records. No other emperor, we are certain, ever wore a helmet decorated in the same manner.

The coins of Constantine having for reverse the two Victories and the legends **VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC. PERP.** and **VOT. PR.** are followed by those both of himself and of his two sons, Crispus and Constantine the Younger, which bear the same type, and have a cross with four equal arms engraved upon the pedestal on the reverse. The following is their description:—

3. **CONSTANTINVS MAX. AVG.**—Head to the right, covered with a helmet adorned with a laurel wreath.

*Rev.* **VICTORIAE LAITAI** (*sic*) **PRINC. PERP.**—The two Victories as before; upon the pedestal a cross with four equal arms; in the exergue **ST**. (In the possession of Depoletti, dealer in antiquities, Rome.)

This cross is widened at the four extremities, thus , as in the specimen in the museum of Bologna. Upon another example, described by Father Hardouin, instead of **ST** we read **PT**. From this piece again differs the one described by Muselli, which bears **TT** in the exergue. Father Hardouin publishes two additional examples, the first of them from the mint of Arles, **P. ARL**; the second from the London mint, **P. LN**. Upon this last piece the title **IMP** on the obverse is wanting. Another specimen presenting a different bust on the obverse is described by Tanini (p. 267), the legend is **CONSTANTINVS AVG**; and the emperor is shown armed with the spear, cuirass, and shield. On the reverse we read **PR** on the votive shield, and **ST** in the exergue.

4. **D. N. CRISPO NOB. CAES.**—Head to the right.

*Rev.* **VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC. PERP.**—Two Victories supporting a shield engraved with **VOT. PR** above a pedestal, upon which is inscribed a cross with four equal arms. (Tanini, p. 283.)

5. **FL. CL. CONSTANTIVS IVN. N. C.**—Radiated bust to the right in the *paludamentum*.

*Rev.* Type as before. In the exergue **P. LN**. (Tanini, p. 289.)

The Abbé Cavedoni is of opinion that this type is anterior to the year 330, and probably even to the year 326; since it is found upon many coins with the portrait of Crispus. Since then, the same critic has come over to my opinion, and throws back its date even earlier than the year 323, on account of the non-appearance of the same type in the mintage of Con-



stantius Cæsar ; a peculiarity to which I have already called attention in my ' Numismatica Constantiniana.'

The pieces of the following series are almost all of them unpublished ; as I had figured (in the work just quoted) no more than the single medal of Constantine the Great ; and given the descriptions of only those of his two sons, Crispus and Constantine, of which I now subjoin the copies ; and in addition, those of the two Licinii, father and son, which were totally unknown up to the present time.

6. **CONSTANTINVS AVG.**—Busts to the right, armed with cuirass and helmet.

*Rev.* **VIRTVS EXERCIT.**—Two captives at the foot of a standard upon which is read **VOT. XX** ; to the left the monogram, with a dot at the upper end of the vertical bar ; in the exergue **A. SIS.** (Kircherian Museum.)

7. **IMP. LICINIVS AVG.**—Bust, slightly bearded, to the right, armed with cuirass and helmet.

*Rev.* **VIRTVS EXERCIT.**—Standard bearing the inscription **VOT. XX**, on each side a captive in a different posture, on the left the monogram ; in the exergue **TSA.** (Paris.)

8. **LICINIVS IVN. NOB. C.**—Laureated bust to the left, holding in his hand a Victory perched upon the globe.

*Rev.* Standard bearing the words **VOT. XX**, at its foot two captives ; on the left the monogram as in No. 6 ; in the exergue **TT.** (Depoletti.)

9. **CRISPVS NOB. CAES.**—Laureated bust, seen from the back, turned to the left, with the shield and spear.

*Rev.* **VIRTVS EXERCIT.**—Standard with the words **VOT. XX** between two captives; to the right the monogram as in No. 6; in the exergue **AQT.** (Paris.)

10. **CONSTANTINVS IVN. NOB. C.**—Laureated bust to the left, with cuirass and *paludamentum*, and holding in the right hand a Victory perched on the globe, and something, perhaps a precious stone, in the two fingers of the left hand. [It is evident that the young Cæsar is merely resting his hand upon one of the studs of his breastplate, a conventional attitude clearly exemplified in the figure of Drusus upon the ‘Gemma Augustea.’]

*Rev.* **VIRTVS EXERCIT.**—Standard with the words **VOT. XX** between two captives: on the left the monogram as in No. 6; in the exergue **ST.** (In the Lovatti cabinet.)

Upon another almost identical specimen in the Firrao cabinet, we read in the exergue **TSB.** Compare Muselli (tab. ccl. 5), who cites in error Beger and Hardouin, neither of whom have described any piece of Constantine the Younger that bears the monogram.

This type is prior to the year 323, because the two Licinii have employed it, and because it is wanting in the entire monetary series of Constantius Cæsar. It is to the year 317, when the two emperors gave the title of Cæsar to their sons Crispus, Constantinus Junior, and Licinius Junior, that the mintage of the coins with the standard or *Labarum* ought to be referred (vid. De Witte, ‘Rev. Num.’ for 1839, p. 156).

To the foregoing series we must join the following four types:—

11. **CONSTANTINVS P. F. AVG.**—Laureated bust with the cuirass.

*Rev.* **MARTI CONSERVATORI**—The same bust, armed in the cuirass, to the right, having the helmet decorated with the monogram. (Tanini, p. 271.)

12. **IMP. CONSTANTINVS P. F. AVG.**—Laureated bust to the right.

*Rev.* **MARTI CONSERVATORI** — Mars nude, standing, armed with spear and shield ; on the right in the field a cross, having four equal arms ; to the right a star ; in the exergue **P. T.** (Garonni, ‘Ragguaglio d’un Viaggio in Barbaria,’ ii. p. 189 ; where by mistake he has figured on the obverse **PP**, which he transcribes in his text as **PF**.) Hardouin gives for the legend on the obverse, **IMP. C. CONSTANTINVS P. F. AVG.**

13. **IMP. CONSTANTINVS P. F. AVG.**—Laureated head to the left.

*Rev.* **MARTI PATRI CONSERVATORI** — Mars nude, standing, with helmet and spear, and leaning on a shield adorned with the monogram, as in No. 6. In the field, to the right **A**, to the left **S** ; in the exergue **PTR**. (Tanini, p. 269.) But the writer has here confounded two different pieces.

14. **IMP. C. CONSTANTINVS P. F. AVG.**—Laureated head to the right.







*Rev.* **SOLI INVICTO COMITI** — Nude figure, crowned with rays, with the chlamys fastened upon the right shoulder, and wrapped about the left arm, the face looking upwards, the right hand raised, and the globe in the left. In the field to the left the monogram **\*** ; in the exergue **R.P.** (Lovatti cabinet.)




15. **IMP. CONSTANTINVS P. F. AVG.** — Lau-  
reated bust to the right, with the cuirass and *paluda-*  
*mentum*.





*Rev.* **SOLI INVICTO COMITI** — Nude figure  
crowned with rays, with the *pallium* rolled about the  
arm, the globe in his left hand, the right elevated and  
turned towards the east; in the field to the left a  
cross, widening at the extremities, to the right a star;  
in the exergue **TT**. (Garucci.)

Sometimes this cross is placed within a laurel wreath,  
and the exergue reads **QQ**. A specimen in my own  
possession bears **PT** in the exergue. If these coins  
are, on the one side, later than the year 312, on the  
other they must be earlier than the year 323, for the  
sufficient reason that none of the sort belong to Con-  
stantius Cæsar. As to the type of the “Invincible  
Sun,” since it is not to be found on the coins of  
Licinius Junior, we must conclude that it was revived  
several times at that period; the first time for the  
two Augusti, Constantine and Licinius; the second  
for the family of Constantine alone. This emperor  
must have struck the coins with the type of the Sun  
after the year 319, when dissension had broken out  
between the two families, a dissension which speedily  
ended in open war.

I would like now to make some remarks upon the  
different symbols which have been passed in review in  
describing the coins of Constantine the Great, Licinius,  
and the three Cæsars, Crispus, Constantinus Junior,  
and Licinius Junior—symbols which we shall again  
meet with upon other coins. I will begin by acknow-  
ledging that although these symbols, as far as regards

their *material form*, were not invented by the Christians, they nevertheless received at this time a new signification, and which became their proper one; and everybody agrees in giving them this peculiar signification when they occur in the coinage of Constantine. In fact, coins of the Ptolemies are known bearing the monogram ; also those of Herod the Great struck forty years before our era, with this other form of the monogram . Similarly the monogram formed out of the **I** and **X** is figured on the denarius of L. Lentulus, flamen of Mars, with the portrait of Julius Cæsar, in which situation it represents the star of Venus, *Julium sidus* ; and another  is figured in the same manner upon some medals of the kings of the Bosphorus, for instance on those of Sauromates, Rescuporis, &c., ; although the asterisk, or star, is commonly figured like the *sigla* , which amongst the Romans served to indicate the denarius.

The letter *chi*, **X**, traversed by a line or bar placed vertically, and terminated at the upper end by a circle, , or by a small dot, , may be compared with the *sigla* , which denotes, it is supposed, the commander of a thousand men—*χιλίαρχος*; and which, crossed by a horizontal bar, makes its appearance on some coins of the Ptolemies.

As for the cross with the four equal arms, the most ancient example, and which at the same time approximates the most closely to it in form, is furnished by a statue in the British Museum, found at Nineveh, and which carries this sign  suspended from the neck.<sup>1</sup> At a later date we find a cross formed of simple lines, , and sometimes accompanied with globules, or dots, , upon the painted vases; symbols having perhaps for their origin the mark  (fylfot), often employed in antiquity as the sign of Safety. Sometimes these different kinds of cross are meant for nothing more than a star; for example, upon the complete series of the coins of Eugubium; where it is accompanied with the lunar crescent; and again, over the heads of the Dioscuri upon an antique mirror and on the consular denarii.

A similar cruciform intention is observable upon a coin of Cossutius Meridianus, a moneyer of Julius Cæsar's, who writes his own name in the form of a cross, apparently in allusion to the star Venus.<sup>2</sup> The same motive for imitating the shape of the cross or star may have influenced the similar disposition of the names on certain terra-cotta vases:

<sup>1</sup> This "Maltese cross" figured as a four-rayed star is the proper symbol of Shamas, the Assyrian sun-god; as the eight-rayed star is of his consort Gula.

<sup>2</sup> Much more probably in allusion to the "noonday sun" that gave him his cognomen, through that fondness for the rebus so conspicuous in the mintage of the times. A striking example is the moon and the seven stars upon the coinage of Fulcinus Trio.

SE  
SOTER  
ST

LT  
CRVSANTVS  
TTI



Sempronius Hieron, who worked for the Twenty-second Legion quartered in Upper Germany, had the same intention when he stamped upon the bricks of his manufacture the inscription in form of a cross :

LEGXXIIPF  
SEMPRON

And it is a mistake to discover in the inscriptions thus arranged a profession of Christianity made by the whole legion, an assertion controverted by the pagan monuments raised by the soldiers of the very same legion. Some have wished to interpret **LEGXXIIPF** ("legio xxii. primigenia pia felix") by *legio xxii. pristina fidelis*, by changing the letters **PPF** into **PRF**. But these letters, any more than the standard on which they are emblazoned, cannot be regarded as symbols of a religion. I do not however pretend to deny that in the first ages of Christianity, people did occasionally write their names in the figure of a cross, and in proof I will cite a square seal of bronze, recently found at Terracina, reading "Furco vivas :"

FVRCOVI  
VACOVI

To the same sign is allied the letter *Tau* of the Aramean alphabet, to which the cross was likened even in Origen's times ('Comment. in Ezechiel,' ix. 4).

Notwithstanding the acquaintance the ancients had with these forms of the cross, employed either as groups of letters or as symbols, people generally accept as evidences of his Christianity the monograms and crosses which appear on the coins of Constantine. The manner of figuring these asterisks, or stars, upon all the medals of that epoch is altogether different from that previously used; for these stars are placed at the side of the monograms and at the side of the crosses, and the examples I have figured in my plates are sufficient to prove this. As for the examples above quoted from the medals of the kings of the Bosphorus, they can hardly modify this manner of considering the question, they being simply isolated instances, due either to accident or to the carelessness of the engravers of the dies, and generally the crosses seen upon them have the transverse bar drawn either horizontally or obliquely, thus ; whereas in our monograms of Christ this bar is vertical, . It follows from this

unvarying arrangement of the lines in the monograms upon the medals of the period of Constantine that we reasonably draw the conclusion that the lines were so disposed *intentionally*, and not for the purpose of representing *stars*, which also are to be seen upon coins of the same epoch traced in the shape which is usually given them. As soon as we admit that these signs or symbols are tokens of Christianity, it follows that we



must equally recognise as crosses and monograms of Christ the same symbols when they accompany the figures of *Mars Conservator* and the *Sol invictus*, although this appears to Tanini a monstrous confusion, and Eckhel finds in it a proof of what slight aversion Constantine entertained for pagan ideas. In my 'Numismatica Constantiniana' I have endeavoured to prove that the types of Jupiter and Hercules are anterior to the date of Constantine's conversion, because none of the coins bearing these types give him the title of "Maximus," which was only bestowed upon him by the senate in the year 315,<sup>1</sup> the tenth of his reign. And as regards the medals of his sons Crispus and Constantinus Junior, bearing the same types, I have equally endeavoured to show that these figures must not be attributed to their father, inasmuch as they were struck in the mints of the East, that is, in the provinces subject to Licinius. There therefore only remain the medals with Mars and the Sun, which are evidently posterior to the victory at the Pons Milvius, because we find on them the title of "Maximus," and some bear the date of the fourth consulship of Constantine, and even present the symbols of Christianity.

I will not undertake to seek for excuses for this conduct of the emperor, but it seems to me that types of the sort are rather evidences of his *vanity* than of his *superstition*. In reality there can be no doubt that this Mars represents the *emperor* himself, for Constantine has substituted his own portrait for the head of

<sup>1</sup> This is a mistake, the title must have been given him during his sojourn at Rome after the victory, for it is inscribed on his triumphal Arch.

the god Mars; and the same also must be recognised in that of the Sun, for Zonaras records that when he transported the statue of Apollo from Ilium to his new capital he changed the name, substituting for it his own. In the latter historian the MSS. give the reading 'Ιλίου, but Lambeccius corrects it into 'Ηλιου̇, because in the Chronicle of Julius Pollux we read, ὄπερ χαλκούργημα ἠγάγευ ἐκ τῆς 'Ηλιονπόλεως οὐσης τῆς Φρυγίας. Du Cange has, "Zonaras and others say it was a statue of Apollo that Constantine transported from Heliopolis of Phrygia into his new capital, for that emperor appears on some of his medals under the form of Apollo, with the legend **CLARITAS REIPUBLICAE.**" But the town of Heliopolis in *Phrygia* is totally unknown, whence it may be conjectured that the identity of sound in the letters η and ι has led to the mistake in Pollux.<sup>1</sup>

From the above quoted passage we can understand the purport of the legend **SOLI INVICTO AETERNO AVG** inscribed around the quadriga of Phoebus upon a medal of Constantine. This is the reason why certain of his medals bring him into connection with the Sun god, who receives the title of "Companion of the Emperor"—**COMES AVG.** His panegyrists equally compare him to the Sun, and particularly Porphyrius, who says in his 4th book,

"Constantine, decus mundi, lux aurea sæcli,"

And in his 17th gives again to him the epithet of

<sup>1</sup> Calvert excavated the tumulus called the Tomb of Priam at Balli-dagh, the supposed site of Ilium, and found it enclosed a construction of dry stones fourteen feet square, and resting on the natural rock, which he justly supposes was made for a foundation to the pedestal of a colossus. ('Archæol. Journal,' xxi. p. 48.)

“*lux aurea mundi;*” and elsewhere of “*lux pia terrarum,*” and “*lux unica mundi.*”

In the same strain Eusebius compares Constantine to the sun: “Constantine with the rising sun making his appearance out of the palace, ascending as it were in company with that luminary in the heavens, . . . shone forth out of his own excellence.”—*Hist. Eccl.* x. 9. Lactantius also, on his side, compares Constantine to the sun, where he writes: “In the course of time the cloud was dispelled and the longed-for light shone forth.”—*De M. P.* 1. An inscription at Cirta, dedicated to Constantine by a governor of Numidia, repeats the same allegory: “*Qui libertatem tenebris servitutis oppressam (nova) luce illuminavit.*”

From these evidences, coupled with the examples derived from the medals, it is permissible to suppose that Constantine took a pleasure in allowing himself to be styled the Sun, and the “Light of the world;” and that he felt a pride in these appellations, but not that he paid worship to the solar god.

The Abbé Cavedoni gives his support to what has been said with respect to the types of Jupiter and Hercules; to which must be added the type of Mars, which cannot be separated from them, for a piece is known bearing this latter type on which Constantine takes the title of “Maximus,” and because, upon some other examples of the same reverse, the Christian symbols are met with. But these exceptions do not serve to upset what I have said upon the public profession of his Christianity made by Constantine, for it is not the pagan deity that is found represented upon these coins, but, beyond all mistake, the emperor with

his well-known features substituted for the god Mars. I do not wish to excuse, on the contrary I condemn, the legend "Marti Conservatori;" and in my opinion Constantine did better, when, at a later period, he substituted for it the legend "Virtus," which likewise accompanies the type of Mars, symbolising military valour; and which is found not only upon his medals and those of his son Crispus, but even on those of Constantius II. Augustus. But I must protest against the charge of an act of which Constantine has been accused by some writers.

The case is this; Guattani, writing in 1789 ('*Mon. antichi di Roma,*' p. xciv., and again in his '*Roma descritta,*' p. 42), on the subject of the inscription upon the triumphal Arch dedicated to Constantine not earlier than the year 315, remarks: "Observe that in this inscription, where we read **INSTINCTV DIVINITATIS**, the surface of the marble is lower, and the hollows of the letters confused, which indicates the previous existence of other letters in their place; it is supposed that there had been inscribed **DIS FAVENTIBVS**, an expression more in character with the polytheism of the Romans." Some have likewise asserted with the same audacity that clear traces are discernible of a previous inscription, which should have been **NVTV I. O. M.** But at present there is no necessity for our troubling ourselves with theories of this sort, since we have had a close view of this portion of the inscription, of which a cast in plaster has been taken at my request by the Cav. P. Rosa; with the long dissertation subsequently published on the subject ('*Bull. dell' Inst. Arch.*' 1863-4, pp. 183,


156). Besides, in 1856, after my return from Paris, I had been able to certify myself by the simple inspection of the monument, that the marble was not more cut away or lowered in that place than in any other, neither are the hollows of the letters disposed in a confused manner, as Guattani pretends, and that no traces are to be discovered of other letters previously engraved there.

And now, to resume my subject, I will say that however blameworthy was Constantine for permitting himself to be represented under the form of Mars, or of the Sun-god, and to receive the titles of the "Sun," and "Light of the World," yet it is impossible not to recognise regular crosses and monograms of Christ engraved upon the very same medals, as described above; these symbols even make their appearance upon his coins before he had got rid of his colleague; and for this series we have only to recollect the argument already advanced, which is, that these types are entirely wanting in the series of his son, Constantius Cæsar.



After the coins minted before the year 323, a series which I have just reconstructed, in opposition to the opinion of the early and the recent numismatists, and which ascends up to the first years of Constantine's conversion, I shall proceed to describe those which are later than the year 323, that is to say, those which were struck after the death of Licinius.

**16. CONSTANTINVS MAX. AVG.**—Laureated bust to the right, with the *paludamentum*.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Two soldiers, helmeted, standing, armed with spear and shield; two

military standards, and between them the cross ; in the exergue **AQP**, and sometimes **AQS**. I have seen in the Museum of Bologna, in the cabinets of Lovatti and Depoletti, examples in which the cross has this form 

17. **CONSTANTINVS IVN. NOB. C.**—Laureated bust to the right, with breastplate.

*Rev.* The same type of the two soldiers, the two standards, and the cross in their middle ; in the exergue **AQP**. Two examples in my possession, upon one the upper part of the cross is rounded,  ; upon the other it is square, . Some examples have **AQS**.

18. **FL. IVL. CONSTANTIVS NOB. C.**—Laureated bust to the right, with *paludamentum*.

*Rev.* The same type as before ; in the exergue **AQP**, **AQS**. It occurs also with the cross rounded at the upper end.

19. **CONSTANTINVS MAX. AVG.**—Bust to the right, with a diadem set with gems, and the *paludamentum*.

*Rev.* Soldier standing, in front face, looking to the right, armed with spear and shield, in the field to the right a cross with four equal arms. *Gold*. Tanini, p. 264. Cohen describes the same type in copper, but wanting the cross.

20. **FL. IVL. HELENA AVG.**—Head to the right, with the hair arranged in a wreath (or, rather, in a twist).

*Rev.* **PAX PVBLICA**—Peace standing, holding a laurel-branch and sceptre, in the field to the left a cross with four equal arms; in the exergue **TRS**. Baron Marchant ('Lettres sur la Numismatique,' p. 219) describes a similar coin, but reading **HELENÆ** on the obverse.

21. **CONSTANTINVS MAX AVG.**—Bust to the right, wearing the diadem, and the *paludamentum* on the shoulder.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**. Two soldiers, and two standards, in the middle the monogram  $\text{P}^{\times}$ . (The Kircherian, and the British Museum.)

22. **CONSTANTINVS IVN. NOB. C.**—Laureated head to the right.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Same type as the last, in the field the monogram  $\text{P}^{\times}$ ; exergue **P. CONS.**

23. **FL. IVL. CONSTANTINVS NOB. C.**—Laureated head to the right, with the *paludamentum* on the shoulder.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS.**—The same type with the monogram  $\text{P}^{\times}$  in the field; exergue **S. CONST.**

24. **CONSTANTINVS MAX. AVG.**—Head to the right, wearing the jewelled diadem.

*Rev.* **VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG.**—Victory carrying a trophy, with a palm in the left hand; in the field to the left the monogram  $\text{P}^{\times}$ ; on the right the numerals **LXXII**; in the exergue **SMAN.** *Gold.*

"*Aureus est eximice cœlaturæ in Thesaurio regio,*" wrote Hardouin ('Op. Sel.' p. 481). But instead of the numeral **LXXII** Hardouin puts **XXII**, which is not correct. The same piece has after Hardouin been described by Du Cange, Caylus, &c.

25. **FL. IVL. CONSTANS NOB. C.**—Laureated bust to the right, with the *paludamentum*.

*Rev.* **VICTORIA CAESAR. NN.**—Victory carrying a trophy in the right hand, and a palm in the left; in the field to the left the monogram **✱**; in the field to the right the numerals **LXXII**; exergue **SMAN.** *Gold.* (Chabouillet, 'Rev. Num.' for 1849, p. 10.)

26. Diademed head of Constantine to the right.

*Rev.* **CONSTANTINVS AVG.**—The emperor standing, holding in one hand the sceptre, in the other the labarum terminating in a ball, and upon which is embroidered the monogram **Ϟ**. Silver medallion of the weight of two aurei. (Garonni, 'Mus. Hedervar.')


27. **CONSTANTINOPOLIS**—Head of the City, covered with a crested helmet, to the left.

*Rev.* Victory looking to the left; in the field to the left a cross with four equal arms; exergue **CONST.** (Tanini, p. 278.)


28. **CONSTANTINOPOLIS**—Bust of the City wearing a helmet decorated with a laurel wreath, in the left hand a sceptre.

*Rev.* Victory to the left, standing upon a ship, holding a sceptre in the right hand, and resting the other on a shield, on which are seen five globules




arranged in the form of a quincunx; to the left in the field the monogram ; exergue **S CONST.** (Turin; Vienna; Feuardent, 'Rev. Num.' 1853, vii. 3.)

29. **VRBS ROMA.**—Bust of the City, with crested helmet, to the left.

*Rev.* The wolf and the twins; above them the monogram  between two stars; exergue **P CONS** or **S CONS** (Garcia della Torre). Upon another example (Lovatti), we read distinctly **ROMA**, preceded and followed by indistinct letters. On the example described by Eckhel, the mint-mark is **MOST**; and on that by Tanini no letters occur in the exergue.

30. **CONSTANTINVS MAX. AVG.**—Laureated bust to the right.

*Rev.* **SPES PUBLICA**—Labarum, upon which are embroidered three globules; on the top, above the cross-piece from which the banner hangs, is the monogram ; below, a serpent transfixed by the spiked end of the flagstaff; exergue **CONS.** First published by Baronius; Eckhel describes an example in the Waldeck cabinet; Tanini (p. 275) a third in his own collection. A fourth is described by Gaillard in the Della Torre cabinet; this piece reads on the obverse **CONSTANTINVS AVG.**<sup>1</sup>

31. **CONSTANTINVS MAX. AVG.**—Head to the right, wearing a laurel crown enriched with gems.

<sup>1</sup> This most important one amongst the numismatic memorials of the triumph of Christianity, is unfortunately of a rarity commensurate with its interest. Although discovered so long ago as the

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Two soldiers armed with spear and shield, between them the labarum embroidered with the monogram  $\text{P}$ ; exergue **P. CONST** (Banduri, Feuardent, Garucci, Brit. Mus.) With the different mint-marks **Δ. SIS**, **Ε. SIS**. (Garonni.) With mint-mark of Lyons **PLG.** (Feuardent, *l.c.*) Two pieces struck at Siscia, **A. SIS**; **T. SIS**; one described by Tanini, the other seen by me in the Gonzales cabinet. Also are known **Γ. SIS**, with the legend on the obverse **IMP. CONSTANTINVS P. F. AVG.**; **P. SIS**; **Ε. SIS**; **SMTS**; and three without any mint-mark.

32. **CONSTANTINVS IVN. NOB. C.**—Laureated head to the right.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Usual type of soldiers and labarum inscribed with the monogram; exergue, **P. CONST.** (Tanini; Feuardent, *l.c.*)

33. **FL. IVL. CONSTANTIVS NOB. C.**—Laureated head to the right.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Type as the last; exergue **S. CONST**, or **CONS.** Numerous examples cited.

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times of Baronius, Eckhel himself knew but a single specimen, that in the Waldeck cabinet, and the most experienced numismatist of our day, M. Feuardent, had doubted of its genuine existence until he actually became the possessor of an incontrovertible example upon his recent acquisition (1872) of that receptacle of things unique, the immense Wigan collection. Through his kindness I have carefully examined the coin, and find it to be a third brass of the smallest size (*module du quinaire*), and in tolerable, but not fine condition. The execution is very neat, in the style of the pretty little pieces with the head of "Populus Romanus." M. Feuardent attributes it to Constantinus Junior, but coined upon his elevation to the dignity of Augustus in the last days of his father's lifetime.

34. **FL. IVL. CONSTANS**—Laureated head to the right.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Type as before; exergue **S CONS**, or **P CONST**, or **C CONST**. Other mint-marks are **AQP**, **ASIS**, **BSIS**, **ΓSIS**, **᾿SIS**.

35. **FL. DELMATIVS NOB. C.**—Laureated head.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Type as before. Mint-marks are **P CONS**, **P CONST**, **S CONST**, **CONS**; also **SMKT**, **SMDN**, **SMAL Δ**, **SMISE**,<sup>1</sup> **R \* Q**.

36. **DIVO CONSTANTINO**—Head covered with a veil, to the right.

*Rev.* **AETERNA PIETAS**—The emperor in military costume, standing, and leaning upon a spear, holding in his right hand the globe on which is placed the monogram **Ϟ**. The legend reads sometimes **AETRNA**, for **AETERNA**. Exergue **CONS**.


37. **DIVO CONSTANTINO**—Veiled head to the left.

*Rev.* **AETERNA PIETAS**—Type as the last; in the field to the right a plain cross; in the exergue **PLC**. Tanini gives one from his own cabinet, reading **DIVO CONSTANTINO Ϟ**, and for mint-mark **P CONS**.

38. **CONSTANTINVS MAX. AVG.**—Youthful head to the right, with the hair long and wavy, wearing a laurel crown enriched with gems; with the *paludamentum*.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Usual type, the

<sup>1</sup> This looks like a false reading of the mint-mark of Siscia, of which **SMSIS** is the regular form. The others denote the mint-ages of Constantinople, Carthage, Naissus, Alexandria *fourth office*, and Rome.

labarum inscribed with the monogram  Mint-marks

**ASIS, ESIS, ESIS** *with crescent*, **TSIS**.

39. **CONSTANTIVS P. F. AVG.**—Head to the right, wearing a crown of laurel enriched with gems.


*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS** — Type as before ;  
exergue **FSIS**.

40. **CONSTANS P. F. AVG.**—Head to the right, wearing the jewelled crown of laurel, and the *paludamentum*.

*Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**—Type as before ; mint-marks **ASIS, BSIS, SMSIS, AQS, AQP, BCONST, PLO**,<sup>1</sup> **SMNA**.

The type of the two soldiers and the two standards was only adopted after the death of Crispus ; it was maintained for the eleven years that Constantine survived ; and even was continued after his death. To this type are joined the crosses, no longer with four equal arms, but of the 'Tau shape ; and the monogram of Christ, placed sometimes in the field, sometimes upon the banner of the labarum. It must be supposed that this form of the cross was introduced upon the coinage between the years 326 and 333, because it does not make its appearance upon the similar pieces of Constans. It might, however, be supposed that the introduction of this form of the cross was previous to the year 330, because we find no piece of Constantinopolis bearing such a mark ; but this argument is destitute of foundation, inasmuch as it appears that it was the mint of Aquileia alone that had adopted this

<sup>1</sup> Evidently a false reading of **PLG**, for the London mint was given up before Constans became Augustus.

symbol of salvation. The second series, or that bearing the monogram  in the field, is beyond a doubt anterior to the year 333, because we do not meet with pieces of the kind that have the portrait of Constans, but only those with the portraits of Constantine the father, and of his two sons, Constantinus and Constantius. It is therefore necessary to place later than the year 330 those pieces that have the monogram, at least those bearing the mint-mark of Constantinople.

The *third* series presents the labarum having the monogram of Christ embroidered upon the banner. This series was struck before the death of Constantine, but these pieces are not anterior to the year 335, because we find the same type with the portrait of Delmatius, who was created Cæsar in that year, and survived his uncle but a very short time. The sons of Constantine when they became Augusti resumed this type, as is proved by the examples 38, 39, 40.

Besides these, we meet with other coins bearing Christian symbols, issued by different mints in the course of these years; and in the first place the small brass with the portrait of St. Helena, Constantine's mother. It is known that Helena was obliged by Constantine's command to emerge from private life, and I think it certain that before giving to his mother the title of Augusta he struck medals in her honour, as well as in honour of Fausta,<sup>1</sup> his own empress: which latter equally received at a later period the title

<sup>1</sup> The *impossibility* of this theory will be demonstrated further on; the good padre is here led astray by a natural eagerness to antedate the numismatic triumphs of his faith.

of Augusta. This fact is proved to demonstration when we compare the medals which read on the obverse **HELENA N. F.** and have for reverse a laurel crown with a star in the middle. It is supposed that the coin which joins with the type of Peace the legend **PAX PVBLICA** and the cross with the four equal arms in the field, was struck upon the discovery of the sacred wood of the Cross by the empress; but if the presence of the cross suggests this date, I am obliged to own it is not a well-grounded argument, since this cross makes its appearance before that epoch upon the coins of Constantine.


In the same way it is not possible to fix the date when the aureus of the Tanini cabinet was minted (No. 19), nor the small silver medallion (No. 26) which displays the statue of Constantine.

It is more easy, in my opinion, to determine the years in which were issued the pieces described under Nos. 24 and 25, because the piece with the portrait of Constantine cannot be anterior to the year 333, for the reason that a similar piece exists with the portrait of Constans Cæsar; and the date of this issue can be fixed with much probability in the year 335, on account of the legend **VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG.**; **VICTORIA CAESAR. IVN.**; acclamations which took place every fifth year in honour of the emperors and their families; the seventh lustre falling nearly in the year 335.


It is not necessary to speak of the pieces bearing the mint-mark of Constantinople, and which are for that reason posterior to the year 330. Similarly it is evident that the piece No. 36, was struck in honour of

Constantine after his death, by order of his sons, probably in the year 337, or at latest in 338, the epoch at which the three brothers, having assumed the title of Augusti, and the eldest that of "Maximus," struck afresh the coins with the legend **GLORIA EXERCITUS** with type of the two soldiers, which had been previously used on two different occasions in the years 330 and 335.

It results from the review of the long series above described, that I have brought into it all the coins described in my 'Numismatica Constantiniana,' with the sole exception of those which exhibit the labarum terminating at its upper extremity in a cross, the aureus of Constantinus Cæsar, which bears the cross with four equal arms, and finally another aureus of

Constantine the Great, which has the monogram 


placed between the **A** and **Ω**. I have followed the plan of separating the things that are unquestionable from such as in our times may give room for dispute. But although it has appeared to me advisable to make this distinction, I shall not on that account pass over in silence the pieces in question. The coins which exhibit standards terminating in a cross have been admitted by Cavedoni amongst the medals bearing Christian symbols. Subsequently to him, I have adduced some fresh pieces of the series in my 'Numismatica Constantiniana.' The same critic, however, now refuses to believe in the existence of this class of coins, forgetting that he himself has described a gold medal of Constantinus Junior on which is seen a standard terminating in a cross. The reason assigned



by Cavedoni for refusing this kind of piece admission into the ranks of those bearing Christian symbols is, that on comparing them with others he has satisfied himself that it is not the *Cross* that is really figured there, but merely a *resemblance* to a cross. Now if an argument like this is allowed to have any weight, a large proportion of the coins above described as bearing crosses and Christian monograms would run the risk of being rejected, because we find a considerable number of pieces bearing the same types, but without crosses or monograms—a fact of which it is easy to certify oneself. Meanwhile it is right to mention that I have seen a *vexillum* terminating in a cross upon a coin of Licinius in the Lovatti cabinet. This coin bears the mint-mark of Aquileia, **AQS**. In publishing this piece it seems quite allowable to conclude that those who have published similar pieces as having been seen by themselves, were not under a delusion, although neither Borghesi nor myself had previously met with any example of the kind. Besides, I have thought it both advantageous and prudent to separate these four pieces from the number of those exhibiting indubitable symbols of Christianity. I use the word *four* and not *nine*, because I except from the number the coins of the two Licinii and of the two Constantines, father and son, which display in the field the monogram of Christ; to which must be added the medal of Crispus and the one of Licinius the Elder bearing the *vexillum* terminating in a cross, of which I have just spoken. And although upon these pieces the monogram is not drawn in the customary figure , as the early engravers represented it, nor yet



the Cross such as we find it described, yet both figures are drawn in such a manner that it is easy to reduce them to well-known and correct forms; and it is impossible to see in this monogram merely a *star*, as Cavedoni will have it to be.

As for the aureus of Constantinus Cæsar, it is rejected by the illustrious numismatist of Modena as “a strange coin” (*strano nummo*), on account, not merely of the faulty abbreviation **IV.** in place of the customary **IVN.**, but yet more on account of the type, which is not to be met with, in my opinion, in all the numerous sequence of Constantine’s medals. But the first objection is of no weight, for every one knows that we often meet with blunders committed by the engravers of the dies. Besides, the piece in question is not the only one with the portrait of Constantinus Cæsar that bears the abbreviation **IV.**; Cohen describes another with the same reading. The second reason assigned by Cavedoni for rejecting the aureus of Constantinus Cæsar, viz., the *novelty* of the type, does not appear much better founded; for in that case we ought to have doubts about the genuineness of all exceptional types—a thing perfectly inadmissible. Besides this, the type seen on the reverse of the aureus of Constantinus Cæsar is not altogether so novel as Cavedoni supposes it; the seated female holding a little Victory in the right hand and a sceptre in the left, with the legend **VICTORIA AVGG**, is a type which is found already noticed by Mezzabarba in the number of the reverses of the coins of Constantine. But whatever it may be, notwithstanding the arguments I have just advanced, I do not choose to admit this aureus amongst the

medals bearing the cross with four equal arms, in order not to admit doubtful pieces into the series, and thus give occasion to renewed discussions. Tanini (Suppl. to Banduri, p. 265) gives a place in the list of authentic medals to the aureus published by De Brie ('Num. Aur.' pl. li.), and upon which the Canon Hemalarius wrote a dissertation. This piece bears the laureated head of Constantine the Great facing to the right, with the legend **CONSTANTINVS P. F. AVG**; on the reverse the monogram **A**  **ω**, around which is traced the legend **VICTORIA MAXIMA**.<sup>1</sup> I have inserted this piece in my 'Numismatica Constantiniana,' at No. 65, as well as a small brass, No. 66, bearing a similar type, and described by Vettori in his MS. catalogue of the Christian Museum in the Vatican. This is what Vettori says of it: "*Nummus ex ære parvi moduli in quo Constantini caput et literæ partim deperditæ. In aversa parte monogramma Christi decassatum, literis extrinque A et ω, et literæ in gyro detritæ.*" Although this small brass confronted with the aureus confirms the genuineness of the latter, I have deemed it expedient to set it aside, and wait for further confirmation.

I have rejected from my catalogue the monogram  engraved upon the helmet of Constantine, and also the monogram  traced in *intaglio* upon the pedestal supporting the shield bearing the inscription

<sup>1</sup> This strikes me as a false reading for **MAXIMI**, referring to Constantine himself by his especial title.

**VOT. PR.**, because I regard the signs traced upon both these medals as being of modern fabrication. Upon another specimen which I have seen the pedestal bears the monogram  $\text{P}$  engraved in intaglio in the same manner and probably by the same hand. The star with eight rays which is found on the reverse of the piece described in the 'Numismatica Constantiniana,' No. 31, cannot be a monogram; it is a veritable star which recalls the vision of Constantine, in the same way as the *wooden bridge* upon the reverse of a similar coin does the defeat of Maxentius. This star figures the sun which appeared to Constantine in his celebrated vision at the same time with the Sign of Christ—" *signum Christi*;" and which from that time forth became, as it appears, a symbol peculiar to Rome and an emblem of the emperor.

*On the Development of Christian Symbolism.*

Thus far extends the elaborate dissertation of the indefatigable Garucci, which it is my purpose to supplement by a notice of other types in the same series which, though not presenting Christian symbols directly, were evidently dictated to the designers by the influence of the new religion. But before entering upon this hitherto untrodden field, some statements of the learned Father advanced in the preceding pages appear to me to be open to several valid objections.

To begin with those occurring latest in his memoir. The "bridge," which he interprets as a memorial of the rout and death of Maxentius, cannot possibly have

any reference to that event, the scene of which was the Pons Milvius (*Ponte Molle*), then as now a substantial stone edifice of many arches, whilst the bridge seen upon the little coin in question (a reverse of the *minimus* with the head and legend **POPVLVS ROMANVS**) is a *military* bridge of boats, guarded by two towers, *têtes de pont*, at each end; clearly commemorating some noted performance of the kind in crossing the Danube, or other great river, in those expeditions against the Sarmatians, or similar barbarians, which shed a lustre on the concluding years of Constantine's life. That the memory of Maxentius and his defeat had become obsolete long before the issue of these curious little coins may be proved by the observation of the mint-mark, for they all bear that of Constantinople, the foundation of which was long subsequent to the fall of Maxentius and conquest of Italy.

Garucci is certainly wrong in assigning the coins with reverse of the sun-star within a wreath to the mother and wife of Constantine. The Helena and Fausta, whose coins exhibit this remarkable symbol, both take in the legend the title of **N.F.** Now this title, "Nobilissima Fœmina," is beyond all doubt the feminine equivalent to "Nobilissimus Cæsar," the regular style at that period of the next in succession to the empire. Consequently such a title would never have belonged to the Helena, Constantine's mother, whom her husband Constantius was forced to divorce in order to marry Theodora, Maximian's stepdaughter; one chief condition of his elevation to that dignity of Cæsar. Helena, thus repudiated, remained in a private station until created *Augusta* by the filial piety of her

son, upon his own accession to the empire. She was at no time of her life the wife of a *Cæsar*, and consequently could not have borne the title appropriated strictly to that dignity. The case is yet stronger as regards Fausta, who was an *Augusta* from the first, for her father, Maximian, upon giving her in marriage to Constantine, raised him at the same time to the rank of an *Augustus*.

The star type on both these coins will, however, enable us to ascertain indisputably who this Helena really was. This reverse is found on only three other coins; a second minimus with the bust and legend of "Populus Romanus," a denarius of Gallus, and another of his brother Julian, both proceeding from Gallic mints. There is, consequently, every probability that all coins bearing this very singular device were struck at the same time, and were inspired by the same motive. Now, Helena, youngest sister of Constantius II., wife of Julian, who governed Gaul with the rank of *Cæsar* only, would take of right the title of **N.F.**, and the fact of this particular type being then actually in use at the Gallic mints, is an additional reason for assigning these very rare pieces to the *daughter*, not *mother*, of Constantine. She never enjoyed the dignity of *Augusta*, for she died during the celebration of the *Quinquennalia* by her husband at Paris, the first occasion on which he ventured to assume the pomp and jewelled diadem of an *Augustus*, having previously contented himself with a "simple wreath (*vili corona*) and purple robe, so that he looked

<sup>1</sup> Of bay twigs, such as the *lanista* is seen wearing in the Pompeian paintings.

like a trainer of athletes" (Ammian. xxi. 1). As for the Fausta, who uses the same style and type, it is now impossible to discover her identity; she may have been the wife of one of the cousins of Julian, whom to their own destruction Constantine created Cæsars in the last year of his life. Some have supposed her the first wife of Constantius II. before his marriage to Eusebia, but this supposition rests upon no historical evidence; and these small copper coins are all of one and the same *fabrique*, and apparently issued about the date of Constantine's demise. But the most satisfactory explanation is the one quoted by Bauduri, which makes her a sister of Gallus and Julian, mentioned by the latter in his Epistle to the Athenians. Her portrait upon the rare coin preserving it, is decidedly more juvenile than that of Fausta the Empress, and the resemblance to the latter may be explained either by the real family likeness of mother and daughter, or by the want of skill on the part of the engraver. On this supposition we have coins of Julian, his wife, brother, and sister all issued at one and the same time (probably that of Julian's elevation to the rank of Cæsar), and stamped with the same auspicious device, the rarity of the medals of this younger Helena and Fausta being explained by the premature death of the two princesses.

Lastly, the argument—a very strong one, too—from *costume*, comes in to settle the question. Helena *Augusta* on her coins wears the diadem due to her rank, and always has her back hair arranged in a large *queue*, carried upwards and fixed to the top of her head, after the fashion which had prevailed in the

century that gave her birth, and of which the latest example (beside her own) is exhibited by Valeria, daughter of Diocletian. But the Helena with the title **N.F.** wears her hair waved and tied up in a simple *chignon* at the back of her head after the elegant antique fashion that had been revived by the better taste of the Fausta of whom there is every reason for supposing her the daughter: The old numismatists declared this Helena the wife of Crispus, from the fact of the two being named together in a law of the period; and Cohen shares all coins with the name of Helena equally between the mother and daughter of Constantine, not having perceived the stumbling-block to such attribution that lies in the difference of titles.


M. Feuardent had anticipated Garucci to a certain extent, in a memoir under the same title as his; published in the 'Revue Numismatique' for 1856. He describes a treasure-trove of 6000 Third Brass of Constantine and his three younger sons, all, with a single exception, from the Constantinople mint, all of the smallest *module*; and apparently, from the quality of the metal, and artistic execution, the work of the same die-sinker. A single coin of Hannibalianus was in the lot; and one piece, giving Constans the title of Augustus, fixes their date as later than the year 337. This last was struck at Siscia. The reverses were all of the commonest description, but included a few of each prince with the "Gloria Exercitus" type, in which the labarum was emblazoned with the monogram of Christ; and others of "Constantinopolis," with the monogram in the field. M. Feuardent observes: "From what we have remarked with respect to the

heads and legends above described, people will be convinced, at least we think so, that the monogram of Christ does not figure on the coinage until about the year 335. Constantine had it engraved upon his own coins and those of his sons, at the moment when he divided between them his vast empire; it is our belief that this sign was *then, for the first time*, placed upon the coins of these four princes, and that the idea of the great emperor was, in thus consecrating this memorable epoch, to bind his sons religiously to observe his arrangements. If in reality this prince believed he was giving to his sons a lesson of concord, his wishes were, alas! without effect; for hatred and discord were not long in breaking out in the bosom of his family."

"After the numerous dissertations that have been published upon the pieces bearing the monograms of Christ, and the extraordinary care that museums and collectors have taken in seeking after pieces of the sort, we think the coins we are now describing cannot fail to interest the antiquarian world. It will be seen that they not only bear testimony to a memorable event, the establishment of a new religion, but also to another fact, no less interesting in the historical point of view, that of the first partition of the vast Roman empire between the three sons of Constantine; a partition, moreover, that was full of misfortune, inasmuch as it brought about in a few years its dismemberment and downfall. The curious coins under consideration, offer *seven* varieties, perfectly distinct, and all having the appearance of being struck at the same time."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> One of these coins of Constantine bears the Lugdunum mint-



The kindness of Fortune has enabled me to add two fresh specimens to Garucci's list, differing in some particulars from any he has published. In the year 1870 was discovered at Sutton, near Woodbridge, Suffolk, a vase containing a "bushel" of Roman small brass coin. Out of a parcel of 260 examined by myself, half were the usual *Urbs Roma* and *Constantinopolis*, all fresh from the die; the rest were of Constantine and his three younger sons, three of Helena, the same number of Theodora, and one of Licinius of the *Jupiter Conservator* type. Another lot examined by a friend included coins of Constantius Chlorus, and Crispus. The latest pieces in the hoard were those of Constans *Augustus*, of which but few presented themselves; and those perfectly fresh. But on examining the reverses minutely, with a view to the object of this dissertation, two prizes rewarded my trouble; of which this is the description: **CONSTANTINVS IVN. NOB. C.** Youthful diademed (?) head to the right; rather defaced by oxidation. *Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS.** The regular two soldiers, between them the labarum, of unusual size, bearing a large monogram ; in good preservation, except the mint-mark, which is not visible, and in fact looks as if intentionally effaced by a blow with the hammer. (In the collection of Trinity College Library.)

The second is still more valuable, as belonging to Constantine himself. **CONSTANTINVS P. AVG** (the mark, **S L G**: the legend of the obverse is **CONSTANTINVS MAX. AVG.** but the face is so juvenile that it must belong to the son, and therefore (although M. Feuudent has not remarked it) gives the same indication of date as the Constans "Augustus," already noticed by him.

last two words indistinct). Head of Constantine, advanced in life, wearing the diadem, and of good workmanship. *Rev.* **GLORIA EXERCITVS**, type as the last, but the banner of the labarum of still larger dimensions, and the monogram rendered very conspicuous. Mint-mark: **P. CONS.** This side of the coin is fresh from the die, but the obverse has the legend somewhat blurred. (Collection of S. S. Lewis.)

A parcel of 363 from the same hoard has yielded to our Disney Professor a new variety in a Theodora with a cross in the field of the reverse **PIETAS ROMANA**, exergue **TRS**; also of Constantine, of the **GLORIA EXERCITVS** type, with the cross on the standard, and a second with the monogram; of Constans, four of the same type with the monogram, three struck at Constantinople, one at Treves; of Constantius II., one of the same kind.

It will be seen that taking the parcel submitted to me as a test, Christian types form about one per cent. of the whole; it may therefore be hoped that by calling the attention of other sharers in the treasure-trove to this particular point, many further contributions will accrue to this most interesting series.

Before quitting the subject of the labarum and its two guards, some remarks that have occurred to me in turning over this parcel (in which, with a single exception, it formed the only type of the coins of Constantine and his sons), as affording matter for curious speculation, can hardly be considered out of place. At first it puzzled me much for what cause the "Glory of the Army" should be represented sometimes by a pair of standards, sometimes by a single

one, until a comparison of the coins so impressed respectively satisfied me, by the difference of their *module*, that the motive was no deeper than pictorial information to the illiterate (whose currency it was) of the different *values* of the coins; that with the one standard on it being evidently the half of that bearing the pair.<sup>1</sup> The reader must be reminded that this currency, though now degraded to the class of "Third Brass," was in its time the *denarius cereus*, the sole representative of silver (being in truth a very base *billon*) known in the western provinces of the empire; hence the care bestowed upon the engraving of the dies, as well as upon the striking of the pieces, which, indeed, when new, had all the appearance of true silver, from the pellicle with which they were coated, just as the fire-new *Silbergroschen* and *Heller* of our own day. After Constantius II. had restored the standard silver currency in all parts of his empire, these neat little copper *deniers* disappear, and the small change is supplied by real coppers of the most uncared-for and slovenly execution. It will also be noticed that the labarum on this particular coinage of Constans is regularly emblazoned with a large **M**, whose conspicuousness attests the importance of its functions in that position.<sup>2</sup> At first, arguing from the analogy of

<sup>1</sup> This hieroglyphical mode of expressing value is to be found in Grecian numismatics. The Duc de Luyne has pointed out that where a horse forms the type of the unit, the half and the quarter are denoted by the half-body, and the head alone, of the same animal. Similarly in the late papal currency, whenever the *paolo* bore the head of one apostle, its double was marked by the figures of two standing side by side.

<sup>2</sup> Which is still further shown by its occupying the centre of the field, as if to receive the crowns from the hands of the Twin Victories in the type **VICTORIAE. DD. NN. AVGG.**

the **XCVI** ("96 to the pound") or the *fine* denarii of Diocletian, and the **LXXII** ("72 to the pound") on certain solidi of Constantine's reformed coinage, I was inclined to understand the letter as a *numeral*, indicating the coin to be the thousandth part of the *aureus*. But this explanation is upset by the occurrence of other letters, **C** and **O**, in the same position on the similar denomination of the coinage of his brothers, which reduces me to finding in the mysterious letter the initial of a *name*. Now, whose name could more naturally be looked for in a type devised to compliment the army, and to furnish pay for the troops, than that of the "Magister militum," or commander-in-chief, under each of the three boy-emperors? In the case of Constans the name of this officer is known, and "Magnentius" tallies with the initial, and exactly fits my hypothesis: probably a careful scrutiny of the history of these times would discover persons holding the same office under his two brothers, whose names might equally well take to themselves the other initials.

### *Salonina.*

There exists a coin, bearing almost certain traces of Christian inspiration, and struck half a century before the epoch of Constantine, but to which, strange to say, very little attention has hitherto been paid. This is a denarius of Salonina, wife of Gallienus, having for type the empress seated, with an olive branch in her hand, with legend **AVGVST. IN PACE**. This is a legend entirely without precedent on a coin; but, on the other hand, the "In pace" forms a regular con-

clusion to every Christian epitaph of the same period—in fact serves to distinguish them from the contemporary pagan, whose **D. M.** it takes the place of. The employment of this watchword of the faith seems to me proof positive of two things—that Salonina was a Christian, and that the coins exhibiting it were struck in her honour after death by Gallienus, being, in fact, of the same nature as the apotheosis-medals of former empresses, but on which the normal style, “*Diva*,” was precluded by the religion of the person commemorated, and consequently the monumental expression of good hope, “*In pace*,” was with justice used for its equivalent.

That this empress died in the lifetime of Gallienus is shown by a remark of Treb. Pollio’s, in a passage of which the beginning is lost, which runs thus: “. . . Pipara, daughter of a barbarian king, whom he loved to distraction. Gallienus, with his family, always used to dye his hair *yellow*, ‘*flavo crinem condit.*’” This last remark, apparently so out of place, signifies that the princess, being of Teutonic race,<sup>1</sup> had brought yellow hair into fashion; as Martial has recorded of long before,

“*Caustica Teutonicos accendit spuma capillos  
Captiva poteris comptior esse coma.*”

It is evident the chronicler was speaking of a *second* marriage of Gallienus with this barbarian princess—an action that would have brought upon the emperor

<sup>1</sup> She belonged to the powerful Marcomanni, against whom his father had carried on a war. I cannot help conjecturing that this child of the North with the golden hair is the “*Chrysogone*” whose head adorns some Egyptian coins of this reign; for the expression of a noble *Roman* name by a Greek *sobriquet* would be a liberty without precedent in the history of the mint.

greater discredit in the opinion of his contemporaries than all his other crimes and follies put together. Now Salonina, who was married to Gallienus in the lifetime of his father, the rigid Censor Valerian, was, according to the necessity of the case, as well as from the evidence of her *gentile* name, the child of that high patrician family the Cornelii, Saloninus being a cognomen of the Asinii.<sup>1</sup> She is also highly praised by historians for her numerous virtues, especially clemency, and the beneficial effect of her influence upon the emperor—a character affording further support to the explanation I have offered for her title. The religion of his wife may likewise serve to explain the change in the policy of Gallienus towards the Christians, as soon as he was released from the control of his father, that notorious persecutor of the Church. To borrow the words of Gibbon, “The accession of Gallienus, which increased the calamities of the empire, restored peace to the Church, and the Christians obtained the free exercise of their religion by an edict addressed to the bishops, and conceived in such terms as seemed to acknowledge their office and public character. Eusebius (vii. 13) gives us a Greek version of this Latin edict, which seems to have been very concise. By another edict he directed that the *cœmeteria* should be restored to the Christians.”

The words of the rescript, which Eusebius says he has “translated out of the Latin for the sake of intelligibility to his readers,” are as follows: “The Emperor

<sup>1</sup> It was first given to his son by Virgil's patron, Pollio, to commemorate his taking of Salona. The *cognomen* probably got into the Cornelian family by the process of *adoption*.

Cæsar Publius Licinius Gallienus, Pious, Fortunate, Augustus, unto Dionysius and Pinna and Demetrius, and the rest of the bishops. The benefit of my concession I have ordained to be firmly established throughout all the world, so that they may desist from these persecutions. And for this cause ye also are empowered to make use of the form of my rescript, in order that no one may molest you. And that which, according to right (*κατὰ τὸ ἐξὸν*) is allowable to be discharged by you, *has been already, long ago, conceded by me.* And on this account Aurelius Cyrenius, who presides over the supreme court" [the original must have read "*summæ rei præpositus*"], "shall preserve the form that has been granted by me." The words in italics, obscured as they are by a double translation, read almost like an apology to the bishops for the tardy concession of toleration in all lawful matters, which the emperor had long before allowed so far as his limited power permitted. And this agrees with Eusebius's remark that, *as soon* as Gallienus became *sole* ruler, he put a stop to the persecution. This conduct indicates a domestic influence, like that of Marcia over Commodus, acting strongly upon the emperor in this direction, and producing decided effects on the first opportunity.

A further proof that Salonina's life ended some time before that of her husband may be deduced from the fact that her head is to be found on very few amongst the innumerable pieces of the basest *billon*,<sup>1</sup> the miser-

<sup>1</sup> The same observation applies to her equally with her son Saloninus, who was put to death by Postumus in 259, nine years before the fall of Gallienus. Did the cruel fate of the young Cæsar hasten his mother's death?

able *denarii cerei* that disgrace the concluding years of the reign of Gallienus. Eckhel is of opinion that she was married to Gallienus ten years before his accession to the empire; but why modern numismatists make her to have been slain at the same time as her husband at the siege of Milan (A.D. 268) remains a mystery to me. Treb. Pollio merely notices that Valerian Junior, brother of the emperor, shared his fate, and Zosimus gives the details of the death of Gallienus alone.<sup>1</sup> The latter historian had previously mentioned the blockade of Saloninus, son of Gallienus, and his tutor Silvanus, in the city of Cologne on the Rhine, by Postumus on his first seizing the empire, and the slaughter of the two when surrendered by the starved-out garrison. But this took place nine years before the death of Gallienus, who has commemorated the fate of the young Cæsar by several consecration medals.

The unprecedented form of the legend **AVGVSTA IN PACE** was a problem to the early numismatists. Tristrianus does not attempt to solve it; Bandurius thinks to explain it as being a *satirical* medal, reflecting upon Gallienus's noted effeminacy, and struck by some one of the numerous usurpers of his times; comparing it with the existence of the celebrated type of **VBIQVE PAX**. But this writer was led astray by the medallic usages of the moderns, and even these will not account for the supposed satirical reflection being imprinted on the coins of the unoffending *empress*—

<sup>1</sup> Which was rather an act of public necessity than a murder; for it was executed with the privity of the best men of the times, after mature consultation, and was not followed by any *massacre* at the *camp*.



The plentifulness, also, of the coins bearing this legend seems to betoken a mintage proceeding from imperial authority rather than from the transient spite of an ephemeral usurper. There is, moreover, no difference in their fabrique from the other denarii of Salonina, which, no one doubts, were struck at Rome, whereas the productions of the Gallic mint (which alone could be suspected of such a fabrication) have an idiosyncrasy to be recognised at the first glance.

The credit of discovering in this legend evidence of so interesting a fact as the avowed, and allowed, Christianity of a Roman empress in the middle of the third century, is due to that eminent antiquary, De Witte, who published it as a conjecture in his ‘*Mémoires sur l’impératrice Salonine,*’ in the ‘*Mém. Soc. Roy. de Belgique,*’ vol. xxxvi.<sup>1</sup> But I cannot imagine what unlucky afterthought has made him retract his expressed opinion, for he writes, five years later (in the ‘*Revue Numismatique*’ for 1857, page 71), “Il est impossible, comme je l’avais pensé, de considérer les pièces qui portent la légende **AVGVSTA IN PACE** comme des médailles de commémoration frappées après la mort de Salonine, pour rendre hommage à la mémoire d’une princesse chrétienne.” Lenormant, in his memoir on the portrait of Marcia (p. 245 of the same volume), takes this legend for an unmistakable declaration of faith; but, accepting without examination the current opinion as to the time of Salonina’s death, he makes these medals to have been

<sup>1</sup> Not having access to that periodical, his arguments are unknown to me: those therefore which I have advanced in the text have, at least, the merit of originality.

issued by her own command. To escape the difficulty of the essentially funereal nature of the words, "In pace," he brings forward, with a parade that betrays his sense of their real weakness, a number of arguments to show that the same expression was applied to living people. But, "most lame and impotent conclusion," he cites, as deciding the question, Paul's admonition to married people (1 Cor. vii. 15), "*In pace autem vocavit nos Deus*"; which is a general observation on the working of the religion, not an employment of the phrase as a technical term. The problem therefore remains as first stated—a form of words known to be used in a strictly defined sense makes its appearance upon a coin, and common sense obliges us to give it the same value there as if we had found it inscribed upon a tombstone.

Gallienus evidently took a pleasure in perpetuating the memory of those he loved, or admired, by the instrumentality of medals. He struck consecration coins not only for his two sons, the Saloninus above mentioned, and Q. Julius Gallienus, but also for his predecessors, Augustus, Vespasian, Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, M. Aurelius, Commodus, Severus, Sev. Alexander. All these have the regular title of "Divus," and reverse of pyre, or eagle, with "Consecratio." Why did he not deify his empress (who there is every reason to believe died before him) after the established fashion, unless he had been prevented by the insurmountable obstacle of her religion, and the fear of shocking the powerful body to which she belonged? There is another singular omission in his list of consecrations—it does not include his own

father, whilst of his mother, Mariniana, they exist in abundance. A plausible, if not sufficient, explanation is found in the fact that Valerian had gone down to posterity as a persecutor of the Christians, and was therefore ignored by his son for precisely the same motive that caused the placing of this "Augusta in Pace" upon the medals commemorating his pious wife.

But to resume the subject of coin types dictated by the spirit of Christianity, it seems to me unaccountable why Garrucci should have omitted the one that, if correctly described, displays the influence of the new creed in a most remarkable degree. Mionnet, who is followed by Cohen, copies without the slightest kind of suspicion the following description of a bronze medallion of Crispus, then in the Sanelementine Museum: "**SALVS ET SPES REIPVBLICE**: Christ seated, seen in front face, his right hand raised, in his left a cross, between two military figures standing: in the exergue **S. P.**" Now everyone acquainted with the history of Christian art will perceive that such direct representation of the Saviour on the coinage was a thing utterly repugnant to the feelings of that early period, and one that would have shocked the Christians equally with the pagans. But the explanation of the problem is sufficiently obvious: Mionnet and his successor, Cohen, have copied the description without taking the trouble to ascertain its accuracy; had they done so, they would have found this astounding picture to turn out no other than what occurs on a bronze medallion of Constantine with the *same legend*, and from the same mint, and which Mionnet correctly catalogues as "the emperor

seated, seen in front face, between his two sons." Whether the object in the hand of the emperor, upon the medallion of Crispus, be really a cross, or merely some indistinct symbol such as a Victoriola, converted into the Christian badge by the fancy of the draughtsman in the copper-plate (or by the fraudulent ingenuity of the vendor of the actual coin), it is of course impossible to decide in the absence of the original. But it is safer to conclude that the true Cross, symbol of the Faith, does not really make its appearance upon this medallion, for it issues from the mint of *Rome*, and Garrucci's laborious researches have conclusively proved that she was not one of the few cities that as yet ventured to introduce the tokens of Christianity upon their coinage. The ancient capital continued to the last to be the stronghold of the old religion of the empire, as the recently founded capital was, from its beginning, that of the new.

In all the extensive series of the medals of Constantine, not one displays so conspicuously the influence of the religion of the Bible as does the elegant little piece (module of the quinarius) struck in memory of his *apotheosis*. The idea of the conveyance of the soul of the deceased Augustus up to the celestial regions where he should take his place as a new "Divus," was actually expressed (as Dio Cassius describes it in his account of the obsequies of Severus), by the letting loose of an *eagle* from the topmost stage of the lofty funeral pile at the moment when the torch was applied to the base. Hence upon the consecration coins struck in honour of any departed emperor, he is depicted soaring aloft upon the bird of

Jove; and down to the reign of Constantine the eagle was used as the established symbol of an apotheosis. No stronger proof of this can be adduced than the coins struck in honour of his deceased father by Constantine's own command (as their mint-marks attest), where the eagle, variously displayed, decorates the numerous pieces issued to perpetuate the **MEMORIA DIVI CONSTANTII**. But the medal doing similar homage to the departed Constantine, although its obverse still covers his head with the regular consecrated veil, entirely discards from its reverse the figure of the pagan vehicle of souls. Its place is taken by a type most unmistakably suggested by the Biblical record of the translation of Elias by the agency of "a chariot of fire and horses of fire," for the emperor is seen standing up in a chariot of four horses going at full speed, whilst the Hand of God issues from the heavens, to which he raises his eyes and hands. These interesting medals belong to the mints of Alexandria, Antioch, and Carthage alone, but must have been issued to a large extent, considering their plentifulness at the present day.

A very interesting piece in the list of Constantine's medals is the one that illustrates certain remarks of both his panegyrists and detractors. This is the aureus (medallion and *solidus*) presenting his head, with eyes uplifted, and no legend round, executed in the very highest style (and which may still command our admiration) of which the age was capable; whilst the reverse always has reference to *triumph* in type and legend, as **GLORIA** or **VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AUG.** The emperor's motive for this

striking innovation in Roman medallie portraiture<sup>1</sup> is thus given by his eulogist, Eusebius ('Vita Constant.' iii. 15):—"How great was the strength of the divine faith that was the foundation of his soul may be estimated from the consideration that he devised how his own portrait should be represented upon the gold coins after such a manner as to appear to be looking upwards, stretching himself aloft<sup>2</sup> towards God, in the action of one praying. Now the pieces thus stamped are in circulation all over the Roman world. Moreover, in the palace itself, at certain of the entrances, upon the pictures placed over the gateways, he had himself painted standing upright, looking towards heaven, and stretching forth his hands in the attitude of one in prayer. And thus even in his pictures he represents himself as a suppliant; but he passed a law forbidding any portraits of himself to be dedicated in the temples of idols, in order that his image should not be polluted by the deceit of things forbidden, even in its painted similitude."

But his irreverent nephew sneers alike at this pious gesture, and at the scrupulous care which the imperial devotee expended upon his hair and personal appearance (so conspicuously exhibited by the same medal), in the following humorous terms (Julian's 'Cæsars') :—"Constantine in his turn received permission to plead his cause. He had prepared himself for this contest with a great deal of confidence. But little by little, as he came to

<sup>1</sup> Before him it is to be seen only on certain denarii of Augustus, the idea of which was evidently suggested by the Greek regal drachmæ.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ανατεταμένος, which Valesius renders "manibus expansis," contrary both to the Greek and to the medal.

reflect upon the actions of those who had just spoken, he found his own exploits very inconsiderable when compared with theirs. For, to tell the truth, although he had rid us of a couple of tyrants, the one was a weak effeminate wretch, the other equally debilitated by distress and old age; and both of them abominable in the sight of gods and men. As for his performances against the barbarians, that was a point in which he appeared only to deserve to be laughed at, for he had in a manner made himself tributary to them, and was moreover entirely given up to self-indulgence. For this reason he kept himself aloof from the company of the gods, and continued standing in the vestibule of the Moon, of whom he seemed desperately enamoured, and upon whom he kept his eyes fixed, without paying the least attention to Victory. But as he was obliged to speak, he acquitted himself as follows: 'It will not be difficult for me to show that I have surpassed all those who have spoken before me: this Marcus Aurelius, because I have had to combat Romans, and Alemanni, and Scythians, and not merely the barbarians of Asia; Cæsar and Augustus, because I have not taken up arms, through civil dissension, against good and virtuous citizens, but for having taken them up against the most wicked and infamous of tyrants. As for Trajan, the exploits I have performed against these tyrants, give me of right the precedence over him. For, through my having recovered the same countries which he had gained by his arms, I might put myself on a level with him, were it not a greater thing to *recover* that which has been lost than to make *new* conquests. Marcus Aurelius shows plainly by his

silence that he cedes to all of us, with a good will, the honour of precedence.'

" 'What!' said Silenus to Constantine, 'do you vaunt to us these *gardens of Adonis*, as actions of any real value?'—'What do you mean,' replied Constantine, 'by what you call "gardens of Adonis"?'—'I mean,' said Silenus, 'such as women prepare for the minion of Venus, by filling flower-pots with earth fitted for making certain plants spring up, the which grow dry and wither so soon as they begin to come into blossom.' Constantine had no sooner heard this than he turned very red, recognising the close resemblance of the thing to the actions of his own life. . . .

"After this, Mercury, addressing himself to Constantine: 'And thou, what thing hast thou regarded as the finest thing of all?' To which he replied: 'To amass great riches, and to employ them in satiating my own desires or in gratifying those of my friends.' Whereupon Silenus, laughing ready to split his sides, asked: 'How comes it then that you, with this noble intention of turning banker, should have so far forgotten yourself as to lead the life of an under-cook, or female hair-dresser? Your style of wearing your hair and your face already announced it; and now the noble sentiment you have just declared bears ample testimony to the same charge.' Thus did Silenus rally him, roughly enough. After this, silence being made, the gods gave their votes in secret, the great majority of them being for M. Aurelius. But Jupiter, after a little whispering with his father, commanded Mercury to pronounce sentence, which he did in the following terms:—



“‘Ye Mortals who have presented yourselves for this competition, know ye all that the laws and judgments are pronounced amongst us in such a manner that the successful one may indeed exult, but the vanquished must refrain from complaining. Go therefore each one of you, according to his liking, to range yourselves under the guidance and protection of the several gods, and to live henceforth under their auspices; and let each of you choose one of their number for his Master and Protector.’

“Upon this proclamation being made, Alexander ran towards Hercules, Augustus to Apollo, and M. Aurelius kept his place by the side of Jupiter and Saturn. As for Cæsar, after wandering about in uncertainty from one side to the other, the mighty Mars and Venus at last took pity upon him and called him to them. Trajan ran towards Alexander, wishing to take his place by his side. But as for Constantine, as he could discover no model of his own life amongst the gods, when at last he perceived Effeminacy close by, he went and ranged himself by her side. She received him very lovingly, and held him a long while in her embrace, and after clothing and decking him out in a lady’s flowered gown,<sup>1</sup> she led him up to Luxury. It was there that he found his son (Constantius), who was crying aloud to all passers by: ‘Whosoever feels himself guilty of violences, of murders,<sup>2</sup> of sacrileges, or any other abominable crime,

<sup>1</sup> The imperial robes of *silk* which he had introduced into court costume.

<sup>2</sup> Julian here takes revenge upon his cousin for the slaughter of his father and brother, Julius Constantius, and Constantius Gallus.

let him come hither in all confidence, and as soon as I shall have washed him with this water, I will make him altogether clean. Nay, more; if he fall back again into the infamy of the same crimes, I will bring it about that after he has well thumped his breast and beaten his head, he shall become pure and clean as before.' So Constantine was very well pleased to dwell with this goddess, and he and his sons retired in her company out of the assembly of the gods. But the latter, the Avengers of impiety, strangely tormented him and his sons, and justly punished them for having shed the blood of their relations, until at last Jupiter granted them a little respite, for the sake of Claudius Gothicus and Constantius Chlorus."

Of all the types in this numerous series (the very last in which antique taste, then fast expiring, ventured to display itself, and often with considerable success), the most curious for the boldness of its declaration of faith, and the most ingenious in the conception of its allegory, is the already quoted piece with the labarum transfixing the serpent, and the legend **SPES PVBLICA**. Although both these qualities at first lead the sober numismatist to suspect a cinque-cento forgery in the case, which suspicion is confirmed by the rarity of the coin itself (only four specimens being known), which prevents the satisfying of doubt by a careful examination of its *material* claims to authenticity, yet the *moral possibility* of its being the production of the age of Constantine is made out by certain other proceedings of that emperor, the account of which I shall transcribe from his biographer ('Vita Constant.' iii. 3). "Moreover, he

set up in a certain painting, placed over the grand entrance of the palace, the spectacle of the Cross, that life-giving symbol being placed over his own head ; whilst below him the Adversary and Enemy of mankind, who through the agency of impious tyrants had assailed the Church of Christ, was being cast down headlong in the *figure of a serpent*. For the divine oracles in the books of the prophets have called him a *dragon*, and a *smoky serpent*. For which cause the emperor ordered the serpent pierced with darts through the middle of his belly, and drowned in the depths of the sea, to be painted with wax dissolved with fire<sup>1</sup> under the feet of himself and his children, and to be set up for a spectacle unto all men : pointing out in this manner that secret foe of mankind whom he depicted as being hurled down into the pit of destruction by the force and potency of that salutary trophy which was placed above his own head. And this truth the picture painted in lively colours clearly set forth. I cannot but admire the intelligence of the emperor, who, thus moved by divine inspiration, exhibited in painting the things predicted by the voices of the prophets so long before, saying that God would bring down His great and terrible sword upon the dragon, the serpent that fled away, and would slay the dragon that lieth in the depths of the sea. The figures, therefore, of these things did the emperor express, exactly rendering the reality by the painting.”

This picture was therefore designed as a decoration for the most conspicuous building in the new capital, and the flowery expressions of Eusebius intimate that

<sup>1</sup> Encaustic painting, used by the ancients instead of fresco.

the serpent symbolized the power of the tyrants whom Constantine had recently destroyed. The place selected for the exhibition of such an allegory proves the confidence of the designer that it would be not distasteful to the great bulk of those who beheld it. The type of the coin in question, with its *transfixed serpent*,<sup>1</sup> may be called an abbreviated expression of the same idea, and consequently may have been actually suggested by this very remarkable painting above the palace gate; whilst no stronger objection can be made against the issuing of such a coin type than against the exhibition of such a picture at Constantinople, to which mint alone this singular medal belongs.

In the type under discussion, the monogram tipping the flag-staff is simply formed of the letter X traversed by a vertical bar, and the banner itself is emblazoned with *three* circles, probably conventional representations of the imperial stars<sup>2</sup> that regularly occupied the same place: particulars explained by the full account of the labarum, and its origin, which Eusebius shall proceed to give in his own too rhetorical language (i. 28):—"He therefore began to implore His aid, praying and beseeching that He would deign to make Himself known unto him, and stretch forth a helping hand in his present necessity. And whilst the emperor was praying and earnestly supplicating for this, a wonderful sign, sent by God, appeared unto

<sup>1</sup> The counterpart of the "serpent pierced with darts through the middle of his belly," in the painting just described.

<sup>2</sup> That customary emblem of the beneficent sway of the family: an idea so clearly expressed by that common type, the altar shone upon by these luminaries, with the legend **BEATA TRANQVILLITAS**.

him. Which sign, had it been related by any other person, the hearers would not readily give credit to the same. But seeing that the victorious Augustus himself related the event, and confirmed his narration by the sanction of an oath to us who write the present history (that is to say, at a much later period, when we enjoyed his acquaintance and friendship), who can hesitate to believe the account? Especially when the intervening time has confirmed by its own evidence the truthfulness of this communication. About the meridian hours of the sun, when the day was already on the decline, the emperor declared that he saw with his own eyes, in heaven itself, placed above the sun, the trophy of the Cross, composed out of light, and an inscription fastened<sup>1</sup> to it, saying, *With this overcome* (τούτῳ νίκα); and that astonishment at the sight seized both himself and his whole army, which was following him as he was pursuing his march, and which became an eye-witness of the prodigy.

“Furthermore he added that he was greatly perplexed as to what this apparition might be, and whilst he was turning it over in his mind and musing upon it, the night came on and overtook him; and then, whilst he was sleeping, the Christ of God appeared to him together with the sign (or *standard*<sup>2</sup>) that had been shown in the heavens, and commanded him to cause to be made a copy of the sign seen in the heavens, and to use the same for a helper in his conflicts with the enemy.

<sup>1</sup> Συνηφθαι, clearly signifying that the words were written on a banner or scroll, tied to the “trophy.”

<sup>2</sup> Σημεῖον, like *signum*, has both these senses; and Eusebius evidently delights in playing upon them.

“Rising with daybreak, he disclosed the secret to his friends; and summoning the workers in gold and precious stones, he takes his seat in the midst of them, and describes the appearance of the sign; and ordered them to make a copy in gold and precious stones, which same (model<sup>1</sup>) we ourselves have had the opportunity of examining with our own eyes.

“Now it was fashioned in the following shape. A long spear, covered over with gold, had had a pole placed across it made in the form of a cross, whilst above, at top of all, was a wreath twined out of gold and precious stones, upon which was affixed the symbol of the Saviour’s own appellation, that is, two letters of the alphabet expressing the name of Christ, signifying it by means of the first two characters, the **P** being formed into an **X** in its middle part: which sign also the emperor was accustomed to bear upon his helmet in the time that followed. But from the transverse pole that was fixed upon the spear, a sort of hanging cloth was suspended, a royal texture<sup>2</sup> covered with a variety of precious stones fastened together,<sup>3</sup> and flashing with rays of light, with much gold woven into it, presenting to all beholders an indescribable object of beauty. Now this banner, fastened from the cross-bar, received a proportionate measure of length and width; whilst the spear itself, being greatly elongated, below the trophy of the Cross placed upon the top of the banner just described,

<sup>1</sup> The very original made upon the occasion: a remark showing that it was preserved as a holy relic.

<sup>2</sup> That is, made of the same *purple* as the imperial robes.

<sup>3</sup> So as to form a definite design: for example, the stars already noticed.

carried the image of the pious emperor down to the breast made of gold, and also those of his sons. This symbol of salvation therefore the emperor always had as a defence against the forces of whatsoever enemy was opposed to him ; and ordered that others made after the same pattern should be carried at the head of all his armies."

The reader will remember that in the account of the same circumstances given by Lactantius, and already quoted, no mention whatever is made of this apparition of the Cross in the heavens. "The distance of a thousand miles and a thousand days" (Lactantius was writing at Nicomedia three years after the event), to which Gibbon ascribes the inaccuracies in his narrative, is not sufficient to account for his *silence*, although it might for any *embellishment* of the actual facts. His reason for such reticence was doubtless the very one Eusebius openly assigns, that even he himself would not have believed the story had he not received it from the emperor's own mouth, with the most solemn assurances of its truth. Lactantius may very well have heard the popular report of the miracle, and yet abstained from introducing it into his history, for fear of drawing down upon himself the ridicule of the educated circle in which he moved.

But there is no necessity for *our* suspecting Constantine of inventing, or Eusebius of retailing, a false miracle. In our own times, and very recently too, the most credible and unprejudiced witnesses have observed the same phenomenon, and under circumstances to which its manifestation so aptly fitted that the story, if found in an ancient or mediæval author,

would be unhesitatingly set down for a monkish fable.<sup>1</sup> There is, however, one little part in the narrative which one *cannot* help suspecting the worthy prelate has transferred from one event in the emperor's story to the other, either through a slip of memory or from the irresistible impulse, due to his profession, of heightening the effect of so miraculous a tale. The *natural* phenomenon appearing to him a thing so utterly incredible, he made no difficulty of appending to it an embellishment which it was utterly impossible for the ordinary powers of Nature to produce. This is the banner emblazoned with the famous inscription, which he makes Constantine see fluttering from the Cross, like a flag from its pole. This portion of the story, as told by the emperor, we may fairly believe belonged to the *dream*, the very natural production of his imagination so highly excited by the wonderful sight of the afternoon. This view of the matter is strongly supported by the brief and vague statement, so far as it goes, which Lactantius gives of that nocturnal visit of Christ, in consequence of which the Cæsar, as yet halting between two opinions, adopted the banner of the Cross. And in truth, Eusebius expressly states that the labarum was made after the pattern, *not* of the Cross seen in the heavens, but of the standard presented to Constantine by the Saviour's own hand in

<sup>1</sup> In Whymper's ascent of the Matterhorn, four of his companions were killed by falling down a precipice. Shortly after this had occurred, the survivors were astonished by the appearance of three luminous crosses of immense height in the sky, the central one considerably elevated above the others placed at its sides. A drawing of the scene, made at the moment, is given in his 'Scrambles amongst the Alps.' The native guides, naturally enough, connected the vision with the fate of the lost. The time was 6½ P.M., July 14, 1865.



the vision of the night. This same nocturnal vision seems to be the source of that very curious type upon a medal of Constantius II., which shows that prince holding a standard emblazoned with the Christian monogram, the legend being **HOC SIGNO VICTOR ERIS**, "Under this *banner* thou shalt be victorious" (for such is the true sense of *signum*). There is every reason to believe that this type not merely had reference to Constantine's dream, but preserves the exact words addressed to him by the celestial visitant. For the native tongue of that prince (a Dalmatian by birth) was the Latin, and therefore the same in his sleeping as in his waking conversations, so that we must take the *τούτω νίκα* of Eusebius for merely the interpretation given him by the emperor (the bishop probably not knowing a word of Latin) of the exhortation addressed to himself by Christ. The occasion that induced his son to take for himself this encouraging watchword may plausibly be supposed the moment of extreme peril when the usurper Magnentius was marching upon him with every prospect of success.

This same coin-type presents another point of interest in the probability that it preserves the memory of the celebrated statue erected at Rome by Constantine in acknowledgment of the celestial helper, whose admonition is expressed in the legend. The erection of this statue is briefly noticed by Lactantius in his narrative of the fall of Maxentius already quoted; but Eusebius gives a much fuller and very curious account of the same event, the whole of which I shall here translate (cap. xl.) :—"By a great inscription, and by monuments, he proclaimed unto all men the Sign of

salvation: having in the middle of the imperial city set up this for a grand trophy over his enemies, engraving in indelible characters this Sign of salvation, a protection for the supremacy of the Romans, and for the whole of the empire. For he at once commanded them to place a tall spear, in the shape of a cross, in the hand of his own likeness put up as a statue, in one of the most public places of Rome; and to engrave below it this inscription in the language of the Romans: ‘Through this saving Sign, the true test of virtue, I have delivered your city, rescued from the yoke of tyranny: and moreover I have liberated and restored the senate and Roman people to their pristine nobility and splendour.’<sup>1</sup>” That by “the tall spear made in the form of a cross” the labarum is intended, and that the statue was modelled in the attitude represented on the coin under discussion, may be regarded as certain, for on all coins prior to the erection of this statue it is the regular legionary standard, of a totally different construction, that is placed in the hand of the Cæsar: for example, upon the medals of Constantine with legend **PRINCIPI IVVENTVTIS**.

We now come to another type, which commemorates the change of religion and the blessings expected to flow therefrom, by means of a very poetical allegory: this is the *Phœnix*. The story of the wondrous bird and the renewal of its life is first told by Herodotus (ii. 73); but to *him* the thing was only a very curious

<sup>1</sup> This seems intended for a liberal version of the Latin, couched in some such form as, “Hoc salutari signo, veræ virtutis argumento, urbem vestram a tyrannica dominatione liberavi: et S. P. Q. R. pristinae dignitati splendorique liberatum restitui.”

natural phenomenon. The idea was first applied to a higher sense by Trajan, who placed the phœnix on an *aureus*, without any further inscription, leaving the significant figure to speak for itself. It was next pressed into the service by the directors of the Alexandrian mint in the reign of Antoninus Pius, upon whose medals (and those of his adoptive sons) the phœnix appears with radiated head standing upon a funeral pyre. In this place the notion of the resuscitation of the bird from its ashes is by a stroke of sagacious flattery applied to the revival of the Roman world under the beneficent sway of the two Antonines. A similar allusion is contained in that very remarkable reverse of an Egyptian coin of the elder emperor, the head of Serapis within the coiled-up asp, emblem of Eternity, and surrounded by the images of the different planets; having the signification of the commencement of a Sothiac period or "Great Year;" when the world was to start afresh on its course with renewed youth. After this period the phœnix was dismissed from its post on the coinage, the continuous disasters of the succeeding reigns having rendered its employment there more like a satire than a compliment to the reigning prince. It only reappears when Constantine was firmly seated on the throne, and order was restored throughout the empire; upon which the reverse of a bronze medallion exhibits the emperor seated, to whom a military figure, *Virtus* in person, presents the orb on which sits the auspicious bird; the legend being **GLORIA SAECVLI VIRTVS CAESARIS**. But on the coins of his successors, Constans and Constantius, the phœnix by itself occupies

the field, represented in exactly the same manner as upon the already noticed mintage of Alexandria. The signification of the allegory is now proclaimed to the world by the legend accompanying it, "*Felix Temporum Reparatio.*"<sup>1</sup> It is a very noticeable circumstance that this promising reverse is confined to the small brass—the currency of the lower classes. Amongst them who had no interest involved in the ancient order of things the new faith had made its greatest progress, just as twelve centuries later the doctrines of the Reformation first gained a hold over the artisans and husbandmen of Germany and France. The conception of another reverse bearing the same legend evinces a charming poetical feeling, quite astonishing for so degenerate an age. The emperor, holding the *labarum* in one hand, extends with the other the orb surmounted by the phoenix, as a pledge of future happiness to the subject nations; he stands on the deck of a galley, that very ancient emblem of a prosperous course,<sup>2</sup> whilst the pilot of the vessel is no other than Victory in person. This is the most usual reverse of the large brass of Constantine, minted in his Gallic dominions; and may have commemorated his

<sup>1</sup> This notion, like most others in the Roman belief, was of Etruscan origin. Plutarch notices ('Life of Sylla') that the great trumpet-blast heard in a serene sky, A.V.C. 665, was interpreted by the best Etruscan diviners to the senate, then sitting in the temple of Bellona, as portending the renovation of the world. "There were to be eight several races of man, each enduring for one Great Year, and each totally differing in mode of thought from the one before it. For example, in one period divination should be held in honour; in the next, utterly despised," &c.

<sup>2</sup> For which reason it generally bears the legend **LAETITIA AVG** on the medals,

successful expedition into Britain, for a medallion with the same design actually is inscribed **BONONIA**, the regular port of embarkation for this island.

But the Bird of promise vanishes from the scene together with the last of the sons of Constantine: the cry of the times was, "Who can show us any good?" and it was useless attempting to disguise it.

The inscription "Felix Temporum Reparatio" is now applied to the figure of the emperor destroying, or leading captive, a barbarian enemy; the *summum bonum* of Roman desire being by this time reduced to the holding one's own, and keeping off the packs of hungry wolves that beset on all sides the failing empire.

The *monogram* of the Saviour's name frequently becomes the exclusive occupant of a medal's field under the two sons of Constantine already named. It is placed between the mystic letters **A** and **Ω**, and has the legend "Salus Augusti"—a bold declaration on which their father never ventured. The murderer of the youngest of these Cæsars, the Briton Magnentius, continues to employ the same reverse, but with his fall it, at least in this shape, disappears from the moneyer's repertory.

The most tasteful way in which the monogram was introduced is that to be seen decorating the solidi of the two Eudoxias (the wife and the daughter-in-law of Arcadius), of Pulcheria, and of some other subsequent reigns. Victory, seated on a pile of armour of the vanquished foe, is inscribing the sacred letters upon a shield supported upon a cippus, emblem of *stability*, or else held up for her by an infant genius (now to be regarded as a Christian cherub), to acknowledge the

source of all prosperity—a sense declared by the **SALVS REIPUBLICAE** of the legend. During the same period the monogram inscribed within a laurel wreath forms the common reverse of the smaller gold pieces : and this, again, on the silver quinarii is simplified into a Latin cross, also within a wreath ; both these types speaking for themselves, and requiring no inscription.

A singular transition of ideas is to be discovered in the treatment of the most usual reverse of the *solidus*, which has the legend “Victoria Augusti.” During many reigns the invariable type is the figure of the reigning prince, holding orb and labarum, and setting his foot upon the neck of a crouching barbarian, whose nationality is declared by his Scythian cap. But the effeminate Valentinian III. changes the earthly into the spiritual enemy—it was, in truth, a much easier thing to boast of victory over Satan than over a Genseric or an Attila—

“nulli gravis est percussus Achilles.”

The barbarian is therefore transformed into the conventional figure of the Tempter, the serpent with angel's face, whose head the orthodox emperor proudly bruises with his heel. This pious conceit was so well suited to the taste of the times that it held its ground in the Roman mint under many successive emperors.

There was, however, a degree of self-assumption in so depicting the prince himself that must have scandalised the sensitive piety of Majorian's mintmaster, for he replaces it by an unmistakable *angel*, holding for spear a long and broad Latin cross with jewelled borders ; the legend remaining as before. This ele-

gant design continues, with but trifling variations, to constitute the regular reverse of the solidi for the space of a century and a quarter (450-575). The drawing, however, became more incorrect, and the workmanship more careless, with each succeeding reign, until at last either devotion or want of skill (or both combining together to excuse the change) reduced it, under Tiberius Constantinus, into the simple "Jerusalem cross" (cross *potent*) elevated upon a "Calvary" of four steps. This last perfunctory device held its ground for several years amidst the civil distractions and foreign invasions of the succeeding disastrous reigns, until, the empire reviving under the vigorous administration of a tyrant, it was replaced by a new type, once more making by no means inconsiderable pretensions to be considered a work of art.

Justinian II. had, by his exactions and cruelty, so exasperated his subjects that they dethroned him and elected Leontius in his place, who exiled the tyrant to the Tauric Chersonesus, after cutting off his nose, whence his subsequent epithet, "Rhinotmetus." But through the assistance of the Bulgarians he regained the empire in 705, and held it for six years, at the end of which his intolerable conduct brought about a second revolution and his own death. His gratitude to Heaven for his almost miraculous recovery of his ancestral throne is commemorated by a complete change in the types of the gold piece, that, besides ostentatiously manifesting his piety, does also much credit to his taste. The obverse of the solidus now offers the bust of the Saviour, not the emperor, seen in front face, holding the volume of the Gospels in one

hand, and giving the sacerdotal benediction with the other, the legend being, "Jesus Christus, Rex regnantium." For reverse stands at full length the emperor himself, attired in the imperial robes, and carrying a long sceptre<sup>1</sup> tipped with a Jerusalem cross: and he glories in the new title of "Servus Christi." The head of the Saviour is drawn with much character and dignity, and the die is engraved with carefulness and technical skill, altogether refreshing to the eye after the long series of miserable attempts at portraiture that precede the reign of Justinian. This head is said to be a copy from an older statue of the Saviour erected over the palace gate, Chalcé: the original has every appearance of having been suggested to the sculptor by the established type of Serapis; so closely does it resemble the countenance of that deity upon the elegant little Alexandrian medals of Julian's coinage. The emperor, in his full-length portrait on the other side, grasps firmly with one hand the Cross planted on the Calvary, a speaking manifestation of the trust he places in that emblem of salvation; in the other hand he holds the *mappa* or rolled-up napkin used for giving the signal in the Hippodrome, and therefore the regular badge of sovereignty; he also figures for the first time in the robe composed of embroidered squares, from thenceforth the established form of the Byzantine purple.

The portrait of Christ was entirely banished from its place on the bezant during the succeeding period of the Iconoclast dynasty, and only reappears

<sup>1</sup> Now called "narthex," the old name for the wand borne by those initiated into the Greek Mysteries.



when Michael Rhangabe (811-813), the ally of Charlemagne, enters into amicable relations with the Pope, and re-establishes the worship of images. But after his brief reign the adverse feeling again got the upper hand, and the sacred *effigies* was discarded as idolatrous, for another thirty years. But the great schism of the Eastern and Western churches seems to have called forth an extraordinary religious display from the prince under whom it happened, Michael III. (842), and the bust of the Saviour, still preserving some traces of a better style, resumes its place upon the gold coinage, and holds its ground to the date of the first capture of Constantinople.

Basil the Macedonian (886) manifests his zeal for the faith by giving yet more prominence to the divine image, for he depicts the Saviour at full length, blessing the world with one hand, and holding the book of the Gospels in the other; and seated on a wide and richly jewelled throne, a copy of that occupied by the emperor himself. The devotion of his son, Leo the Philosopher, is further signalised by the introduction of a type of a most remarkable character, a conspicuous landmark of the change then commencing in the spirit of Christianity. This innovation is the bust of the Virgin Mary, shown in front face, with hands, palm upwards, "*manus supinas cælo ferens*," on each side; and by no means despicably executed. The legend over the head is **MARIA**, and on each side in the field **MP ΘΥ**, the usual abbreviation of the title "Mother of God." For many generations following this Madonna seems to have been appropriated to the coinage of a female sovereign.

Nicephorus Phocas (963) invents a device which became popular for some years after him, although not admitted to the honour of figuring on the bezant. He marks his entire attachment to the Faith by placing his own miniature likeness signed with his initials within a quatrefoil elevated on the top of the Cross of Calvary. The bust of Christ, and the Saviour on the throne, appear to have been used indiscriminately by the emperors of these times, some preferring the one, some the other representation to form the decoration of their bezant.

But the grand epoch of religious mintage is that of John Zimisces (969). This heroic usurper seeks to atone for the murder of his cousin Nicephorus Phocas, and for the consequent perjury through which he obtained coronation at the hands of the patriarch Photius, by an unprecedented display of religious fervour upon his coinage, corresponding with the munificent acts of charity that accompanied his accession to the throne. His gold presents two half-lengths, himself, and the Madonna in person placing the diadem on his head, whilst the Hand of God issuing from the skies gives its benediction to the ceremony. The malicious Greeks might easily have discovered in this group an acknowledgment of the important share in his elevation to the empire taken by the amorous Theophano (so ungratefully requited), had it not been for the title  $\overline{\text{MP}} \overline{\text{ΘΥ}}$  in the field, and the invocation running round in an abbreviated form of  $\Theta\epsilon\sigma\tau\acute{o}\kappa\epsilon, \beta\omicron\acute{\iota}\eta\theta\epsilon\iota \text{ 'I}\omega\acute{\alpha}\nu\eta\eta \delta\epsilon\sigma\pi\acute{o}\tau\eta\varsigma$ , "Mother of God, aid our Lord John." The reverse bears the long-established bust of the Saviour, and still the Latin inscription, **IHS**

**XPS REX REGNANTIVM.** His very rare silver coins bear the bust of the Madonna alone, holding out before her the celebrated Veronica handkerchief; the reverse a miniature of Zimisces, inserted in a circle fixed on the summit of the Cross of Calvary. But the noted zeal of this emperor has chiefly perpetuated itself in a vast multitude of the sacred effigies minted in the baser metal. This mintage was in fact the *translation* of the bezant into the currency and language of the *people*, for it bears the Saviour's bust exactly copied from the time-honoured type of the gold, but with the legend **EMMANOYEA**, whilst the Latin legend (now unintelligible to the multitude) is rendered into the Greek **IH̄SUS XRISTUS BASILEU BASILE**. These pieces are of the size of the First and Second Brass of the Roman empire, and have often supplied materials for the coinage of the succeeding reigns. Their existence in such profusion furnishes a curious illustration of history, upon which I shall quote the remarks of Sabatier:—"The attribution of these anonymous copper coins to John Zimisces is founded upon a passage in Scylitzes and in Cedrenus, where it is said 'that this emperor gave orders to put upon the coin the image of the Saviour, which had no place there up to that time, and on the other side were *Latin* letters forming the sentence, Jesus Christ the King of kings.' This record has clearly reference to the copper coinage;<sup>1</sup> the sense of it is in some measure confirmed by the existence of specimens in pretty considerable numbers that have served for *blanks* to coins struck at a later period

<sup>1</sup> That being the only metal "on which the image of the Saviour had no place before."

by Nicephorus Botaniates, Romanus Diogenes, Eudoxia Delassene, and Constantine Ducas." ('Mon. Byz.' ii.) The curious anomaly that these Greek words are printed on the coin in *Latin* characters had forcibly struck the two historians, the fact being that the letters are the uncials of the debased Roman alphabet then in general use.

That sole lingering vestige of ancient Roman supremacy, the **REX REGNANTIVM** legend of the bezant, is visible for the last time upon the gold of Constantine XIII. (1078). His obverse, however, bears a type first employed by Romanus Argyrus, two *full-length figures*, in front face, of the emperor standing in his robes of state, and the Virgin placing the crown on his head. This group is very gracefully composed.

This enlargement of the proportions of the device was favoured by the considerable change in the module of the coin, first made at the beginning of the century. For more than six hundred years the diameter of the solidus (or *bezant*) had remained at the measure fixed by Constantine the Great in his monetary reform, namely at about four-fifths of an inch, and of a well-proportioned thickness, but Basil II. (975-1025) beat out the same weight of gold to an additional extent of one-third, preposterously attenuating its substance. This change, there can be little doubt, was made in imitation of the gold dinars of the Caliphs, who had purposely retained the pattern of their Sassanian predecessors, whose coinage had from its commencement distinguished itself from the ancient by its tenuity; a peculiarity which had constantly augmented, until the pieces of the two last Chosroes (which the

Caliphs for seventy-nine years continued to mint) were as thin as the very thinnest in the mediæval series. This reduction of the thickness of the gold piece, however unfavourable to artistic excellence, possessed two great recommendations from the commercial point of view. In the first place, it completely obviated the ancient and so common method of forgery, that of plating a copper *core* with a thick leaf of gold (which demanded considerable thickness in the piece in order to be successful), and likewise was a bar to the debasement of the standard, for the pure metal admitted of bending in all directions, like so much wax (the test still employed by the Sennaar traders for their gold ring money), whilst a very slight admixture of copper rendered the gold too brittle for such manipulation. At the time this important revolution took place in the size, another and very curious innovation was made in the form, evidently for the purpose of protecting from the defacement of wear the image and superscription of the emperor. This result was obtained by making the one die very convex, the other equally concave in the field, which produced a coin in the shape of a shallow saucer; whence the name of "nummi scyphati" given to the currency by mediæval Europe, which knew no other gold coin down to the close of the thirteenth century. It is a laughable circumstance as proving the superior veneration entertained by even the most superstitious of men for the earthly over the heavenly sovereign that it is always the emperor who enjoys the benefit of the shelter of the concave side, the divine likeness having to bear the brunt of circulation upon the convex part.

To Romanus Diogenes (1065) is ascribed the credit of first making both gold and silver carry a poetical legend, accompanying a truly elegant type. This is the full-length figure of the Virgin, in well-managed drapery, bearing the Infant on her arm, with the hexameter verse, continued from one side to the other around the coin, Πάρθενέ σοι πολύαινε ὅς ἤλπικε πάντα κατορθοῦ, "O glorious Virgin, he that trusteth in thee prospers in all things." The reverse presents the emperor at full length, attired in his robes; but with no indication of name.

The only other example of a current *coin*, as distinguished from *medal*, graced with poetry is that most famous of all currencies, the zecchin of Venice, which reads in a very abbreviated and puzzling form round the figure of the Saviour, "Sit tibi Christe datus quem tu regis iste Ducatus."<sup>1</sup> This innovation in the legend on the Byzantine pieces (though not adopted by any of the succeeding emperors) may reasonably be supposed to have suggested the same pious ejaculation to the designers of the zecchin; first struck two centuries after the times of Romanus (1280).

Alexius Comnenus has been termed by historians the first of the *Greek* emperors of the East, and in fact his coinage displays Byzantine pictorial art fully developed in all its features, and which became stereotyped from this time downwards. The long and (comparatively) prosperous succession of his dynasty, under

<sup>1</sup> The concluding word gave the coin its so familiar name of "ducat." Its other appellation, "zecchino," from the Arabic *zecca*, "the mint," signifies legal currency; the application being analogous to that of "moneta" with the ancients, and of "sicca" (*i. e.* *zecca*) rupee with ourselves.

which learning, commerce, the arts, more especially the glyptic, revived, has enriched the medallie series of the Eastern empire with several novel and well-executed types. The bezants of Alexius commonly bear the Saviour enthroned, but the time-honoured *Latin* legend is replaced by the Greek prayer, *Κύριε βοήθει*, "Help us, O Lord!" A half-bezant, instead of the Divine Son, displays His Mother seated on His accustomed throne, and holding forth the holy vesture of Edessa: but the regular practice of the mint was to restrict the patronage of the Madonna to the silver currency alone. The usual legend attending upon her figure is, *Θεοτόκε βοήθει Ἀλεξίῳ Δεσπότῃ τῷ Κομνηνῷ*.

John Comnenus varies the picture of his consecrated coronation, upon the principle of equal compensation to both his heavenly patrons. When Christ is figured placing the diadem on the imperial head, then the throne on the reverse is occupied by the Virgin Mary; and the converse scene is repeated upon the other moiety of the gold coinage. A striking innovation of this reign is the obverse representing the emperor and St. George supporting between them a tall cross; the reverse being the usual enthronement of Christ.

Manuel Comneus takes St. Theodore for his patron instead of St. George upon a few of his bezants; but also continues the old subject of his consecration by the Virgin; for whom, in one remarkable instance, he substitutes the Hand of God issuing from the skies. The bust of the Saviour, inscribed  $\overline{\text{IC}}-\overline{\text{XC}}$  at the sides, now resumes its old place upon the reverse of the gold; and in some examples, by a most un-

accountable variation upon the established type, the face is depicted beardless and infantine.

Isaac Angelus (1185) makes an elegant change, suggested by his own surname, in the obverse of the bezant, taking the Archangel Michael for his helper in the onerous support of the Cross, instead of the former St. George; the reverse of these pieces presents the Virgin, holding the vernicle, upon the throne. The same "canting arms" of the angel, at full length, or as a bust, decorate the copper coinage of the same emperor.

The Frankish empire of Constantinople has left an appropriate memorial of its fifty-seven years of chronic bankruptcy in the shape of rude copper pieces bearing on one side the customary bust of Christ, and on the reverse a cross with legend **IC—XC—NIKA**. During the same interval the exiled Greek emperors, who had made a new capital of the city of Nicæa, continued the issue of bezants (but of very debased standard, being only sixteen carats fine) with the Comnenian types of the prince crowned by the Virgin, or with a saint standing at his side, and the Christ enthroned upon the reverse.

But Michael Palæologus signalises his obligation to Heaven for the miraculous restoration of his ancient capital, by a complete change in the devices upon his coin. Christ and Cæsar no longer stand side by side as joint rulers of heaven and earth: the former is now seated on the throne, whilst the emperor, presented by his guardian the Archangel, kneels low before him to receive his benediction. Still more conspicuous is the display of gratitude made on the reverse, which shows



the Virgin herself, with extended hands, in the midst of the circle formed by the walls and towers of the city recovered through her interposition. This change is mentioned by Pachymer (vi. 8) in the following brief terms:—"Afterwards, when the capital was recaptured, Michael changed the device of the old coins, engraving the figure of the city on the reverse; which he did [referring to the debasement described in the previous sentence] by reason of the heavy payments, especially to the Italians, to which he was compelled." This new recognition of the true source of sovereign power became the established type for the miserable and debased coins sparingly issued by the unfortunate line of the Palæologi, and therefore will serve to mark the last epoch in the history of ancient Christian numismatics. But the same design was taken up, and perpetuated almost down to our own times, in a nobler material, though the first barbaric, or conventional, style of art was most religiously preserved. It was copied, with the substitution of doge for emperor, even to the vertical arrangement of the legend, upon the obverse of the zecchin, first struck in Venice in 1280, that is, nineteen years after the piety of the restored emperor had excogitated the device. In truth, the type appears to possess the gift of immortality, for though the actual mintage of the zecchin ended with the fall of the republic of Venice in 1797, yet facsimiles of it continue to be reproduced by the jewellers of Hindostan; so high is the reputation of the time-honoured image and superscription as an amulet all over the East.

The coinage of Byzantium served for a model to the

barbarians of Europe, as they successively attempted to possess a gold currency of their own. The first instance is that of the Frankish king Theodobert, who imitates with some success the solidus of Justinian in his own *sou d'or*. The actual bezants that found their way thus far west were looked upon by the Saxons as precious jewels, were mounted as such in necklaces, and clumsily imitated with the punch and graver upon disks of gold. But the most conspicuous instance where the Byzantine type furnished the pattern, which was adapted to another purpose, and brought to perfection by the more refined taste and greater mechanical skill of the borrower, is to be found in the gold penny of our Henry III., minted in 1257, or four years earlier than the monetary revolution of Palæologus. It is evident at first sight that the figure of the king in his robes, seated upon a wide throne, of a pattern entirely different from the normal Gothic, has been copied, with no more than the necessary alterations, from the Christ enthroned of the bezants; a type having then the prescription of nearly three centuries to recommend it. But the English (or Roman<sup>1</sup>) die-sinker who produced this glory of our national series was no servile copyist; he corrected the drawing and completed with matchless delicacy all the details of his model, producing a result infinitely superior to the best that ever emanated from the Byzantine mint.

The "Hand of God" we have seen for the first time upon that most interesting little medal which

<sup>1</sup> Probably the "Petrus civis Romanus," Henry's goldsmith, then employed upon the grand shrine of the Confessor.

represents the first Christian Augustus rapt to Heaven in the fiery chariot of Elias. The same Hand, holding forth the laurel wreath of *celestial* victory (that of earthly triumph had been a mockery in those times) over the brows of the Defenders of the Faith, makes its appearance upon the mintage of the family of Theodosius. After a long discontinuance, it is again to be seen on the gold of Constantine Copronymus, associated with Leo Chazar, descending in the field between the heads of the imperial partners, and dividing its benediction equally between the two. This symbol is represented as *open*, from the engraver's inability to give in so confined a space the complicated positions of the five fingers that go to form the Greek benediction. In this formula the several fingers, straightened or bent in turn, are supposed to express the sacred letters **Ι** **ϸ** — **Χ** **ϸ** — **Ν**. Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς νικᾷ. The Latin benediction, on the contrary, is given with the two first fingers extended and the others closed, to typify the union of the two Natures in the One Person. The Byzantine Hand was adopted on some Saxon pennies, notably on those of the unlucky Ethelred II., the mystic **A** and **Ω** being placed at each side to denote the sense of the symbol; but contrary to what might have been expected from the Church of the adopters, the fingers usually<sup>1</sup> express the Byzantine, not the Roman, form of benediction. The director of Ethelred's mint must have been a man of taste as well as of learning, these coins with the type of the Hand surpassing all

<sup>1</sup> Of the five examples figured by Ruding, only one shows the three fingers closed.

in the Saxon series for accuracy of engraving and carefulness in the striking (with the sole exception of those of Offa, the work of a Roman artist): they are in fact immeasurably superior to any that follow, until we come to the civilised epoch of Edward I.

Before quitting the subject of Saxon imitative art, notice is due to that interesting coin of the Confessor, the "sovereign" penny. This piece takes its name from the full-length figure of the king (in profile) seated on the throne, and holding the orb surmounted by the cross. This type was intended to proclaim him sovereign ruler, or *suzerain*, over all the other kings of Great Britain, and contains the same assumption of supremacy as does the title of "Basileus" in the contemporary Byzantine sense, which also he employs in his charters. With respect to the symbol he carries, a few words will here not be out of place. From the time of Probus downwards, the emperor was often figured (in his bust) on the obverse of the coin, holding in his hand the orb, on which perches a little figure of Victory. But, in place of this heathen idea, the director of the Ravenna mint, upon the accession of Jovian, chose to substitute the triumphant Cross, evidently desiring to celebrate the victory of Faith in the death of Julian. Thenceforward, the orb and cross becomes the regular badge of imperial power; although Justinian, with characteristic arrogance, to set forth his religious and temporal supremacy, makes his appearance upon a medallion, holding in one hand the orb with the *Christian*, in the other with the *pagan* decoration. And before quitting the Confessor and his "sovereign" penny,

the reverse of the same piece furnishes matter for the most curious speculation. Its type is the Four Birds placed in the *cantons* of a Greek cross, popularly called *starlings*, and supposed by many (following Polydore Vergil) to have given the name "sterling" to the silver currency of all subsequent reigns. Now this identical device is found amongst the cohort shield-bearings, drawings of which are preserved in the 'Notitia Imperii;' and, what is equally worthy of notice, the corps using this particular badge is entitled the "Constantiniani," which shows that it had been raised by that emperor. The device is therefore in modern parlance his coat of arms, and must have been recommended to the holy Saxon by that circumstance, as tallying so well with the imperial type he had put on the obverse of the same piece. It is in truth impossible to imagine any other motive for the Confessor's selecting this particular figure out of the long array of cohortial insignia, innumerable specimens of which must have met the eye upon the Roman monuments standing in his time in every part of England. This shield of *starlings* (in reality *doves*), after heraldry had grown into a regular science, was esteemed the true coat of arms of the Confessor; and the assumption of it by the celebrated Earl of Surrey was judged and punished as an act of high-treason.

Constantine's vision of the Cross in the heavens is not commemorated directly by any monetary record of his times, unless it be by the medal of his son Constantius, to which attention has been called above (p. 65). But there can be no doubt that it suggested the idea of that *follis* of Heraclius which

exhibits that emperor standing at full length in his robes, with his hand resting upon a tall cross in lieu of a spear; whilst the reverse bears a Greek cross surrounded with a legend in the very words of Eusebius **EN T&TTO** (*sic*) **NIKA**. This is the first time the Greek language makes its appearance on the mintage of a Byzantine Cæsar, and must therefore have owed its admission to some very powerful motive; and the all-sufficient one is supplied in the history of its miraculous origin, then become an article of faith. The occasion for its mintage may with every probability be supposed the event of Heraclius' taking the field against that most formidable of all the enemies of the Church and the empire, the Sassanian Khosru Parviz. The issuing of this coin might well have been regarded in those times as dictated by the spirit of prophecy, foreshowing his glorious deliverance of Jerusalem, and the True Cross, out of the hands of the unbelievers.

To transform the sovereign's name into the actual *Ensign of Salvation*, **Σωτήριον Σημείον**, as Eusebius loves to call it, was the invention of the ingenious flattery of the Byzantine mint. The letters composing **ΡΩΜΑΝΟC**, and **ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟC**, were so disposed in monogram as to form a *Cross*, filling the obverse of the coin; of which that of Romanus combines also the favourite Christian symbol of the anchor, whilst that of Nicephorus is constructed with great elegance of outline. The same notion is continued by Alexius Comnenus, who simply applies his initials to the arms of the life-giving Sign. This device, too, had taken the fancy of the Saxons, for that enigmatical Knut,

whose coins formed so large a portion of the grand Cuerdale find, had adopted it for the setting forth of his name and title to the utter bewilderment of our numismatists, whom it took so long to analyse the simple combination. The example of adopting the Byzantine invention had been already set by Charlemagne, whose name **KAROLVS** lends its elements readily to the construction of a very elegant cruciform monogram; his satisfaction with which is attested by his making it the commonest type of his imperial *deniers*. Other Saxon moneyers, too unskilled in caligraphy for the composition of a monogram sufficiently compact to serve for a coin device, do the best in their power to carry out the same principle by dividing their employer's name into syllables, separated by blank spaces, each of which should correspond to one extremity of the cross placed in the centre of the field.

This subject cannot be properly concluded without some notice being taken of the curious misreadings, and real forgeries, by which the credulity of the older numismatists, and the craftiness of their providers, have augmented the series of Christian types. At the head of the list, in every sense of the term, stands the piece of Constantine's, first published by Ducange, which represents the emperor in military attire standing with orb in one hand, sceptre in the other; with a legend, then read as conveying the all-important announcement to the world of the emperor's actual admission into the Church in the definite words **CONSTANTINO Pio AVGusto BAPTismate Nato**. As may well be supposed, this conspicuous piece of evidence was hailed with delight, and republished by a

host of subsequent Church-historians ; and admitted for authentic by the most recent writer of Christian numismatics, Dr. Walsh ; the gift was too welcome to allow of any impertinent scrutiny into its genuineness. It is with regret that one is now obliged to submit to the very simple explanation, which so cruelly breaks this charming bubble, that the momentous declaration is produced merely by the wrong reading of **A** for **R** ;<sup>1</sup> a very facile interchange upon a badly preserved specimen, but which elicits the announcement of the first imperial baptism out of the common title, “Constantino Pio Augusto *Bono Reipublicæ Nato*.” This legend is to be read, in characters admitting of no misunderstanding, not only upon numerous bronze coins with the same type of Constantine himself, but, what sets the matter at rest, in an inscription found at Feleri, in honour of him and his *pagan* colleague, Licinius, and their children : and again in another commemorating the very unorthodox Julian (Orelli, No. 1110). The first appearance of it fully written on a coin is on a solidus of Victor as colleague of Mag. Maximus, **BONO REIPUBLICAE NATI** ; and later on solidi of Galla Placidia and Grata Honoria. Longpérier has collected numerous examples of the lapidary use of this title in his “Note sur une Légende monétaire de Constantin le Grand” (‘Revue Numismatique’ for 1868).

There is also a sufficient chronological argument against the old interpretation of this legend, which may

<sup>1</sup> It was the Père Hardouin, so famed for his wondrous interpretations, who first pointed out the absurdity of *this*. He went right in this case, out of the spirit of contrariety, and did summary justice upon all interlopers in his own peculiar province.



as well be mentioned here, in case the reader should require yet stronger moral proof in order to dispel his pleasing illusion. The coin bearing this far-famed reverse does not give Constantine the title of "Maximus," which became his regular style from the time it was conferred upon him by the Roman senate in the year 312; and for this very reason the coin in question *must* have been minted before that date. Now, Eusebius records that Constantine had always cherished a strong desire to submit to the rite of baptism under circumstances worthy of the occasion, namely, in the waters of Jordan itself, there "to partake of the seal of salvation," in imitation of his Lord; but he was surprised by his fatal sickness at Nicomedia, and felt himself compelled to abandon his long-cherished intention, and to receive baptism at that place, without further loss of time: in fact his death was only removed from the ceremony by a very few days. This event took place A.D. 337; so that the medal supposed to commemorate it must have been issued at least twenty-five years beforehand—a very remarkable example of prescience on the part of its designer, though one which probably would not have proved an insuperable objection (had their knowledge of history suggested it) to writers of the class above mentioned, accustomed as they are to discover a *prophecy* in every record of the *past*.

The most extravagant of all the forgeries ever perpetrated in that favourite domain of fraud, antique medals, was suggested by the existence of that great Catholic festival, the "Exaltation of the Cross." This festival was instituted to keep up the memory of the

conveyance of the wood of the True Cross to Jerusalem by the emperor Heraclius in person, after it had been restored by the Shah Siroes; whose father, Khosru Parviz, had become possessed of it at the time of his capture of the Holy City. The medal in question, equal to the dignity of its subject in material and size, being of fine gold and five inches in diameter, exhibits the bust of Heraclius with a long beard, which he grasps in his hand, supported upon a crescent, and with eyes devoutly lifted up to heaven, whence streams the light of the Shechinah. Out of his mouth proceed the words, "Illumina vultum tuum, Dominus"; and below, "Super tenebras nostras militando in gentibus"; around runs his style in Greek. The reverse shows the victor seated in what the artist meant for a triumphal car, but which is literally copied from a mediæval travelling-carriage with curtains; it is drawn by three horses, and guided by a driver on foot. Heraclius wears a crown, much resembling the papal tiara, and holds a long cross in lieu of sceptre; he is supposed to be uttering the prayer placed in the field in Greek capitals, Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις χῶ τῷ Θεῷ ὅτι διάρρηξεν (*sic*) σιδήρας πύλας καὶ ἤλευθέρωσεν ἅγιον βασι. Ἡρακλε. The legend on this side is, "Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulavit, conculcavit leonem et draconem." The three lamps hanging above, to which the victor lifts his eyes, are supposed to denote the church of St. Anastasius, in which the Cross, when restored by the Persians, was deposited until the emperor had finished his preparations for carrying it to its proper resting-place. The conception of the whole design, considered as intended for a monument

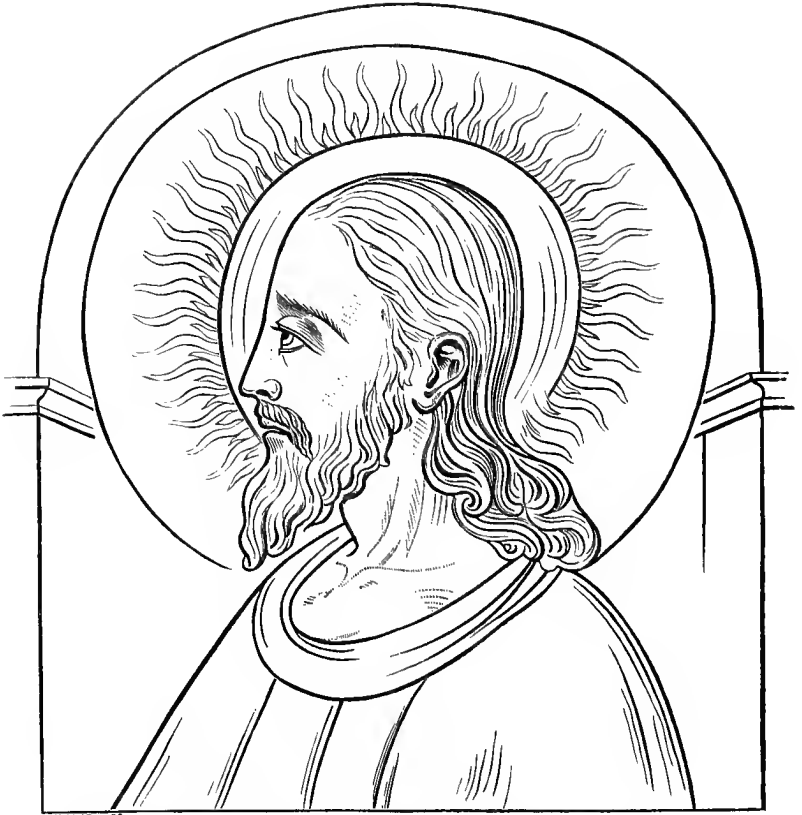
of the time, is absurd in the extreme, the Byzantine Cæsar being made to wear that grotesque King David physiognomy so familiar to our eyes in the old tapestries of Flemish manufacture. This incongruity struck Ducange, even in his uncritical age; who, however, contents himself with remarking that the emperor's costume is not that of the times of Heraclius ('Dis. Num.' 65). There can be no doubt that the medal is the birth of the ludicrously disguised Gothic taste, known as Flemish Renaissance, so fertile in religious art; for the Italian would have produced something more consistent with historical requirements. As to fabric, it is doubtless a cast from a wax model, according to the rule for the huge medallions of the same period. When Du Cange described it, it was esteemed one of the chief ornaments of the French Cabinet of Medals: and there probably it may still be found.

After disposing of this unparalleled piece of imposture, so well adapted to the unquestioning credulity of the age that gave it birth, we may appropriately conclude this enquiry by noticing a modern acceptation of Christian types in a monument really belonging to personages of a very unspiritual character. Louis Bourbon, Infante of Spain and Duke of Parma, had been appointed by Napoleon, in his first settlement of Italian affairs, to the vacant place of Grand-duke of Tuscany, with the fine title of King of Etruria. He did not, however, long enjoy his new dignity, but dying left a widow, Maria Aloysia, and a son, Charles, so well known in our times as the last Duke of Lucca; famed for his patronage of "le sport," and equally so for his Yorkshire groom and prime minister, Baron Ward. Mother and

son ruled Etruria for a few years longer, until *translated* to the defunct miniature republic of Lucca; the richer province being wanted by the almighty king-maker as an appanage for his own sister Elisa Bacciocchi. But if nothing else is on record to the credit of the widowed Infanta, she can certainly claim the honour of having minted the largest and perhaps the handsomest specimen of current money known to modern times. This is the silver ten-lira piece, weighing about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ounce troy, having for obverse her bust with that of her infant son, *conjugated*; life-like portraits, and done in the bold effective manner of the old Roman medallions, without that futile attempt at minute finish, so fatal to effect in modern numismatic art. The reverse displays an extensive shield emblazoned with the innumerable quarterings due to the paternal and maternal ancestry of the baby *principino*. The history of the origin of this coin (or rather medallion, as it would be termed if in the antique class) was very soon forgotten in Tuscany, for the Italians have no memory for events less than five centuries old; the peasants therefore now-a-days recognise in the busts the conventional portraits (considerably flattered) of the Madonna and divine *Bambino*, in virtue of which belief the old ten-lira pieces, furnished with rings and chains, are worn by the *contadine* as ornaments and religious talismans of especial sanctity—*decus et tutamen* in one. At the time of my residence at Florence, some twenty years ago, these coins were to be seen in abundance displayed in the jewellers' windows, amidst the numerous assortment of similar portable aids to devotion. Occasionally they were gilt, to enhance

their beauty and price to the purchaser. But to the few persons yet acquainted with the true prototype of the medallic *Bambino*, as he afterwards developed himself in his jovial dukedom, this religious metamorphosis could not but appear ludicrous in the extreme.





OTTING. 55

Portraiture of Our Lord: a painting after the type of the emerald vernicle presented by Bajazet II. to Innocent VIII. Preserved at Douglas, Isle of Man.  
From a drawing and photograph communicated by Miss Wilks, of Douglas.

## THE EMERALD VERNICLE OF THE VATICAN.

“ Quale è colui, che forse di Croazia  
 Viene a veder la Veronica nostra,  
 Che per l' antica fama non si sazia ;  
 Ma dice nel pensier, fin che si mostra :  
 Signor mio, Gesù Cristo, Iddio verace,  
 Or fu sì fatta la sembianza vostra ?”

(*Parad.* xxxi. 103.)

No monument of any art could approach in high and holy interest to the one asserted to be preserved in the Treasury of the Vatican, were it possible to give credence to the statement accompanying its pretended copy. This statement, attached to a copperplate engraving, or to a photograph from the same, now commonly to be seen in the London printshops, runs thus:—“The only true likeness of Our Saviour, taken from one cut on an emerald by command of Tiberius Cæsar, and was given (*sic*) from the treasury of Constantinple by the Emperor of the Turks to Pope Innocent VIII., for the redemption of his brother, taken a captive of the Christians.”

But in *this* instance the claims of both prototype (supposing there really to be one) and of copy may be dismissed at once, a single circumstance sufficing amply to disprove them. Any eye slightly practised in art will immediately detect that the character of the design in this head is neither antique Roman nor even Byzantine, but bears the unmistakable stamp of the *naturalism* of the Italian Revival. In fact, if

compared with the head of the Saviour in Raphael's "Miraculous Draught of Fishes" (so well known to everybody by its perpetual republication in various forms), it cannot fail to be discovered an exact transcript from that celebrated work. Nevertheless it is probable enough that a real engraved gem (an *emerald*, too, considering the importance of the object to which the material was devoted) may have served for original to the print, and have impudently usurped the honours of a lost predecessor of the same kind. An Italian gem-engraver, working at any period subsequent to the "divine" painter, would of necessity have adopted his conception of the sacred countenance as the most authoritative model he could take for his art. Commissions for religious subjects were commonly given to the greatest glyptic artists of the Cinque-cento and subsequent schools by their ecclesiastic patrons—witness the elaborate crystal plaques and medallions done to the order of Clement VII. and the Cardinal Farnese by Valerio Vicentino and Castel-Bolognese, of which Vasari has left full particulars in his 'Lives' of those artists. And what is yet more cognate to the present subject, the masterpiece of Carlo Costanzi (and which cost him two years and a half of incessant labour<sup>1</sup>) executed for Benedict XIV., was an immense table *emerald*, two inches in diameter, having for obverse the head of St. Peter in relief, for reverse the portrait of the Pontiff himself. It was intended to adorn the *morse* or clasp fastening the sumptuous cope worn only at the grand festivals of the Church.

<sup>1</sup> According to his contemporary, Mariette, in his 'Recueil des Pierres gravées en creux du Cabinet du Roy,' published 1750.



Having thus cleared the ground of a pretender who carries his modern origin so conspicuously impressed upon his face, I will proceed to bring under the notice of my readers another of like nature, but whose pretensions are of a very different order, possessing at least the required character of type, backed by a very respectable and indisputable antiquity to countenance them. This is a painting on panel traditionally reported to have been found in the old convent of St. Bride at Douglas, Isle of Man, degraded to the office of a barrel-lid. Rescued thence, the picture came into the possession of Dr. P. Moore, who bequeathed it in the year 1783 to the Grammar School-house of that little capital (of which he had been rector), as a most precious legacy, with the memorandum that its counterpart was then preserved at Greystoke in the collection of the Duke of Norfolk. The existence of this interesting picture was recently communicated to me by a local correspondent, Miss Wilks, of Douglas, a lady as distinguished for her knowledge of the antiquities of her insular home as for the intelligent zeal with which she prosecutes the study and preserves the memory of its fast-fading traditions. To her kindness I was indebted for a careful tracing of the outline of the head, fully sufficient to certify the style, a facsimile of the inscription underneath, and the other necessary particulars of the description. The face is shown in profile, with the eyes somewhat bent downwards, the hair golden, the beard short and bifurcated, the upper folds of the drapery white, the lower dark-blue. The type of this portrait is evidently derived from the detailed description of Christ's personal appearance

contained in the celebrated letter of Lentulus to Tiberius, first cited by our Anselm of Canterbury:—"A man indeed of lofty stature, handsome, having a venerable countenance, that the beholders can both love and fear. His hair verily somewhat wavy and curling, somewhat brightish and resplendent, flowing down upon his shoulders, having a parting in the middle of the head after the fashion of the Nazarenes. A forehead flat and full of calmness, without wrinkles or any blemish, which a slight tinge of red adorns. The nose and mouth beyond all praise, having a beard, full and ruddy, of the same colour with his hair, not long but forked. His eyes of changeable colour (*variis*) and brilliant." For the further information of such as may happen to possess that deservedly popular book, Walsh's 'Ancient Coins, &c., as Illustrations of Christianity,' I add that the face in this painting is identical with that on the medal figured by him on plate i., which latter will come to be considered in another place, inasmuch as its existence appears in some degree to elucidate the subject of our enquiry.

The lower quarter of the panel is occupied by an inscription, here and there obliterated by accident, of which a facsimile, so far as modern print will allow, is here given:—

"This Prefent fimitude of our lord an . . . Sauioir Jesus Christ imprinted in Amerilde by the Predefefors of y<sup>e</sup> Greate Turke and fent to the Pope . . . ente the . . . for this cause for a token to redeme . . . his brother y<sup>e</sup> Was taken prifoner . . ."

Persons conversant with old English writing will at once perceive that spelling and lettering combine to prove this inscription not possibly later than the reign

of Elizabeth, nor, on the other hand, earlier than her father's time. But, as I am informed, this writing, ancient as it is, presents every appearance of having been *painted over* the original painting, that is, upon the lower part of the bust, obliterated for the purpose. There is consequently proof positive that the picture must be at least three hundred years old: in fact, everything in its appearance would warrant us to refer it to the Italian school of the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

The chief value of this inscription is that it carries back the tradition concerning the emerald Vernicle (*vera icon*), by its own antiquity, to within a century of the date assigned for the first appearance of the gem in the Treasury of the Vatican. The next step is to examine into the *probability* of the story which this inscription records. The historical facts, briefly stated, are these:—Zizim, son of Mahomet II., having disputed the succession with his elder brother, Bajazet II., was defeated in the great battle of Brousa, took refuge with the Soldan of Egypt, Kaibai, and, after a second unsuccessful trial of his fortune, with D'Aubusson, Grand Master of Rhodes, who sent him to France

<sup>1</sup> "It is thought by Mr. Nicholson, a rising artist of great promise, and who has made a most satisfactory facsimile copy of the picture, that he can detect, amid other alterations from the original, the profile 'glory' of very thick yellow paint around the head as a late addition; also that the background was originally gold, no doubt much decayed and effaced; the present inscription entirely painted over a former one, probably a restoration of the original; with other minor touchings up. The time when these restorations were made may be attributed to the year when these artists (Byrne and Hearne in 1783) pointed out the true though expiring merits of this ancient relic; they might even suggest and superintend the restoration." (*From a MS. Note by Miss Wills to her Reprint of this Memoir.*)

in the year 1482. From France he was conveyed, at his own request, to Rome, in 1488, whither both his brother and the Soldan sent embassies on his account, but with very different views. Bajazet promised the Pope, then Innocent VIII., the large sum of 40,000 zecchins annually for the *safe* though honourable keeping of a respected though formidable brother, whilst Kaibai made large presents to the Head of Christendom in the hopes of securing aid from the Franks against his much dreaded enemy the Turk. Onophrius Panuvinus, his contemporary, the continuator of Platina's 'Lives of the Popes,' mentions that Bajazet, besides the pension, made the Pope a present of the spear of the Crucifixion (the far-famed lance of Longinus), doubtless regarded at the time by donor and receiver as equivalent to a much larger amount, and which at once, skilfully wielded in pontifical hands, proved to the new possessor the very wand of Hermes. This gift suffices to prove that the recent usurper of the throne of the Byzantine Cæsars found still something left in their old storehouse of relics to dispose of when he chose. Onophrius does not indeed mention this emerald (perhaps because he was sceptical as to its genuineness), yet it is very conceivable that amongst the costly gifts of either Turk or Egyptian was included an emerald (or plasma, which usually passes for its precious congener in these circumstances), actually bearing the head of the Saviour, and proceeding from the early Byzantine school. Similar gem-works, when the art was lost to the Franks, regularly figure amongst the presents of the Byzantine emperors to the kings of the West. One of the most valued objects in the

*Trésor de Saint-Denys* was a large lapis-lazuli engraved with the head of our Lord on one side, of our Lady on the other, probably the gift of Heraclius to Dagobert, he being named as the donor of the next article on the list, a silver-gilt reliquary. Now, supposing such a gem to have been received at Rome under such remarkable circumstances, nothing could have been more natural than to account for its origin by applying to it, with very slight amplification, the popular legend concerning Lentulus and his communication to his imperial and inquisitive master, and by making the latter embody the information so received in the most precious material nature could supply.

But there was another and very sufficient cause for assigning the authorship of this emerald to Tiberius. Martinus Scotus (*d.* 1086) had copied from a certain Methodius the following legend:—“The Emperor Tiberius was afflicted with leprosy. Hearing of the miracles of our Lord, he sent for him to Jerusalem; but Christ was already crucified, and had risen and ascended into heaven. The messengers of Tiberius, however, ascertained that a certain Veronica possessed a portrait of Christ, impressed by the Saviour himself upon a linen handkerchief, and preserved by her with reverence. Veronica was persuaded by them to come to Rome; and the sight of the sacred image restored the emperor to health. Pilate was then sentenced by him to death for having unjustly crucified the Lord.” This Cæsar, moreover, had the reputation, throughout the Middle Ages, of a great connoisseur in gems, like that royal Faustus, the Regent Orleans, seventeen centuries later, of whom he was, in many respects, the

prototype. Both had passed the better part of their lives, under the cloud of court disfavour, occupied in the cultivation of "curious arts," astrology, alchemy, and the like; and of both the term of power was equally unlucky, a certain ill-fate baulking the effect of their wisest measures, until, in despair, they drowned themselves in unrestrained voluptuousness.

Prudentius seems to allude to a miraculous print of a holy visage upon a handkerchief, when describing the signs accompanying the execution of the two martyrs of Calagurris (*Περὶ Στεφάνων*, i. 85):—

"Illius fidem figurans nube fertur annulus ;  
 Hic sui dat *pignus oris*, ut ferunt, orarium.  
 Quæ superno rapta flatu lucis intrant intimum,  
 Per poli liquentis axem fulgor auri absconditur ;  
 Ac diu visum sequacem textilis candor fugit :  
 Subvehuntur usque in astra, nec videntur amplius."

It is, however, quite unaccountable to me how this legend of the emerald, most assuredly "vetus et constans opinio," came to escape the notice of all writers on the subject of Vernicles, not being once alluded to by Peignot in his elaborate essay, 'Recherches sur la Personne de Jésus-Christ,' published in 1829; nor by Heaphy in his "Examination into the Antiquity of the Likeness of our Blessed Lord," in the 'Art Journal,' n. s. vol. vii. 1861; nor again by the latest writer upon the subject, the author of the article, "Portraits of Christ," in the 'Quarterly Review,' vol. cxxiii. p. 490, who has evidently taken immense pains to make his researches thoroughly exhaustive.

The medal to which passing reference was made above, and of which specimens are not uncommon, was in existence as early as the opening of the six-

teenth century, for it is described as a most precious antiquity (being supposed contemporary with its prototype) by Theseus Ambrosius, who flourished under Julius II. and Leo X. Passing over the other absurdity of this notion on the grounds of ancient usage, art, and language of the legend, it suffices to point out that its material, *white bell-metal*,<sup>1</sup> and its *fabrique* being a *sand-cast*, not struck with a die, conclusively declare it to proceed from the century before Ambrosius' date, the period when the manufacture of medals thus produced most especially flourished in Italy. Throughout this period, before the invention of the coining-press, casting in sand from a wax pattern was the sole effectual method of executing those medallions, or, rather, small bas-reliefs, of large diameter and highly raised designs, the easily produced memorials of the celebrities of the age, which have come down to us in such otherwise inexplicable abundance. The medal, therefore, whose sacred antiquity struck Ambrosius with so much awe, can only belong to the generation preceding his own: Gothic art never produced anything of the like nature; and had it originated in ancient times, even those of the Christian emperors of the West (which its style also entirely controverts), it would have been made by a die like the other medallions of the same princes.

Nevertheless, the existence of this medal may be fancied indirectly to support the tradition concerning the emerald of Bajazet. Supposing a new *vera effigies*

<sup>1</sup> The same is the material of the famous statue of St. Peter, a work of the Quattrocento school—a sufficient refutation in itself to the Protestant joke about “a christened Jove.”

to have come to Rome in so conspicuous a manner, and with so august a voucher for its authenticity as the Grand Turk himself, it would necessarily excite the highest interest and devotion amongst all who flocked to St. Peter's shrine, and nothing could be more obvious to its wonderfully *intelligent* proprietors than the multiplying the relic (with the spiritual advantages accompanying the sight) by converting its imprint into the popular form of a medal. An analogous instance offers itself in the linen impressions of St. Veronica's far-famed *Sudarium*, still regularly kept on sale at the same temple. The inscription, in the modern Hebrew character, filling the reverse of the medal in question, may be supposed to countenance in some slight degree the conjecture above hazarded as to its invaluable prototype: "The Messiah has reigned, He came in peace, and being made the Light of Men, He lives."<sup>1</sup>

But setting this conjecture aside, there is another important question that must not be eluded, inasmuch as it involves a circumstance which might effectually prevent the recognition of the real emerald by a modern and too knowing eye, supposing it still to repose in the Vatican Cabinet. It is true that the Byzantines, from the very commencement of their school, were fond of engraving sacred images upon green-coloured

<sup>1</sup> This glaring piece of forgery has given birth, through the cabalistic mystery involved in its inscription, to a very profound essay, the title of which I copy in full: "De Nummo Hebraico prope Corcagium (Corck) in Hibernia detecto dissertatio hermeneutica et critica quam anno præterito dedit modo novis curis auget Fr. Thomas Maria Borghetti, Ordinis Prædicatorum, Sanctæ Theologiæ Magister, ac Linguarum Orientalium Professor. Romæ, 1820."



stones, substitutes for the too costly *smaragdus*. I have seen amongst others a plasma of such beautiful quality as might well be mistaken for emerald, bearing in relief the Saviour's bust in front face, at the side the sacred initials  $\overline{\text{IC}}-\overline{\text{XC}}$ , executed in the highest style to which Byzantine glyptic art ever attained. Nevertheless, there is a possibility of a strange confusion of personages in the giving of the names to such representations. Even that very learned and practical antiquary, Chiflet, has fallen into a singular error in this actual particular. He figures a noble head of Serapis, wreathed with persea-branches, as that of the Saviour crowned with thorns,<sup>1</sup> and attributes its origin to the Carpocratian Gnostics, who are *accused* by Epiphanius of making and worshipping similar images. But the *calathus* capping the head would alone unmistakably declare the presence of the patron god of Alexandria, did not the excellence of the engraving likewise bespeak the best period of the glyptic art, not the much lower and decrepit ages when the Gnosis flourished. Chiflet calls the material *emerald*, and his word may be accepted in this instance without too much questioning, for the Greco-Egyptians frequently consecrated the most costly produce of their national mines to the embodiment of the conceptions of their gods. Examples in fine ruby as well as emerald have repeatedly come within my own observation. This interchange of personages, however, is facile enough to a beholder paying no attention to the distinctive attributes of the Alexandrian

<sup>1</sup> No. 111 in the plates to his valuable 'Macarii Abraxas-Proteus, seu Apistopistus,' Antv. 1657.

deity. Antique art has stamped the features of Serapis with that expression of profound thoughtfulness and majestic severity so well befitting his special character as Lord and *Judge* of the dead, the very character in which the Saviour came subsequently to be most usually depicted in early Christian work. Compare any of the numerous fine camei extant of the Serapis' head in front face with the better executed examples of the Byzantine Christ, for instance, as portrayed (for the first time) in coinage on the *solidi* of Justinian Rhinotmetus (685-711), and every draughtsman will detect and be astonished at their identity. The latter portrait, however, is said (on what authority I know not) to have been copied from the bronze statue of Christ which stood over the vestibule Chalcé of the imperial palace until destroyed by the great iconoclast, Leo the Isaurian, who has commemorated his substitution of the simple cross in place thereof by an inscription still (or recently) to be read upon the marble.

Lastly comes the all-important question—Does this paragon of all glyptic monuments anywhere exist, with any probability of ever being recognised?—an object of warmest adoration to devotee and to archæologist alike. Alas! sober consideration compels an answer in the negative. Small chance had it of escaping that worse than “Spartacum vagantem,” the mercilessly ransacking Spaniard at the lamentable sack of the Eternal City in 1527, unless, indeed, by special miracle (like that which protected the vernicle of Edessa) it should have had the good luck to be amongst the precious stones from St. Peter's

Treasury, which Cellini assisted the Pope and his confidant, Cardinal Cornaro, to sew up in their own robes when starved into surrender out of their last stronghold, Castel Santangelo!

The quantity of these jewels may be guessed from the two hundred pounds weight of gold which the veracious chronicler avers he obtained from melting down their settings.

Nay, even the last chance (on which I had once confidently reckoned, hoping against hope) has finally disappeared. Clement, restored to the ruins of his power, *might* be supposed to have replaced the emerald, so cleverly rescued by his Florentine astuteness, within the gem casket of the Vatican—a collection which, during the peaceful interval between the Constable Bourbon and the Emperor Napoleon I., had, through the perpetual favours of Fortune (so propitious at this her ancient seat), grown to such dimensions that its catalogue, drawn up by Visconti at the beginning of this century, filled two folio volumes. But over the fate of this cabinet there hangs an impenetrable mystery. It is not visible in any part of the public gallery; and when, some few years back, a learned and sagacious friend, being engaged upon the MSS. of the Vatican Library, made careful enquiry about it at my request (for this special object), none of the officials could give him any information, or were aware that any such collection had ever existed in the place! And yet this cabinet contained, amongst numerous gems of “great volume,” as Visconti expresses it, the largest cameo in the world, the Carpagna, “The Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne,” a piece whose

magnitude was surpassed by its artistic worth, and so well known by repeated publication in previous times that wherever it went its recognition could not be avoided. It is, however, not impossible that in the troublous times speedily following Visconti's labours, the cabinet was put away so carefully that the place of deposit had been lost to the next generation of keepers, as was actually the case here for more than fifty years with the better known Marlborough Gems. But there is another solution of the difficulty, and, I fear, the true one. When the Vatican statues were transferred to the Louvre, no notice can be found of the gems having accompanied them upon their enforced journey; they, therefore, may have been appropriated as perquisites by the French commissaries. In those days, when the gem mania raged so furiously, the temptation to such an exercise of the law of might was almost irresistible; and a very unanswerable reply to papal remonstrance would be found in the repetition of the old Gallic hint—"Væ victis." It is well known how French authorities, putting taste before religion, carefully despoiled the shrine of St. Elizabeth, Marburg, of every antique gem with which it was studded, but honestly left untouched all its gold and precious stones. These remarks upon the disappearance of the Vatican Cabinet are appended here in the hope of eliciting, from any parties better informed about its fate, that explanation which I have long laboured ineffectually to obtain. But to return to the Douglas Vernicle: its existence in Man has been plausibly accounted for by supposing it brought thither by T. Stanley, the last Catholic occupant of

the see. During his sequestration and detention in London under Edward VI., he was on intimate terms with the Norfolk family, then in close relation with the court of Spain, and therefore in the way of obtaining similar relics. A second example, bearing the same inscription, but slightly varied and modernised, which now hangs in the sub-librarian's room in the Bodleian Library, was presented by Mrs. Mary Prince (1722), "painted by herself," a copy, doubtless, of some older work, accompanied by a portrait of the "Royal Martyr," from the same hand; both, as my informant hath it, "horrid daubs." The current story that a third exists in the Provost's lodge, Trinity College, Dublin, has proved, upon enquiry, totally without foundation. Another, with some slight variations in the inscription, well painted and in excellent preservation, has been long in the possession of the Lechmere family, at Rhydd, Worcestershire.

The prototype of all these pictures there are many reasons for supposing to be the one discovered by M. Coutet in an out-of-the-way château of Vacluse; the description of which cannot be better given than in his own words:—"A l'entrée du village de Grambois, petite commune du canton de Pertuis, arrondissement d'Apt, s'élève un modeste château, assez moderne, mais dont tout l'ameublement rappelle encore la fin du règne de Louis XIV. Tous les appartements sont tapissés en haute lisse et renferment quelques tableaux remarquables. Mais le plus curieux sans contredit est un buste de Notre Seigneur, barbu, vu de profil, sur fond d'or, et entouré d'une auréole, composée de têtes d'anges, ailées. Les proportions de ce joli tableau

sont d'environ 30 centimètres de hauteur sur 20 de largeur.<sup>1</sup> Il est peint sur cuivre, avec un cadre en ébène, couvert de moulures, et relevé par des coins en argent ciselés. La figure du Christ est celle d'un homme dans la force de l'âge, elle est plutôt sérieuse que triste, avec ce noble caractère qui nous est transmis par l'iconographie chrétienne. Ce qui donne un attrait et un mérite particulier à ce curieux échantillon de l'art byzantin, c'est une inscription en vieil anglais, qui occupe toute la partie supérieure du tableau, et que je copie textuellement, avec sa naïve orthographe :

"THE PRESENT FIGVRE IS THE SIMILTYDE OF OVR LORD IHN  
OVRRE SAVIOR IMPRINTED IN AMARILD BY THE PREDECESSORS  
OF THE GREATE TVRKE AND SENT TO THE POPE INNOSENT  
VIII AT THE COST OF THE GRETE TVRKE FOR A TOKEN  
FOR THIS CAWSE TO REDEME HIS BROTHER THAT WAS  
TAKYN PRISONOR"<sup>2</sup>

The local tradition makes this picture to have been a present from the family of the famous Treasurer, Fouquet, to Pierre Rafélis de Roquesante, Conseiller au Parlement de Provence. He was on the commission appointed in 1661 for the trial of the great "self-helper," and by his exertions got the sentence of death commuted into one of exile; for which act he was himself banished and sequestered by the exasperated king. The picture is furthermore reported to have been stolen out of the Vatican; a circumstance that can be referred to no other occasion than the sack of Rome under the Constable Bourbon. Nothing is known of the manner by which it got into Fouquet's

<sup>1</sup> About 12 x 8 inches.

<sup>2</sup> "Un Portrait de Jésus-Christ, et le prince Zizim." Par Jules Coutet, Sous-Prefect de Drie. ('Revue archéologique,' iii. p. 101.)

possession, but the fact of the inscription being in English (which so sorely puzzles M. Coutet) makes it highly probable that it came out of the Gallery at Whitehall, sold by the Parliament a few years previously. Its existence in that gallery might be ascertained by reference to the catalogue drawn up by its keeper, Vanderdoort.

Great light is at last thrown upon the source of all these paintings, and of the legend so oddly blundered both as regards the event and the material, by the production of a medal from the King's Cabinet, British Museum. This medal bears the head of the Saviour\* to the left—legend **IHS XPC SALVATOR MVNDI**. On the reverse, "Presentes figuræ ad similitudinem domini Ihesu Salvatoris nostri et apostoli Pauli in amarildo impressæ per Magni Theucris predecessores antea singulariter observatæ missæ sunt ab ipso Magno Theucro **S. D. N.** papæ Innocencio octavo pro singulari cleinodio<sup>1</sup> ad hunc finem ut suum fratrem captivum retineret."

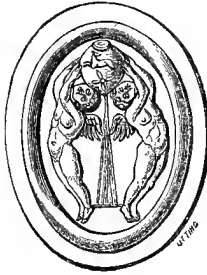
Here, at last, is the real cause assigned for the gift by the Sultan to the Pope of the inestimable relic—it was a bribe to induce him to *detain* his brother in his safe keeping. But the English painter who transferred portrait and legend from the medal to his panel or his copper-plate, being perfectly ignorant of the history of the transaction, very naturally concluded that the emerald was sent in the customary way of ransom, and under that impression translated the "retineret"

<sup>1</sup> Probably the German "Kleinod," *jewel*, Latinised, and, if so, an indication of the *atelier* of the medal. "Theucro," also, suggests "Türke."

of the legend as “redimeret”—a mistake hardly avoidable under such circumstances. The designer of the celebrated piece of tapestry with the same portrait (in the possession of Bagster, the publisher) has similarly misread the legend of the medal, for his inscription gives the sending of the emerald as “*pro redimento fratris Christianis captivo*” (*sic*).

That the medal last mentioned was the real source of the inscription placed upon the paintings is made evident by one curious particular. Instead of “*smaragdo*,” its legend gives the barbarous word “*amarildo*”; and this the painters have duly transcribed without any definite notion of its meaning; in fact, some of the variations in its spelling in the different copies give reason to suspect that they understood it as the name of a *place*. Now the word “*amarild*,” being thoroughly un-English, could never have crept into the inscription through the accidental mistake of the painter, but must have existed in the original from which he was making his copy.





NOTICE OF A REMARKABLE INTAGLIO REPRESENTING THE CLEPSYDRA USED AT RACES IN THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS.

At the dispersion (1864) of the collection of works of ancient art formed by the late Mr. J. W. Brett, I became possessed of a very curious, possibly unique, intaglio, the subject engraved upon the gem being the ancient Clepsydra.

Although the nature and general fashion or construction of the instrument originally employed by the Greeks, and subsequently used at Rome, for measuring time by the escape of water, may be understood from passages in the works of Aristotle, and other writers of antiquity,<sup>1</sup> representations of the clepsydra are of very rare occurrence. An example which has been pointed out in a bas-relief at the Mattei Palace in Rome closely resembles in form the hour-glass of our own times.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aristot. 'Problem.' xvi. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Figured in Rich's 'Companion to the Latin Dictionary,' v. Clepsydra.

The remarkable antique gem (drawn to twice the actual size), which I am desirous to bring under the notice of archæologists, is an intaglio on a "banded agate" (a sardonyx cut transversely), representing two Cupids turned back to back, and supporting in their uplifted arms a huge oviform vase with a contracted mouth, whence issues a stream of water. On the belly of the vase appears a horse at full speed, and a large star (the sun). These adjuncts precisely indicate the subject of the design: the clepsydra of the Circus Maximus, where the great races were held on December 25, the *Natale Solis*. In a bas-relief of the date of the Lower Empire, figuring the Hippodrome of Constantinople, a similar vase appears, but more simply mounted, being merely traversed by an axis and turned with a crank handle by the proper official, the entire arrangement being what is still seen in a large grindstone. By this contrivance the instantaneous inversion of the vase was secured. The contents escaping in a certain definite time showed the number of minutes taken up by each *missus*, or course, of which, at the Great Games, there were twenty-four.

The gem which has suggested this brief notice, in itself a very valuable relic of ancient art—a fine engraving of the best Roman period—doubtless is a faithful picture of the elegant adaptation of such a timekeeper that adorned the Circus Maximus in the days of the first Cæsars.

There is a copy of this subject in the Blacas Cabinet, made by a modern artist, who, not comprehending its real meaning, has converted the whole into a *lyre*, of

which the Cupids form the arms, and the falling water the strings. Visconti describes the same gem, then in the De la Turbie Collection, as typifying Spring, with the two Genii bringers of its genial showers.

The clepsydræ used in the ancient law-courts for regulating the time allotted to each pleader were yet simpler in arrangement—a mere vase inverted by an attendant. Pliny incidentally mentions that each marked the third of an hour:—“*Dixi horis pæne quinque; nam xii clepsydris quas spatiosissimas acceperam sunt additæ quatuor.*”—Ep. ii. xi. 14.

From the fact that so many clepsydræ were assigned to each pleader before opening his case, it would appear that a large number were kept in readiness, filled beforehand, and inverted in succession by the special officer until the speaker's allowance was run out. Hence, in the extant speeches of the Attic orators, we find “water” perpetually used as a synonym for “time.” This custom supplies Martial with a humorous allusion where, describing a dull declaimer repeatedly moistening his throat with a glass of water during the progress of his interminable harangue, he suggests that it would be an equal relief both to himself and to the audience were he to drink every time out of the clepsydra itself:<sup>1</sup>—

“*Septem clepsydras magna tibi voce petenti  
Arbiter invitus Cæciliane dedit.  
At tu multa diu ducis, vitreisque tepentem  
Ampullis potas semisupinus aquam;  
Ut tandem saties vocemque sitimque rogamus,  
Jam de clepsydra Cæciliane bibas.*”—Ep. vi. 35.

<sup>1</sup> The reader who may desire further information in regard to the *clepsydra* of the Greeks and Romans, or the water-clocks of mediæval

The picture of the Vatican Virgil (vi. 414) represents Minos seated in judgment. At his side is a table and a high square frame supporting a large globular vase upon pivots, exactly after the arrangement of the clepsydra of the Hippodrome. Its introduction clearly refers to the "urnam movet," but the painter, not being acquainted with the old practice of trying the cases in the order given them by *lot*, has put here the clepsydra (court-clock) for its representative.

" . . . As when a girl  
Plays with a clepsydra of hammered brass,  
Whilst she its pipe stops with her pretty hand,  
And dips the vessel in the yielding wave,  
No drop can enter—for the pent-up air  
Falls heavily and shuts the numerous holes.  
But when she lifts her hand the air escapes;  
Pours in the waters in a copious flood.

Again, when the same vase with water filled  
Distends its brazen womb, but mortal hand  
Doth close the passage of its gaping mouth,  
Then strives th' external air to force its way  
Through those same apertures, and bars the flow,  
Keeping fast the passage of the sounding tube.  
Remove the hand—the former scene's reversed;  
Furious pours in the air, whilst from below  
The loosened water gushes in a stream."

This simile of the Sicilian, Empedocles, enables us to form a clear idea of the simple machine of his primitive times (B.C. 414). The bottom of the vessel was pierced like a colander, whilst the top was solid,

times, may be referred to the curious particulars collected by Beckmann, in his 'History of Inventions,' in the dissertation on Water-clocks, and also in that on Clocks and Watches. Notices of writers who have treated on water-clocks are given by Fabricius, 'Bibliograph. Antiquaria,' p. 1011; and by Berthoud, 'Art de mesurer le temps par les horloges.'

having merely a short pipe inserted that could be easily closed with the finger. Supposing this vessel, when empty, to be immersed in water, so long as the orifice above was stopped, no water would enter through the holes below, in consequence of the resistance of the confined air. And, conversely, if filled with water, the water would be retained so long as the upper orifice was stopped. The principle was exactly that of the common trick of giving a person, to uncork, a bottle with perforated sides. This simple plan enabled the clepsydra to be filled expeditiously by merely plunging it into a vat of water.

The mediæval watering-pots for gardens were made in earthenware upon this principle. Perfect specimens have come to light in London excavations, and are figured in C. R. Smith's Catalogue of the Museum proceeding from that source.<sup>1</sup>

This contrivance in its primitive form, it will be perceived, only marked the lapse of a fixed portion of time, and not the steps of its actual progression. Its improvement and adaptation to this important use was due to Ctesibius of Alexandria some two centuries before our æra, a mechanician who had paid particular attention to hydraulics. The principle of his water-clock was simple and effectual; a cylindrical vessel filled with water bearing up a float loosely fitting its interior, out of which rose a vertical gauge marked with the hours, which, by its gradual ascent, as the

<sup>1</sup> Athenæus (xiii. 567) mentions a lady of pleasure at Athens who got the title of *Clepsydra*, from her selling her favours according to the measurement of this time-keeper. Κλέψυδρα, οὕτως ἐκλήθη αὐτὴ ἢ ἑταῖρα ἐπειδὴ πρὸς κλέψυδραν συνουσίαζεν ἕως κενώθη, ὡς Ἀσκληπιάδης εἴρηκεν.

water entered through a small aperture into the cylinder, showed the passing away of the day with tolerable accuracy. Indeed, after due allowance had been made in the first construction for the variation in the rapidity of the water's inflow as the weight of the column above augmented, in the equable climate of Egypt, where the atmospheric pressure may be assumed as almost constant, a very efficient time-keeper, never liable to get out of order, was thus readily attainable. And such must have been the case, since the principle was applied to the most complex motions, for Vitruvius has a chapter upon the construction of a clepsydra which, besides the hours, told the moon's age, the zodiacal Sign for the month, and several other particulars—in fact, it was a regular astronomical clock. His details, though in their time a valuable guide to the horologist used to the making of such machines, are now so obscure and complicated as to afford but a confused idea of its mode of working. The principle, however, is sufficiently intelligible: the float, *scaphium* or *phellos*, as it moved upwards, by means of the vertical column fixed in it, drove different series of cog-wheels, *tympana denticulis æqualibus*, which impelled in their turn other sets, “by means of which figures are made to move, obelisks to twirl about, pebbles or eggs are discharged, trumpets are sounded, and many other tricks, *parerga*, put in action.”<sup>1</sup> The admission-pipe was made either out of gold, or a gem perforated, in order neither to wear away nor to be liable to fouling. But there is a circumstance that renders it extremely probable the

<sup>1</sup> Vitruvius, lib. ix. c. viii.

common Roman clepsydra had both a regular dial-face and one hand, set in motion by a string and float, exactly like the index in our wheel barometers. In his *horologium anaphoricum*, the dial, painted with the world and the zodiac, was traversed by an axle, on which was wound a flexible brass chain, supporting by its one end the float, on the other a balance weight, *saburra*, equal to that of the float. As the latter rose with the water, so the balance weight, descending, unwound the chain and made the dial revolve. In two of Albrecht Dürer's engravings, known as "The Knight and Death," and "Melancholy," the hour-glass there represented displays a dial (of different shape in each instance, a circle in one, a quadrant in the other) fixed upon its top, and marking the hours by the revolution of a hand. This result could only be attained by the contrivance just noticed; and it is allowable to conjecture that the notion was borrowed from the ancient water-clock. At what precise time the classic timekeeper became obsolete cannot now be ascertained; but a water-clock is specified amongst the presents sent by Haroun-al-Raschid to Charlemagne, early in the ninth century.<sup>1</sup>

Yet further, the Romans had already "given Time a voice," to make them take note of his loss; for, though Petronius makes the millionaire Trinalchio

<sup>1</sup> A.D. 807. "Horologium ex aurichalco arte mechanica mirifice compositum, in quo duodecim horarum cursus ad clepsydram vertebatur, cum totidem æreis pilulis quæ ad completionem horarum decidebant, et casu suo subjectum sibi cymbalum tinnire faciebant."—Eginhard, 'Ann. Franc.' In the 'Chronicon Turonense' it is stated that the hours were marked not only by a sound (*cymbalo*), but by twelve horsemen issuing from windows.

keep a trumpeter who by his *hourly* blast apprises him "how much of his life is spent," and warns him to make the most of the remainder (which could not have been done without some exact mode of marking the time being accessible to this human bell), yet, in the next century, Lucian, amongst the numerous conveniences of certain newly built baths, describes a *horologium* that proclaimed the hour *διὰ μνημάτων*—"by means of a roaring sound."<sup>1</sup> This sound was doubtless produced by hydraulic pressure upon the air contained in a cupola with pipes attached, according to the plan so skilfully elaborated by the Romans of the Decline in their *hydraulis* or water-organ. The principle of the latter was exactly that of the steam-whistle, water-pressure being substituted for that of heated vapour; and the confined air, driven into a vast brazen cylinder, or *turris*, by means of forcing-pumps (worked sometimes by seventy men at once), was allowed to escape through valves placed in pipes arranged above, and regulated by keys worked by the performer. Vitruvius has minutely given all details.<sup>2</sup>

It will hence be seen how Lucian's *horologium* might have made its voice audible to as great a distance as the modern giant whose whistle so perpetually assails our ears.

The same contrivance is evidently alluded to, and at the same time explained, by Lucilius, the friend of Seneca, in his 'Ætna,' 293:—

"Nam veluti sonat hora die Tritone canoro  
Pellit opus collectus aquæ victusque moveri  
Spiritus, et longas emugit buccina voces."

<sup>1</sup> Lucian, 'Hippias,' 8.

<sup>2</sup> X. 8.



A sudden gush of water, admitted into the cavity of the figure by the opening of a valve, expelled the air by the only passage left for its escape, the pipe forming the trumpet. Our cuckoo-clocks still perform upon the same principle, only substituting a small pair of bellows for the old water-power. It must be mentioned that the Cambridge MS. of Lucilius (the most ancient extant) reads "duc" for "die" in the passage cited, which makes no sense at all, and is not much helped by the latest editor's correction into "duci." The reading now proposed carries conviction with it, so easily explained as the slight blunder of the ancient scribe; besides the moral argument that a simile is naturally taken from some well known, or commonly used, object. Add to this, Triton's profession was that of trumpeter, and whenever figured in ancient art, he is sounding his spirally twisted, straight *buccina*; in the "parerga" mentioned by Vitruvius, he would necessarily be introduced in that capacity.

The name *horologium* seems to have been given to the *clepsydra*, or "steal-water," after the improvements in the latter enabled it to tell the time. The same term is used for that other most ancient indicator, the sundial. This originally was no more than a column, the shadow of which by the variations in its length marked the hour. Aristophanes speaks of its being dinner time when the shadow of this gnomon, which he terms *στοιχείον*, waxed ten feet long. Augustus, says Pliny, converted an Egyptian obelisk (that now serving the same purpose in Rome, on the Monte Citorio) into a gigantic gnomon in front of his Mausoleum in the Campus Martius. Pliny notices that in his day it

had ceased to mark the hour correctly, either through "some change in the solar orbit," or the settlement of its own foundations, in spite of the vast depth (equal to the height of the obelisk) at which they had been laid by the emperor's architect.<sup>1</sup>

Vitruvius assigns to Berosus the Chaldean the invention of the concave sun-dial (the usual form with the ancients), the "hemicyclium excavatum ex quadrato;" to Aristarchus, of Samos, the convex kind, the "hemisphærium," and also the horizontal dial; to Scopinas, of Syracuse, the vertical, "plinthus, lacunar," one of which was set up in the Circus Flaminius; to Theodorus, that for all latitudes, *πρὸς πᾶν κλίμα*, an invention implying an extraordinary proficiency in the science.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, 'Hist. Nat.' lib. xxxvi. c. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Vitruvius, lib. ix. c. ix.





## SIGNET OF Q. CORNELIUS LUPUS.

ANTIQUÉ gems, though chiefly valuable (in respect to their subjects) for their illustration of mythology, religious and poetical, often present us, besides, with important memorials of history preserved in them alone. Of such records, perhaps the most valuable that has ever come to my knowledge is the sard from the Waterton Dactyliothea, here figured of twice the actual size. This gem, somewhat exceeding the customary dimensions of a ring-stone, is engraved in a singularly bold and large manner, with two distinct devices occupying the field: a horse's head and neck, bridled and couped (to use the heraldic term), and two large Gallic shields covered with barbaric ornamentation placed *en saltire*. In the field is deeply cut the legend **Q. CORNELI LVPI.**

That the shields can be no other than Gallic is certain, from their peculiar oblong shape, that perpetually strikes the eye in the various representations of armed Gauls or their spoils, so frequently affording the types upon the denarii of the Roman conquerors during the later ages of the Republic. The *horse*,

prancing at freedom in the field, was the established national emblem upon the autonomous gold coinage of the Gauls; one cannot help suspecting that in the design before us the *bridle* is purposely introduced to mark the subjugation of the fiery spirits who assumed him for their type. In their choice, it is not improbable that a rebus was intended upon the national appellation, either invented at the time or subsequently perceived and embraced—for *Gaul* is yet current in German for *horse*, though in a disparaging sense.

The duplication of the shields is intended, according to the rule in such cases, to proclaim to the world that the trophy was won from *two* allied peoples of the Gallic stock. Now this circumstance it is that, coupled with the family name of the owner of the signet, enables us to discover, with more than conjectural accuracy, the event commemorated by this remarkable intaglio.

As our starting-point, it must be assumed for certain that a member of the *gens Cornelia* would adopt for his own signet-device the glorious achievement of some ancestor of his own family, or, in preference, one wherein he had himself played the chief part—just as we know that the greatest of this very family, Sulla, took for his signet, first the “Surrender of Jugurtha,” and afterwards the “Three Trophies” commemorating his victories over Mithridates, the crowning glories of his ever successful military career—an example subsequently followed by Pompey.

These two conditions bring the attribution of the particular event within very narrow limits of time, for, on referring to Livy for the victories illustrating

the Cornelian name in connection with the Gauls, we find none with which all the particulars of our gem exactly tally, except the great battle won by the Consul C. Cornelius Cethegus over the confederate Insubres and Cenomani, upon the banks of the Mincio, in the year B.C. 197. Of the Celts, 35,000 men fell in the action, having lost it partly through the foul play of the Cenomani, gained over the night before by the promises of the wily Roman, who had vowed a temple to Juno Sospita in event of his success.

In the same campaign his colleague, Minucius, reduced the Boii, who had made common cause with the Insubres, but had deserted them before the battle for the sake of protecting their own territory. Amongst the prisoners was Hamilcar, a Carthaginian, the prime mover of the revolt against the Romans.<sup>1</sup>

The duplication of the shields and the difference in their heraldic bearings is conclusive evidence, as already pointed out, that the Gallic army was raised from two tribes combined, not from one singly. But for this restricting circumstance I should have assigned the occasion to the vastly more important victory gained some forty years later (B.C. 159) by another of the *gens*, the Consul P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica, over the single nation of the Boii.

Livy's account of the Boian spoils, as paraded through the streets of Rome upon his triumph, affords a truly interesting glimpse of the state of civilisation to which these Italo-Celts had thus early attained. In this triumph Nasica carried in parade upon the Gallic waggons, the arms, standards, and spoils of

<sup>1</sup> Liv. xxxii. 30.

every kind, gold vessels of Gallic make, and together with the prisoners of note were led in procession herds of the captured *horses*. The victor displayed 1470 *torques* of gold, 245 pounds by weight of gold (coin); of silver, both in ingots and wrought up into plate "after the native fashion, and by no means unskilfully," 2340 pounds; and likewise of the coinage *bigati*,<sup>1</sup> 233 pounds by weight.<sup>2</sup>

"Lupus" was a favourite *cognomen* in the *gens Cornelia*: thus we find, in the year B.C. 156, P. Corn. Lentulus Lupus Consul, and he may very well have been son of the Q. Corn. Lupus, whose name is only preserved from oblivion by this gem. The latter was, in all likelihood, a near relative of the Consul Cethegus, and had held some important post under him in the army gaining that victory, the credit of which appears to have been in some measure ascribed to him by popular consent. Had it not been so, he would hardly have ventured to claim for himself so much of its glory as to appropriate its trophies for his own personal device. The peculiar execution of the *intaglio* also points to the same date as does its subject, for it exhibits the grandiose yet somewhat careless manner of the Campanian engravers, such as cut the dies for the first silver and gold coinages of the Republic.

Some observations upon the military equipment of the Gauls will not be out of place here, for the peculiar fashion of the shields upon our gem remarkably illustrates the description given by Diodorus Siculus

<sup>1</sup> The primitive Roman denarius having for reverse a *biga*.

<sup>2</sup> Livy, xxxvi. 46.

of that portion of their defensive armour. Julius Cæsar has, strangely enough, omitted all mention of the arms or costume of his Gallic adversaries ; he probably considered them too well known to his Roman readers to require any further notice in the sketch he gives of their institutions. But Diodorus, writing only a few years later, and in *Greek*, for the world at large, has fortunately, to gratify the curiosity of those more remote, gone into the minutest particulars of the subject. His account applies equally well to the period of our Lupus, for the Gauls had merely been rendered tributary to Rome by Cæsar's victories, continuing unchanged in everything else until after the re-organization of their country by the Emperor Claudius.<sup>1</sup> "They wear a curious kind of dress, dyed tunics ornamented with colours of every possible sort, and trousers, or, as they themselves call them, *braccæ*. Over these they wear, fastened by a fibula, large striped mantles (*sagi*), of a shaggy stuff in winter, of a smooth in summer, chequered all over in squares, of many colours set close together. For armour they use shields as tall as the man, and painted over after a peculiar fashion. Some of these shields have figures of animals in relief of bronze, not merely for ornament, but also for defence, and very well wrought. They wear bronze helmets, having lofty projections rising out of them, and which impart a gigantic appearance to the wearers ; for upon some are fixed pairs of horns united, upon others the heads of birds, or of beasts,

<sup>1</sup> Who destroyed their nationality by making them all Roman citizens (he was their fellow-countryman in virtue of his birthplace), and abolishing the caste of Druids.

forged out of the same metal.<sup>1</sup> They have trumpets of a peculiar form and of a barbaric fashion ; these they blow, and produce a hoarse sound, well suited to the din of battle. As for body-armour, some have shirts of iron chain-mail ; the rest are content with that given by Nature, and go into battle naked. Instead of the sword (*ξίφος*) they have claymores (*σπάθαι*) hung from long iron or bronze chains, and depending along their right side. Their tunics they gird in with belts, overlaid with gold or silver. They carry spears, or, as they call them, *lances*, with heads of iron a cubit in length, and even more than that, the width of the blade being little short of two palms (6 inches). For their swords are as long as the darts used by other nations, whilst the heads of the spears they use are actually longer than other people's swords. Of these spear-heads some are forged of a straight pattern ; others have a wavy indentation all along the edge, so as in striking not only to cut, but to mangle the flesh, and in the withdrawal of the spear to tear the wound."<sup>2</sup> The last sentence but one has been entirely misunderstood by M. Desor, in his Memoir on the Lacustrine Antiquities of Neufchâtel,<sup>3</sup> and by some other writers following him. Not perceiving the drift of Diodorus's comparison, they, very needlessly, have recourse to the usual expedient of supposing a corruption or interpolation in the text. But

<sup>1</sup> The Cimbri who encountered Catulus at Vercellæ wore helmets, in the shape of wild beasts' heads with gaping jaws, topped with lofty plumes. Their weapons, double-edged javelins and long heavy swords.

<sup>2</sup> Diod. Sic. v. 30.

<sup>3</sup> 'Les Palafittes du Lac de Neufchâtel,' Paris, 1865, p. 79.



it is obvious to me that the historian here intends to exemplify his previous remarks, by comparing the Gallic spear-heads with the Greek and Roman swords, never exceeding 18 inches in the blade, and the long claymore, of a yard and more in the blade, with the total length of the javelins of other nations, in which latter point a little rhetorical exaggeration may well be admitted. The cut, taken from a coin of Constantine (formerly in my possession), minted at Treves, exhibits the Gallic Mars, equipped with the national *lancea*, with its enormously dilated blade and cuspidated barbs: a singular proof of the persistence of the fashion.



And again, on many other coins of his sons,<sup>1</sup> from the several Gallic mints, the cavalier on the reverse wields a lance fully two feet in the head, to judge from its relative proportion to the rest of the design. An incident in the boar-hunt, described by Apuleius, where the hero's horse is hamstrung by a blow from a *lancea*, informs us that this weapon was used for striking with as well as stabbing, like the mediæval Welsh glaive, or the Italian spontoon.

The exact arms described by Diodorus are often displayed upon the consular medals, notably upon the very common denarius of the family *Furia*, which exhibits a trophy formed of the horned helmet, the mail shirt, and the peculiarly ornamented oval shield, together with the huge wooden trumpet (*carnyx*), terminating in a horse's head. On another denarius (*Servilia*), a gigantic naked Gaul with the *horns* above

<sup>1</sup> As well as of the Gallic tyrants, Magnentius and Decentius.

mentioned fastened upon his head, appears aiming, back-handed, with his long blade, his "swashing blow" at his diminutive Roman antagonist. This is the very scene so vividly portrayed by the old annalist, Claudius Quadrigarius, that the philosopher Favorinus declared he could never read it without becoming an actual spectator of the combat. The peculiar attitude of the Gaul and his strange guard with his shield aptly illustrate the "status" and "disciplina sua" of that early author.<sup>1</sup> The "Cornuti" and "Braccati," as well as the "Celtæ," are named by Ammian as forming distinct corps in Julian's army, which had been chiefly levied in Gaul. The first appellative will at once indicate the origin of the unique *horned* head-piece in enamelled bronze, found some years ago in the Thames at Waterloo Bridge (now in the possession of the Conservators of the river), which, being mistaken for a mediæval relic, goes, in virtue of those appendages, by the name of the "Jester's Helmet." And, to conclude this part of the subject, I know of hardly any other historical monument due to the



engraver's art more interesting than the spirited representation of a combat between Romans and Gauls, drawn by a contemporary hand, of which a very faithful copy is given in the annexed woodcut.

These unwieldy swords were made of untempered iron, as we learn from Polybius. "Their swords have

<sup>1</sup> The whole passage is preserved by A. Gellius (ix. 13), and well deserves the encomium he passes upon it.

only the first down-stroke, that is fatal; after this they immediately become unserviceable, bending both longways and sideways to such a degree that the second blow is entirely without effect unless the owners get the chance to retire, to press them against the ground, and straighten them with the foot. . . . The Gauls are only able to fight in loose order, because their sword has no point at all.”<sup>1</sup>

The weapons<sup>2</sup> recently discovered in the fosses of the celebrated lines drawn by Cæsar around Alesia, afford a striking illustration of these passages of Polybius. Amongst them the swords are of incredible size according to Grecian notions, being of three feet and more in length. They are *pointless*, with their flat broad blades of the same width throughout; the body forged from a very stiff, or fibrous, iron (“très-nerveux”), hammered out lengthwise, on each side of which is welded a cutting-edge of *soft* steel, with the evident object that the owner might be himself able, after using it, to repair any damage done to the edge, by hammering it up again cold, exactly as our mowers do to their scythes when they get notched by striking against a hard substance.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the few Roman swords found mingled with them are of less than half their measure, have a rib down the middle, giving them great

<sup>1</sup> Polyb. ii. 33.

<sup>2</sup> See “Les Armes d’Alise,” ‘Revue archéologique’ for 1864, giving photographs of the most noteworthy examples.

<sup>3</sup> This discovery supplies the etymology of “acciaio,” and of “acier,” *steel*. In fact, *acies* must have been used in the same sense in classical Latinity; for Pliny, to express the superiority of the Indian iron, terms it “*mera acies*,” an expression exactly answering to our “sheer steel.”

stiffness, and taper gradually from the hilt to the point.

The lance-heads accompanying the swords in naturally much greater numbers fully justify Diodorus's astonishment at their magnitude and strangeness. Some are two feet long, and therefore exceed in that respect the old classic sword; and, above all, exhibit that configuration of the edge he so particularly remarks, many having a *flamboyant* outline of extreme elegance; others, again, the well-known myrtle-leaf shape of the primitive bronze sword.

These iron lance-heads resemble their bronze predecessors of the same kind in having the centre-rib, the prolongation of the socket, forged *hollow* (a masterpiece of the smith's craft), a make inseparable from all spear-heads *cast* of bronze. This arrangement diminished the weight, though not materially the strength, of these otherwise unwieldy weapons, which may, as above remarked, be compared in their character to the *spontoons* of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The metal of them, upon analysis, proves to be true *steel*.<sup>1</sup>

These Gallic lances, retaining the elegance of form derived from much earlier ages, strikingly contrast with the Roman *pila* lying beside them—ill-favoured, murderous-looking weapons, whose only object was to kill. These likewise can still be accurately described in the words of Polybius, to be found in his disser-

<sup>1</sup> The reader desirous of further information on this subject will find numerous examples of these weapons belonging to the Helvetic Celts of the same ages in Lee's valuable translation of Keller's treatises on the Lake Dwellings of Switzerland.

tation upon the military system of the Romans. They are long, solid shafts of iron, of a spit-like pattern, clearly exemplifying Virgil's "veru Sabellum," and the term "verutum" given to the national weapon. These "spits" terminate in small solid pyramids (sometimes barbed at each corner of the base), sometimes in cones, or small heart-shaped points; the other end being a tang, either pointed or chisel-shaped, for sticking into the shaft, which, to prevent splitting, was secured by iron collars slipped over it. The latter demonstrate the diameter of the shaft itself to have been 28 mm. (about one inch); Polybius giving the same as *τριὰ ἡμιδακτύλια*, or  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch nearly.

It is curious to observe how completely the *pilum* went out of use under the Cæsars; for, although it may be seen carved on certain monuments at Mayence of the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, and has been found there in Roman sepulchres of the same date, yet on all public monuments of importance, like the triumphal arches and columns, the soldiers carry the long Greek spear, the Roman "hasta," which indeed from the beginning was the weapon of the second line in their battle array, hence termed "hastati." But, strange to say, in Byzantine times the old *pilum* reappears quite unchanged, in the distinctive arm of the Franks, the "angon," and secured to those barbarians the same success in war that in its pristine days it had brought to the Roman legionaries. But so entirely obsolete had its form grown with their degenerate descendants that Agathias describes it, and its direful efficiency, with unbounded wonder. His

account, coupled with the specimens exhumed by the Abbé Cochet from the Merovingian tombs, leaves no doubt as to the identity of the angon with the former *pilum*.

It is almost needless to add, after what has been said above, that no bronze weapons accompany these relics of the times of Julius Cæsar. And, to go farther back, that the Gallic sword, at the time of their first irruption into Italy, was precisely the same as Polybius describes, is proved by the precautions taken by Camillus (detailed by Plutarch in the last chapters of his 'Life'), in order to spoil its "soft-tempered and thin iron." He gave his soldiers *κράνη ὀλοσιῶηρα*, "helmets of *solid iron*" (an epithet perhaps meaning that they covered both face and head, like the early Greek in bronze all in one piece), in order to make the blows glance off. He also bound their wooden shields with rims of *bronze*, and taught them to push with long pikes, on which to catch the Gallic swords. Following his example, at the great battle described by Polybius in the chapter above quoted, the centurions armed the first line with the *hastæ* of the second, instead of their own missile *pila*, against which the Gauls bent their swords, and so being disabled gave an easy victory to the Romans. It is hard to imagine how these monstrous weapons, so easily disabled in action, so useless at close quarters, came to supersede the elegant leaf-shaped, cut-and-thrust swords of the Bronze age; the latter being certainly, both in material and figure, better edged and more efficient than their successors in untempered iron. The question may perhaps be answered by Plutarch's notice

(‘Camillus’) “that their strength lay in their swords, which they managed without any art, rushing furiously in, and aiming at the *heads* and *shoulders* of their adversaries.” The weapon, therefore, was exclusively designed for decapitation and the striking off of limbs. For the very same reason the mediæval headsmen’s sword (like the Dresden one in the possession of Mr. Hewitt) is similarly long, broad, and of extreme tenuity, which last is further augmented by a deep groove running down the middle. Thinness and a razor-edge were indispensable requisites in the blade for the effectual severing of bone and cartilage at a single blow. Nevertheless the metal bronze for warlike purposes had gone out of use in Europe long before the period when authentic history begins; Hesiod speaking of its employment for such purposes as marking the Age of Fable; and Lucretius following him to the same effect—

“Inde minutatim processit ferreus ensis,  
Versaque in opprobrium species est falcis ahenæ.”

Though the Gauls had not in the age of Polybius learnt the art of tempering iron, yet their neighbours, the Celtiberians, were perfect masters of the secret when the Romans first came in contact with them, and borrowed from them the “Spanish sword” as the most perfect model of its class. Diodorus describes the Celtiberian sword as “so well hardened that nothing can withstand its stroke, neither shield, nor helmet, nor bone.”<sup>1</sup> The process was simple enough—to bury thin plates of iron in the earth until all the baser particles were consumed by the rust, and nothing

<sup>1</sup> V. 33.

but the pure metal remained.<sup>1</sup> Later, Bilbilis was as famous for its sword-blades as Toledo now; their excellence being ascribed to some peculiar quality in the icy water of its river, the Salo, as Martial informs us—

“Pugio quem curva signat brevis orbita<sup>2</sup> vena,  
Stridentem gelidis hunc Salo tinxit aquis.”

This consideration brings us to a curious subject, but to which antiquaries seem to have paid very little attention. Every intelligent reader of Homer must have been struck at the facility with which his heroes' spear-heads of *bronze* (for only arrow-heads with him, and that but rarely, are made of *iron*) pierce through the cuirasses and shields of the self-same metal. Though something must be allowed for the superior strength of the Heroic sinews, yet the poet, a true painter of nature, would not have so frequently repeated the incident as he does had it set at defiance the daily experience of his hearers. The mention of it, therefore, shows that some method of tempering bronze almost to the hardness of steel was then commonly practised. And this inference is supported by examples actually remaining to us from Homer's age, however remote we please to throw that age back.

<sup>1</sup> A method still recommended for obtaining a razor of most exquisite temper when reground after disinterment. The iron shoes of the piles in the foundations of old London Bridge (when they were drawn up to clear the bed of the river upon the demolition of the original structure) were found to make the finest steel for surgical instruments ever known in this country. A friend who was a medical student at the time, and perfectly remembers all the circumstances, is my authority for this statement.

An evident allusion to the *armourer's mark*, a small embossed wheel, stamping the Bilbilis blades. The “signat” is decisive.



Sir Gardner Wilkinson obtained a bronze dagger, sheath, hilt, and all in perfect condition, from a mummy-pit, which rivals steel in hardness, sharpness, and elasticity: the last a quality that, in such a composition, astonishes the modern metallurgist.

A century ago the attention of Caylus was arrested by this very subject, and he has detailed some interesting experiments<sup>1</sup> he made as to the possibility of hardening not bronze, but the much softer metal, copper. The question was first suggested to him by his observing the hardness and temper of some Celtic swords (but supposed by him, after the fashion of his times, to be Roman) found at Gensac, which, when analysed, proved to be nothing but copper with a small native alloy of *iron*, but no trace of tin. Upon this, on communicating with M. Geoffroi, the chemist, they found that precisely the same results could be obtained by combining copper with one-sixth of its weight of iron. Thereupon Caylus himself proceeded to try the effect of tempering as well as of alloying copper, taking the first hint from a passage in Philo Byzantinus, where that writer directs the spring for a dart-thrower to be made out of pure copper mixed with one-thirtieth of tin, and afterwards well hammered when cold. Employing an intelligent brazier to carry out his theories, he was rewarded by finding he could make serviceable knives, scissors, and even razors,<sup>2</sup> out of brass and copper (*cuivre jaune et rouge*): he did not try *bronze*,

<sup>1</sup> Given in his 'Recueil d'Antiquités,' vol. i. p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> To anyone acquainted with the *non-cutting* quality of French steel articles of the sort, especially as they were formerly manufactured, this success will not go for much.

which was unfortunate for the completeness of the enquiry. The result was obtained merely by dipping the articles red-hot into a mixture of soot, sal-ammoniac, urine, and kennel-water.

I have somewhere seen it stated that Chantrey once tried what cutting-instruments could be produced out of bronze, and actually succeeded in making a bronze razor, wherewith he was able to shave "after a fashion." He discovered that the best proportion for the alloy was that found pretty constant in archaic Greek, Etruscan, and Celtic weapons, viz. one-tenth part of tin added to the copper.<sup>1</sup> The metal was hardened by cold-hammering.

As for the case of surgical instruments found at Pompeii, all having their blades of *bronze* set in handles of iron, the phenomenon may possibly be explained by a medical superstition, traces of which are preserved in the whimsical explanation the scholiast gives of *εὐήνωρ*, the favourite Homeric epithet of *χάλκος*, "*good for man*, because wounds made with that metal heal more readily than those made with iron." Though this "allopathic" property may have done something to retain the primitive metal in Roman surgical practice, yet, for all that, it must have been susceptible of a passable degree of keenness, otherwise, in spite of its reputation, it could not have maintained a place there, in an age when the best steel was as well known and as commonly used as in our own. Another remarkable instance of the late use of bronze for cutting-instruments by the Romans is

<sup>1</sup> Feuerbach's analysis of the Helvetic bronze swords makes the proportion of tin vary from 5 to 25 per cent.

known to myself: it is a pair of small shears, found at Caerleon, very neatly made, and retaining both their elasticity in the bend and their keenness. See Lee's 'Isca Silurum,' pl. xxxiv. p. 66.<sup>1</sup>

One is at first surprised to find that most ingenious invention of the armourer's craft, *chain mail*, amongst the accoutrements of so uncivilised a race as these Celts; but our wonder is increased by the circumstance that the Romans actually considered them as the true inventors of it. Varro, under "*Lorica*," states that it got its name from being at the beginning made out of leather, "*lorum*," but that the "*Galliorica*," formed of iron rings, had then completely usurped the appellation. In the fosses round Alesia, a few links still connected together suffice to attest its use at the time of the siege; but no considerable remains could be expected to have lasted under the circumstances, the ditches being filled with water, and the iron web by its nature extremely perishable.

The use of this species of defence can be traced back, obscurely indeed, to the remotest ages. There is even reason to suspect it was brought into Europe along with the Aryan immigrants from India, in which latter country it has ever been, and still con-

<sup>1</sup> It is a most strange though certain fact that fine gold itself can by means of long-continued cold-hammering be brought to the hardness of iron. No better metal than this hardened gold for making watch-movements, according to an ancient practitioner of the now lost art (Smith, of Brighton), who had made use of it in his younger days with the greatest success. This being the case, the golden *acinaces* worn by the Persian satraps may have been more than a badge of rank, and intended for actual service.

tinues, the sole kind of defensive body-armour known to the inhabitants. Although Homer never alludes to its use (his warriors, if not clad in plate, wear the cuirass of quilted linen, *λινοθώρηξ*<sup>1</sup>), yet heroes covered with what seems intended to represent a vestment formed of metal links appear on some Etruscan vases, and the archæologist, Virgil, could not have been without some ancient authority for making Æneas give as a valuable prize at the funeral games—

“Loricam . . . hamis consertam auroque trilicem,”

—“a coat woven out of rings, and trebled with gold.” The poet probably means by “trilix” the insertion of one gold link between every two of steel, for its weight was doubled, and value immensely enhanced; and the squire, Phegeus, who requires the assistance of another to carry off this ponderous coat to the winner’s tent, is afterwards described as clad in a “bilix” lorica, evidently implying the ordinary kind. In an Etruscan bas-relief published by Winckelmann (‘Mon. Ined.’ No. 6), Mars wears a mail jacket, cut away from the left shoulder, to allow the more ready management of the great circular shield, his lions being protected by a deep zone, *mitra*, of plate. The Hon. R. Curzon states<sup>2</sup>—“Some years ago I saw at Naples the fragments of an ancient Greek shirt of mail of rings.” And Livy,<sup>3</sup> describing the equipment of the Samnites, in the early ages of the Republic, has the singular ex-

<sup>1</sup> The latter, as appears from Herodotus’ description of the pattern one dedicated by Aniasis, king of Egypt, to the Lindian Pallas, Rhodes, was woven out of threads of many strands, the one in question having each thread composed of 365 others, all quite distinct.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Arch. Journ.’ vol. xxii. p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> IX. 45.

pression, “*spongia pectori tegumentum*,” where *spongia* is always interpreted as a soldiers’ cant term for a mail shirt, in allusion to its porous texture.

To come down a little later in Roman history, Athenæus,<sup>1</sup> in describing the forces of Antiochus Epiphanes, mentions his 10,000 picked men, arrayed in mail shirts after the *Roman fashion*: ‘Ρωμαῖον ἔχοντες καθόπλισμον ἐν θώραξιν ἀλυσιδώτοις. Although chain mail is not often represented upon Roman statues, yet I suspect it was all the while in general use under the Empire, but that the sculptor preferred exhibiting his heroes in the old Greek *thorax* of plate, imitating the exact conformation of the body underneath, on account of its superior picturesqueness. For if the latter kind of armour had been still in such general use as the monuments of the age would lead us to infer, why should Pausanias (in his description of the grand fresco by Polygnotus in the Lesche, Delphi) have taken so much pains to explain the nature of a suit of armour of this very make (*γύαλα*), stating in so many words, as the reason for his minuteness, that it had been for many ages out of fashion? Again, we should conclude that chain-mail had been the more usual form of armour in the time of Statius (the preceding century), for he notices amongst the other preparations for war—

“*ferrum—quod mille catenis*  
Squallentes nectat tunicas.”—*Achilleis*, l. 431.

His patron, Domitian, however, preferred, says Martial, a novel and light yet arrow-proof cuirass made of scales of boar-hoof—

<sup>1</sup> III. 22.

" Invia Sarmaticis domini lorica sagittis,  
 Et Martis Getico tergoe fida magis,  
 Quam vel ad Ætolæ securam cuspidis ictus,  
 Texuit innumeri lubricus unguis apri :  
 Felix sorte tua! sacrum cui tangere pectus,  
 Fas erit, et nostri mente calere Dei.  
 I comes, et magnos illæsa merere triumphos  
 Palmatæque ducem, sed cito, redde togæ."

MART. vii. 2.

Nevertheless we have some Roman statues clad in mail-shirts. I have observed a bust of Pertinax so covered in the Galleria, Florence ; whilst Constantine, full length, in the triumphal procession upon his Arch, Rome, wears a long shirt of mail very accurately represented. And yet the *same* prince, in his imperial statue, now standing in the portico of the Lateran, is accoutred in the time-honoured and elegant Homeric *thorax* ; a circumstance strongly supporting the theory above advanced. A sepulchral bas-relief in the Museum, Mayence, exhibits a Dalmatian cavalier in a mail-shirt with short sleeves ; and in digging a well for a house in the Schillerstrasse there (1857) was discovered amongst a quantity of Roman sandals, broken tools, and weapons, &c., part of a mail-shirt of iron rings. The links are of unusually small diameter, not exceeding a quarter of an inch, and *not riveted*.

Ammian,<sup>1</sup> indeed, describes the Persian cavalry, at the time of Julian's invasion, as completely covered with steel plates (*laminæ*) and wearing helmets fashioned into human heads with faces, vulnerable only in the perforations at the eyes and nostrils ; whilst his contemporary, Heliodorus, gives a minute and valuable account<sup>2</sup> of the construction of this armour by the

<sup>1</sup> XXV. 1.

<sup>2</sup> ' Æthiopica,' IX. 12.

linking together with rings of a number of such small plates (iron or bronze), a hand's breadth each in size, the very "teglated" armour<sup>1</sup> of the Norman Crusaders, doubtless borrowed by them from their Saracen opponents. Nevertheless, in the fine bas-relief of the Takht-i-Bostan, the cavalier, probably Sapor I., sculptured in the preceding century, is armed in a long mail-shirt having the hood drawn over a skull-cap and falling over his face like a veil, serving thus for a vizor, exactly as still worn by the Circassians. Such mail-clad *cavalry* were first introduced into the Roman service by Severus Alexander, who, after his Persian campaign, where he had learnt their efficiency, formed a body of 10,000 of them. "Cataphractarios quos illi clibanarios vocant decem millia interemimus, eorum armis nostros armavimus," says the victor in his letter to the Senate.<sup>2</sup> They speedily became the most important part of the army under the Lower Empire, like the *gens d'armes* in the mediæval service. Constantius II. had 30,000 cataphractarii at the battle of Mursa, who with their armour of proof and long heavy lances broke the brave Gallic legions of Magnentius.

I cannot but allude to that groundless theory broached by Sir S. Meyrick, and adopted without question, upon his authority, by many subsequent writers, our sagacious friend Mr. Hewitt, perhaps, alone excepted, upon mediæval armour. It is the name "edge-mail" coined by him as the appellation

<sup>1</sup> Such as Milo of Gloucester, *temp.* Hen. I., wears on his seal. 'Archæologia,' vol. xiv. pl. 47, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> Lamprid. 55.

of that seen upon knightly effigies previous to the time of Edward I., with his explanation that this kind of defence was formed by sewing the rings *edge-ways* upon a basis of stout canvas. One would have thought that their own common-sense *might* have suggested to some at least of his copiers that links thus arranged would not serve in the slightest degree to keep out the *thrust* of a weapon, or even the cut of one, should its edge chance to alight between any two parallel rows, in which case it is evident it would encounter no other resistance than that of the canvas substratum. But so it is; no one seems ever to have troubled himself to bestow a moment's thought upon the senselessness of such a contrivance, but each writer in his turn has gone on indorsing this self-condemning hallucination of the far from sagacious antiquary. Yet a vestment so constructed would be much more due to the tailor than to the smith, who, as in Aldhelm's well-known enigma on "*Lorica*," and by all others after him, is ever named as the fabricator of mail-shirts.

"Roscida me genuit gelido de viscere tellus :  
 Nec sum setigero lanarum vellere facta;  
 Licia nulla trahunt nec garrula fila resultant;  
 Nec crocea Seres texant lanugine vermes;  
 Non radiis carpor, duro nec pectine pulsor,  
 Et tamen, en! *vestis* vulgi sermone vocabor:  
 Spicula non vereor longis exempta pharetris."

Or, again, the explicit words of Sidonius—

" . . . *sutilis illi*  
 Circulus impactis, lorica[m] texuit hamis."

And to wind up, Meyrick's eyes *might* possibly have been opened had they lighted upon Isidorus' funny



derivation of the word: "*Lorica* vocatur eò quod *loris* careat, solis enim circulis ferreis contexta est!" ('Origg.' xviii. 13.) The author of this untested theory has taken infinite pains to collect passages from Norman writers to support it, but they are all totally irrelevant to the question.

His mistake seems to have arisen from his observing the parallel rows into which the surface of a mail-shirt naturally falls in all cases where its links are not *riveted*; and the regularity of which rows is again somewhat heightened in mediæval sculpture and drawing for the sake of facilitating the work. It seems certain that, up to the end of the thirteenth century, the links were not *riveted*<sup>1</sup> (a process to be explained further on), but merely bent up into rings. These rings were slipped, or *hooked*, one within the other, whence the propriety of the Virgilian term *hami* for them is obvious. In such a mode of uniting them into a continuous texture, it is evident that these rings must necessarily be of very stout wire, and of small internal diameter, otherwise the vesture would be liable to tear asunder by its own weight, as we see in the carelessly wrought mail-shirts made in London for the African trade that occasionally find their way into sale-rooms in Town as the "armour of Runjeet

<sup>1</sup> A remarkable exception to this rule has lately been brought to light. In the find of arms and armour, dating from the Roman Empire (denarii of Severus occurred amongst them), extracted from the Thorsbjerg Moss, Flensburg, certain pieces of chain mail were met with, most carefully riveted, some in alternate links, some in every link. The author of the description, however, doubts of their being of equal antiquity with the rest: so the discovery can hardly be deemed sufficiently complete to decide the question.

Singh." A Circassian, however, once informed me that his countrymen still prefer the unriveted mail to the riveted, because it allows the musket-ball (if not repelled by it) to enter by its links opening before the blow, so that none of the wires are carried with it into the wound; that fatal objection to the use of chain-armour, and which banished it from the camps of Europe upon the introduction of hand fire-arms.

But this open-linked mail,<sup>1</sup> from the necessary stoutness of the wire used, was of enormous weight, as is shown by those rare examples still preserved; for instance, the suit now in the Hon. R. Curzon's armoury. The same thing is attested by the manifest efforts of the porters who carry the single suits suspended upon poles, two men to each, in the Bayeux Tapestry. Again, it is mentioned as a proof of William's gigantic strength, that, though himself so clad, he carried the mail-shirt of a disabled comrade, who, having fallen into a quagmire, was unable to extricate himself, until he was relieved by the Duke from his cumbrous envelope.

The links, the *hami* of the Romans, had, in making the shirt, each to be slightly opened, and so passed into its neighbour; the wire, being steel, closed firmly again of itself, and secured the continuity of the whole network. Hence Anna Comnena describes

<sup>1</sup> The Bedouin suits above alluded to weigh 40 lbs. each, to which weight must be added that of the thickly padded tunic required underneath to prevent its rough texture galling the wearer. The suits, however, made for the Venezuelans, only designed to keep out Indian flint-headed arrows, are as light as 25 lbs. But the Norman had to encounter the shock of the steel lance-head, driven with all the impetus of his adversary's charge on horseback.

the armour of the Norman Crusaders as a "tunic, ring interwoven upon ring," χίτων, κρικὸς ἐπὶ κρικῶ περιπεπλεγμένος: and this, be it observed, at a time (1081-1118) when, as Meyrick would make us believe, nothing was known but his "edge-mail" of rings stitched upright on canvas.

As the next step towards improvement, the junction of the wire in the links was secured by *brazing*, an addition supplying a vast increase of resisting force to the steely web; and of this an example is preserved in the shirt of Philippe le Bel, dedicated by him, after the year 1302, at the Cathedral of Chartres. There can be no doubt that in other cases, where the great additional labour and expense were not taken into account, other mail-shirts perhaps long before had had their defensive power similarly augmented.

This led to the final and great improvement in the manufacture of mail, viz. the *riveting* of every link at the opening, by beating out each end of the wire forming it, making one overlap the other slightly, piercing both, and driving a rivet through them, thus rendering the joint the very strongest place in the whole ring. By this ingenious invention, due no doubt to the sagacity of some Saracenic armourer, it was found that the mail-shirt could afford equal protection with half its former weight of metal, inasmuch as the diameter of each ring in it could now be doubled, all danger of their gaping being in this way obviated. In fact, we see the links now an inch in diameter over all, when made of stout wire as in the old Turkish, and about half that diameter when slighter wire is

employed; the customary size for European suits. When woven after this fashion, the whole texture lies flat upon the person, and no longer assumes the parallel-ridged surface of the former thick and rigid mail of unriveted links, to which indeed the name of "edge-mail" was in one sense applicable, for the small internal diameter of the rings, and their little play one within the other, rendered the thickness of the fabric exactly equal to the width of the links composing it.

Such armour, light and easily concealed under the clothes, long continued in use (although far from being musket-proof), but more especially as a "privy coat" against the dagger or pistol of the assassin:—

"Had not my *coat* been better than thou deemedst,  
That thrust had been my enemy indeed,"

exclaims Michael Cassio. Cellini and his apprentice Ascanio are equipped with such in their ride from Paris back to Florence. Anselm de Boot (Boetius), physician to Rudolf II. (1576–1612), writes of such armour as being then common;<sup>1</sup> and even as late as Elizabeth's times it occasionally appeared on the battle-field, Spenser describing the Irish "galloglasses" as wearing long shirts of mail: and, in the

<sup>1</sup> See the notice of this use of emery in De Boot's 'Gemmarum et Lapidum Historia,' lib. ii. cap. cex.: "De smiri lapiee. Ad loricas annulatas emundandas et a rubigine liberandas vasi rotundo cum lorice imponitur, quod frequenti rotatione commotum, ac hic inde jactata lorica, smirisque pulvere per annulos sæpius decidente partesque illius affricante, ita lorica abstergetur ut nova videatur." In the time of Edward III. mail-armour was cleaned by rolling it in a barrel, with sand probably, or emery. See the "Dover Castle Inventories," 'Arch. Jour.' vol. xi. pp. 382, 386.

glorious old ballad of that reign, “Mary Ambree”—  
scene, the war in Flanders—we have—

“She clothed herself from the top to the toe,  
In buff of the bravest, most seemly to shew :  
A faire shirt of mail then slipped on shée :  
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree ?”

There is no saying when its use as a concealed defence—in the parlance of the day “a secret”—came to a complete end. Late in the seventeenth century (1657) Monaldeschi, Queen Christina’s faithless and indiscreet paramour, was so provided when put to death by her orders in the garden at Fontainebleau, on which circumstance Ludolf, in his “*Schaubühne der Welt*,” published immediately after, coolly remarks that “he suffered very much, but it was entirely *his own fault*, for, wearing armour under his clothes, they were obliged to despatch him by stabs in the face and neck !”









THE LAOCOON GROUP, RESTORED FROM THE ARUNDELL SEAL.

*To face page 151.*





SEAL SET WITH AN INTAGLIO OF THE LAOCOON,  
USED BY THOMAS COLYNS, PRIOR OF TYWARDRETH,  
CORNWALL,  
EARLY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

WHEN Goethe, for the first time in his life, had the opportunity of studying a collection of antique gems (in the Hemsterhuis Cabinet), the impression which, at the very outset, forced itself upon his mind was, "that here it was also undeniable that copies of great, important, ancient works, for ever lost to us, are preserved, like so many jewels, within these narrow limits; hardly any branch of art wanted a representative amongst them; in scarcely any class of subjects was a deficiency to be observed." I have elsewhere ('Handbook of Engraved Gems,' p. 45) adduced several examples which have come under my own observation in the pursuit of the same study, that amply corroborate this opinion of the acutest of German critics; and I have there described gems which are the only things preserving the memory of the, in their day, wonders of the world, the master-

pieces of Canachus, Apelles, Lysippus, and Leochares. Gems, to the same extent as coins, have carried down to our times exact ideas of such marvels of art, or monuments of pristine creeds, like celebrated statues of deities, as were from their nature objects of popular *worship* to the communities issuing the coins stamped with their figures; but gems go far beyond this limit, and in this very province of creative art claim an infinitely more extensive domain. To say nothing of Painting (which has bequeathed little to us by the way of numismatics), the Glyptic art has, from the very beginning, especially delighted in rivalling her elder sister, Sculpture, and in perpetuating, in miniature, those performances of hers that recommended themselves, not by the traditional sanctity only of the object, but by their intrinsic merit and beauty, or by the celebrity of their authors. To the same causes is it due that engraved gems are almost the sole means enabling us to form a notion of the more essential principles of ancient Painting—its rules of composition and design in its best days—which otherwise would have all but entirely perished, inasmuch as vase-painting, which would otherwise have preserved their remembrance in a yet more complete manner (as our lithographs do the pictures of modern times), was in rapid decadence before historical painting had truly commenced; whilst, on the other hand, the frescoes of the later ancients, copies of these masterpieces, have long since shared their fate, their scanty, half obliterated remains, like the Pompeian, being merely sufficient to assure us of the immensity of our loss.

But gems possess a further value of their own.

Besides summoning up before us the beauteous spectres of what has passed away for ever, they have the practical advantage of empowering us rightly to understand that which has survived the wreck of ages, though with a maimed and mutilated existence, and which too often has suffered as much from the injudicious friendship of modern restorers as from the hostility of accident, or old iconoclastic fanaticism.

Of all such glyptic traditions of the original state of memorable antique works, none has hitherto been brought to light so replete with interest to all lovers of art, equally with archæologists, as the little relic forming the subject of the present memoir—an interest derived from the important service it lends towards the true restoration of, perhaps, the most celebrated and remarkable of all extant remains of ancient sculpture. For the knowledge of this monument, almost as deserving of notice from the circumstances of its preservation as from its special value in the subject under discussion, I am indebted (as on many former occasions of the like nature) to the kindness of Mr. Albert Way, who lately communicated to me the impression of the private seal<sup>1</sup> (figured [p. 151] double original size) of Thomas Colyns, Prior of Tywardreth, from A.D. 1507 to 1539. This signet was

<sup>1</sup> Attached to a document now in the possession of Lord Arundell of Wardour. We are here indebted to the researches of our friend Mr. Smirke, whose investigations of documentary evidence and of ancient remains in the western counties have frequently contributed to the gratification of the Institute. The grant to which the signet of Prior Colyns is appended was brought to light at Wardour Castle by Mr. Smirke. The intaglio of Laocoon is noticed by him in Dr. Oliver's 'Monasticon,' Additional Supp. p. 5. See the memoir of Colyns, 'Monast. Dioc. Exon.' p. 35.

set with an antique intaglio (on sard, as its style of cutting seems to indicate), a spirited though minute reproduction of the famous group of the Laocoon. In my own judgment, based upon the long-pursued comparative study of ancient glyptics, the work of this intaglio exhibits nothing of the style of the first quarter of the Cinquecento, so easily recognisable in its treatment of complicated designs like this,<sup>1</sup> nor even of the Roman imperial school, but rather possesses every characteristic warranting its ascription to the best period of Greek art in this particular branch, viz. the two centuries commencing with the æra of Lysippus and Pyrgoteles. It is necessary thus to premise with the confession that the antique origin of the work is to a certain degree only conjectural, resting as it does upon critical decisions alone, not upon chronological data that render its authorship (Greek or Roman) a matter beyond all dispute: which would have been the case had the Cornish prior, its last owner, flourished within the preceding century, when gem-engraving yet slumbered, together with the Laocoon, amidst the dust of the perished empire. For the marble group, its prototype, was disinterred as early as 1512 from its burial-place on the Esquiline, by Felix de Fredis, who still "glories in death" in the discovery, says his epitaph in the Ara Cœli. Hence there is a *possibility* (sufficient to disquiet the faith of those incompetent, from want of special knowledge of the art, to ap-

<sup>1</sup> Whoever has examined with an experienced eye the miniature groups of the greatest proficient in this line, P. M. da Pescia, the friend of M. Angelo, will at once perceive that our Laocoon displays a totally different *technique* in the mode of its execution.

preciate the evidence borne by the gem itself to its own Hellenic parentage, however sufficient the same may be to connoisseurs) that Colyns, who is known to have had transactions with the Apostolic See under Leo X., *may* have procured, for his own delectation, a gem-copy from the newly-discovered and far-famed sculpture, done by some clever hand among the innumerable rivals of Valerio Vicentino flourishing there at the time, when “*si ne era cresciuto si gran numero che era una meraviglia,*” as Vasari tells us, that is, before the fatal sack of the city in 1528. This uncertainty is increased by the unlucky lateness of date to the document (1529); one prior or shortly subsequent to 1512 would have settled the question in favour of my position; but it will be perceived that Colyns lived and *sealed* for many years after the discovery of the marble. Another consideration must be taken into account. Before the discovery of the impression which forms the subject of this enquiry, no *antique* representation of the Laocoon group had ever made its appearance. Nothing of the kind is to be found in Winckelmann’s Catalogue of the immense and all-comprehensive Stosch collection (confined to antiques); and although Raspe, in his Catalogue of Tassie’s pastes, does put down eight repetitions of the group in gems, yet, as he gives the post of honour amongst them to that signed by Flavio Sirletti (1700–37), it may safely be concluded that he regarded the rest as modern performances, and of trivial importance.

Having now, as candour required, stated the weightiest objections that occur to me as possible to be brought, with any show of reason, against my own

decision in the case, the next step is to produce confirmatory evidence in its favour; and such evidence is most unexpectedly furnished by a single particular in the seal, rendering testimony of the utmost value on my side, when it comes to be dispassionately examined in all its bearings upon the question. The intaglio *differs* from the marble group, as we see it *at present* (besides some minor details), in one grand point—the action of the right hand of the father. He appears on the wax attempting, with his right arm *bent*, to tear away the head of the serpent from his throat, into which it has already fastened its fangs, whilst at the same time he vainly averts his face from its attack. Now in the marble the action is totally different: Laocoon *extends* the same arm at full length, and forces away from him merely a fold of the serpent's body, the head of which appears much lower down. Singularly enough, one of our first living sculptors recently pointed out (to my informant whilst contemplating the group in his company at Rome) this very action of the principal figure, as being not merely unmeaning, but positively detrimental to the force and expression of the whole design. But the discrepancy is easily explained. This portion of the marble was wanting upon its discovery, and was immediately restored—by M. Angelo, as the story, of course, goes—consistently with his own false conception of the original attitude.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, a small projection is still visible on the head of Laocoon, sufficient to have guided a more sagacious restorer

<sup>1</sup> Most likely being misled by Virgil's expression ('Æn.' ii. 220):

"Simul manibus tendit divellere nodos."

to a better understanding of his duty, by suggesting the former adhesion of the serpent's bite in that particular place. For it will be perceived, upon the information of our gem, that the sculptor had, as his better knowledge of nature dictated, made his twin-serpents fasten their teeth on the two most mortal parts—the jugular vein and the region of the heart. Virgil himself beheld the attack made upon the head of the principal victim ; his Laocoon stands—

“ *Perfusus sanie vittas atroque cruore.*”

Now this very discrepancy demonstrates, in my opinion, that the gem-copy was taken when the marble was still perfect, and therefore before the date of 1512, and the Italian Revival. It is inconceivable that any Cinquecento gem engraver should have presumed to restore the design in a sense so strongly differing from that sanctioned by the overwhelming authority of the “divine” Florentine ; or again, and what is more to the purpose, that, having such audacity, he should have exhibited in his conjecture an intelligence so much superior to the greatest of modern artists. This last is a moral argument, and derives its weight from other considerations than those of art criticism, but it appears to me irresistible when backed by the evidence afforded by the technical execution of the intaglio itself, worked out, as the impression, though dulled and wasted by time, unmistakably shows, almost entirely with the diamond point, that grand agent of the best masters in ancient glyptics, but totally unknown to their emulators of the Cinquecento school.

Accounts vary greatly as to the restorer of the arm. Vasari states that Bandinelli, when making his copy

of the group (finished in 1525) now in the Galleria, Florence, "also restored the antique Laocoon in the right arm, the which being broken off and never found, Baccio made one in *wax*, the full size, that corresponded with the muscles, and with the boldness and character of the original, and united with it in such a manner as to prove how well Baccio understood his profession; and this model served him for making the perfect arm of his own work" ('Vita di Baccio Bandinelli'). But Winckelmann ('H. A.' x. 1, § 13) has the following account of the restoration:—"The right arm of Laocoon, which was wanting and replaced by one of *terra-cotta*, M. Angelo formerly thought of restoring, and commenced cutting it out of marble in the roughest way possible, but never finished it; this piece therefore now lies under the statue. This arm, entwined with the serpents, would have bent itself on high over the head of the statue. . . . *Bernini* has, on the contrary, stretched out the arm restored by him in *terra-cotta*, in order to leave the head of the figure free, and that no other portion might approach the same in an upward direction."

It must, however, be observed here that, had M. Angelo attempted the restoration, it could not possibly have escaped the knowledge, and the chronicling, of his devoted admirer, Vasari, who says nothing of it.

Winckelmann must certainly be confounding the great *Michele* with his obscure friend *Giovanni Angelo Montorsoli*, who is actually mentioned by Vasari ('Vita di G. Ang. Montorsoli') as having "restored the left arm, which was wanting, of the Apollo, and the *right of the Laocoon*," for Clement VII.



But, whether well-grounded or not, the tradition proves his idea of the proper action of the arm to have been equally wide of the original<sup>1</sup> as what we see at present, whether that be due to Bandinelli or to Bernini.

In the Paris intaglio of this group (clearly a Cinquecento work, though published by Mariette as undoubtedly antique) the arms of Laocoon and *one* son are similarly bent, but elevated considerably more *above* the heads: showing the nature of the *first* restoration.<sup>1</sup>

To attribute a *Grecian* origin to the copy of a sculpture believed by a large section of the antiquarian world<sup>2</sup> to have been executed in Pliny's own times, certainly demands some explanation on my part. A few remarks therefore, or rather a contribution of fresh conjectures towards the elucidation of this long disputed question, will probably not be thought out of place as a conclusion to this notice. The soundest mode of approaching the subject is to examine the actual words of Pliny, in which the conflicting opinions discover equally good grounds for the most discordant conclusions. "Quorundam claritati in operibus eximiis obstante numero artificum, quorum nec unus occupat gloriam, nec plures pariter nominari possunt; sicut in Laocoonte qui est in Titi imperatoris domo, opus omnibus et picturæ et statuariæ artis præferendum. Ex uno lapide eum ac liberos draconumque mirabiles nexus de consilii sententia fecere summi artifices, Hegesander et Polydorus et Athenodorus Rhodii. Similiter Palatinas domos Cæsarum replevere probatis-

<sup>1</sup> Our Laocoon's hand almost touches his *ear*.

<sup>2</sup> Headed by Thiersch in his 'Epochen der bildenden Kunst.'

simis signis Craterus cum Pythiodoro, Polydeuces cum Hermolao, Pythiodorus alter cum Artemone, et singulariter Aphrodisius Trallianus" (xxxvi. 5).

The point in dispute is whether Pliny meant to imply that the three Rhodian partners executed this unrivalled group "at the commission of Titus," as those named in the next sentence are beyond all question mentioned as working for the preceding Cæsars, "whose palace they filled with their own highly approved sculptures;"—or whether he merely cites the Laocoon as "then standing in Titus's palace," but the work of artists belonging to a much earlier period, perhaps to the school of Lysippus, to which the majority of critics at present refer them. The latter interpretation of the passage seems to me the true one. Pliny's prime object in quoting the Laocoon was indubitably the same as for quoting the *names* of the then *modern* sculptors in the passage following: to substantiate the assertion with which he starts, "that the copartnership of artists in a work, however meritorious the result, deprives them individually of the credit they deserve." This he shows by examples, taken, as the natural mode of arguing in similar cases suggests, from both old and recent experience; adducing the Laocoon as the most conclusive instance in the former class (probably on account of some special predilection of his patron Titus for that piece), and the very praiseworthy modern sculptures decorating the edifices on the Palatine as proving the same unwelcome truth in the case of artists of his own times. It is clear to me that the Laocoon is adduced for no other reason than as being the most conspicuous

example known to the historian of a great sculpture produced by a partnership of artists. The very expression laid hold of to prove its recent execution—"now standing in Titus's palace"—has a contrary effect on my judgment, for it sounds more applicable to an old work, transferred from another destination, than to one just completed for the place it filled; whilst the "similarly" commencing the next sentence infers a comparison between the Past and the Present. Pliny evidently considered that the highest claim of the Laocoon group to admiration was the cutting of the whole out of a single block, for a little above he has pointed out the same circumstance in the masterpiece of a certain Lysias—an Apollo and Diana standing together in a *quadriga*—a piece so much esteemed by Augustus that he had *selected* it (which proves it an older and not Roman work) to adorn the arch erected by him to the memory of his father, Octavius.

This notice of the group by Lysias, equally elaborate in its details with the Laocoon, may serve to throw light upon the original destination of the latter work—to adorn the pediment of a temple of Apollo—as the very nature of the first-named piece of sculpture assures must have been the case with *it*. The appropriateness of the subject for such a position, though not obvious at first, is however completely established by the explanation Hyginus gives of the cause of the miraculous destruction of Laocoon. He was the priest of Apollo, but had sacrilegiously polluted by incontinence the shrine of the pure god of Light. This tradition also accounts for the choice of the particular

ministers of divine vengeance, the serpent being Apollo's most noted attribute.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the "*earth-born dragon*" had nothing to do with Neptune, to whom Virgil, compelled by his plot, ascribes its mission, both as being the arch-enemy of Troy, and desirous to punish Laocoon for having profanely struck the *horse*, peculiarly sacred to that god as the actual creator of the animal.<sup>2</sup> The punishment of Laocoon therefore, exhibited in life-like horror above the entrance to the temple of Phœbus, read an awful lesson on the necessity of purity to priests and votaries alike. The choice of marble instead of bronze for the material of so complicated a design as this, which by its nature falls rather within the province of *statuaria* in metal than of *sculptura* in stone, is at once accounted for, if my idea concerning its proper destination be accepted. All intelligent readers of ancient notices of works of art will have perceived that for statues intended to be honoured *by* mortals, or to do honour *to* mortals, in the form of gods or memorial-figures of distinguished men, *metal* was regarded as the only appropriate medium, partly from traditional usage as having been the first to be so employed, partly from its superior costliness. Dædalus and Learchus and their disciples, with their figures in hammer-wrought bronze, preceded by many generations Scyllis and Dipœnus, the Cyprian, inventors of

<sup>1</sup> The Pythian Oracle is commonly expressed on gems by a column entwined with a *serpent*, and supporting a raven, Apollo's own prophetic bird.

<sup>2</sup> Hence the sea-faring Carthaginians, and, after them, the Saxon pirates, took the horse for the national cognisance.

sculpture in marble.<sup>1</sup> Praxiteles is noted by Pliny as a remarkable exception to the rule, and to have done his best in marble, "marmoris gloria superavit etiam semet." But for *architectural* decoration, necessarily meant to be viewed from a distance, and where the utmost conspicuousness was the greatest recommendation, marble was with good reason preferred to bronze. Its brilliant white,<sup>2</sup> yet further enhanced by the accustomed tinting of the background, rendered all its details distinguishable at the greatest distance from which they possibly could be viewed. No instance occurs to my recollection where the pediment or frieze of a temple is mentioned as decorated with whole figures, or with *rilievi*, in metal. The group of the Laocoon would be with equal propriety chosen to fill the tympanum of a temple of Phœbus as that of Niobe and her children, teaching another moral, to decorate one consecrated to his goddess sister.

Any one with a tincture of ancient art who reads Virgil must often have been struck, and then highly interested, with the scrupulous anxiety the very erudite poet manifests to have good ancient authority for all his descriptions. One often *feels* that he is transferring into his verse almost servile copies of the paintings and sculptures by the great masters of old Greece then accumulated around him in the palaces of his patrons at Rome. Here and there the pictorial representation has had such overpowering charms for him that he introduces it as an incident somewhat

<sup>1</sup> Who, migrating to Sicyon, first practised the new art there about Ol. 50, B.C. 650 (Plin. xxxvi. 4).

<sup>2</sup> Its name comes from the same root as *μαρμαίρειν*, "to shine."

clumsily incorporated with the rest of his story, like the defence and fall of the wooden tower at the taking of Troy. That he had admired some ancient representation of the fate of Laocoon, no one can doubt after reading his truly pictorial description of the scene; but that he drew his inspiration from the very sculpture we still possess is by no means so certain. There is one notable variation in his account of the mode of attack of the serpents from that adopted by Hegesander and his colleagues: in his verse they make a double coil around the throat and body of the father, and tower aloft over him with their heads and necks:—

“ Bis medium amplexi, bis collo squamea circum  
Colla dati superant capite et cervicibus altis; ”

whereas, in the sculpture, they leave their victim's neck entirely free, and show no attempt at suffocating him in their coils. Again, Virgil makes them *devour* the two boys before they attack the father:—

“ Corpora natorum serpens amplexus uterque  
Implicat, et miseros morsu *depascitur* artus.”

The picture of this catastrophe in the Vatican Virgil (ii. 193) is highly interesting, as displaying a totally different manner of treating the subject: neither inspired by the poet's description nor by the extant group. And yet the importance of the latter in every age of the empire would, it were to be supposed, have made it the fixed model for all future painters. But here, Laocoon has one knee on the altar, his sons are twins of three years old, they are lifted from the ground halfway up his sides by the folds of the serpents whose tails encircle his arms, and whose heads point sym-



PICTURE IN THE CODEX VATICANUS.





metrically downwards at his hips. He wears a *cope* flying in the air over his head.

A child destroyed by a serpent must have been a very favourite subject with the Greek sculptors, to judge from the frequency with which the "Death of Opheltes" is reproduced upon gems; for it is an article of faith with me that no fine gem-work was without a more celebrated prototype in statuary. The subject was recommended to ancient taste not so much by the importance of the legend it commemorated as by the opportunities it afforded to art in the contrast between the rounded and the attenuated contours of the victim and the destroyer, and equally for the graceful convolutions into which the coils of the latter could naturally be thrown. Curves and spirals had a special charm for the Grecian eye, as the decoration of the painted vases alone proves to demonstration. Why the Laocoon group should not, in any previously known example, have been taken for his model by the gem-engraver (a fact containing the sole grave objection against the antiquity of the work before us) admits of satisfactory explanation to those experienced in ancient glyptics. Gems of the best period, as a rule, present only a single figure, very rarely do they admit more than two; to enclose the multiplied details of an entire picture within their narrow limits, was reserved for the misplaced and unsuccessful ingenuity of the Cinquecento school. The ancient engraver knew the capabilities of his art too well to strain after such impossibilities, and never attempted a miniature reduction of a complicated group unless in some special cases where he was induced by the equal importance

of every member of the composition as in his oft repeated copies of the far-famed masterpiece of Euty-chides, the *τύχη πόλεως* of Antioch, in which the City seated on the Orontes, her founder Seleucus, and the attendant Victory all form one inseparable whole. When the story of Niobe, for example, is represented on a gem, it is sufficiently told by the introduction of no more than the two principal figures, the mother shielding her child; the escape of Æneas from Troy, by himself carrying his father (which is only equivalent to a single figure), and his little son grasping his hand. Unquestionably, therefore, the reason was a very sufficient one, that so happily induced the old engraver to break through the rule of his art and daringly transfer this very elaborate composition to the gem which the tasteful Prior of Tywardreth was fortunate enough to obtain for the embellishment of his personal signet, of which the half effaced impression has alone transmitted to us the correct idea of one of the most important existing monuments of antiquity.

The discoverer of this most interesting monument has assigned (in a memoir published in the 'Archæological Journal,' vol. xxv.) some very cogent reasons for changing the ownership of the seal, which point I had taken for granted. His words are:—"I have already stated that the document was a grant of the patronage of a living of which the Convent was patron, to a member of the well-known knightly family of the Arundells of Lauherne. The date is 25 May, 21 Henry VIII. (A.D. 1529); about 23 years after the discovery of the mutilated marble group in the

vineyard of Felice de Fredis at Rome, in the spring of 1506: a date which is fixed by contemporary letters, and other early notices. It at first appeared to me (as I stated in Dr. Oliver's Supplement) that the grant being found in a collection of title-deeds and muniments of the dissolved Priory, and purporting to be a grant of some property of the Convent, was the identical grant by the Convent; and it appeared singular that the Convent seal (well known, and of a very different type) should not be attached to it: but on reconsideration and reinspection of the original by the favour of Lord Arundell of Wardour, I am satisfied that the seal was the seal of the *grantee*, Thomas Arundell. The deed is styled in the deed itself an 'indented' one, and it is so indented along the upper edge in the usual fashion of the time, indicating that it was one of two facsimile instruments, written at opposite ends of a single piece of parchment. The regular seal of the Priory was no doubt attached to the other half, and delivered to the grantee for his own use and security, and was therefore not likely to be found amongst any muniments of the Priory. The bundle of Priory instruments had long been deposited, for some unexplained reason, in the muniment room of the Arundells, though it is not known that any portion of the Convent lands had ever been granted by the Crown to that family. We know, indeed, historically that such a grant was very improbable. That there had, in fact, been some voluntary transactions, directly or indirectly, between the Convent and that family *before* the dissolution, is apparent from the documents supplied by Dr. Oliver in the volume of

the 'Monasticon' first printed, and included in the long list of instruments under the head of that Priory.

"The general practice of the Augmentation Office was, I think, to deliver the muniments of the surrendered monasteries, or some of them only, to the subsequent grantee of the Crown; but I can easily believe that a religious house, on the eve of its threatened dissolution, might consider it expedient to put its muniments of title into the hands of a powerful and favoured family, on whose known friendship it had good reason to rely.

"As the missing deed has at last, after much search, been recovered, I have thought it worth while to print a copy of it, leaving an occasional blank where there is some obscurity or obliteration in the original: and I am also more disposed to do so, because its existence had well nigh become a matter of doubt, and because it gives me an opportunity of correcting some former observations made by me in the supplemental volume of the above work. I there expressed some surprise that the old Prior, then on the verge of his professional extinction, should have possessed himself of an ancient gem, and employed it as the official representative of his House in the course of a strictly canonical and capitular act. That such an ornamental object should be found in the possession and use of the scion of a distinguished family, who figures, if I mistake not, among the young retainers of the magnificent Cardinal—who was himself a candidate for the See of Rome, in opposition with the House of the Medici in the person of Clement the Seventh—could

be a matter of no surprise at all. In fact, he had in various ways abundant facilities for obtaining from beyond seas such specimens of ancient art, at that time so highly prized." . . . . .

"There are some observations not immediately connected with the principal subject of this paper, which occur to me to make in connexion with the Convent, and with the ancient family whose name we find associated with it in the above document.

"Among the muniments of the Priory, which are several hundreds in number, I find one which purposes to grant to *John Arundell, Esq.*, eldest son of Sir J. Arundell, Knight, and to two others (probably trustees), the next presentation of the church of St. Austell, also in Cornwall. Like the grant of St. Anthony to Thomas Arundell, it has only one seal attached, accompanied by an *apparently autograph subscription* by the grantee, Jno. Arundell. It is plain that this must be a counterpart, though called a 'scriptum' only, and not an indenture. The seal is not the Convent seal, but one in a finger-ring, which was doubtless the property of John Arundell. It is remarkable that the seal is a well-executed but fanciful one, perhaps with some mystic meaning, and represents what seem meant for a lion, a crab, and a small mirror.<sup>1</sup> The date of this deed is 15th March, 1530 (in words, not figures), *i.e.* 21 Henry VIII. It is therefore of nearly the same date as the one sealed

<sup>1</sup> An astrological device, embodying for the benefit of the wearer the joint influence of Leo and Cancer (the *Houses* of Sol and Luna) with that of the planet Venus. The impression shows this engraving to have been cut in the metal of the ring itself, not in any gem.

with the Laocoon seal. Copies of this seal, made fifteen years ago, are in the possession of myself and of Mr. Way, and the deed has not been lost, but is now in the possession of Lord Arundell, with the original papers. The autograph signature serves to identify the ownership of the signet-ring, and to confirm what I have already stated, that the instrument is a counterpart, as in the case of the Laocoon deed.

“At the present time the subscription of the name of a grantee would be a matter of course in a counterpart. At the time of this grant it was not a very usual, or a necessary practice: and so far as my experience extends, the reign of Henry VIII. was about the time when the practice of autograph subscription in addition to a seal was coming into use. It was indeed a marked period in our history as to art, architecture, and legal forms: a sort of line of demarcation between the outgoing and the incoming law about to be followed in the next century by the great living landmark of Lord Chief Justice Coke, whose works constitute a real wall of separation and transition between the living and the dead jurisprudence.

“Again, I find another curious document of a rather earlier date. It is a licence given by the same Prior Colyns to Richard Wencote, dated on 5 February A.D. 1517. Wencote then was, or had lately been, one of the monks of Tywardreth, and a priest, and the licence enabled him to go to Rome with the utmost expedition, ‘cum permagna celeritate,’ and there to obtain from the Pope liberty to visit the holy places at his pleasure, ‘in fulfilment of his pious and meritorious vows.’

“Now it may be that the sole object of this visit to Rome was only of a professional or religious character: but it is certain that if the worthy envoy happened to be a man of taste, or had learned at the court of Leo of this famous monument of Rhodian art, of which the praises were at that time sung by Sadoletus in verses of no mean merit, he might have been tempted, or perhaps was duly commissioned by the Prior, or his friends at Lauherne, to make an investment in the purchase of such ornamental specimens of glyptographic art as the two signets of which the wax impressions are now before me.”



The Laocöon group.





## TALISMANS AND AMULETS.

ALTHOUGH these terms are usually confounded together, their proper meaning is entirely distinct. *Talisman* is no more than the corruption in the Arabian mouth of the Greek ἀποτελεσμα, the influence of a planet or zodiacal Sign upon the person born under the same; whence came the technical term for astrology, ἡ ἀποτελεσματικὴ. Now the influence of every *degree* in each Sign was typified by a fanciful figure, or group, painted in the "Table of Myriogeneses" (a term to be explained further on), and thus, by a natural transition, in course of time the symbol itself usurped the name, *Apotelesma*, of the idea which at first it was only meant to portray. A *talisman* was therefore by its very nature a *sigil*, symbolical figure, whether engraved in stone or metal, or drawn upon parchment and paper. An excellent illustrative example is the one figured by Raspe, No. 354, where the Abraxas god, carrying the lustral vase, is encircled by the ungrammatical invocation of its Alexandrian fabricator, ΠΡΟΣ ΠΑΝΤΑΣ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΝ ΔΟΤΑΙ ΧΑΡΙΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΦΕΡΟΥΣΙΝ, "Give unto the bearers favour in the sight of all men." The talisman, therefore, served both to procure love and to avert danger from its possessor.

The latter purpose alone was the object of the *amulet*, a word probably derived, to judge by the thing it originally designated, from rustic Latinity, its root

being *amolior*, "to do away with," or baffle. The, at first sight, so specious etymology from the Arabic *hamalet*, "suspended," is overthrown by Pliny's notice of its primary signification, which shows it to be a genuine old Latin term, and not imported by the Oriental magicians of imperial times. For he cites the word as the countryfolks' name for the cyclamen, "which ought to be planted in every house, if it be indeed true that where it is grown poisonous drugs have no power to harm; on which account they call the flower *amuletum*."<sup>1</sup> Afterwards the name of the flower came to be applied to other natural objects possessing the like virtue; for Pliny, speaking of amber, observes "infantibus alligari amuleti modo prodest." It may here be remarked that the only *amuletum* provided by nature that preserves its ancient reputation in our own day is the "child's caul," still to be seen advertised at the regular price of five guineas, and readily saleable to sea-faring folks as a sure protection from all danger of drowning. But with the Romans, as Lampridius tells us ('Diadumenian.' iii.), its efficacy was of a different kind, and in fact only affected that profession held of all others in the greatest detestation by sailors; for the Roman midwives used to sell the membrane stripped off the fortunate infant's head "to credulous lawyers, who believed that they prospered through possessing it."

Many other things, both animal and vegetable, the stranger in shape the more efficacious, had the power

<sup>1</sup> "A nostris Tuber Terræ vocatur, in omnibus serenda domibus si verum est ubi sata est nihil nocere mala medicamenta: *amuletum* vocant: narrantque et ebrietatem representari addita in vinum."

of counteracting the ever-dreaded Evil Eye ; amongst which stands pre-eminent the Greek *phallus*, the Latin *fascinum*, either represented in its natural form or by the fist with the fingers so closed as to suggest the same obscene idea. The first stroke only of the fearful influence was fatal, hence whatever diverted it from the person in so doing destroyed its force. For such a purpose what could serve better than anything odd, strange, indecent, and thereby unlikely to be exposed to view ? The *phallus* was, of course, the first to suggest itself, and was followed, more decorously, by numerous other articles bearing some supposed analogy to the idea it conveyed. With this meaning a locust, or rather mole-cricket, of bronze was set up by Pisistratus, says Hesychius, in the Acropolis as a *καταχώνη* (literally “a thing to stare at”), or charm against the Evil Eye;<sup>1</sup> and the insect itself is perpetually repeated on gems with a similar intention. The skull of an ass stuck upon a pole in the middle of a vineyard was accounted the best preservative against blight ; and this usage long held its ground in Tuscany, for Boccaccio makes an amusing use of it in one of his tales, where the lady telegraphs there-with her husband’s absence to her lover, by turning the skull in a particular direction. (Day vi. Nov. 1.)

I shall now proceed to illustrate the foregoing definitions by describing the most remarkable examples in either class that have come under my observation. Those only are quoted which declare their intention

<sup>1</sup> With the same view “certain laughable objects” were set up in front of potters’ furnaces, to avert the mischances to which their manufacture is so peculiarly liable. (Pollax.)

in an intelligible language, to the exclusion of the purely Gnostic, although, by the light of the former, we may safely conjecture the purport of those long inscriptions in an unknown tongue which, if interpreted, may be supposed to contain prayers of the same kind as others less carefully shrouded from the understanding of the profane.

A large round disk of loadstone, still extremely powerful (belonging to myself) is engraved with the three Graces, and the legend—**ZHCЄC ZABATI**—“Long life to thee, Sabatius!” reverse, Horus seated on the lotus, with **ΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΒΛΑ** in a continuous circle around him: on the margin, declaring the purpose of the talisman, **CY NIKAC ΠΑΝΤΕC** (*sic*). Of much the same character is another gem of mine, a bloodstone bearing a spirited engraving of a race-horse carrying the palm of victory in his mouth, and his name, **TIBERIS**, added. The reverse exhibits the Power to whose favour the pious *turfite* of old had ascribed his success, in the person of the Abraxas god, with the invocation on the stone’s edge, **ZACTA ΙΑΩ ΒΑΡΙΑ** — “Jehovah, the Destroyer, the Creator” (Chaldee). Raspe’s invaluable repertory<sup>1</sup> supplies many curious instances of the sort. His No. 630, a magic symbol inscribed with the frequently occurring formula **ΣΑΛΒΑΝΑ ΧΑΜΒΡΗ**, presents for reverse the inscription **ΠΑΜΦΙΛΟC—ΤΥΡΑΝΝΟC—ΠΑΡΑΔΟΞΟC—ΕΚΑΤΗ—ΕΠΗΚΩ—ΕΥΧΗΝ**: which seems to mark the gem for an *ex voto*, dedicated by Pamphilus

<sup>1</sup> Rud. E. Raspe, Catalogue raisonné d’une Collection générale de Pierres gravées etc., moulées par J. Tassie. In English and French. London, 2 vols. 4to, 1791.

to Hecate in return for some unlooked-for piece of good luck. Another, No. 625, inscribed **ΘΩΧ—ΘΩΧΑΜ—CΩZE BAPIN**, invokes this oddly titled Power<sup>1</sup> to protect Baris. In No. 611, five lines of unintelligible letters have for reverse **CHC—OMO—NOIAC**, showing that the former contained a charm for ensuring concord between the donor and the wearer of the jasper.

It may not be out of place here to observe that certain prescriptions of those eminent Roman physicians, Alexander, Marcellus, and Sammonicus (to be quoted under their proper heading) afford reasonable ground for suspicion that amongst those legacies of the hidden wisdom of Egypt—the regular, as yet untranslated Gnostic formulæ—many, instead of enjoying the high dignity of being passports to eternal bliss, or else words of power over demons, were to those that understood them mere charms against the gout and colic—complaints which seem to have provokingly set at defiance the legitimate practice of the sons of Æsculapius. For Egypt continued under the Cæsars a great centre of medical science: Pliny, when mentioning the introduction from that region, the land of lepers, into Italy, of the *mentagra*, face-leprosy, adds that it brought over to Rome a multitude of practitioners, who attended to that disease exclusively. Their mode of treatment was deep cauterization, the remedy being, says the historian, worse than the evil itself, through the frightful disfigurement of the face resulting therefrom. The

<sup>1</sup> “Amidst, amidst them,” Heb., perhaps equivalent to “Omnipresent Spirit,” or perhaps, “Thou that sittest between the Cherubim.”

profits accruing to these empirics were enormous; they contracted beforehand for a fixed sum, on the terms of "No cure, no pay," and arranged their price accordingly. Manilius Cornutus, governor of Aquitaine, is quoted as having paid n.s.cc. (*ducenta* must be meant) or about 2000*l.* for the job.

To return to amulets in their strictest sense. One of the most singular, and frequently occurring both on bas-reliefs and gems, represents the dreaded Eye itself as the centre of a circle of symbols radiating from it, and all working together to baffle its stroke. A Praun gem displays the organ of fascination thus circumscribed by a lion, stag, dog, thunderbolt, dove, and serpent; the easily recognisable attributes of the deities presiding over the days of the week, whose influence and protection against the *malocchio* were thereby ingeniously invoked. But the completest set of all the amulets most in repute amongst the Romans was that making up the necklace lately found on the skeleton of a Pompeian lady, in the house of Holconius. Separated by beads and Canopic vases, hang terminal figures of Isis, Anubis, and Silenus, two jackals, two phalli, an open hand, a *manus obscena*, astragal, wheel, die, bunch of grapes, pine-cone, panther, with a cigala forming the centre. This discovery explains the use of the same objects so often turned up separately.

The *bullæ*, a gold case, circular or heart-shaped, worn round the neck by the Roman boys, was a true amulet, for in the beginning, says Macrobius, it was the special ornament of the victorious general in the triumphal procession, "having enclosed within it such

remedies as they esteemed the most efficacious against the stroke of envy.”<sup>1</sup> Probably this hidden safeguard was some written spell, for the *bullæ* came from the Etruscans, those great charm-mongers of Italy. In fact the specimen (No. 254, Mus. Nap. III.) at Paris was found, when opened, to contain, folded up, a thin leaf of silver, inscribed with eighteen lines in Greek, mixed with cyphers, interpreted as a prayer to the gods of Olympus, joined with an invocation of the infernal deities. This “Etruscum aurum,” restricted to patrician children, was replaced amongst the plebeians by a leather pouch, “nodus tantum et signum de paupere loro,” but with contents of equal virtue. And in addition to the *bullæ*, a number of other fantastic objects, of the same character as in the Pompeian necklace just cited, were strung together around babies’ necks, as their portraits often show, serving also to divert the child by their clinking together, whence the whole appendage got its name of *crepundia*.

To protect oneself against evil influences by wearing *spells*, that is, as the name denotes, mystic words *written* out upon leather or parchment, is a practice going back to immemorial antiquity, perhaps the very first use to which the art of writing was applied. Pericles, in his last illness, showed a friend calling to see him such a thing, that his women had tied round his neck for a last resource when all medicine failed, saying, with a sad smile, it proved him ill indeed to

<sup>1</sup> See in the ‘Archæological Journal,’ vol. vi. p. 112, vol. viii. p. 166, observations by Mr. James Yates on the *bullæ* worn by Roman boys; several examples are there figured.

have consented to such folly (Plutarch). Anaxilas, quoted by Athenæus, describes the Athenian fop of those days as wearing the "Ephesian spell" handsomely printed upon parchment strips :—

ἐν σκυταρίοις ῥάπτουσι φέρων  
Ἐφέσια γράμματα καλά.

This most venerable of charms was the words in an unknown language graven upon the zone and feet of the Ephesian Diana, and preserved to us by Hesychius, viz. **ΑΣΚΙ ΚΑΤΑΣΚΙ ΑΙΞ ΤΕΤΡΑΞ ΔΑΜΝΑΜΕΝΕΥΣ ΑΙΣΙΟΝ**, whereof the traditional interpretation was, "Light, darkness, Himself, the sun, truth." These words, according to Plutarch ('Sympos. '), the Magi used to recite over those *possessed with devils*; and the name **ΔΑΜΝΑΜΕΝΕΥΣ** is actually found on a Gnostic amulet (De la Turbie) around the type of a mummy enfolded by a serpent, his good genius. As a title of the sun, its appropriateness to a Mithraic gem is sufficiently obvious. Another very ancient example of a charm is that composed by the diviner, Battus, to drive away pestilence, and sung for that purpose by the Milesians, which Clemens Alexandrinus has preserved :—

**ΒΕΔΥ ΞΑΜΥ ΧΘΩ ΠΛΗΚΤΡΟΝ ΣΦΙΓΞ  
ΚΝΑΞΒΙ ΧΘΥΠΤΗΣ ΦΛΕΓΜΑ ΔΡΟΥ,**

where he explains the first four words as meaning Air, Sea, Earth, Sun. The Jews, on the restoration of their kingdom, practised the same custom, substituting, however, for these heathenish words certain verses out of the Law, which, being supposed of power to avert all evil and mischief from the wearer (they



were bound round the head), received the appellation of *phylacteries*, *φυλακτήρια*, that is, safeguards. The same belief yet flourishes amongst Mohammedans, especially the African, who employ verses of the Koran with similar confidence in their efficacy. A remarkable illustration of this is offered by certain Oriental mail-shirts, every ring of which is stamped with some holy word, thus converting the whole into an endless tissue of amulets—in every sense, “*decus et tutamen in armis.*” Now-a-days the same spells—*grigris* is their proper title—are sewed profusely over the dress, enclosed in little metal or leather cases.

That the same fashion was equally prevalent under the Lower Empire is apparent from innumerable passages in writers of the time. To cite one of the most curious, Gregory Nazianzen (‘Hom.’ xl. 18) exclaims, “Your child hath no need for amulets and spells, in company wherewith the Evil One likewise maketh his entrance, robbing God of His glory amongst the lighter-minded; but give to it (in baptism) the Trinity, that great and glorious mystery.” And the Greek epigrammatists, with whom, as with the wits of Molière’s time, physicians were ever held fair game, forget not to bring in the superstition for their benefit. Take this example,

Ἐρμογενῆ τὸν ἰατρὸν ἰδὼν Διόφαντος ἐν ὑπνοῖς  
οὐκέτ’ ἀνηγέρθη, καὶ περιάμμα φέρων.

“In slumber sound was Diophantus laid,  
When a dire dream Hermogenes portrayed;  
He saw the leech—enough! he woke no more,  
Spite of the guardian amulet he wore.”

Pliny (xxviii. 5) quotes, with ill-disguised ridicule,

the singular superstition of his all-powerful and learned friend, the "king-maker," Mucianus, who used to carry as a preservative against ophthalmia a live fly tied up in linen.<sup>1</sup> Another noted man of his day, the Consul Q. Serv. Nonianus, wore for the same purpose, tied about his neck, a paper inscribed with the Greek letters **PA**; the virtue whereof perhaps lay in their expressing the Egyptian name of the Sun.

Most of the Gnostic stones have clearly been intended for wear as amulets, and not for setting in rings, a purpose for which their often large dimensions quite unfit them. This last peculiarity would lead one to suspect that such stones were usually carried about in the purse or zone, both for their special object and also to be readily producible at pleasure, as credentials amongst the faithful, and as means of introducing one *illuminato* or *ami de la lumière* to another. To such a custom, derived from the more ancient *tessera*, by means whereof the general circulated amongst his troops the word for the "day"—"It belli tessera signum"—does St. John evidently allude in the promise, "To him that overcometh will I give a white stone, and in the stone a *new Name* written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it." The word used here,  $\psi\eta\phi\omicron\varsigma$ , a *gem*, contains a palpable reference to the *white* calcedony, that regular material for those talismans, covered with interminable

<sup>1</sup> Which notion may perhaps more reasonably explain the frequent appearance of the insect in gems than the usual theory of its reference to Baalzebub, whose protection is supposed to have thereby been secured against those bloodthirsty swarms of whom he was the lord.

legends, the attempt at whose interpretation will, after all his pains, convince the baffled philologist of the truth of the concluding part of the "sainted seer's" declaration. That such things were intended to be carried about the person, not ostentatiously displayed, is furthermore shown by the old Arabian story-teller's notice how that the Princess Badoura's talisman, "a cornelian engraved with strange figures and letters," was carried by her in a small purse sewed on to her jewelled girdle.

The devices seen on certain talismans, for example, the lion bestriding a corpse, or the captive bound to a pillar surmounted by a gryphon, almost prove that they were made to be given to him that "overcometh," the neophyte who had passed through all the trials preceding initiation; and their existence may explain Augustine's "image of the demon purchased with blood-shedding" in the Mithraic mysteries. As to the grand seat and authors of the manufacture, we are not left in doubt, for Epiphanius, when mentioning that Manes, after his 'Mysteries' and 'Treasury,' wrote likewise an 'Astrology,' adds, "For these sectaries are so far from eschewing the forbidden art that the head and front of their boast is the science of *astronomy*;<sup>1</sup> and moreover the making of *amulets*, that is to say, things for wearing round the neck, *periapta*, and incantations, and all such trickery." The use of *periapta* in their proper sense yet survives amongst the German Jews, for, when the sick man is at the last gasp, the attendants bind about his head

<sup>1</sup> Another and undesigned testimony this to the primarily astrological nature of talismanic figures.

and arm certain knotted leather thongs.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, a Jew about to be executed thus prepares himself to meet his fate. And in Turkish medical practice a sovereign cure for apoplexy is to encircle the head with a parchment strip painted with the Signs of the zodiac.

That all such matters were properly designed to be tied round, or hung from, the person is sufficiently manifest from their generic appellation, *periapta*. This, with their universal use, appears from Spartian's remark when, to place in the strongest light the capricious cruelty of Caracalla, he says that he put to death "et qui remedia quartanis tertianisque collo suspensa gestarunt."<sup>2</sup> In fact, the only Gnostic stone known to me as retaining its antique setting is one adapted for this purpose. It is a red jasper, oval, engraved with a mummy erect, having its head radiated, type of the soul released and glorified, inscribed **ABPACAZ**; reverse, the Abraxas god himself and **IAΩ** below. The stone, nearly an inch long, is mounted in a rudely made gold frame, having a broad loop soldered on for the cord, after the fashion of the mounted medallions of the Lower Empire.

<sup>1</sup> These are probably identical with the phylacteries, according to the actual use of objects so designated Tephillim, in the Hebrew ritual, and worn in the synagogue service on the forehead and on the left arm, being attached by long thongs of calf-skin, curiously knotted. These objects consist of small leathern boxes, enclosing four inscribed rolls, and a single roll, respectively. To these boxes the knotted thongs are attached. The fashion of the Tephillim may be seen in Dr. Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible,' v. Frontlets.

<sup>2</sup> Probably alluding to the famous Abracadabra, which the first physician of the age, Sammonicus, directs how to write on parchment and wear for the same purpose. History mentions its general use, and the belief in its efficacy, in time of pestilence.

This unique example rewarded my search amongst the miscellaneous gems of the British Museum, where, at the same time, I recognised many of the finest in the Gnostic Series published by Chifflet more than two centuries ago—another proof of the well-known axiom, that the curiosities of the entire world ultimately gravitate towards London as their centre-point of attraction. In their number, particular attention is due to the immense sard, covered on both sides with a long formula, agreeing word for word with that on the celebrated Hertz garnet and Chifflet's calcedony; a repetition that declares the importance of these mystic words, intended either for recitation over a sacrifice, or to accompany the defunct *illuminato* into the grave, for the same beneficial end as the set of prayers prescribed in the "Schema of the Ophites." A third singular relic, belonging to the last phase of the Gnosis, is a large, egg-shaped calcedony, bearing the lion-headed man (perhaps *Ourotal*, the great god of the Aubians, identified by Herodotus with Dionysos), encompassed with a long legend in the latest Pehlevi, perhaps Himyaritic, lettering, and agreeing perfectly in style with the latest Sassanian stamps.

An appropriate complement to this enquiry will be a description of the "Table of Myriogeneses (properly, Moriogeneses)," alluded to in the beginning. That such tables formed one great repertory for the talisman-makers may be inferred from Ptolemy's observation in his 'Carpus,' aph. ix.<sup>1</sup>: "The figures

<sup>1</sup> See the treatises entitled "De Sculpturis Lapidum," and "Liber Secretus Filiorum Israel," printed from MS. Harl. 80, and MS. Arundel, 342, in the 'Archæologia,' vol. xxx. pp. 449, 451; also the extract

(στοιχεῖα) in their rise and decline are affected by the heavenly bodies, on which account the *στοιχειοματικοὶ* employ them by observing the entrance of the planets into them:" where the Arabic translation renders the Greek name of these professors by "talisman-makers." And there is another interesting thing about these strange creations of the ancient astrologers' fancy; they would seem to have supplied many of the sigils which the mediæval lapidaria describe as existing on gems, or "Pierres d'Israël," but which, for the most part, do not now present themselves upon any such relics of antiquity. Scaliger ('Manilius,' Not. p. 487) has translated the entire table, describing the *Ascendants* in each Sign as they were represented by the Arabian astrologers, who, in their turn, pretended to be transcribing the manuals of their ancient Egyptian predecessors in the science. To give here the *degrees* of the first Ascendant in Aries alone will amply suffice to exhibit the truly unclassical nature of the representations themselves, and, equally, their close affinity in taste to the sigils so highly valued by the mediæval doctors.

*Arsiccan*, Mars, First Decanus in Aries, gives courage and impudence to him that is born under the same. 1st Degree. Man holding in his right hand a pruning-hook, in his left a cross-bow. 2. Dog-headed man with right hand extended, a wand in his left. 3. Man holding out various ornaments in his right hand, his left placed in his girdle. 4. Man with

from 'Le Livre Techel des Philosophes et des Indois et dit estre des Enfans d'Israël,' *ibid.* p. 454, from the French 'Lapidaire,' printed by Le Roux de Lincy, in his 'Livre des Légendes.'

curly hair; in his right hand a hawk, in his left a whip. 5. Two men; one cleaving wood with an axe, the other holding a sceptre. 6. King, carrying in his right hand the orb, in his left the sceptre. 7. Man in armour, holding an arrow. 8. Man with a helmet on his head, in his right hand a cross-bow. 9. Man bareheaded, in his left hand a sword. 10. Man spearing a wild boar.

All these types were expressive of analogous predispositions and natural qualities in the *native*, under each degree. Taking the hint from this list, Scaliger explains (and very plausibly) many of those composite figures carrying zodiacal Signs in their hands, and which are commonly accounted as Gnostic works, to be in reality genuine representations of these Myriogeneses, and intended to personify the astral influence of the particular degree upon the infant whose destiny it governed.

But if the virtue of a charm is to be estimated by the amount of ingenuity involved in its construction, the one annexed (found scratched on the plaster of a Roman house at Cirencester) would drive even the far-famed "Ephesian Letters" out of the field. Read in four different directions, it yields the same words, giving the sense (or non-sense)—"The labourer holds the plough-wheels, I, the sower, creep after him"—perhaps ensuring fertility to the land.

ROTAS  
OPERA  
TENET  
AREPO  
SATOR

MEDICINAL AMULETS, RINGS, AND  
PROPHYLACTICS.

THE physicians of antiquity had the advantage of one powerful auxiliary, the patient's own imagination, now totally excluded from the regular pharmacopœia, and subsisting only in the practice of those old hags in out-of-the-way country places who still cure burns and bruises, and disperse wens and warts according to the mystic lore of old. The agents employed were natural amulets and spells, of which the old Grecian doctor made as liberal use as any "medicine-man" now-a-days amongst the Red Indians. Such remedial means, according to Pindar ('Pyth.' iii. 90), seem to have formed no unimportant part, nay, rather, to have held the first place in the resources of the actual god of the healing art when he set up in business for himself after serving his apprenticeship to the Centaur Chiron, his predecessor in the same line. The poet describes how thereupon immediately flocked unto him "all people either long afflicted by natural sores, or wounded by the grey steel, or damaged in body by the burning fire or by the nipping frost; some he treated by means of *soothing spells*, others by suitable potions, some by applying medicines to their injured limbs, others, again, he set on their legs once more by the use of the knife."

The descendants of Æsculapius long continued to follow so respectable a precedent. Hippocrates de-



clares (and evidently without intending a joke) that spells are very useful as adjuncts to medicines, although of little service by themselves. Even the sceptical Pliny, though he indemnifies himself by an occasional sneer at their absurdity, found himself compelled, by the force of public opinion, to ensure the completeness of his work by filling it with a list of the supernatural virtues, not merely of herbs, but of all sorts of objects which operated when merely carried about the person.

Such being the case, it is very conceivable that the medicinal as opposed to the *magical* virtues of sigils upon gems, of which Camillo, physician to Cesare Borgia, has left us so copious a list in his 'Speculum Lapidum,' as constituting a very important element in the education of the Italian doctor of the fifteenth century, were not from first to last the chimeras of dreaming mediæval monks, but were, many of them, received by tradition from the ancient masters in the art. And what confirms this view is the finding the recognition of the value of charms in the cure of disease ever and anon obtruding itself throughout the works of Alexander Trallianus (who flourished under Justinian), although his writings are in other respects highly commended by competent judges for the knowledge they display of the nature of diseases, and their proper mode of treatment. Further on will be found several extracts from his book prescribing, with the utmost minuteness, the proper mode of applying these powerful arcana. It would be interesting to know the exact nature of the rings sold in the days of Aristophanes, nine centuries before Trallianus' date, for protection against the bite of serpents and noxious

insects ; but there is reason to suppose, if the authority of the Arab astrologers counts for anything, that they bore the figure of the creature to be repelled by their virtue. This supposition also would account for the frequency of bronze rings of early workmanship engraved with the scorpion, the tarantula, the fly, and even smaller vermin.

I believe I have met with one of these defences against reptiles in a bronze ring of Roman work, engraved with a stag standing with a snake hanging from his nostrils. This singular type finds an explanation in the statement of Pliny (viii. 50) : "Stags have a quarrel with the serpent : they trace out their holes, and, strange to say, by means of their *breath* draw them out, in spite of all resistance. On this account the smell of burnt stag's horn is singularly effectual in driving away snakes ; and a specific against their bites is the liquid (*coagulum*) from the fawn killed while yet in the belly of its dam." A brazen scorpion was actually set up by Apollonius Tyaneus, at Antioch, for the purpose of freeing the city from such reptiles, and with complete success, according to Glycas ('An.' iii.). The "Brazen Serpent" of Moses is a yet more respectable evidence of the efficiency of the charm.

Aristophanes ('Plut.' 883) makes his "honest man" reply to the common informer in these terms of defiance :—

"I care not for thee since I wear a ring  
For which I paid one drachma to Eudemus."

To which the other retorts—

"But 'tis no charm against th' informer's bite."

Antiphanes again ('Athen.' iii. 123) mentions another sort, exactly answering to the galvanic rings, whose virtues used to be so wonderfully puffed a few years ago as preservatives from all manner of aches and pains, for he introduces his miser, exclaiming—

“ In a kettle  
Beware lest I see any one boil water :  
For I've no ailment : may I ever have none !  
But, if perchance a griping pain should wander  
Within my stomach or about my navel,  
I'll get a ring from Phertatus for a drachma.”

But to a much later stage of ancient society belong those magical rings whose potency was of higher order, dealing not with natural ills, but with the abstract principle of Evil, an idea totally absent from the graceful mythology of primitive Greece. To their consideration a distinct chapter has been devoted in the sequel.

To return to the subject viewed as an auxiliary of the healing art, the following are amongst the most interesting of the recipes given by Trallianus. Against the *gout* (b. xi.), “Take a strip of thin gold, and, after engraving upon it the words **MEY . TPEY . MOP . ΦOP . TEYE . ZA . ZON . ΦIΛOY . XPI . GE . ZE . ON .**, wrap it up in the sinews of a crane, put it into a little leather case, and wear it tied to the ankles. Inasmuch as by these *Names* the sun is strengthened and daily renewed, so is this composition restored unto its former power : ‘*Now, now quickly, quickly, lo ! I say the Great Name wherein quiet is confirmed.*’ **ΓAZ . AZYΦ . ZYON . ΘPIHΞ . BAYN . XOAK .** ‘*Strengthen this composition as it was at the first ; now, now quickly, quickly.*’” It is evident that these invocations to the sun are given for

translations of the two spells in an unknown tongue; and the giver's express declaration that they contain the *names* of that luminary sufficiently explains the frequent occurrence of **TEYE**<sup>1</sup> and **BAINXO** upon our talismans.

Another of his prescriptions, good for the gout and all fluxions:—"When the moon is in Aquarius or Pisces, dig up before sunset the sacred herb called *hyoscyamus* with the forefinger and thumb of the left hand without touching its root, and say, 'I speak unto thee, I speak unto thee, O sacred herb! I call thee that thou come to-morrow into the house of Phileas, that thou mayest stop the fluxion in the feet or hands of such-and-such a one. But I conjure thee in the great Name **ΙΑΩΘ ΣΑΒΑΩΘ**, who hath fixed the earth and fastened the sea abounding in flowing waves, who hath dried up Lot's wife and made of her a pillar of salt, receive into thyself the spirit and the forces of thy mother the earth, and dry up the fluxion in the feet or hands of such-and-such a one.' Next day take the bone of any dead animal, and before sunrise dig up the root therewith, saying, 'I conjure thee, by the holy names, Iaoth, Sabaoth, Adonai, Elohim.' Then sprinkle a little salt upon the root, saying, 'As this salt shall not increase, so let not the pains of the patient increase.' Then take the small end of the root and tie upon the patient, but hang up the remainder thereof over the fireplace for 360 days."

Compare this Byzantine method of obtaining aid from heaven against the "opprobrium medicosum"

<sup>1</sup> It is actually inscribed under Sol in his quadriga on a large hæmatite of my own.

with the following recipe, written partly in Hebrew, partly in Italian, in a hand of the sixteenth century, and extracted from a MS. of Hebrew spells belonging to the Rev. R. Sinker, Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge:—" *A cure for the gout (Pedaca)*. And I have heard that it is a disease that cometh upon man, by reason of great weakness, to the knees and to the legs and to all the body; but I do not know wherefore. Thou shalt take **I.S.SI** (*fringe of a priest's robe*) and shalt find the measure of the man, or of the woman, from the top of the brain down to the great toe of the left foot: and then thou shalt take the measure with the same thread of **I.S.SI** of the big middle-finger of one hand which is the longest, even unto the big middle-finger of the other hand. And take hold of his arms, saying always (in Hebrew), 'It is pleasant,' as well in taking the measure of his waist as in taking that of his two arms. Then holding his feet, both of them, over a chafing-dish containing a little wood-ashes moistened, with a coin of good silver thou shalt cut the ashes round about his feet three times, saying all the while as before. And then thou shalt gather up the ashes and put them into a rag of black cloth that hath never touched water, and then tie it up with three threads of the aforesaid fringe; and then thou shalt lay it under the head of the person; and this thou shalt do three times before the sun sets. And then let one carry the parcel to a running water,<sup>1</sup> saying all the while, 'It is pleasant,' to whomsoever carries it; and to him must be given the piece of silver above mentioned." This is followed by the Hebrew

<sup>1</sup> Suggested by the analogy of "rheuma," and "defluxion."

heading, "a charm for a burn," which is given in Italian, thus: "Agro fuoco, agro fero, agro fuoco, dell'azzalle fosti creato; sopra al fonte fosti gettato, tanto malposte far quì come fai là." A part of this remedy reminds one of Virgil's 'Pharmaceutria':—

"Fer cineres Amarylli foras, rivoque fluenti  
Transque caput jace, ne respexeris."

It will be seen that Greek and Hebrew charms are alike based on the axiom that gout proceeds from *moisture*, and must be counteracted by means involving the idea of dryness.

As a remedy for the *colic* (seemingly a much more frequent complaint with the ancients than in our days), Trallianus prescribes an iron ring, engraved with this figure, which again is a regular



Gnostic device, and to be seen conspicuously upon one of the leaden scrolls from the Vigna Marini tombs.<sup>1</sup> The ring itself is to be eight-sided, and on each side to bear two syllables of the formula:—ΦΕΥΓΕ ΦΕΥΓΕ ΙΟΥ ΧΟΛΗ Η ΚΟΡΥΔΑΛΟΣ ΣΕ ΖΗΤΕΙ—"Fly, fly, ho there! Bile, the lark is looking for thee." He adds:—"Of this recipe I have had long experience, and have deemed it unreasonable not to make it known, being, as it is, of such great virtue as an *antipathic* to the disease. But I recommend you not to communicate such things as this to the vulgar, but only unto the lovers of virtue and those able to keep a secret. Wherefore, also, the divine Hippocrates exhorts us saying, 'These matters being holy, you must declare to holy men alone: to the profane it is not lawful.' Observe that the pre-

<sup>1</sup> Matter, 'Excursion gnostique en Italie,' pl. xii.

scribed ring must be made upon the first, or else the seventeenth, day of the moon's age." For the same complaint, he also recommends the wearing an intaglio of Hercules strangling the Lion, cut upon a "Median Stone." Now such engravings in the rudest style of the Lower Empire are frequently to be met with, having, moreover, the initial of the malady they are intended to combat repeated four or six times on the reverse, in the form of a square, or in two rows, so as to leave no doubt upon the object of the amulet. But all that I have seen are in red jasper, whereas Pliny describes the Lapis Medicus, "so called after the Medea of fable," as black with veins of gold. For the *stone* in the bladder, the same high authority recommends you "to get a piece of copper ore, either Cyprian or Nicanian (as being the purest sorts, one must suppose), that has never felt the fire; to pick out the veins of metal and beat them up together into the shape of a signet-stone, on which you must engrave a *lion with the sun and moon*, and set the same in a gold ring." This device is often met with engraved on jasper; perhaps its popularity arose from the general faith in this its particular virtue. And, as regards the special material ordered by Trallianus, I have in my own experience observed disks of a reddish metal set in gold rings, although none bearing the sigil in question. The *colic*, if we may judge from the number of charms against it that have been transmitted from Roman times, must have been a very prevalent complaint amongst the *bons vivants* of the Empire. Nor is the fact to be wondered at after reading the recipes for the dishes then in most esteem,

as given us by the famous Apicius: vegetables uncooked and strong pickles forming so considerable a proportion of their meals, all washed down by oceans of sour much diluted wine. Strange to say, this disease had been unknown in Italy before the reign of Tiberius, and the emperor himself was the first sufferer from the unpleasant novelty. Pliny records how all Rome was puzzled on first reading the word *colum* in the edict put forth by the prince to excuse his non-appearance in the senate. The great frequency of the charms against the disorder (an irregular mode of treatment to which we find the most eminent physicians of the day having recourse) is a very convincing evidence that the colic then set at defiance all cure *secundum artem*. Amongst these recipes, the most curious that have come in my way are the amulets recommended by Marcellus Empiricus,<sup>1</sup> an authority well worthy of his surname, such is his fondness for these now unrecognised branches of the *materia medica*. “Take a thin plate of gold, cut it square, and engrave thereon with a point of the same metal these letters. Roll it up and put it within a tube of gold, stopping up the ends with bits of goat’s skin. Then tie the tube with a strip of the same skin upon the right or the left foot, according to which side the pain affects. The operation must take place upon the twenty-first day of the moon’s age. The wearer must observe strict chastity, neither should he touch a corpse nor enter a tomb.”

L*M⊙RIA
L*M⊙RIA
L*M⊙RIA
L*M⊙RIA

<sup>1</sup> A native of Bordeaux who flourished under Theodosius.



A second recipe of his for the same malady is to make a ring out of gold thread melted down, engrave on its face a fish or dolphin, and on the shank the verse—

**ΘΕΟΣ ΚΕΛΕΥΕΙ ΜΗ ΚΥΕΙΝ ΚΩΛΟΝ ΠΟΝΟΝ.**

A good specimen of a ring made according to these directions is preserved in the Galleria, Florence, with, however, a slight variation in the reading :—

+ **ΘΕΟΣ ΚΕΛΕΥΕΙ ΜΗ ΕΧΕΙΝ ΠΟΝΟΥΣ ΚΟΛΟΝ.**

Lenormant has published (*Revue archéologique*, iii. p. 510) a curious amulet of this description, now in the Musée de l'Histoire naturelle, Paris. The material is a very fine red jasper, 2 inches  $\times$  1 $\frac{2}{3}$  inch in size. The engraving of Hercules and the lion, in a very miserable style of art, is surrounded by the neatly cut phonetic inscription **ΑΝΑΧΟΡΙ ΚΟΛΕ ΤΟ ΘΙΟΝ  
 CE ΔΙΟΚΕΙ** for *Ἀναχώραι κόλε τὸ Θεῖόν σε διώκει*, where the “lark” of Trallianus’ recipe is replaced by “the deity” himself. The reverse presents the triple Hecate, each of her heads crowned with the modius, and wielding in her several hands her customary attributes, torches, swords, and whips. Over her head is the “Great name” **ΙΑΩ**, and below her feet **ΑΒΡΑΧΑΞ**. These titles, though frequently applied to Phœbus, in no other example known to me are given to his sister, the Queen of Night. I have omitted mentioning that in the exergue under the Hercules are the three letters **Κ**, and below them an eight-rayed star (the Sun), each ray terminating in a circular dot. Lenormant thinks the execution of this intaglio quite as late as the period of the celebrated physician who

prescribes its formation, and he was brother to the Anthemius who built Santa Sophia.

A remedy for the *pleurisy*, from which Marcellus promises "you will obtain wonderful results," is the wearing of a cerulean Scythian jasper (our sapphirine calcedony) engraved with that common Gnostic sigil<sup>1</sup> s s s upon a bar; probably a sketchy representation of Æsculapius' staff (the serpent-twined wand of Egyptian priesthood).

For a *sore throat* you are to write on a bit of paper;

εἶδον τριμερῆ χρύσειον τοάναδον  
καὶ ταρταροῦχον<sup>2</sup> τουσάναδον.  
σῶζόν με, σεμνὲ νερτέρων Ὑπέρτατε.

Interesting on many accounts is the large Praun hæmatite, now added to the Gnostic series in the British Museum. The type is Mars standing, executed in a very debased style, legend **ΑΡΗΣ ΕΤΕΜΕΝ ΤΟΥ ΗΠΑΤΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΟΝΟΝ.**

In the field are several unknown letters: in those behind the god's head, Professor Stephens, of Copenhagen, has discovered the Runes **ÆFL**, "help," which he conjectures to be the *addition* of some Northman, subsequent owner of the amulet. But it is clear to a practised eye that *all* the inscriptions on the stone were cut at the same time, and by the same hand; and it is easily conceivable that some Goth in the imperial service (they or Franks almost entirely

<sup>1</sup> Which invariably accompanies the Chnuphis Agathodæmon on green jasper, which last, Galen says, was prescribed by King-Nechepsos, to be worn as a protection to the chest.

<sup>2</sup> Some epithet has dropped out here, for the iambic is incomplete; probably the missing word was *ἀργυρέην*, for the barbarous names manifestly denote Phœbus and Hecate.

manned the armies of the Lower Empire) had carried with him spells in the mystic language of his ancestral religion, and caused them to be added to the regular formula of the Kabalists upon the amulet made to his order. Upon another gem (in my possession) are added characters to the Greek, that also have the appearance of Runes. The high antiquity of this alphabet has been disputed, but on no tenable ground. F. Schlegel has sagaciously adduced one convincing argument in support of the old theory, that the *Scandinavian* Runes were introduced by the Phœnician traders (being indeed their own alphabet slightly modified), in the fact of their limited number, the actual *sixteen* of the original Punic. Had they been as most antiquaries now hold, nothing more than the Roman letters simplified for the convenience of cutting them upon sticks, they would have equalled the number of their parent. In proof of this comes the Welsh Bardic alphabet, the latest of the Runic, and which possesses no fewer than 43 characters. And again, the genuineness of the Scandinavian is established by repeated occurrence upon the *umbos* found in the Thorsbjerg moss, Flensborg, found in company with denarii of Severus, and legionary inscriptions.

The *formula* upon the stone last quoted may serve to explain another which, from its frequent appearance, must have been held in high esteem in the same ages of the Empire. It is the figure of a reaper at his work, the reverse inscribed in large characters **CXIΩN**. The very nature of the subject suggests the reading of the mystic word as a contracted form of  $\sigma\chi\acute{\iota}\sigma\omega\nu$ , "about to cut," whilst from the previous example we

may infer that the idea of *cutting*<sup>1</sup> was considered an essential element in the cure of liver complaints, and therefore this sigil of the reaper was esteemed an equally efficacious remedy for that incurable disease. And to conclude, the often cited Marcellus directs any one choking with a bone sticking in his throat to repeat the Homeric—

μή μοι Γοργείην κεφαλὴν δεινοῖο πελώρου  
ἐξ Ἄϊδος πέμψειεν ἀγαθὴ Περσεφόνηα,

which done would procure him immediate relief.

Old Cato's sure remedy for sprains, which Pliny transcribes for the amusement of his readers, was the utterance of the words HAVT, HAVT, ISTA PISTA VISTA. But the same historian seriously relates that Julius Cæsar having once had a dangerous upset in a chariot never afterwards entered one without repeating thrice a certain spell, *carmine ter repetito* (xviii. 4), which however he very provokingly omits to give us.

That most famous spell of all, ABRACADABRA, is first mentioned by Serenus Sammonicus, the most learned Roman of his times, and physician to Caracalla, to whom he dedicated his poetical Guide to Health, entitled, "De Medicina præcepta saluberrima." This work, remarks Spartian, was the favourite study of the unfortunate Cæsar, Geta, for attachment to whose cause this true son of Apollo was afterwards put to death by the imperial fratricide. Severus Alexander, also, "who had known and loved Serenus," greatly admired his poetry, putting him on a level with

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps on the same principle by which the belemnite cured the pleurisy, its *pointed* form being analogous to the *piercing* pains of the disease.

Horace, as Lampridius' expressions seem to intimate. This high authority orders the word to be written out in the form of an inverted cone, and declares it of virtue against all disease :—

“Thou shalt on paper write the spell divine,  
 Abracadabra called, in many a line;  
 Each under each in even order place,  
 But the last letter in each line efface.  
 As by degrees the elements grow few,  
 Still take away, but fix the residue,  
 Till at the last one letter stands alone,  
 And the whole dwindles to a tapering cone.  
 Tie this about the neck with flaxen string;  
 Mighty the good 'twill to the patient bring.  
 Its wondrous potency shall guard his head,  
 And drive disease and death far from his bed.”

The belief in the virtue of this recipe flourished through the Middle Ages. It seems alluded to in the Dialogue on Masonry, ascribed by Leland to Henry VI., for amongst “the things that Masons conceal” is “the winnyng of the facultye of *Abrac*,” perhaps signifying the possession of this mystical arrangement of letters; unless, indeed, one chooses to suspect in this “facultye” a deeper sense—some traditionary knowledge of the ancient Abraxas religion. Again, De Foe mentions how people commonly wore the word written in the manner above prescribed, as a safeguard against infection during the Great Plague.

As for the etymology of the word, the most satisfactory yet offered is the compound of the Hebrew *Ha-Brachah*, “blessing,” and *dabberah*, “speak, pronounce,” that is, invoke the Holy Name, or Tetragrammaton, itself the mightiest of charms.

It is very remarkable, considering its high repute,

that no Gnostic stone bearing such an inscription should be known to exist. On the other hand, that normal address to Iao **ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΛΒΑ**, "Thou art our Father!" is to be found on talismanic jaspers arranged in the exact pattern recommended by Serenus for the paper spell,<sup>1</sup> and probably so done in compliance with his directions.

But a *negro* amulet is the finest of all, extracting medicine out of the doctor himself. Ismayl Pasha, son of Mohammed Ali, on his return from his expedition to Meroe, took up his quarters with a small guard in a hut at Chendy, Sennaar, imagining the country quite reduced to subjection. But Nimir, the former king, came by night, placed combustibles round the hut, and consumed it with all those inside. The guard was cut to pieces by these Nubians, with the exception of the pasha's physician, a Greek, who was carried off for the more evil death. His captors drew out all his teeth, which they divided amongst themselves to sew up in their *grigri* bags, it being their firm belief that whosoever carries about him the tooth of a physician (drawn whilst *living*) secures himself thereby from all diseases for all time to come.

<sup>1</sup> There is a real distinction in the primary meaning of "spell" and "charm": though now used as equivalents. "Spell" signifies something written; "charm," the *recital* of the same in a muttering voice. The word is still common in the West for any confused, senseless noise, like that made by a number of children all chattering at once.

## MEDIÆVAL TALISMANS.

CERTAIN Gnostic figures and "Holy Names" continued during the Middle Ages to enjoy as high a reputation as in the classical times. At the very close of the mediæval period, Camillus Leonardi (Camillo di Leonardo), in his 'Speculum Lapidum,' written in 1502, and dedicated to Cesare Borgia, whose physician he was, when treating upon the virtues of gems and of the sigils cut in them, lays down this fundamental rule:—"Magical and necromantic figures bear no resemblance to the Signs or constellations, and therefore their virtues are only to be discovered by persons versed in those particular arts, viz. Magic and Necromancy; yet is it most certain that the virtue of the figure may be in some measure discovered from observing the qualities of the stone it is cut upon. And inasmuch as the same stone often possesses different properties, so are figures found made up out of the parts of different animals, expressing the various virtues of the gem itself. This is apparent in a jasper of my own, which represents a figure with the head of a cock, the body of a man clad in armour, a shield in the one hand, a whip in the other, and serpents instead of legs; all expressive of the several virtues inherent in the jasper, which are, to drive away evil spirits, fevers, and dropsies, to check lust, prevent

conception, render the wearer virtuous and beloved, and to stanch the flowing of blood. All such figures are of the greatest virtue and potency." Again, he quotes from Ragiél's 'Book of Wings' (a work he styles indispensable to all students of magic) the axiom, "The *Names of God*<sup>1</sup> engraved upon belemnite preserve places against thunderstorms, and likewise give power and victory over one's enemies." In this, doubtless, lurks a traditionary reminiscence of the potency originally attributed to the divine titles in Semitic tongues, that so common decoration of Gnostic talismans, and also of the sense in which those mystic words were at that time interpreted. Ragiél cannot be supposed to allude here to names inscribed in the Latin tongue or character, seeing that nothing of the sort is ever found upon gems known to his early period. The Italian Æsculapius declares more than once in the course of his treatise that all sigils of potency were the work of the Children of Israel in the wilderness, whereas those engraved by the old Romans or the artists of his own times were merely fancy subjects (*voluntarice*), and possessed no other virtue beyond the natural one of the stone itself. For this reason these *efficacious* gems went by the name of "Pierres des Juifs," or "Pierres d'Israël," and are

<sup>1</sup> The Rosicrucians made great use of this notion. One of their legends is that Shem and Japhet, by repeating six times as they walked backwards the great name IABEMIAH, "The God of Increase," restored the virility of Noah, of which he had been deprived by Ham. For they applied the Greek legend of the mutilation of Cœlus by Saturn to the Jewish story of Noah's drunkenness. Again, "The *potent* name NEHMAHMIHAH, coupled with the *delicious* name ELIAEL, puts all the powers of darkness to flight."—*Comte de Gabalis*.



often found so denominated in old inventories of jewels. "Cy après s'ensuyvent plusieurs pierres entaillées et erlentées lesquelles sont appellées *Pierres d'Israël*. Selon les saiges philosophes les aucunes sont artificielles, c'est-à-dire qu'elles ont été ouvrées. Premièrement, en quelque manière de pierre que tu trouveras entaillée à l'ymage du mouton, ou du lyon, ou du Sagittaire, elles sont consacrées du signe du ciel. Elles sont très-vertueuses car elles rendent l'homme aimyable et grâcieux à tous, elles résistent aux fièvres quotidiennes, quartanes, et autres de froide nature," &c. (Mandeville's 'Lapidary,' written 1372; 'Archæologia,' vol. xxx. p. 454.)

Nay, in the very focus of iconoclasm does the most remarkable example present itself of an adopted relic of heathenism in the form of the Kaaba of Mecca. This is a *black* stone,<sup>1</sup> 4 feet high by 2 feet wide, on which is sculptured a figure of Venus with the crescent. It is described by Zachder as a talisman anciently set up to scare away all noxious reptiles. But the popular notion (which prevailed as early as the time of Suidas) was that Abraham begat Ishmael upon this very stone; or, according to another tradition, tied his camel to it when he went up into the mountain. The Venus the Arabs take for the likeness of the hostess of the two angels Arol and Marol.

Lindsay has published an Arabic (which he calls Chaldean) talisman in his possession, which will serve

<sup>1</sup> Probably an aërolite, like the Baal of Emesa, the Venus of Paphos, &c.

for an example of a very numerous class. It is of brass, a tablet, four inches square, besides the triangular top or pediment. In the middle of one face are six circles touching each other, something after the fashion of the Kabalistic Sephiroth, on the other face a row of seven standing figures, supposed to represent the seven Great Angels, Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, Azrael, Dedrael, Azaphael, and Shemkael. The rest of the tablet is filled with horizontal lines of numerals (perhaps doing duty for letters) and astrological *siglæ*, some of which are identical with the Gnostic.

Reinaud, in his 'Monumens musulmans du Cabinet du Duc de Luynes,' ii. p. 331, one of the principal writers to whom we are indebted for information concerning these objects of superstition, considers them to be talismans executed by the Arabs, Syrians, and Egyptians, and that the principal object for which they were formed was to enable the possessors to recover from the ruins of cities and buildings, but above all from the bottom of wells, the treasure supposed to be concealed in them, and which the great number of hoards discovered from time to time in such places rendered particular objects of attraction. M. Reinaud observes that there exist a great number of tracts illustrative of these talismans, and that they bear the title of 'The Book of Treasures,' and says we depend on the positive testimony of an Arab writer, Ibn Khaldoun, who says that in Africa those who wish to obtain the desired result use the figure of a man drawing up with a cord a bucket from the bottom of a well, precisely as we see on some of these

tablets, and that, to confirm the effect of the charm, it is necessary to sacrifice a bird, and to sprinkle its blood upon the talisman. Such subjects we find occupying prominent places on these tablets; the sacrifice of the bird being delineated on Lindsay's specimen, whilst the man with the bucket is seen on others quoted by various writers. Reinaud observes that the forms of the talismans vary according to the nature of the place where the treasure is supposed to lie, and of the means adopted for its discovery. As for the date of these tablets, some may ascend as high as the Arab conquest of Syria, whilst others may be the manufacture of our own day. Lindsay's example bears traces of having been strongly gilt.

But the sacred names of the Gnosis in process of time suffered sad degradation; **IAO** and **SABAOTH** themselves became mere spells for making fish come into the net. The mediæval doctors had, long before, read **IAO** as **AIO**, and, construing this as representing the peacock's cry, promised wonderful effects from a stone engraved with this fowl, having a sea-turtle below, and these letters in the field.

The celebrated "Xenexicon" or plague-amulet of Paracelsus, in whose efficacy the learned Gaffarel<sup>1</sup> (librarian to Cardinal Richelieu) firmly believed, was a paper inscribed with the figures of a serpent and scorpion, to be made when Sol was entering the latter Sign. Another of equal virtue represented a sheep pierced full of holes. But the latest surviving relic of this class of superstitions is that charm against the plague still believed in by the German boors. The

<sup>1</sup> In his 'Curiositéz Inouyes,' 1632.

material is a thin silver plate engraved with those holy names of the ancient Kabala thus arranged :—

+ ELOHIM + ELOHI +					
+	4	14	15	1	+
ADONAI	9	7	6	12	ZEBAOH
+	5	11	10	8	+
+	16	2	3	13	+
+ ROGYEL + IOSEPHIEL +					

The numerals added together either downwards, across, or from corner to corner, give the same sum, 34; though why that particular number should have any special merit must be left for some profound Kabalist (if any yet survive) to explain. This same tablet is seen suspended over the head of “Melancholy” in Albrecht Dürer’s wonderful engraving so entitled—a convincing proof of the importance attached to it in the days of that artist. Its introduction in so conspicuous a place long puzzled me, until I met with the notice of its specific virtue in Justinus Kerner’s little treatise on Amulets.

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

The noted Caireen magician draws in the palm of the boy’s right hand a similar square, but with different numerals, into the middle of which he pours the ink serving for mirror to the apparition called up—of which numbers the sum, counted as above, is 15.

The extreme barbarism marking the execution of many Gnostic talismans would lead one to suspect that their manufacture survived considerably beyond the date usually assigned for the extinction of the Glyptic Art in Europe. The mere mechanical processes of this art are so easily acquired, and the instruments employed therein so simple and inexpensive, that the only cause for its cessation in any age must have been the cessation of demand for its productions. But the Arab astrologers under the Caliphate continue to speak of talisman-makers and their mode of proceeding as a regular trade; the Manichæan branch of Gnosticism flourished far down into the Middle Ages; the old symbolism was, after that, taken up and improved upon by the alchemists and Rosicrucians; so that such barbarous works, in which every trace of ancient design is extinct, may, with good reason, be assigned to times long posterior to the fall of the Western Empire. Of this the most convincing proof that can be adduced is the so-called seal of St. Servatius,<sup>1</sup> still preserved in Maestricht Cathedral. It is a jasper, 2 inches in diameter, set in silver, bearing the rudest intaglio bust of the saint in the style of a Byzantine medallion; the reverse, a Gorgon's head, with a legend plainly a phonetic rendering of the common exorcism, *Μοῖρα μελαινομένη ὡς ὄφεις*. Again, we actually find Marbodius, at the end of the eleventh century, when describing the virtues of the sard, turquoise, and beryl, directing certain sigils to be cut upon them for the purpose of enduing the gems with supernatural powers. This

<sup>1</sup> Figured in the 'Archæological Journal,' vol. xxi. p. 275.

he would hardly have done had gem-engraving been unknown at the time when he was writing, for at a later period, when such had really become the case, we observe the mediæval doctors using the expression, "if a stone be *found* with such or such a figure upon it;" thus showing them to be entirely dependent on chance for their supply of such highly prized articles, and to have no artists within reach capable of transferring to gems the potent figures prescribed by Chael, Ragiël, and Rabanus Maurus. It was not their antiquity that gave the sole virtue to these gems, for we have abundance of sigils and charms cut in *metal* of ostentatiously Gothic manufacture. Inasmuch as gems, from their inherent virtues, were esteemed an infinitely more potent vehicle for similar arcana than the inoperative metal, the very fact of these not occurring upon gems conclusively proves the incapacity of the age for bringing that material into use.

The completest example known of a mediæval talisman is one figured by Caylus ('Rec. d'Antiq.' vi. p. 404, pl. 130): a gold ring, in shape a plain four-sided hoop, weighing 63 grains, and found in cutting turf, a league from Amiens, in 1763. Each side is occupied by a line of Lombardic letters, in seemingly corrupt Greek, mixed up with easily recognisable Gnostic titles.

+ OEGVTAA + SAGRA + HOGOGRA + IOTHE +  
 HENAUEAET  
 + OCCINOMOC + ON + IKC + HOGOTE + BANGVES +  
 ALPHA 7IB  
 + ANA + EENETON + AIRIE + OIPA + AGLA +  
 OMEIGA + ADONAI  
 + HEIEPNATHOI + GEBAI + GVTGVTTA + IEOTHIN.

In most of these spells, the letters **G V G V T T A** seem to form an essential part. To give other and full examples of cognate formulæ :—

The first covers the shank of a silver ring of the fourteenth century (from Berne), on the face of which is cut the *Ave Maria* in disjointed letters : + **Y R Y R R A G V G V G V B E R A L T E R A M I A L P L A E Z E R A E**. The second, a silver brooch (Waterton Collection), has on the upper side, + **E Z E R A · E Z E R A · E R A V E R A G A N ·** + **G V G V R A L T E R A N I · A L P H A · E T · Ω**; on the flat surface underneath, + **A O T V O N O O I O M O O O I O A V**. A silver ring (Collegio Romano) reads + **M E L** + **G E R E L** + **G O T** + **G V T** + **H A I** + **D A B I R** + **H A B E R H E B E R**.

A clue is given to the construction of these interminable formulæ, though not as to their exact meaning, by our knowledge that the very popular **E B E R D I A B E R** is nothing more than an aid to memory, each letter being the *initial* of the word beginning each verse of a prayer, protective against the plague, written in Latin.<sup>1</sup> But the awful **A G L A**, that most potent of all exorcisms, is compounded of the initials of the Hebrew *Atha Gebir Leilam Adonai*, “Thou art mighty for ever, O Lord!” Mottoes so composed go back very far : witness, the famous inscription on the banner which gave their name to the Maccabees, *Mi Camonah Baalim Jehovah*, “Who amongst the gods is like unto Jehovah?”

Another example (and of more recent date) that tends to illustrate the construction of these mystic

<sup>1</sup> This unexpected discovery was made by Mr. Waterton, in a book on similar subjects published at Venice in the sixteenth century.

forms, composed entirely out of initials, intended for no deeper purpose than to assist the memory in reciting the words of the prescribed charm or prayer, is furnished by the "Cross of St. Benedict," often stamped upon a medal so as to read both vertically and horizontally. The vertical letters stand for "Crux sancta sit mihi lux;" the horizontal for "Ne dæmon sit mihi dux;" the letters in the four cantons for "Crux sancti Petri Benedicti." Around runs the legend **VRNSMVMSQLIVB**—being the initials in the quatrian,

	C		S.
C.		S.	
	S		
N	D	S	M
	M		
P.		B.	
	L.		

"Vade retro Satana,  
Ne suade mihi vana  
Sunt mala quæ libas,  
Ipse venena bibas."

Lastly, we have an astrological spell, of admirable efficacy, for it is produced by each planet contributing his own initial to make up the mystic **SIMSVM**:

"Post **SIMSVM** sequitur septima Luna subest."

The following spells, which seem constructed upon the same principle as the foregoing, occur in a medical MS. of the fifteenth century, in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

1. To give luck at play : Write on virgin parchment **JALIENI TARTERRI**, and sew it up in thy sleeve.

2. For the same purpose : Take three leaves of Reb-wort, and write upon them, **DAN CAN OORA TEELENA** : to be held in the hand whilst playing, "probatum est."

3. To gain favour, carry always about thee written



down, **A . X . H . B . K . U . V . III . IX . O**. (This last looks like the mediæval adaptation of a common Gnostic formula.)

Some Hebrew exorcism is probably expressed in the **BBPPNENA** ordered by *Solomon* to be engraved on a brass or iron ring, to be set with a jasper representing a man's head—which gave the wearer protection in travel, success at court, &c. &c. **IHS NAZARENVS** was very good against epilepsy, and therefore is still frequently met with on silver rings of mediæval make; so was the verse—

“Vulnera quinque Dei sunt medicina mei.”

But the most notable of all prophylactics for this disease was the letter **T** with the legend **ANANIZAPTA . DEI . EMANUEL**. In the Devonshire Cabinet is a cameo converted into an amulet, by the addition of “Ananizapta,” the meaning whereof was long shrouded in night, “*res alta terra et caligine mersa*,” until discovered by that eminent Hebraist, Mr. Sinker (to whom I had submitted it as a last resource), to be an accurate phonetic rendering of the Chaldee, signifying, “Have mercy upon us, O *Judge!*” This title was a synonym for “*Jehovah*,” regularly used by the mediæval Jews; and the appropriateness of the sense was a sufficient testimony to the correctness of the translation even though furnished by a less “*idoneus auctor*.” But no charm was of greater force according to the saying,

“*Est mala mors capta cum dicitur Ananizapta,  
Ananizapta ferit illum qui lædere quærit.*”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The complete distich is engraved on a gold ring, found in a tomb at Milan (Waterton Collection).

The belief in the virtue of the letter that accompanies the spell, the Egyptian Tau, or "Tau mysticum," goes back to the remotest antiquity. Although undoubtedly originating in the hieroglyphic "Sign of Life," otherwise the "crux ansata," yet the Christian source of name and notion was afforded by Ezekiel (ix. 4): "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark (*lit.* "a Tau") upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof;" where the Vulgate actually reads, "Signa eis Tau," perhaps from a tradition of the true meaning of the word. It is a remarkable exemplification of the persistency of ancient beliefs, amidst all the apparent revolutions of religious creeds, that this figure (still used in Buddhism to express "stability") should have been universally accepted by mediæval faith as the very "Signet of the Living God" mentioned in the Apocalypse. In the painted glass at Saint-Denys, the Angel was figured stamping the seal upon the forehead of the elect, the legend explaining the subject as **SIGNVM TAV**. The same mark is the distinctive badge of St. Anthony, an *Egyptian* hermit, be it remembered, and in the old Greek paintings is always coloured *blue*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Clarkson states (but without giving his authority—a defect pervading the whole of his learned memoir on the symbolical evidence of the Temple Church) that the **T** cross was the *mark* received by the Mithraicists upon their foreheads at the time of initiation. He adds that the present Masonic jewel of the G. A. is the same symbol, thrice combined thus, **⊥**. The three orders of the Egyptian priesthood had for badges respectively the circle, interpreted as signifying the *sun*; the triangle, *pleasure*; and the tau, *eternal life*.

The phrase, “**I H S** autem transiens per medium illorum ibat,” was a safeguard against all dangers in travelling both by sea and land. “And therefore seyen some men when thei dreden them of thefes on any way, or of enemyes, ‘Jesus autem, &c.’ in tokene and mynde that our Lord passed through oute of the Jewes’ crueltie and scaped safely fro hem. So surely mowen men passen the perеле of thefes. And than say men 9 vers of the pseume, 3 sithes, ‘Irruat super eos formido et pavor in magnitudine brachii tui, Domine. Fiant immobiles quasi lapis donec pertranseat populus tuus Domine donec pertranseat populus tuus iste quem possedisti.’ And thanne may thei passe withouten peine.” (Mandeville, chap. x.) Edward III. put these same words for a legend or motto upon his gold noble in memory of his miraculous escape in the great naval fight off Sluys, an event also commemorated by the type of the obverse, the king fully armed standing in a ship. But the same words being likewise regarded in those times as an alchemical axiom, they were construed into a testimony to the then current story that Raymond Lully, the famed possessor of the Philosopher’s Stone, had made (being shut up in the Tower till he complied) the full amount of gold required for the new coinage.

Equally popular, too, was the figure of St. Christopher, and for very good reason, so long as people believed in the distich—

“Christophori faciem die quocunque tueris  
Illo nempe die mala morte non morieris.”

The earliest to make its appearance amongst these

spells, and occurring the most frequently of them all, is—

**GVTTV.THEBAL.EBAL.ADROS.(VDROS.)MADROS,**

in which one is tempted to discover the similarly sounding Hebrew words, signifying *time, the world, vanity, seek after, sought*, in the sense of “Time flies, The world is vanity, Seek after what is worth seeking for.” And this interpretation is rendered more plausible by what Baccius (‘*De Gemmis*’) mentions under “*Topazius*,” that Hadrianus Gulielmus of Naples possessed one engraved in “*antique*” Roman letters, with the maxim to much the same effect, “*Natura deficit, Fortuna mutatur, Deus omnia cernit.*” But inasmuch as such aphorisms, and couched in that language, have no precedent amongst existing relics of *ancient* superstitions, I more than suspect that Baccius’ *antique* Roman letters meant the Lombardic, quite obsolete in his day, when the real *antique* alphabet, revived, was alone in use; and, moreover, that we have here the true interpretation of the enigma which has so long puzzled archæologists. Besides the obvious correspondence in the sense, there seems an intentional agreement in the number of syllables in each legend. Epiphanius (‘*Hæres.*’ xxv.) laughs at the fondness of the Gnostics for certain Hebrew words; the sound of which had struck their ear as fraught with deep mystery, although in fact of utterly trivial import. “Attempting to impose upon the imagination of the unlearned by the terror of the Names, and the fictitious barbaric sound of the appellations, they give to one of the Powers the title

“Caulau—canch,” words taken from Isaiah (xviii.), and signifying there nothing more than “hope upon hope.” Nevertheless, the sound of **ADROS, VDROS**, irresistibly reminds the ear of the invocation to the Cnuphis upon a gem in the Hartwell House Collection, **ΑΡΤΟΣ ΠΕΙΝΗ ΥΔΩΡ ΔΨΗ, ΠΥΡ ΡΙΓΕΙ**, “The Good Spirit is Bread for hunger, Water for thirst, Fire for cold”: and that some amongst mediæval spells contain fragments of corrupted Greek is a fact that cannot be disputed.<sup>1</sup>

**CASPAR** or **IASPAR, MELCHIOR, BALTASAR**, the traditional names of the Three Magi, yet more famed as the “Three Kings of Cologne,” was an inscription for rings and cups<sup>2</sup> almost as much in vogue as the words last discussed. The importance so long attached to these names of the “Wise Men out of the East” is evidently connected with some reminiscence of the former Mithraic worship so prevalent throughout the later empire; there being every reason to accept Seel’s plausible hypothesis (“Mithra”) that under the cloak of Mithraicism early Christianity first grew up and flourished in Gaul and Germany, secure from molestation from the older national creeds. Or again, the same reverence may have had its source at a later period in Manichæism, which was itself only a modification of the Zoroastrian doctrine, for Manes was

<sup>1</sup> For example, **AGIOS. O. THEOS. AGIOS. ATHANATOS** (words from the Mass service) often occur, more or less distorted, on rings of this kind. Byzantine influence long continued to tinge the superstition of the Franks. Niquitas (*Nicetas*) of Constantinople and his colleague Udros are named amongst the first apostles of the Albigenses.

<sup>2</sup> As upon the silver rim of a chalice-shaped mazer bowl amongst the Parker plate, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

put to death as a *heretic* by the decree of the œcumenical council of Magi, convoked by Varanes II. to consider the nature of his new teaching. The Magi, therefore, professional brethren of the writer, may well be supposed to have played a very conspicuous part in the "Gospel of Manes," now unfortunately lost. When their names were first published cannot be ascertained; they do *not* occur where one would naturally expect to find them, in the "Gospel of the Infancy," which gives so particular an account of their visit to Bethlehem. They had been led thither by a prophecy of *Zerdusht*, and received from Mary, in requital for their offerings, the infant's swaddling-clothes, of which present the result is thus narrated<sup>1</sup>:—

"On their return their kings and princes came to them, enquiring what they had seen and done. . . . But they produced the swaddling-cloth which St. Mary had given to them; on account whereof they kept a feast, and having, according to the custom of their country, made a fire, they worshipped it. And casting the swaddling-cloth into the fire, the fire took it and kept it. And when the fire was put out, they took forth the swaddling-cloth unhurt as much as if the fire had not touched it. Then they began to kiss it, and put it upon their heads and their eyes, saying, —'This is certainly an undoubted truth, and it is really surprising that the fire could not burn it and consume it.' Then they took it and, with the greatest respect, laid it up amongst their treasures."

The notion that the Three Kings typify the three ancient divisions of the earth—the first being painted

<sup>1</sup> 'Gospel of the Infancy,' ch. iii.

as an European, the second an Asiatic, the third a Negro—seems borrowed from some ancient representation of the same regions paying their homage at the “Birth of Mithras,” the *Natale Invicti*, celebrated on the 25th day of December. Hence arose the restriction of their number to *three*, although that of the “wise men” is nowhere specified by either the canonical or the apocryphal evangelists. Their traditional names in fact appear from their marked analogy to the attributes of the Solar god to have been originally no more than the regular epithets of Mithras himself; Caspar signifying the *White one*; Melchior, *King of light*; Baltasar (the Vulgate form of Belshazzar), the *Lord of treasures*. And the origin of our festival of Christmas Day is best stated in the words of St. Chrysostom himself (‘Hom.’ xxxi.) :—“On this day the birthday of Christ was *lately* fixed at Rome, in order that whilst the heathens were occupied in their profane ceremonies the Christians might perform their holy rites undisturbed . . . . But they call this day ‘The Birthday of the Invincible One:’ who is so invincible as the Lord that overthrew and vanquished Death? Or, because they style it the ‘Birthday of the Sun.’ He is the Sun of Righteousness, of whom Malachi saith, ‘Upon you, fearful ones, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings.’”

The very popular spell, already considered, is met with under many and strangely distorted forms; being either corrupted through ignorance or, what is more probable, purposely disguised by the insertion of a foreign letter in each word. For example, a gold ring lately exhumed in an old castle, co. Limerick, reads—

+ ADROCS . VDROCS . ADROCS . TEBRAL.  
 + TGVSTVS . GVS . TAMGVE,

where, for some mystic reason, the **C**, thrice inserted, greatly alters the appearance of the familiar charm. Another, in the Collection of the Royal Irish Academy, actually introduces genuine Greek letters, although there is every reason for supposing that the groundwork of the formula remains substantially the same.

+ ΠΟΡΟΣ . SVORCOS . ΠΟΡCOS . TERRAL.  
 GVSGYSGYSTRMGVET.

An amulet in great favour with the Turks is the *Kef Marjam*, "Hand of Mary." It is the figure of a hand, made of blue glass, or porcelain, and hung about the necks of children, or upon other objects wished to be defended against the stroke of the Evil Eye. The digitated leaf of the *Agnus Castas* bears the same name, and possesses the same virtue. This latter notion is apparently what Hippolytus refers to in his chapter upon Egyptian theology, where he has:— "Which is a sacred numeral, and it is written down, and tied about the neck of sick people, as a means of cure. In like manner a certain plant which terminates in the same number (of digits), being similarly hung upon the patient, produces the same effect in consequence of the virtue of that numeral. Moreover a physician cures his patients when they amount to that particular number; but when the *number* of them is against him, he does so with great difficulty. The Egyptians pay much attention to such numerals, and calculate all similar matters according to this rule; some reckoning by the vowels only, others by all the letters making up the word."



It is much to be regretted that such useful defences of our households should have been allowed to fall into oblivion, as were the spells alluded to by Pope in his lines,

“ One sings the fair, but songs no longer move,  
No rat is rhymed to death, nor maid to love.”<sup>1</sup>

Spells contrived especially for the destruction of noxious animals were perhaps amongst the oldest of their kind; Virgil has

“ *Frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis.*”

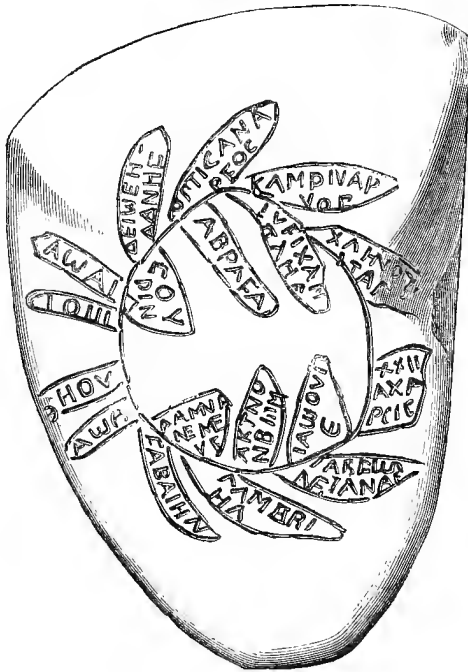
Justin Martyr likewise<sup>2</sup> mentions, with manifestly the fullest belief in their efficacy, the *τελέσματα* made by Apollonius Tyaneus against mice, and wild beasts; accounting for the fact by that philosopher's deep knowledge of the secrets of nature. Gaffarel quotes Jonctinus that “Nicolas of Florence, a religious man, made an amulet for driving away gnats under a certain constellation, in certain determinate forms; he made use of the constellation Saturn in a bodily shape, and he thereby drove away the gnats.” Something of the kind yet survives in the East: the Persians manage to scare away cockroaches by writing up the name of the cockroach king, Kabikaj, in the places infested by his subjects. In the University Library at Cambridge may be seen a Persian MS. thus defended against their attacks by this venerated name, inscribed thrice upon its cover—how invaluable an ornament to a London kitchen, supposing the title to retain its power over those dusky colonists from the Indies!

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Donne's ‘Sat.’ ii.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Quæst.’ xxiv.







CERAUNIA OF JADE.

ON A CERAUNIA OF JADE CONVERTED INTO A  
GNOSTIC TALISMAN.

FEW relics of antiquity combine in one so many and so widely differing points of interest, with respect to the material, the strangely dissimilar uses to which the same object has been applied in two opposite phases of the history of Man, and, above all, the curious superstitions engendered by its peculiar form, as does the stone brought under the notice of the Institute by General Lefroy at the meeting of February 7th, 1868. The kindness of that gentleman having afforded me full opportunity for the careful examination of this interesting monument, I shall proceed, at the request of some members of our Society, to embody in as succinct a form as their multifarious nature will permit the observations suggested to me by that examination.

The subject, therefore, of this memoir is a small stone celt of the common pattern, but of very uncommon material (in the *antique* class), being made, not of flint, but of dark-green jade or nephrite, 2 inches by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch in length and greatest width; and brought, there is reason to believe, from Egypt many years ago, by Colonel Milner, aide-de-camp to Lord J. Bathurst, during the English occupation of Sicily in 1812. Each of its two faces is occupied by a Gnostic formula, engraved with much neatness, considering the exces-

sive hardness of the material, in the somewhat debased Greek character that was current at Alexandria during the third and fourth centuries of our era.

The most important of these two formulæ has been ingeniously forced to take the outline of a wreath composed of broad leaves, in number *fourteen* (or the sacred *Seven* duplicated), and doubtless intended for those of the "Five Trees" that figure so conspicuously in Gnostic symbolism; the ends being tied together with four broad ribbons. This is a design of which no other example has ever come to my knowledge amongst the innumerable and wondrously varied devices excogitated by the prolific fancy of this religion of mysteries. Upon the four ties are engraved in very minute letters different combinations of the seven Greek vowels, whilst each of the leaves is emblazoned with some "Holy Name," of which many can be easily recognised as constantly recurring in charms of this class; others are disguised by a novel orthography; whilst a few, from the uncertain forms of the lettering, defy all attempts at interpretation.

To the first series belong **ΑΒΡΑΧΑ**, "Abraxas," properly an epithet of the sun, but designating here the Supreme Deity; **ΙΑΩΟΥΙΕ**, "Iao, Jehovah;" **ΑΒΛΑΝΑ**, "Thou art our Father!" **ΓΑΜΒΡΙΗΛ**, a curious mode of spelling "Gabriel," that testifies to the difficulty ever felt by the Greeks of expressing the sound of our B; **ΑΚΤΝΟΝΩ**, which contains the Coptic form of Anubis; **ΔΑΜΝΑΜΕΝΕΥΣ**, the sun's name in the famous "Ephesian Spell;" and, most interesting of all, **ΠΣΑΝΤΑΡΕΟΣ**, who can be no

other than the **ΨΑΝΤΑ** of the *Pistis-Sophia*,<sup>1</sup> one of the great *Τριδυνάμεις*, a Power from whom is enthroned in the planet *Mars*. To the uncertain belong **COYMA**, probably for **COYMAPTA**, a name occurring elsewhere, and perhaps cognate to the Hindoo *Sumitri*, **ΧΩNONIXAP**, which may be intended for **ΧΑΡΧΝΟΥΜΙC**, a common epithet of the Agathodæmor. Serpent; **ΑΙΩΕΗΑΑΝΗC**; **ΝΕΙΧΑΡΟΠΛΗC**; the two last spells unexplained, but very common; **ΜΟΝΑΡΧΟC**; whilst **ΑΧΑΡCΙC** and the rest appear here for the first time, if correctly so read.

The other face is covered with an inscription, cut in much larger letters, and in *eight* lines. This number was certainly not the result of chance, but of deep design, for it was mystic in the highest degree, representing—so taught the profoundest doctor of the Gnosis, Marcus—the divine Ogdoad, which was the daughter of the Pythagorean Tetrad, the mother of all creation.<sup>2</sup> The lines 2, 4, 5, consist of Greek letters used as *numerals*, intermixed with *siglæ*, which, from their constant occurrence upon monuments of a like nature, are supposed, with good reason, to be symbols of the planets. The numerals, on their part, probably

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 361. A work ascribed to Valentinus, and the only one of the numerous Gnostic Gospels that has been preserved. It professes to be the esoteric teaching of Christ delivered during the *eleven* years He abode on earth after His resurrection; and written down by Philip: its system, however, is pure Magism veiled under Scriptural names. But, for that very reason, it throws more light on the actual Gnostic remains as to their types and terminology than do all the notices of the religion to be found in other authorities collectively. The work was discovered in a Coptic MS. of the British Museum, by Schwartz, and published from his transcript, with a Latin version, by Petermann, in 1853.

<sup>2</sup> Hippolytus, 'Refut. Hæres.' vi. 50.

denote various deities, for the Alexandrian Gnosis was the true daughter of Magism; and in the old theology of Chaldea every god and astral genius had a *number* of his own, and which often stands instead of his proper name in dedicatory inscriptions.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the number of Hoa (Neptune) was 40; of Ana (Pluto), 60; of Bel (Jupiter), 50; of the Sun, 20; of the Moon, 30; of the Air, 10; of Nergal (Mars), 12; &c.

A fragment of the *Pistis-Sophia*<sup>2</sup> supplied the "spiritual man" with a key to the right interpretation of similar stenography in his own creed. "These be the *Names* which I will give unto thee, even from the Infinite One downwards. Write the same with a sign (cypher), so that the sons of God may manifest (understand?) them out of this place. This is the name of the Immortal One,  $\overline{AAA \ \omega\omega\omega}$ .<sup>3</sup> And this is the name of the Voice whereby the Perfect Man is moved,  $\overline{III}$ . These likewise be the interpretations of the names of the Mysteries. The first is  $\overline{AAA}$ , and the interpretation thereof is  $\Phi\Phi\Phi$ . The second, which is  $\overline{MMM}$ , or which is  $\overline{\omega\omega\omega}$ , the interpretation thereof is  $\overline{AAA}$ . The third is  $\overline{\Psi\Psi\Psi}$ , the interpretation thereof is  $\overline{OOO}$ . The fourth is  $\overline{\Phi\Phi\Phi}$ , the interpretation thereof is  $\overline{NNN}$ . The fifth is  $\overline{\Delta\Delta\Delta}$ , the interpretation thereof is  $\overline{AAA}$ , the which is above the throne of  $\overline{AAA}$ . This is the interpretation of the second  $\overline{AAAA}$ , namely,  $\overline{AAAAAAA}$ ; the same is the interpretation of the whole Name." Making up the number Twelve,

<sup>1</sup> On this curious subject see Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies,' iii. p. 466, 1st ed.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. 125.

<sup>3</sup> That is 1000 and 800 tripled. The next numbers are 10,000 tripled, and so on.



and thereby representing the mystic name of God, said in the Talmud to consist of *twelve* letters.

Lines 7, 8, are made up of vowels, variously combined, and shrouding from profane eyes the *Ineffable Name*  $\text{IA}\Omega$ ; which, as we are informed by many authorities (the most ancient and trustworthy being Diodorus Siculus),<sup>1</sup> was the name of the God of the Jews; meaning thereby their mode of writing "Jehovah" in Greek characters.

For the explanation of the mystery involved in the word we have the highest authority:—"And Jesus was standing by the altar: and Jesus cried aloud, turning Himself towards the four corners of the world, together with His disciples, all being clothed in linen vestments, saying,  $\text{IA}\omega$ ,  $\text{IA}\omega$ ,  $\text{IA}\omega$ . This is the interpretation thereof:  $\text{I}$ , All hath gone forth;  $\text{A}$ , All returneth within;  $\omega$ , There shall be an end of ends." (*Pistis-Sophia*, § 358.) This "Great Name" is therefore a summary of the Valentinian doctrine, enunciating its three main axioms, the *Emanation*, the *Remediation*, and the *Annihilation*, or rather reabsorption of the universe into its original source, the Bythos. Who can doubt what was the true root of the Gnosis when he compares this with the Brahminical definition of the Godhead as "The Self-Existing, Eternal, Supreme Being, who is the *Cause* of everything, and *into whom* everything is finally absorbed"? The Buddhist "Confession of Faith," regularly set up in the temples, engraven on a tablet of stone, is of similar purport: "Of all things proceeding from Cause, their causes hath the *Tathâgatha* explained. The great

<sup>1</sup> 'Bibliotheca Historica,' i. 94.

*Sarmana* hath likewise explained the causes of the cessation of existence."

Line 3 consists of the Seven Vowels placed in their natural order. This was the most potent of all the spells in the Gnostic repertory; and its importance may justify the extensiveness of the following extract from the grand text-book of this theosophy, which sets forth its hidden sense and wondrous efficacy. The primary idea, however, was far from abstruse, if we accept the statement of the writer "On Interpretations" that the Egyptians expressed the name of the Supreme God by the seven vowels thus arranged—**ΙΗΩΟΥΑ**.<sup>1</sup> But this single mystery was soon refined upon, and made the basis of other and infinitely deeper mysteries. In an inscription found at Miletus (published by Montfaucon), the Holy **ΙΕΟΑΗΩΥΑΕΙΟΥΩ** is besought "to protect the city of Miletus and all the inhabitants of the same;" a plain proof that this interminable combination only expressed the name of some *one* divine being. Again, the *Pistis-Sophia* perpetually brings in **ΙΕΟΥ** invariably accompanied with the epithet of "the Primal Man," *i. e.* He after whose image or *type* man was first created. But in the fulness of time the semi-Pythagorean, Marcus, had it revealed unto him that the seven heavens in their revelation sounded each one vowel, which, all combined together, formed a single doxology, "the sound whereof being carried down to earth becomes the creator and parent of all things that be on earth."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is in fact a very correct representation, if we give each vowel its *true* Greek sound, of the Hebrew pronunciation of the word Jehovah.

<sup>2</sup> Hippolytus, vi. 48.

The Greek language has but one word for *vowel* and *voice*; when, therefore, "the seven thunders uttered their voices," the seven vowels, it is meant, echoed through the vault of heaven, and composed that mystic utterance which the sainted seer was forbidden to reveal unto mortals. "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."<sup>1</sup> With the best reason, then, is the formula inscribed on a talisman of the first class, for hear what Valentinus himself delivers touching its potency:<sup>2</sup>—"After these things His disciples said again unto Him, Rabbi, reveal unto us the mysteries of the Light of Thy Father, forasmuch as we have heard Thee saying that there is another baptism of smoke, and another baptism of the Spirit of Holy Light, and moreover an unction of the Spirit, all which shall bring our souls into the treasurehouse of Light. Declare therefore unto us the mysteries of these things, so that we also may inherit the kingdom of Thy Father. Jesus said unto them, Do ye seek after these mysteries? No mystery is more excellent than they; which shall bring your souls unto the Light of Lights, unto the place of Truth and Goodness, unto the place of the Holy of holies, unto the place where is neither male nor female, neither form in that place but Light, everlasting, not to be uttered. Nothing therefore is more excellent than the mysteries which ye seek after, saving only the *mystery of the Seven Vowels and their forty and nine Powers*, and the Numbers thereof. And no name is more excellent than all these

<sup>1</sup> Rev. x. 4.

<sup>2</sup> 'Pistis-Sophia,' cap. 378.

(Vowels),<sup>1</sup> a Name wherein be contained all Names and all Lights and all Powers. Knowing therefore this Name, if a man shall have departed out of this body of Matter, no smoke (of the bottomless pit), neither any darkness, nor Ruler of the Sphere of Fate,<sup>2</sup> nor Angel, nor Power, shall be able to hold back the soul that knoweth that Name. But and if, after he shall have departed out of this world, he shall utter that Name unto the fire, it shall be quenched, and the darkness shall flee away. And if he shall utter that name unto the devils of the Outer Darkness, and to the Powers thereof, they shall all faint away, and their flame shall blaze up, so that they shall cry aloud, Thou art holy, Thou art holy, O Holy One of all holies! And if he shall utter that Name unto the Takers-away for condemnation, and their Authorities, and all their Powers, nay, even unto Barbelo,<sup>3</sup> and the Invisible God, and the three Triple-powered Gods, so soon as he shall have uttered that Name in those places, they shall all be shaken and thrown one upon the other, so that they shall be ready to melt away and perish, and shall cry aloud, O Light of all lights that art in the Boundless Light! remember us also, and purify us!”

And in another place (§ 357) we find this precept

<sup>1</sup> Evidently alluding to the collocation of the vowels on our talisman.

<sup>2</sup> The twelve Æons of the Zodiac, the creators of the human soul, which they “made out of the tears of their eyes, and out of the sweat of their torments,” and which they eagerly seek to catch when released from the body in which they have imprisoned it.

<sup>3</sup> The divine mother of the Saviour, and one of the three “Invisible Gods.” Cap. 359.

exemplified:—"And it came to pass that after they had crucified our Lord, He rose again from the dead on the third day. Then His disciples gathering themselves together unto Him prayed Him, saying, O Lord, have compassion upon us, for we have left father and mother, and the whole world for Thy sake, and have followed Thee. Then Jesus, standing with His disciples upon the sea of the ocean, cried aloud these things in prayer, saying: Hear me, O my Father, the father of all fatherhood, the *Boundless Light* [Zoroastrian name of the First Cause] **AEHIOY Ω ΙΑΩ ΩΑΙ ΩΙΑ,**" followed by a long string of Hebrew titles, ending with **ΙΕΟΥ ΚΑΒΑΩΘ.**

After such a revelation as this, we need seek no further for the reason of the frequent occurrence of this formula upon talismans intended, when they had done their duty in this world, to accompany their owner into the tomb, continuing to exert there a protective influence of a yet higher order than in life.

For the student of the mineralogy of the ancients this celt has very great interest in point of *material*, as being the only specimen of true jade, bearing indisputable marks of either Greek or Roman workmanship, that, so far as my knowledge extends, has ever yet been brought to light. This ancient neglect of the material is truly difficult to explain if the statement of a very good authority, Corsi, be indeed correct, that the sort showing the deepest green is found in Egypt. The known predilection of the Romans for gems of this colour would, one should naturally expect, have led them in that case to employ the stone largely in ornamentation, after the constant

fashion of the Chinese, and to value it as a harder species of the *smaragdus*. The circumstances under which this relic was brought to England render it more than probable that Egypt was the place where it was found; a supposition corroborated by the fine quality of the stone exactly agreeing with what Corsi remarks of the Egyptian kind. That *Alexandria* was the place where the inscription was added upon its surface can admit of little question; the lettering being precisely that seen upon innumerable other monuments which can with certainty be assigned to the same grand focus of Gnosticism. In addition to this, it is very doubtful whether in the third or fourth centuries a lapidary could have been found elsewhere throughout the whole Roman Empire capable of engraving with such skill as the minute characters within the wreath evince upon a material of this, almost insuperable, obduracy. From the times of the Ptolemies down to the Arab conquest, and even later, Alexandria was the seat of the manufacture of vases in rock crystal. This trade served to keep alive the expiring Glyptic Art for the only purpose for which its productions continued to be demanded—the manufacture of talismans, consignments of which must have been regularly shipped, together with the crystal-ware,<sup>1</sup> to Rome, and equally to the other important cities of the empire.

The primitive Egyptians, like the early Chaldeans, used stone in the place of metal for their cutting instruments, and continued its use for making particular articles down into historic times. Herodotus

<sup>1</sup> “Dum tibi Niliacus portat crystallæ catapulus.”—MART. xii. 72.

mentions the regular employment of the "Ethiopian stone," sharpened, for a dissecting-knife<sup>1</sup> in the process of embalming, and similarly for pointing the arrows<sup>2</sup> carried by the contingent of the same nation in the army of Xerxes. The Alexandrian citizen, half Jew, half Greek, who had the good fortune to pick up this primæval implement, doubtless rejoiced in the belief that he had gotten a "stone of virtue," most potent alike from substance, figure, and nature, and therefore proceeded to do his prize due honour by making it the *medium* of his most accredited spells—nay, more, by inventing a new formula of unusual complication and profundity whereby to animate its inherent powers. As regards its *substance*, the stone probably passed then for a *smaragdus* of exceptional magnitude, and that gem, as Pliny records,<sup>3</sup> was recommended by the Magi as the proper material for a talisman of prodigious efficacy, which, duly engraved, should baffle witchcraft, give success at court, avert hailstorms, and much more of like nature. The *smaragdus* of the ancients was little else than a generic designation for all stones of a *green* colour, and the entire Gnostic series strikingly demonstrates that this hue was deemed a primary requisite in a talismanic gem—the almost exclusive material of the class being the green jasper and the plasma.

Again, as regards *figure*, this celt offered in its *triangular* outline that most sacred of all emblems, the

<sup>1</sup> ii. 86.

<sup>2</sup> vii. 69. An intelligent observer just returned from the Nile informs me that flint arrowheads are to be picked up in abundance wherever the ground is disturbed upon the ancient sites.

<sup>3</sup> xxxvii. 40.

mystic Delta, the form that signified maternity, and was the hieroglyph of the moon. This belief is mentioned by Plutarch,<sup>1</sup> and explains why the triangle so often accompanies the figure of the sacred baboon, Luna's special attribute, on monuments, where also it is sometimes displayed elevated upon a column with that animal standing before it in the attitude of adoration.

Lastly, the supposed *nature* of this gift of Fortune was not of Earth, inasmuch as it then passed for a holy thing that "had fallen down from Jupiter," being, in fact, nothing less than one of that god's own thunderbolts; a notion this which will doubtless strike the modern mind as so strange, or rather as so preposterous, that it necessitates my giving at full length my reasons for making such an assertion. And in truth the subject is well worth the trouble of investigation, seeing that the same superstition will be found to extend from an early period of antiquity down into the popular belief of our own times throughout a large extent of Europe.

It is in accordance with this notion that I have designated this celt a "ceraunia" (thunderbolt-stone), and it therefore remains for me to adduce my reasons for giving it what must appear to most people so unaccountable and highly inappropriate an appellation. *Sotacus*, who is quoted elsewhere by Pliny "as one of the most ancient writers on mineralogy," is cited by

<sup>1</sup> 'De Iside et Osiride,' cap. 75. He adds that the Pythagoreans called the equilateral triangle "Athene"—a curious confirmation of the tradition quoted by Aristotle, that the Attic goddess was one and the same with the Moon.



him<sup>1</sup> “as making two other kinds of the *ceraunia*, the black and the red, resembling *hatchets* in shape. Of these, such as be black and round are sacred things; towns and fleets can be captured by their instrumentality. The latter are called *Bætyli*, whilst the oblong sort are the *Ceraunice*. Some make out another kind, in mighty request in the practices of the Magi, inasmuch as it is only to be found in places that have been struck by lightning.” One would have been utterly at a loss to understand what the old Greek had been speaking about in the chapter thus confusedly condensed by the later Roman naturalist, or to discover any resemblance in form between the lightning-flash and a hatchet, had it not been for the popular superstition that has prevailed in Germany from time immemorial to the present day, and of which full particulars are given by Anselmus Boetius in his invaluable repertory of mediæval lore upon all such matters, written at the beginning of the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Under the popular names of “*Strahlhammer*,” “*Donnerpfeil*,” “*Donnerkeil*,” “*Strahlpfeil*,” “*Strahlkeil*” (lightning-hammer, thunder arrow or club, lightning-arrow, &c.), and the Italian “*Sagitta*,”<sup>3</sup> he figures

<sup>1</sup> xxxvii. 51.

<sup>2</sup> ‘*Gem. et Lapid. Hist.*’ ii. cap. 261.

<sup>3</sup> “*Saetta*” (a vulgar Italian execration) is now restricted to the lightning-missile, the archer’s shaft being expressed by the Teutonic “*freceia*,” in accordance with the genius of the language which reserves the old Latin terms for the things not of this world—using those of the *lingua militaris* for everyday purposes. The flint arrow-heads found in the *terra marna* of the primæval Umbrian towns are believed by the peasantry to have this celestial origin, and are highly valued as portable “lightning-conductors.”

stone celts and hammers of five different, but all common, types; remarking that so firm was the belief in these things being the "actual arrow of the lightning" (*ipsa fulminis sagitta*) that, should any one attempt to controvert it, he would be taken for a madman. He however confesses with amusing simplicity that the substance of these thunderbolts is exceedingly like the common flint used for striking fire with; nay, more, he boldly declares he should agree with those few *rationalists* who, on the strength of their resemblance in shape to the tools in common use, pronounced these objects to be merely ordinary iron implements that had got *petrified* by long continuance in the earth, had it not been for the testimony of the most respectable witnesses as to the fact of their being discovered in places just seen to be struck with lightning. Besides quoting some fully detailed instances from Gesner, he adds that several persons had assured him of having themselves seen these stones dug up in places where the lightning had fallen. The natural philosophers of the day accounted for the creation of such substances in the atmosphere by supposing the existence of a vapour charged with sulphureous and metallic particles, which rising above a certain height became condensed through the extreme heat of the sun, and assumed a wedgelike form in consequence of the escape of their moisture, and the gravitation of the heavier particles towards their lower end! Notwithstanding this celestial origin, the virtue of the production was not then esteemed of a proportionally sublime order, extending no further than to the prevention or the cure of ruptures in children, if placed upon their cradles;

and also to the procuring of sleep in the case of adults. In our own times Justinus Kerner mentions<sup>1</sup> the same names for stone celts as universally popular amongst the German boors; but they are now chiefly valued for their efficacy in preserving cattle from the murrain, and consequently the finders can seldom be induced to part with them.

It must not, however, be supposed that Sotacus picked up this strange notion from the Teutones of his own age, whose very existence was probably unknown to him; his informants were unquestionably those Magi cited at the conclusion of Pliny's extract. The Greek mineralogist had lived "apud Regem," that is, at the court of the king of Persia, very probably in the capacity of royal physician, like his countrymen Democedes and Ctesias. In that region he had ample opportunities of seeing stone celts, for Rawlinson observes<sup>2</sup> that flint axes and other implements, exactly identical with the European in workmanship, are *common* in all the most ancient mounds of Chaldea, those sites of primæval cities. Such elevations above the dead level of those interminable plains were necessarily the most liable to be lightning-struck; and hence probably arose the idea that these weird-looking things (all tradition of whose proper destination had long since died out amongst the iron-using Persians) were the actual fiery bolts which had been seen to bury themselves in the clay. And again, to revert to the German belief, it must be remembered that Thor, the Northern Jupiter, is pictured as armed

<sup>1</sup> In his little treatise on Amulets.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ancient Monarchies,' i. p. 120, 1st ed.

with a huge hammer in the place of the classical thunderbolt. The type of the god had been conceived in the far remote ages when the stone hammer was as yet the most effective and formidable of weapons, and was preserved unchanged out of deference to antiquity, after the true meaning of the attribute was entirely forgotten. Nevertheless, his worshippers, accustomed to behold the hammer in the hand of the god of thunder—*ἰψιβρεμέτης Ζεὺς*—very naturally concluded that these strange objects, of unknown use, found from time to time deep buried in the earth, were the actual missiles that deity had discharged. It is a remarkable proof of the wide diffusion of the same belief that the late owner of the relic under consideration habitually spoke of it as a “thunderstone”—a name he could only have learnt from the Arabs from whom it was procured, seeing that no such notion with respect to *celts* has ever been current in this country. But every one whose memory reaches back forty years or more may recollect that, wheresoever in England the fossil *Belemnite* is to be found, it was implicitly received by all, except the few pioneers of Geology (a word then almost synonymous with Atheism), as the veritable thunderbolt shot from the clouds, and by that appellation was it universally known. I, for one, can recollect stories, quite as respectably attested as those Boetius quotes concerning the *Ceraunice*, told respecting the discovery of new-fallen belemnites under precisely the same circumstances; and, in truth, the same author does in the preceding chapter treat at length of the *Belemnites*, and his cuts show that the name meant then

what it does at present ; but he assigns to the missile an infernal instead of a celestial source, giving the vulgar title for it as “ *Alpschoss* ” (elfin-shot), which he classically renders into “ dart of the Incubus,” stating further that it was esteemed (on the good old principle, “ *similia similibus curantur* ”) of mighty efficacy to guard the sleeper from the visits of that much dreaded nocturnal demon. The Prussian, Saxon, and Spanish physicians employed it, powdered, as equally efficacious with the *lapis Judaicus*, in the treatment of the calculus. It was also believed a specific for the pleurisy in virtue of its *pointed* figure, which was analogous to the *sharp* pains of that disease, for so taught the universally accepted “ Doctrine of Signatures.”

The *Ceraunice* of Sotacus, however, comprised, besides these primitive manufactures of man, other substances—it is hard to say whether meteorites or fossils—the nature of which remains to be discussed. Photius,<sup>1</sup> after quoting the paragraph, “ I beheld the *Bætylus* moving through the air, and sometimes wrapped up in vestments, sometimes carried in the hands of the ministers,” proceeds to give a summary of the wondrous tale told by the discoverer of the prodigy—one Eusebius of Emesa. He related how that being seized one night with a sudden and unaccountable desire to visit a very ancient temple of Minerva, situated upon a mountain at some distance from the city, he started off, and, arriving at the foot, sat down to rest himself. Suddenly he beheld a globe of fire fall down from heaven, and a monstrous lion

<sup>1</sup> ‘ *Bibliotheca*, ’ 1063, R.

standing by the same, but who immediately vanished. Running to pick it up as soon as the fire was extinguished, he found this self-same *Bætylus*. Enquiring of it to what god it belonged, the thing made answer that it came from the Noble One (so was called a figure of a lion standing in the temple at Heliopolis). Eusebius thereupon ran home with his prize, a distance of 210 stadia (26 miles), without once stopping, being quite unable to control the *impetus* of the stone! He described it as "of whitish colour, a perfect sphere, a span in diameter, but sometimes assuming a purple<sup>1</sup> shade, and also expanding and contracting its dimensions, and having letters painted on it in cinnabar, of which he gave the interpretation. The stone, likewise, if struck against the wall, returned answers to consulters in a low whistling voice." The grain of truth in this huge heap of lies is obviously enough the fact that Eusebius, having had the good fortune to witness the descent of a meteorite, and to get possession of the same, told all these fables about it in order to increase the credit of the oracular stone (which doubtless brought him in many fees) amongst his credulous townfolk. Damascius<sup>2</sup> (whose 'Life of Isidorus' Photius is here epitomising) adds that this philosopher was of opinion that the stone was the abode of a spirit, though not one of the mischievous or unclean sort, nor yet one of a perfectly immaterial nature. He furthermore states that other *bætyli* were known, dedicated to Saturn, Jupiter, and the Sun; and moreover that Isidorus and himself saw many of

<sup>1</sup> The Greek purple included every shade from crimson to violet.

<sup>2</sup> A Stoic philosopher under Justinian.

such *bætyli* or *bætylia* upon Mount Libanus, near Heliopolis, in Syria.

As for the derivation of *bætylus*, the one proposed by the Byzantine Hesychius, who makes it come from *bæte*, the goatskin mantle wherein Rhea wrapped up the stone she gave old Saturn to swallow instead of the new-born Jove, cannot be considered much more satisfactory than Bochart's, who, like a sound divine; discovers in it a reminiscence of the stone pillar which Jacob set up at Bethel, and piously endeavours to force Sanconiathon, who speaks of the "living" stones, the *bæthyliæ*,<sup>1</sup> to confirm his interpretation by correcting his text into "anointed."

But this last *bætylus* is beyond all question the same thing with that described by the Pseudo-Orpheus,<sup>2</sup> under the names of *Siderites*, and the *animated Orites*, "round, black, ponderous, and surrounded with deeply graven furrows." In the first of these epithets may easily be recognised the *ferruginous* character common to all meteorites (*siderites* being also applied to the loadstone), whilst the second seems to indicate the locality where they most abounded, viz. Mount Lebanon.

Sotacus' notice, indeed, of the efficacy of the *bætylus* in procuring success in sea-fights and sieges, is copiously illustrated by the succeeding verses of the same mystic poet, who, it must be remembered, can claim a very high antiquity, there being sufficient grounds for identifying him with Onomacritus, a con-

<sup>1</sup> "Moreover the god Uranus devised *bæthyliæ*, contriving stones that moved as having life."

<sup>2</sup> *Λιθικά*, 355.

temporary of Pisistratus, in the sixth century before our æra. The diviner Helenus, according to him, had received this oracular stone from Apollo, and he describes the rites, with great minuteness, for the guidance of all subsequent possessors of such a treasure, by means of which the Trojan woke up the spirit within the "vocal sphere." This was effected by dint of thrice seven days' fasting and continence, by incantations and sacrifices offered to the stone, and by bathing, clothing, and nursing it like an infant. Through its aid, when at length rendered instinct with life, the traitorous seer declared to the Atridæ the coming downfall of Troy; the stone uttering its responses in a voice resembling the feeble wail of an infant desiring the breast. It is more than probable that Orpheus, in describing the Orites, had in view the *Salagrama*, or sacred stone of Vishnu, still employed by the Brahmins in all propitiatory rites, especially in those performed at the death-bed. Sonnerat describes it as "a kind of ammonite, round or oval in shape, black, and very ponderous." The *furrows* covering its surface were traced by Vishnu's own finger; but when found of a violet colour, it is looked upon with horror, as representing a vindictive avatar of the god. The possessor keeps it wrapped up in a linen garment like a child, and often bathes and perfumes it—precisely the rites prescribed by our poet for the due consultation of the oracle of the Siderites. In the temple of Jogeswur, Benares, the favourite idol of the Hindoo aristocracy is a round black stone, 6 feet in diameter. According to tradition, this emblem of Siva leaped out of the burning oblation at



a great sacrifice to which all the gods had come together—a legend making it probable that the material is a meteorite.

From all this it may safely be deduced that the “stone of power,” whether *bætylus* or *orites*, was in most cases nothing more than a fossil; either a ferruginous nodule or an *echinus* filled with iron-pyrites. Their being found in abundance in one particular locality precludes the idea of these at least being meteorites, which latter, besides, never assume any regular form, but look like mere fragments of iron-slag. This explanation is strongly supported by the drawings Boetius gives<sup>1</sup> of what was then called the “Donnerstein,” or “Wetterstein” (thunder or storm stone), and which he very plausibly identifies with Pliny’s *Brontias*, “that got into the head of the tortoise during thunderstorms,” and which is described in another place as the “eye of the Indian tortoise,” that conferred the gift of prophecy. His carefully drawn figure of this “Donnerstein” (which also passed for the “grosser Krötenstein,” big toad-stone) shows it to be only a fossil *echinus* of a more *oblate* form than the common sort. The regular toad-stone, plentifully to be seen in mediæval rings, was, on the other hand, the small hollow hemisphere, the

<sup>1</sup> ii. cap. 264. This curious idea still finds its counterpart in France. In the canton of Père Champenoise there is a chalky hill, called Mont Août (*Mons Augusti*), where they find reniform lumps of sulphate of iron of large dimensions, which, when broken, exhibit concentric radiations, the colour of gold. The neighbouring villagers believe that these mineral crystallizations have fallen from the skies in the midst of the flashes of lightning, and give them the name of “pierres à tonnerre.” (‘Revue numismatique’ for 1863, p. 142.)

fossil tooth of an extinct fish, found in the Greensand formation. In that age the Donnerstein was held to possess all the united virtues of the toadstone, belemnite, and *ovum anguinum*, in counteracting poison, giving success in all enterprises, procuring sleep, and protection against danger of lightning. But the old physician, so much in advance of his times, cannot help winding up the list of its virtues with the hint, "Fides sæpe veritate major."

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES ON CELTS AND OTHER IMPLEMENTS USED AS TALISMANS OR VICTORY-STONES.

THE axe-heads and hammer-heads of stone, known to us by the general designation of celts, have, until recent explorations, been regarded as comparatively of rare occurrence amongst ancient relics obtained from Eastern lands and from some other Continental countries. Our information, however, in regard to objects of this class has become greatly extended. Mr. James Yates brought before us, at a former meeting of the Institute, examples of stone celts from Java; an interesting specimen obtained at Sardis is figured vol. xv. p. 178; and some others were found by Mr. Layard at Nineveh. The occurrence of any ornament or inscription upon such objects is very rare, but, amongst numerous stone implements lately obtained in Greece, one is noticed by M. de Mortillet ('*Matériaux pour l'Histoire primitive de l'Homme*,' Jan. 1868, p. 9), of which he had received from Athens a drawing and an *estampage*; it is described

as “une hache en pierre serpentineuse, sur une des faces de laquelle on a gravé trois personnages et une inscription en caractères grecs. L'ancien outil a évidemment été, beaucoup plus tard, quand on a eu complètement oublié son usage primitif, transformé en talisman ou pierre cabalistique.”

At the annual meeting of the Antiquaries of the North, March 21, 1853, under the presidency of the late King of Denmark, several recent acquisitions were exhibited, obtained for his private collection at Frederiksborg. Amongst these there was an axe-head of stone (length about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches), perforated with a hole for the handle, and remarkable as bearing on one of its sides four Runic characters, that appear to have been cut upon the stone at some period more recent than the original use of the implement. It has been figured in the ‘Memoirs’ of the Society, 1850–1860, p. 28; see also ‘Antiquarisk Tidsskrift,’ 1852–1854, pp. 258–266. I am indebted to a friend well skilled in Runes and Scandinavian archæology, Dr. Charlton, secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle, for the following observations on this interesting relic.

“The first letter is L, and, if we accept the idea that these were Runes of Victory, it may stand for the initial of Loki; the second is Th, and may stand for Thor; the third O, for Odin; the fourth, Belgthor, with a T above it, may refer to Belgthor's friendship and alliance with Thor, and the T stands for Tyr. We may imagine the names of the Northern gods to have been cut on this stone axe to give it victory in battle, just as the old Germans and Saxons cut mystic Runes on their swords, a practice noticed by Haigh

in his 'Conquest of Britain by the Saxons,' p. 28, pl. 1, where he has figured amongst various examples of the *Futhorc*, or alphabet of Runic characters, one inlaid on a sword or knife found in the Thames, and now in the British Museum. At p. 51, *ibid.* pl. iii. fig. 20, he has cited also the Runic inscription on the silver pommel of a sword found at Gilton, Kent, formerly in the collection of the late Mr. Rolfe, of Sandwich, and subsequently in the possession of Mr. Joseph Mayer. This relic is now in the precious museum bestowed by his generous encouragement of archæological science on the town of Liverpool. The interpretation given in the latter instance is as follows:—  
 "I eke victory to great deeds."<sup>1</sup>

There was another explanation given of the characters on the Danish stone axe. It was read—**LUTHR. O.**—"Ludr owns," namely, the weapon thus inscribed.

In the ancient Sagas, as remarked in Nilsson's 'Primitive Inhabitants of Scandinavia' (translated by Sir John Lubbock, Bart.), p. 214, mention occurs of amulets designated life-stones, victory-stones, &c., which warriors carried about with them in battle to secure victory. A curious relation is cited from one of the Sagas, that King Nidung, when about to engage in conflict, perceived that he had neglected to bring a precious heir-loom, a stone that possessed the virtue of ensuring victory. He offered the hand of

<sup>1</sup> 'Archæologia,' vol. xxxii. p. 321. A spear-head inscribed with Runes is noticed 'Journ. Brit. Arch. Ass.' vol. xxiii. p. 387. There exist certain massive rings of metal inscribed with Runes, that may have been, as some antiquaries suggest, appended to sword-hilts as charms. One of these rings, lately found at Carlisle, is in possession of Mr. Robert Ferguson, of Morton, near that city.

his daughter, with a third part of his kingdom, to him who should bring this talisman before the fight commenced; and, having received it, he won the battle. In another narrative, the daughter of a Scanian warrior steals during his slumbers the stone that was hung on his neck, and gave it to her lover, who thus became the victor. Nilsson observes that stones are found in museums, for instance, a hammer-stone with a loop, that appear to have been worn thus as talismans in war.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to advert to certain axe-heads of stone, in their general form similar to those with which we are familiar as found in Europe; upon these implements are engraved rude designs, such as the human visage, &c. These objects, of which an example preserved in a museum at Douai has been much cited, may be "victory-stones" of an ancient and primitive people, but they are now generally recognised as of Carib origin, and not European.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> That indefatigable explorer of Indian antiquities, Colonel Pearse, informs me that the Hindoos universally believe these primæval implements to be actual thunderbolts: a belief he explains by the original use of meteoric iron for their manufacture. By a strange coincidence the Romaic name for the same relics is *ἀστροπελέκια*, "star-hatchets." (C. W. King.)



ON THE TRUE NATURE OF THE CONTORNIATE  
MEDALS.

“Hos porro dignos arbitror quorum describendis elegantiss, et enodandis ænigmatibus curiosæ mentes suam impendant curam, nondum enim licuit eorum originem assequi.”<sup>1</sup> So spoke the father of Numismatics, Charles Patin, two centuries ago, in allusion to that very singular class of medals, the *Contorniatæ*; and the “enigmas” proposed to “active minds” by the existence of these curious pieces remain, in spite of all subsequent attempts, as far from any satisfactory solution as in his day. All who have treated of the subject, beginning with Du Cange, followed by Patin himself, Havercamp, Morel, and, lastly, Sabatier, agree in considering the *Contorniatæ* as *medals* in the modern sense of the word; that is, not current coins, but pieces issued expressly to perpetuate the memory of illustrious men and celebrities of every grade—philosophers, poets, historians, equally with stage players, circus-racers, and organists.

But this explanation is open to many insuperable objections. If issued by imperial command for so important a purpose, one would naturally expect to find in them the best specimens of the medallic art of their own times, as in the parallel case of modern medals, which always display higher style and execution than does the contemporary coinage, though the

<sup>1</sup> ‘Hist. Num.’ introd. c. xviii.

same engraver may have cut the dies for both. But it is quite the reverse with the pieces under consideration; their *fabrique* is infinitely more careless than that of the current mintage of their own period, even adopting Du Cange's limitation of their issue to the interval of decadence between Constantine and Honorius<sup>1</sup>—much more so if we assume any to be coæval with those early Cæsars whose portraits many of them present. The strongest evidence of this carelessness in their creation lies in the fact of the whole class being invariably made by *casting*, not by striking from dies—an economy in production that bespeaks the work of a wholesale manufacturer, not the issue from an imperial mint, where no trouble or expense would be spared when the object was to do honour to the individual so commemorated. The true medallions throughout the series are a case in point, the carefulness of their execution being proportionate to their superiority in volume. Furthermore, if the Contorniatî were *honorific* memorials, why is their material always the basest of the three metals? why do they never occur in silver, much less in gold, like the medallions which were devised for precisely the same object, although restricting their honours to the members of the reigning family?—and this poverty of material is a consideration of some weight in this enquiry, inasmuch as the only ancient reference anywhere found to the striking a *medal*, in its modern acceptation, proves that the most precious was in such a case preferred. This was done in honour of Alexander by his namesake Severus: “Alexandri habitu nummos plu-

<sup>1</sup> ‘De Inf. Ævi Num.’ p. 43.



*rimos figuravit, et quidem electros aliquantos, sed plurimos tamen aureos.*" But as nothing bearing the image of Alexander, executed in the peculiar style of the virtuous Syrian's age (excepting Colonel Leake's problematical piece),<sup>1</sup> has come down to us, notwithstanding the *very large quantity* thus related to have been struck (some of which would certainly have survived, owing to the superstitious veneration in which the portrait was held under the Lower Empire), it necessarily follows that the emperor only *restored* the Macedonian's *stater*s in exact facsimile, in the same manner as Trajan had done before him with the consular and imperial denarii of his predecessors. Such *restored* pieces were put again into circulation, for the medallions themselves were intended for public use, being merely multiples of the ordinary gold, silver, and bronze coins. For instance, Lampridius terms the huge medallions of the extravagant Heliogabalus

<sup>1</sup> The Leake medallion, mentioned in the text, was found in Thessaly, and is of the *module* of the largest Roman First Brass; it has the field carefully hammered to an edge all round, clearly for the purpose of entering a frame. It bears for obverse a bust of Pallas, a very weak copy from that upon the *stater*; for reverse Alexander on horseback encountering a lion. Legend, **ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ**. The general opinion was that this supposed unique piece was only a cinquecento forgery, until M. Feuardent, the eminent French numismatist, on a recent visit to the Fitzwilliam Museum (where the Leake collection is deposited), discovered that it is identical in size and *fabrique*, though not in type, with three others, commemorating Alexander and his father, found at Tarsus (1863), in company with *aurei* of Severus Alexander. These medallions weigh about 2 oz. each, the equivalent to 10 *aurei* of that period. From M. Feuardent they were acquired by the Cabinet of the Bibliothèque Impériale. Engravings of them, with the other coins and jewels of the treasure-trove, will be found in the 'Revue numismatique' for the year 1868.

“formas binarias, ternarias, quaternarias, et denarias etiam atque amplius usque ad *bilibres* aut *centenarias*,”<sup>1</sup> all of which his successor called in and recoined into subdivisions of the regular *aureus*. And Capitolinus mentions, amongst the other frolics of L. Verus, his tossing bronze medallions upon the counter in the wineshops, for the purpose of breaking the glasses: “Jactabat et nummos in popinis *maximos*, quibus calices frangeret.”<sup>2</sup>

Another striking peculiarity in their make is left unaccounted for by the current acceptation of their object, and this is the evident care taken to render the edge perfectly circular, which may indeed have occasioned the preference for casting to striking in their manufacture, it being a matter of impossibility to produce a perfectly round piece with the simple die and hammer, the only coining implements then known. Still less does the same theory explain the object of the raised rim, *contorno*, that most conspicuous characteristic of their appearance, and which has given its appellation to the whole class. These two striking peculiarities are indeed what supplied me with the long sought clue for unravelling the whole mystery, and suggested a theory as to the real destination of the pieces so distinguished, which, to myself at least, answers all the requirements of the problem in a more plausible manner than anything that has hitherto been advanced. Another marked feature in the class for which no reasonable explanation has yet been proposed is the *nature of the reverses* to these medals: what so powerful reason occasioned their being invariably

<sup>1</sup> ‘Alex. Sev.’ c. xxxix.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Verus,’ c. iv.

drawn from the theatre or the circus; and the very restricted number of types so selected—for the most part the successful *auriga*, with his name attached, either depicted in all his glory, moving triumphantly along in his car, or else as leading before the applauding spectators their favourite horse, the *Scorpus* or *Volucer*<sup>1</sup> of the day? Though such reverses might be appropriate enough for medals bearing on the other side the portrait of that grand *turfite*, Nero, yet it is impossible to discover their connection with the frugal Vespasian or the virtuous Trajan. Still more out of character do such figures appear on the medals commemorating Homer, or Terence, or Sallust, or Horace; but when they accompany a philosopher's head, as in the case of Socrates, poor Havercamp is driven to the ludicrous expedient of interpreting the design as reading a lesson to athletes of the wondrous power of philosophy in reclaiming and bringing to perfect virtue a naturally bad disposition!<sup>2</sup>

But to come to another point: the similarity in the style and execution of the reverses, however widely the imperial portraits on the obverse may seem to be separated in date; the almost exact correspondence of the pieces themselves, in size, pattern, and finish of the field, strongly support Du Cange's opinion of their being altogether the production of a not very extensive series of years; otherwise changes of taste and fashion had inevitably brought about easily discernible alterations in some one or other of these particulars.

<sup>1</sup> So great a favourite with the Green faction that a peck (*modius*) of gold pieces was often collected for him after a race. 'Verus,' c. vi.

<sup>2</sup> 'Dissert. de Num. Contorn.' p. 149.

The same conclusion is fairly to be drawn from the circumstance that one and the same *auriga*, Eutimius, is commemorated equally on Contorniati bearing the head of Nero and of Honorius; for it is preposterous pedantry to suppose with Havercamp that this personage is the deified *hieronica*, Euthymius the Locrian, who flourished in the times of Xerxes! It is quite enough to observe that the superior popularity of a charioteer chancing to bear this name will amply account for his appearing more frequently upon works of one period than those minor stars of the circus, his brethren Alsan, Pannonius, Philocomus, Stefanus, Ursus, &c., whose fame has been transmitted to all future time through the same medium.

The only objection that can be brought against Du Cange's settlement of their date lies in the evident superiority of style in the *obverses* with the heads of Nero and the early Cæsars, a circumstance which has induced many to attribute the issue of these particular pieces to the reigns to which they pretend to belong. But the true answer is, that for all such pieces the obverse-matrix was taken from an old medallion of the emperor in requisition, for all these portraits betray easily recognisable marks of sand-casting, afterwards tooled up; whilst the reverses of the self-same medals exhibit as debased a style as those bearing the image and superscription of Honorius himself. All these considerations tend to one conclusion, that the Contorniati were no more than articles made by the braziers of the Lower Empire, and sold for some purpose of amusement (as the trivial character of their reverses demonstrates), but

for what special object they were intended is the knotty point that now remains to be discussed.

The surest way of approaching this question, upon which no light whatever is shed by even incidental notices to be extracted from ancient writers, is to search amongst relics of antiquity whose use is clearly ascertained for anything analogous in form or appearance to the objects now under investigation. And here the first glimpse of the truth dawned upon me from a very unpromising quarter, a large collection of antique pastes belonging to our Disney Professor :

“ Via prima salutis,  
Quod minime reris, Graia pandetur ab urbe.”

Amongst these my attention was caught by several glass disks of uniform size and pattern, which on very sufficient grounds are identified by antiquaries with the glass *latrunculi* or draughtsmen, mentioned by Ovid, Martial, and Pliny.<sup>1</sup> They are the size of a penny piece, round, flat, and thin, finished off with a moulded border, and bear in relief a head applied in paste of a different colour. Again, in draughtsmen of Indian make the raised rim is a very conspicuous feature ; in this point and in general figure they bear a wonderful resemblance to the Contorniati, and such is the unchangeableness of Hindoo fashions that they may safely be assumed as identical in form with their prototypes of twenty centuries ago. The primitive draughtsmen were indeed, as their names, *πεσσοι*, *ψῆφοι*, *calculi*, denote, merely pebbles of two different colours, and these continued in use to the last amongst people

<sup>1</sup> Mart. vii. 72, “ vitreus latro.” Plin. xxxvi. 67, “ calculi quos quidam abaculos appellant.”

unable to afford their more artificial substitutes. An interesting exemplification of this was lately brought to light at that English Pompeii, Chesterford, where, in company with a wooden bronze-hooped *situla*, was found a set of pebbles the size of eggs, highly polished, and evidently brought from a distant coast, their material being granite and serpentine. But the shape to which the *πεσσοὶ* were reduced by art is significantly preserved by the transference of the name *pessus* to the surgical appliance, a *suppository*, or flat perforated disk of wood of the same thickness and diameter. In all probability the clay disks, variously impressed, often found amongst Roman remains in this country, popularly called *dinders*, but regarded by antiquaries as the actual *nummi fictiles* mentioned by ancient authors,<sup>1</sup> were only cheap home-made substitutes for the elegant glass men. Passing to the other extreme, Martial describes the same playthings as made of a *gem*,<sup>2</sup> most likely meaning agate, long used in Syria for the purpose, as the far-famed chess-board of St. Louis remains to testify. The actual devices of the Contorniati are perpetuated upon the early mediæval draughtsmen, a conclusive evidence of the common nature of both; Gothic usage being only the antique barbarised and depraved. One in bone (Londesborough Coll.), referred to the tenth century, is engraved with a mounted archer in flat relief; another in walrus-tooth, probably of the twelfth, presents a lion centaur wielding a club. Both offer other

Suidas, 'Numa.' 'De Rebus Bellicis,' cap. "De inhihenda largitate," a tract added to the 'Notitia Imperii,' ed. Froben.  
xxv. 20. "gemmeus miles."

points of resemblance to their Roman predecessors in their ornamental margins, and large diameter of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch respectively.<sup>1</sup> Amongst the *débris* of mediæval London, leaden counters often turn up, rudely stamped with a king's or a bishop's head. Mr. C. Roach Smith, who has figured many specimens of them in his Catalogue, is of opinion that they were *tokens* for small change issued by taverns bearing such heads for their signs; as became the universal practice under the Commonwealth, though in another metal. But such usurpation of the royal prerogative would never have been ventured upon under the Plantagenets and Tudors; whilst the usual device of the reverse, which the learned antiquary himself explains as a *pair of tables*, proves to demonstration that these counters were the actual pieces used in playing at what made "tavern" and "chequers" equivalent terms. I have been unable to discover any notice in the classics of *latrunculi* purposely made in metal, although Pollux has a long section upon the *πεσσοῖ*,<sup>2</sup> the different requirements of the game, its varieties, and the names of the throws of the dice<sup>3</sup> used therein as in our backgammon. But that actual coins came in occasionally as genteeler representatives of the glass men (*res*

<sup>1</sup> A friend sends me this note, very much to the point:—"When in Switzerland, I saw numbers of draughtsmen cut out of box, with heads on obverse, and some subject on reverse, and wondered for some time what they were, till one fine day I came across a complete set, board and all, modern—*i. e.* last century. The dealers in antiquities sold odd men at a good profit."

<sup>2</sup> 'Onomasticon,' vii. 205.

<sup>3</sup> Of which two were called Midas and Manes, after those famous Phrygian and Lydian kings: there seems a certain analogy in the notion of ornamenting the calculi with imperial portraits.

*omnium delicatissima*, as Petronius calls the notion<sup>1</sup>) is shown by his reference to Trimalchio's terebinthine board with its gold and silver denarii instead of *calculi*. It is easy therefore to conceive how the advance of taste, refining upon this refinement, thought it more consistent with the dignity of the game to replace the vulgar current coin by pieces made expressly for the purpose, having the appearance, though not the reality, of money; exactly the same revolution that produced our card counters in silver, or gilt brass, formerly so much in fashion.

The *material* itself of the Contorniati brings additional support to my hypothesis, some being of mixed metal remarkably gold-like in colour and much resembling pinchbeck, others in pure copper; both equally distinct from the substance of the regular bronze coinage. Such differences in colour were amply sufficient, so long as the pieces were bright, to distinguish the two sides—that primary necessity of the game. Or we may suppose that the male portraits discriminated one side, the female the other; or the same object may have been attained by the one player keeping his obverses, the other his reverses turned uppermost. And in the heads commonly ornamenting the glass *latrunculi* (even disallowing the claims of the Contorniati to that office) may lurk the reason for the change of sex in the French nomenclature which transforms our *man* into *dame*. The explanation now offered may serve, in some measure, to elucidate the use (though not the composition) of the inexplicable monogram, seemingly formed of **P, L, E**,

<sup>1</sup> 'Satyricon,' xxxiii. 2.



so frequently stamped in the field of these medals, as well as the silver palm branch inlaid upon others. The calculi are divided by Isidorus into three classes, the *ordinarii*, that could only move one way; the *vagi*, free from such limitation; and the *inciti*, that could not be moved at all. May not these countermarks, which occur on only a minority of the number, have served to distinguish the more important pieces from the rest.

The incredible mania for horse-racing that possessed Romans and Byzantines (citizens whose sole thought was “*panem et circenses*”), and which went on growing in force with the decadence of the empire, is quite sufficient, without seeking other causes, to account for the nature of the subjects on the reverse. The same passion that ornamented pavements, armour, plate, signets, with chariots and race-horses, more appropriately displayed itself upon these playthings, intended to beguile the weary hours when the circus was closed.

Lastly, some argument as to their real character may be found in their present plentifulness when compared with the true medallions. The number of them still preserved is absolutely large, considering that they were manufactured at the capital alone, for they only turn up in Italy itself, intercourse with the provinces being embarrassed by the distresses of those late and evil times to which their origin is due. And if a recollection of the considerable number of men required to set out one board upon the present system should occur to anyone as an objection to my estimate of the plentifulness of the Contorniati (which, so com-

pared, *ought* to be much more abundant than they are), the reply is found in the statement of Pollux, that the ancient game was played with no more than five *πessoι* (on each side, must be meant), whence Sophocles' *pentegramma* as a synonym for the board.<sup>1</sup>

There remains to be considered a single, but very important, exception (as it at first appears) to the rule that none of these medals have any historical value. This is the one displaying a certain **BONIFATIVS** in a chariot of four horses or four stags, and which, ever since Du Cange lavished the stores of his erudition upon its elucidation,<sup>2</sup> has been implicitly received as issued to record the triumph of *Bonifacius*, the celebrated general of Valentinian III. But, in truth, the connection of the medal with the heroic betrayer of Africa rests on the coincidence of name alone (an extremely popular one in his age); the personage thus honoured being no other than a circus driver, for he is depicted in exactly the same figure, attitude, and costume as his compeers, Eutimius or Stefanus, whose profession does not admit of doubt. Nay, his character is declared beyond all dispute by the *whip* raised aloft in his hand, the proper badge of the *auriga*, but never carried by the triumphant general, whose steeds were *led* by attendants appropriately attired, whilst he himself bore the eagle-tipped ivory sceptre—"volucrem quæ sceptro surgit eburno," the proper concomitant of the *tunica palmata*. The nature of the four monograms in the exergue, where the too acute Havercamp, eager to outdo his great master, reads the long legend,

<sup>1</sup> 'Onom.' ix. 97.

<sup>2</sup> 'De Inf. Ævi Num.' p. 41.

“Domina Nostra Placidia Augusta Restituit,”<sup>1</sup> may be confidently determined from the Contorniato of Honorius, which preserves at full length the name of the winner, “Eugenius,” equally with those of his horses, “Achilleus, Desiderius, Speciosus, Dignus;” or from that other, wherein “Eutimius” presents himself with his pair, “Tyrus” and “Carthago.” A gem (‘Impronte Gemmarie,’ v. 87) exhibits the actual *quadriga* at full speed carrying Victory *in propria persona* holding up the wreath triumphal; and gives the names of the horses in *Greek* letters. They are Eutyches, Torquatus, Alcimas, Aquilo.

In fact, any one practised in unravelling monograms will perceive at the first glance that those underneath the car of Bonifatius cannot possibly contain more than *four* words (one for each horse manifestly), whilst the second of them will yield, after a slight analysis, the elements of RHODANVS. That the names of famous *rivers* were, from an obvious appropriateness, often bestowed upon race-horses, is well known both from classical and monumental authority, which gives us Euphrates,<sup>2</sup> Orontes, Tiberis, &c., thus applied to the favourites of the course. Into what a quagmire of absurdity the archæologist may be led by once getting into the wrong track, and persistently following out the same, is amusingly exemplified by Havercamp, in the case of the lately quoted medal. He construes the names of Eugenius and his team into the acclamations addressed to Honorius by the assembled multitude in the circus, supporting his

<sup>1</sup> ‘Dissert. de Num. Contorn.’ p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> The Barcelona mosaic, Martial, &c.

assertion by an apposite quotation from Claudian :  
 “Qui Honorium tanquam *Achilli* parem, *desideratum*  
 a republica, *nobiliter* natum, imperio *dignum*, et *speciosum*  
 imperatoria forma sua, celebrarunt !”<sup>1</sup>

But a celebrated numismatist of our day, Adrien de Longpérier, has contrived to far out-distance old Havercamp in the exercise of similar perverse ingenuity. A legend has been long known, occurring on the reverse to three different obverses, which reads, more or less completely, **NVSMAGCON MONIMVS**. All previous publishers of the medal, from Eckhed downwards, having given up the problem as insoluble, the gallant Frenchman boldly turns the sentence into Latin (?) in the shape of “Nos magna commonimus,” *Nous avons retracé de grandes choses* : and applies this declaration to the seated figure it accompanies, whom he supposes to represent Julius Cæsar ! But if we take the analogy of other legends for our guide in this case, we shall extract from the confusion of words the name of the *auriga*, “Maggon,” or “Maccon,” and of his horses, “Nus” (*i.e.* *Noûs* Latinised) and “Monimus,” *Μονιμός*. The man’s name may well be African, and of the same derivation as the popular Carthaginian one, “Mago”—the Moors and Numidians having ever been famed for their horsemanship ; and their connection with the Roman circus is attested by the above quoted names, “Tyrius” and “Carthago.” *Noûs*, “Thought,” is of all others the aptest name for a racer, for what can be swifter than thought ?—*πτερόν ἢ νόημα* is a Homeric simile for swiftness—and thus conveys the most auspicious omen.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Dissert de Num. Contorn.’ p. 120.

Μονιμός, "Steady," was equally appropriate to the virtues of the equine as of the human race: to the latter it was given for name as the exact equivalent to the Roman "Constans" and "Constantia"; the most illustrious example of its use being that of Monima, wife of the great Mithridates, so famous for her beauty and tragic end.







### THE GEM-PORTRAITS OF COMMODUS AND MARCIA.

THE most important piece in the Marlborough Cabinet, for magnitude, material, and workmanship, is the immense cameo in sardonyx (8 inches wide by 6 inches deep), presenting, as the inscription on its mounting declares, the portraits of Didius Julianus and Manlia Scantilla. But the long accepted attribution of these portraits is completely overthrown by a single consideration—the shortness of that emperor's tenure of power, extending to no more than *sixty-five days*. It would therefore be a work of supererogation to adduce against it the numerous other arguments that suggest themselves to everyone having the least acquaintance with history or art.

Nevertheless it must be allowed, *en passant*, that the Marquis di Fuentes, to whom this attribution is probably due, had some show of plausibility in its favour when he came to such a conclusion through the aid of numismatics alone; paying no attention to the historical requirements of the

question, whilst he attempted to identify by comparison with medals the personages immortalised upon his magnificent cameo. For it is an undeniable fact that the head upon the *earliest* coinage of Didius is an exact copy of that of Commodus, and such as the sexagenarian purchaser of empire could not possibly have been graced with: a truth which, indeed, is proved by the coins issued during the latter weeks of his reign, which present a face of a very different character, and one much better agreeing with the mature age of its owner. This medallic assimilation of his features to those of Commodus was evidently affected and intentional on the part of the engraver of the dies; Didius having, in order to court the Prætorians, proclaimed himself the lawful successor, and avenger, of their regretted patron. Amongst the conditions of his bargain with these troops "scripsit in tabulis se Commodi memoriam restitutum," as his biographer, Spartian, informs us; in proof of which he ordered the execution of Lætus, Marcia, and the other authors of his death.

Again, besides the special and powerful motive in this case, it is well known to numismatists that the Roman mint, during the preceding years of that same century, had regularly pursued an ingenious mode of flattery: the representing each successor with almost the exact features of the last departed Cæsar, as if to prove him the *real*, not the *adoptive*, son of the emperor whom he followed. Thus Hadrian appears on his early coins with the face of Trajan, and only to be distinguished by the legend: his physiognomy in its turn is reflected in the first mintage of Antoninus



Pius; whilst (what tells yet more for our purpose) Severus, upon his accession, assumes not merely the name but the actual countenance of his model, Pertinax. This resemblance between the coin-portraits of Didius Julianus and Commodus is so close that modern forgers have availed themselves of it for practising their common and too deceptive fraud of transforming a common medal into a rare one by the judicious alteration of the requisite letters in the legend. I have seen a medallion of Commodus thus skilfully converted into one of Didius; but the falsifier, being ignorant of history, has left the date, **COS II**, on the reverse without alteration; a curious testimony to the trick played with the other side.

But although the male head on the Marlborough cameo (which in truth is very stiff and without much individuality) might for the reasons just assigned be allowed to pass for a Didius, yet the female one cannot be forced, by any effort of the imagination, into a resemblance to that of his empress, Manlia Scantilla. This latter identification may be at once dismissed as a mere assumed consequence of the first; it being taken for granted that if the one were the husband the other must be the wife; in defiance of all the remonstrance of medals against the identification. Now it is evident to any competent judge that the portrait of the *lady*, upon this cameo, was considered by the artist as far the more important of the two, and he has therefore put forth his utmost powers in the elaborateness of its design equally with the superior carefulness bestowed upon its execution. There is a freedom in the drawing and a life in the expression that contrast

most strikingly with the conventional stiffness so conspicuous in the treatment of her consort's portrait: it is almost impossible to believe both to be the work of the same hand. Had these portraits been no more than regular memorials of the *Augustus* and his *Augusta*, such manifest distinction would naturally not have been bestowed upon the representation of the latter: adulation of this sort belongs, in the order of things, only to the reigning favourite of the day—some ancient Diane de Poitiers, or Madame Dubarry.

That the male head really is meant for Commodus, no one truly competent to form a judgment upon the evidence of coins will be inclined to deny; but we seek in vain amongst the ladies of his family for a face of so Grecian a cast as that possessed by his companion. His mother Faustina, his sister Lucilla, his wife Crispina, have all of them extremely irregular profiles; the last of the trio being actually what would now be called hard-featured; the type of all three being a short face, and prominent nose. But on the other hand, *Marcia*, the celebrated concubine of this emperor, who enjoyed all the power and privileges of an *Augusta* during the greater portion of his reign, may from the circumstances of the case be reasonably supposed the most beautiful woman of her times. Now we have actual historical record that her lover caused this same beauty to be eternised by means of the glyptic art, carrying her portrait, in the guise of an Amazon, engraved in his own signet, as Spartian informs us in a very interesting passage. Nay, more, he placed her head, represented in the same masculine character, side by side with his own upon

a very well known medallion. If, then, Commodus thus paid his idolised mistress the very highest honour the glyptic art could confer—that of making her the impress of the imperial signet—it was merely an *extension*, not an *exaggeration*, of the compliment to take her for his companion upon this cameo, under the thin disguise of an Ariadne. It may confidently be inferred, from our knowledge of Roman customs, that the courtiers would not be behindhand in paying compliments of the same nature to the all-powerful favourite. This is probably the real source of many *Roman* intagli now extant that present the conjugated busts of Hercules and Omphale, but with features varying more or less decidedly from the conventional types of the demi-god and his enslaver.

Of all such gems that have come under my observation, the most important for its direct bearing upon the subject of the present enquiry is only known to me through a plaster cast, which fell into my hands several years ago, in company with a lot of others taken from intagli then existing in the Hertz Collection, now dispersed. The original I sought in vain when that cabinet was brought to the hammer in 1859 : it probably had been previously disposed of by the owner, who, having merely a dealer's knowledge of the subject, little suspected the historical and artistic value of the modest gem. This intaglio, which is of very fine work, offers a male and a female head, united, Janus-like, at the back. The male head, to be recognised at the first glance for Commodus, is covered with the Nemæan lion's hide knotted over his shoulders by the two fore-paws : the female head, of truly

Grecian outline and dignified expression, is partly covered on the back with a veil, the folds of which, uniting with the leonine equipment of her consort, elegantly conceal the junction of the two. In this case, again, this female portrait bears no resemblance to the strongly marked profiles of any of the ladies in the family of the Cæsar with whom she is here associated in such intimate connection: an association indicating an extent and permanence of power that can be assigned to no other personage of his court than to Marcia. Besides, this fanciful mode of coupling the two portraits finds no precedent in medallion usage before the reign of this very Commodus, who actually figures upon a medallion in the same character of Janus, with the sole difference that he duplicates his own head with that of his prototype, Hercules. It therefore seems almost demonstrable that the invention of the medallion-type gave the idea to the engraver of the gem; or, very possibly, that both die and intaglio proceeded from the same hand; for the artist who produced the latter was evidently one of the most accomplished of his day. Without giving too much scope to imagination, we may suppose this gem executed and presented to Marcia herself as a New Year's gift by some *Pistrucii* of the Roman mint, in the same way as the crystal plaque, published by Gori ('*Thesaur. Diptych.*'), offered to her lord on the same occasion. That rings set with fine intagli were a customary form for the *strenæ* is apparent from Suetonius' tale about the ill-omened gift made by Sporus to Nero.

Our gem exhibits an adjunct to the female portrait

that demands particular attention—the *veil* drawn over the back of the head. Now it is upon this very point of costume that especial stress is laid by Lenormant in his elaborate and interesting memoir, “*Sur une Pierre gravée représentant Marcia, concubine de Commodus*” (‘*Revue numismatique*,’ 1857). The *amethyst*,\* the subject of his dissertation (or rather, treatise, so minutely is it worked out), bears a female head in profile with a very severe and masculine cast of features, in which the writer discovers an exact identity with the helmeted lady *conjugated* with Commodus upon the already quoted medallion; and who is unmistakably pointed out for the “*Amazonian*” Marcia by the miniature *pelta* affixed to her breast. It must, however, be confessed that the resemblance between the amethyst and the medallion is not very striking, to my eye at least, in the cuts given by Lenormant to support his identification; neither does the former tally in any way with the face in the Hertz intaglio; the connection of whose original with Commodus rests on equally strong grounds with that of his helmeted associate upon the medallion.

In this *veil*, however, the too sagacious French archæologist discovers an open profession on Marcia’s part of her membership in Christianity; and upon this slight foundation, he, with true national ingenuity, proceeds to build up a most pleasing history of her *legitimate* union with the emperor, her influence exerted over him for the good of the Church, ending

<sup>1</sup> The same I suspect to be the material of the Hertz gem, for the impression shows it to be very *convex*; a form rarely given to the sard, but the normal one for the amethyst.

in his destruction through the alarm of the Senate at the change he was meditating in the religion of the empire—in a word, making out Commodus, in some sort, a martyr to the Faith! The particular of costume, however, that serves as starting-point to this charming romance does in reality bear no evidence in the direction required. The veil cast over the back of the head is to be seen in the portraits of the Augustæ, from the very commencement of Cæsarian rule: of which costume Livia's may be adduced as the most notable example. The veil seems to have been assumed at that period (having previously been restricted to goddesses) as a regular badge of sovereignty, seemingly in imitation of the practice of the Ptolemaic queens: and such, if it has any special significance in the former case, may be reasonably taken for the motive of its introduction upon the amethyst published by Lenormant. But upon the Hertz gem the explanation of its use is sufficiently obvious; the consort of the "Roman Hercules" (as he loved to style himself) had necessarily to figure in the character of Omphale, whose national head-covering formed an indispensable part in every representation of the Lydian queen.

But the fact of Marcia's Christianity rests upon evidence of a very different nature from that of a disputable particular of dress. The fact had long been known from an incidental allusion in Dio Cassius,<sup>1</sup> but has received full confirmation from a

<sup>1</sup> Who, or rather his abbreviator, Xiphilin, has this brief but very significant notice of her (lxxii. 4):—"Marcia, concubine to Quadratus, one of those put to death at that time (in the 4th year of his reign), and Eclectus, first chamberlain to the same: of whom

passage in the recently discovered 'Philosophumena,' ascribed to Origen, or Hippolytus, either of them contemporary writers. The author of this work relates (ix. 10) that Callistus, afterwards Pope, had been banished to the mines of Sardinia. "Some time afterwards, as confessors of the Faith were found there [at the mines], Marcia, concubine to Commodus, who entertained Christian sentiments, sent for the Blessed Victor, at that time Bishop of the Church, and requested of him the names of the Confessors who were then in Sardinia. Victor furnished a list of the names, but without including Callistus, because he was acquainted with his excesses. Thereupon Marcia, availing herself of the influence she possessed over Commodus, obtained and delivered the order for their liberation to a certain eunuch Hyacinthus, a presbyter. The latter, having taken ship for Sardinia, showed the mandate to the officer charged with the government of the island, and caused the prisoners to be set at liberty. Callistus, finding himself the only one left out, fell down at the feet of Hyacinthus, and begged him with many tears not to separate him from his companions in misfortune. The eunuch, moved by his prayers, consented to persuade the governor, declaring himself to be the person who had brought

Eiectus became first chamberlain to Commodus, and Marcia his concubine, and afterwards wife of Eiectus. And even those [the nobles first mentioned?] he was spectator of as they were being put to a violent death. She (Marcia) is related to have been very zealous in favour of the Christians, and to have done them many services, inasmuch as she was then all-powerful with Commodus." This gives nine years for the duration of her *reign*: a term justly applicable to her position, for she was allowed all the honours of an Augusta, except that of having the thurible carried before her.

up Marcia, and taking upon himself all the responsibility of the action. It was in this way that Callistus recovered his freedom." The same writer, in another passage, gives Marcia the epithet *φιλόθεος*, "pious," a praise which from his own position he could not possibly have applied to any one except a member of his own church.

Taking all these circumstances into consideration, the little gem, the subject of this notice, deserves to be reckoned amongst the most valuable monuments bequeathed to us by the glyptic art. The engraving (double the actual size) which I give at the head of these pages has been executed by Mr. Utting with a fidelity as well as a spirit that leave nothing to be desired, and which will serve every purpose to the practised numismatist who may have the opportunity of comparing the portraits with those upon the above-quoted medallions of Commodus. Its publication may also have the much to be desired result of attracting the attention of the present owner of the lost treasure to the importance of the gift which Fortune has cast into his lap; and thus rescue from neglect a relic so valuable in its bearings upon religion, history, and art.





ON AN ANTIQUE PASTE CAMEO,  
FOUND AT STANWIX, NEAR CARLISLE.

A LITTLE relic of the Roman occupation of this island has lately been brought under my notice, possessing considerable claims to our attention on the grounds of art and history, but much more from the circumstances under which it was discovered.

This object is a circular disk,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch in diameter, of opaque, lavender-coloured antique paste, bearing a female bust in half-relief, and in front-face, with the hair *waved, parted* down the *middle*, and falling in *one ample tress* far down over each shoulder upon her bosom. These latter particulars in the treatment of the figure will be shown, in the course of this enquiry, to be of essential importance towards the identification of the original of this portrait.

As regards the first consideration mentioned—that of artistic merit—this work is of the highest order; for although cruelly corroded by time and friction upon the surface, it still shows itself, at the first glance, to have been cast from a *gem* executed in the very noblest style of the Augustan age. The discovery, therefore, of it at Stanwix (the supposed *Axelodunum*), near Carlisle, is a very memorable event in the history of Roman-British remains; for though old Leland, just awakening from the night of Gothicism, speaks with admiration of the “cornalines marvellously well entayled” frequently turned up then, as now, in the same locality, yet our more familiar acquaintance with the highest antique art forces us to acknowledge that the glyptic works bequeathed by the Romans to this soil are at best mediocre, generally barbarous, and unmistakably the productions, not of the Italian or Asiatic artists of those times (far less of the earlier Grecian masters), but of the semi-civilised die-sinkers of the mints of Lugdunum and Treviri, or possibly of those working at Camulodunum and Augusta.

The *material* also is worthy of a passing notice. This opaque, light-blue paste, of the colour of *zaffre*, is the kind mentioned by Pliny<sup>1</sup> in his valuable account of the glass-manufacture of his day, as being an imitation of the lapis-lazuli, “*sapphiros imitatum* ;” and our cabinets attest that it was a favourite medium with the Roman *vitriarii* for their imitations of camei, especially those of considerable volume. For the ancient *sapphirus*, our lapis-lazuli, ever retained that

<sup>1</sup> xxxvi. 67.

pre-eminence in rank which its beauty and rarity had given it amongst the first inventors of glyptics, the Assyrians and Egyptians ; even after the opened trade with India had rendered the stone comparatively cheap and common at Alexandria and Rome. Even at the end of the fourth century, Epiphanius mentions one kind of it as dignified with the title of "Royal;"<sup>1</sup> and in the eleventh century the Norman poet, Marbodus, copying some lost ancient original, describes it as only conceded to the hands of princes.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, important intagli, probably the privy signets of the personages represented upon them, continued during the whole course of antiquity to be engraved in lapis-lazuli, from that of the Macedonian Perseus (in the Blacas Cabinet) down to that of Phocas, the Byzantine emperor (Martigny). Of *camei* in the same stone may be cited the Azara Medusa, a Messalina (Marlborough), and a Crispina (Praun). At the head of works in the imitative paste stands the Townley "Bonus Eventus," or the youthful Caracalla so complimented, a plaque eight inches square ; and other important specimens of the same material may be seen in the show-cases of antique glass in our National Museum.

When first discovered, the paste under consideration retained its mounting, described as being "of silver filigree," but so oxidised by the action of the salts of the earth where it had lain as to fall to pieces immediately when handled. This circumstance is to be

<sup>1</sup> 'De XII Gemmis quæ erant in Vestimentis Aaron,' cap. v. *Sapphirus*.

<sup>2</sup> 'Lapidarium,' v. *Sapphirus*.

regretted, for, if preserved, this mounting would have shown the destination of the ornament, whether for a pendant jewel or for a fibula. By the description "filigree" (work of which the Romans made no use) it is almost certain we ought to understand that cut and pierced pattern-work, beginning to come into fashion (for silver plate alone) in Pliny's day,<sup>1</sup> under the name so expressive of its nature, "Opus Inter-rasile," and which, from the reign of Severus downwards, became the general style of mounting for all sorts of jewels. Illustrations of this kind of work in *gold* are common enough; good examples are certain fine medallions<sup>2</sup> set in broad, pierced borders in the form of pendants, in the French Cabinet; the massy rings of the Tarsus and Rouen treasure-troves, of the reign of Severus Alexander;<sup>3</sup> and, what bears immediately upon the present question, the pretty *gage d'amour* ring, found at Corbridge, pierced *à jour* with the "posy" (in Elizabethan phrase), **AEMILIA ZESES**,<sup>4</sup> "Long life to thee, Emilia!" The silver ornaments of that period, probably obtained by melting down the current denarii (then largely debased with lead), were caused by this pierced-work ornamentation to expose innumerable surfaces to the destructive influences of the earth, and rapidly decomposed into a black, brittle

<sup>1</sup> "Interradimus alia (vasa) ut quam plurimum lima perdiderit." —*H. N.* xxxiii. 19. "Découpé à jour" is the French term for it; and better than our own.

<sup>2</sup> Particularly the two of Postumus, found in the same hiding-place with the celebrated "Patère de Rennes."

<sup>3</sup> Caylus engraves a very elaborate example of a ring of this kind with broad open-work shoulders, set with a gold quinarius of Maximin, found at Hen, near Amiens. 'Rec. d'Antiq.' v. pl. 112.

<sup>4</sup> Figured in 'Arch. Journ.' vii. 191.

sulphuret, falling to pieces on the lightest touch. But other circumstances render it most probable that this paste in its completed state was designed as a pendant for the neck. By a singular coincidence, the only lazulite paste that ever came under my notice, still preserving its antique mounting (of gold), was a beautiful bust of *Abundantia*,<sup>1</sup> in intaglio, and of smaller dimensions: one of the most interesting pieces in the Hertz Collection. The Marlborough Cabinet possesses a fine sardonyx cameo of a hippocampus, retaining its original and curiously constructed gold framing for the same purpose; not to mention its numerous and magnificent examples of the Cinquecento jewels of the same nature, the first idea of which was evidently borrowed from similar legacies of antiquity; lastly may be adduced, of all others, that most interesting illustration, the great cameo of St. Albans (of whose specific virtues Matthew Paris has left so full and amusing a history, together with an invaluable drawing by his own hand), which was in a silver frame of elegant pattern of the same *opus interrasile*, the taste of which bespeaks a higher period than the rude Saxon king's who presented it to the monastery.<sup>2</sup> It is true that large circular camei were also used for ornamenting, or rather composing, fibulæ (the usual destination of the Medusa heads so common in relief), a fine example of which is the one fastening the mantle on the shoulder of the Spada Pompey; but as a much more substantial frame for our paste would have been

<sup>1</sup> That is, some empress in that character, according to the rule of the times.

<sup>2</sup> Figured in the 'Archæologia,' xxx. 444.

required in such an employment, it may more reasonably be supposed to have been mounted, and worn as a pendant jewel.

I have left for the last the determination of the most important question of all—the *personage* represented in this noble specimen of ancient portraiture. An antiquary, distinguished by his zealous investigations of Roman remains in Northumberland and the parts adjacent, discovers in this cameo a portrait from the life of Antinous himself, whom he furthermore supposes to have accompanied his imperial patron into Britain, and to have left behind him this imperishable memento of the honour done by his visit to the barbarians of the North. But, unfortunately for this romantic hypothesis, the celebrated favourite of Hadrian made no pretensions to *feminine* loveliness, but gained the admiration of the world as the most perfect embodiment of the Grecian idea of *male* beauty—the ancient Achilles returned to life. This is proved by the noble Marlborough gem of him in that very character, with spear on shoulder; also by the medallions struck in his honour, giving him the actual title of **HPΩΣ**; on all of which his head appears with the short, close-clustering curls of the Thessalian hero. But to descend to sober reality, if anyone capable of judging of likenesses will refer to the plaster-cast of the “Gemma Augustea” (the noted Vienna cameo representing the family of Augustus<sup>1</sup>), he will at the first glance recognise the same bust (identical in pose,

<sup>1</sup> Of which an admirable copperplate, the actual size, may be seen in Montfaucon's great work; also, copied more recently, in Krause's ‘Pergoteles.’

*coiffure*, and benign expression) as belonging to the woman seated on the ground with her two little boys standing by her, on the left hand of the emperor. She is holding up a cornucopia, and wears round her neck a heart-shaped *bullæ*. As to her personality, there can, in this composition, be no room for doubt; she is *Antonia*, daughter of M. Antony and Octavia, niece to Augustus, and wife of the hero of the scene, his beloved step-son, Drusus; whilst her two children are the afterwards so famous Germanicus and the Emperor Claudius. Again, let the same critic minutely examine the head of the same princess on the *reverse* of the beautiful gold medal<sup>1</sup> struck in her honour by either her grandson or son (where she is figured under the form of *Ceres Legifera*, holding the long flambeau and cornucopia of the beneficent goddess, with her head in the same pose as in the cameo just quoted), and he will feel his first impression converted into certainty. Or, if further evidence be wanted, let him compare the fine Marlborough cameo (figured in Raspe's Catalogue at No. 11256, but there miscalled an Agrippina), where also Antonia appears with the attributes of Ceres, and he will discover, one might almost say, the actual cameo upon which the paste we are considering was moulded. Lastly, if none of these means of forming a judgment be at hand, let him but cast his eyes upon the lovely Townley "Clytie rising from the sunflower" (to retain the familiar name), now so deservedly popular through its elegant *reduction* in Parian, and he will immediately

<sup>1</sup> A very correct drawing of it, magnified to show the details, will be found in the 'Penny Cyclopædia,' article "Antonia."

recognise the head on the Axelodunum relic in the marble bust which deifies the same virtuous lady as an Isis reposing on her lotus-flower.

Antonia's claims to such eternity of fame were well founded, and the ample manner in which they were acknowledged, both during her lifetime and after her decease, may be accounted for in several ways. She was the widow of Drusus, the idol of the Roman people, and whose popularity went on increasing after his death through the very unpopularity of his brother, Tiberius. She was the mother of the equally beloved and equally regretted Germanicus; and she had the credit of saving the empire and the Cæsarian line by her detection of the conspiracy of Sejanus at the very moment it was ripe for execution. To the last-named service allusion seems to be made in the sense of the **CONSTANTIA** of the legend on the medal already quoted. She received the highest honours from her grandson, Caligula, upon his accession to the empire, although he is accused of having afterwards, in his capricious madness, hastened her death—a gratuitous crime, and probably laid to his charge on no surer grounds than his bad reputation. When her son Claudius succeeded his short-lived nephew, Antonia obtained from his filial piety a large share of the honours he paid to the deceased members of his family. As this Cæsar (the James I. of antiquity), besides his love of books, was also a patron of the glyptic art—for Pliny notices his fondness for the sardonyx,<sup>1</sup> evidently meaning that

<sup>1</sup> “Singulorum enim libido pretia singulis (gemmis) facit, præcipueque æmulatio, velut cum Claudius Cæsar smaragdus induebat vel sardonyches.”—*H. N.* xxxvii. 23. The emperor brought the sard-



gem in the *camei*, of which so many with his and his wives' portraits are still preserved—it seems to follow naturally that his mother also should have received under him her part in this most imperishable kind of monument. I am not ignorant that it has been the traditional custom to attribute all cameo-heads of this particular type to *Agrippina*, wife of Germanicus; but its appearance on the Gemma Augustea, executed before her birth, as well as on the medal of Antonia (pointed out here for the first time), is sufficient to overthrow such an identification.

It may perhaps be acceptable to such of my readers as are unacquainted with ancient glyptics to explain the *composition* of the paste before us, and also the *process* of its fabrication. All the antique imitative lazulite that has come under my examination is of the same close-grained texture, and the same shade of light blue (or lavender) colour. Its hardness is declared by the polished surface the small ring-stones of the sort retain in spite of all the injuries of time and wear. The composition appears to be identical with that of the Egyptian blue enamel, the "artificial cyanos" of Theophrastus,<sup>1</sup> so largely applied to the decorative productions of the national art. That such enamelling had for its object the making terra-cotta and steaschist pass for true lapis-lazuli is made evident by Ælian's notice that the high-priest of the Egyptians used, when administering justice, to wear round his neck an image of the goddess Truth, carved

onyx into fashion by wearing it alternately with the emerald, the gem the most valued of all in his day.

<sup>1</sup> 'On Stones,' chap. 53.

in *sapphirus*.<sup>1</sup> The nature of this badge of office is abundantly attested by the existence of the numerous tablets in artificial cyanos, bearing figures of deities, and similarly intended for pendant jewels. Sir H. Davy found by experiment that the cyanos used in Roman fresco-painting could be exactly reproduced by fusing together, for the space of two hours, 15 parts of pure carbonate of soda, 20 of pulverised flint, and 3 of copper filings. A similar mixture, the proportion of flint somewhat increased for the sake of hardening it, would produce a paste with all the qualities and appearance of the antique specimens. As Alexandria, upon the decay of Sidon, became the chief seat of the glass manufacture (one of its fabricants, Firmus, being actually wealthy enough to dispute the empire with Aurelian), it is more than probable that paste gems, “*vitreae gemmæ e vulgi annulis*,”<sup>2</sup> formed a large part of her exports; and that, for the species requiring it, the artificial cyanos (the invention of the country) was especially put into requisition.

The actual process of making paste gems can be briefly described, if minute technical details be omitted. The impression of the work to be imitated is taken in a mixture of fine tripoli and pipe-clay, rammed down in a little iron case of the dimensions required. This forms the *matrix*, which, after drying, is placed within the furnace, with a bit of glass of the proper colour laid upon it. This is watched until observed to become plastic, and then carefully squeezed down with

<sup>1</sup> ‘*Varia Historia*,’ xiv. 34. “Truth” is known by the tall feather rising from her head, and which, placed alone, is her hieroglyphic.

<sup>2</sup> Pliny’s term for the manufacture. ‘*H. N.*’ xxxv. 30.

an iron spatula coated with French chalk to prevent adhesion. After annealing, the glass, on removal from the matrix, presents an exact counterpart of the original gem, whether in cameo or intaglio. For camei of two or more strata, so many layers of different-coloured glass must be employed, and the relief afterwards touched up with the usual engraver's instruments, to remove superfluities and to level the field. Some of the antique examples, thus worked over, can hardly be distinguished from camei in true sardonyx.

In that valuable storehouse of information upon every antique matter conceivable—the ‘*Recueil d’Antiquités*,’ Caylus gives a detailed account of experiments made by his friend, Dr. Majault, in attempting to recover the ancient process of paste-making, and which he justly styles “un des articles les plus curieux et les plus intéressants de ce Recueil.”<sup>1</sup> The result of these experiments was the discovery of the method of producing all the beautiful patterns of inlaid flowers, the “millefiore” and “Egyptian mosaic,” so much admired in antique jewels of the sort; it is likely our own glass-makers might derive some valuable hints from the study of the researches in their art, carried on so sedulously by the indefatigable old collector.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 298. A fuller description of all the processes will be found in Mariette’s ‘*Pierres gravées du Cabinet du Roy*,’ i. p. 209, in the section “*Des Pierres gravées factices, et la Manière de les faire*,” written at a period (1750) when the manufacture had been brought to its utmost perfection through the researches of the chemist Homberg, under the patronage of the Regent Orleans.



PRESENTES  
 FIGVRE · AD · SIMILI  
 TVDINEM · DOMINI · IHE  
 SV · SALVATORIS · NOSTRI  
 ET · APOSTOLI · PAVLI · IN · AMI  
 RALDO · IMPRESSE · PER · MAG  
 NI · THEVCRI · PREDECESSORES · AN  
 TIA · SINGVLARITER · OBSERVA  
 TE · MISSE · SVNT · AB · IPSO · MAG  
 NO · THEVCRO · S · D · N · PAPE  
 INNOCENCIO · OCTAVO · PRO · SI  
 NGVLARI · CLENODIO · AD · HV  
 NC · FINEM · VT · SVVM · FRA  
 TREM · CAPTIVVM  
 RETINERET.

Bronze Medal in the British Museum, and Inscription on the Reverse.

(Original size.)

ANCIENT PORTRAITURES OF OUR LORD.

AFTER THE TYPE OF THE EMERALD VERNICLE GIVEN  
BY BAJAZET II. TO POPE INNOCENT VIII.

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(Notice Supplementary to a Memoir by Mr. C. W. KING, 'Archæological Journal,'  
vol. xxvii. p. 181.)

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THE investigation of the earliest types of sacred portraiture, and especially of those of the Saviour, presents a subject of such pre-eminent interest in the history of Christian art that any details connected with it cannot fail to prove acceptable to readers of the 'Archæological Journal.' In a previous volume we were indebted to Mr. King for a dissertation on "The Emerald Vernicle of the Vatican," that inestimable relic of early art, now unhappily lost almost beyond all hope of recovery, and of which no tradition even seems to have survived, beyond the garbled inscriptions on certain paintings of the sixteenth century, which, from time to time, have been brought under the notice of the Institute by the examples exhibited at our meetings.

It appeared to me desirable to bring together any available evidence connected with the highly interesting tradition of this portraiture, which, as might be

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anticipated from the glyptic nature of its prototype—a cameo probably on plasma—is not, like the other early portraits of our Lord most familiar to us, in full face, but in profile. It has, moreover, not been noticed in various dissertations on the subject. We seek for it in vain in Peignot's elaborate work, 'Recherches sur la Personne de Jésus-Christ;' in Heaphy's 'Examination into the Antiquity of the Likeness of Our Blessed Lord;'<sup>1</sup> and even in the exhaustive researches by the writer of "Portraits of Christ," in the 'Quarterly Review.'<sup>2</sup> Neither is this particular type mentioned in Mrs. Jameson's 'History of Our Lord,' edited by Lady Eastlake, in which so much valuable information will be found.<sup>3</sup>

It is very remarkable that no trace of the gift of so precious an object as the *icon* should be found in the works of contemporary authority, and in which we find the most ample relations of Bajazet's propitiatory gift of the Holy Lance to Innocent, and also of his annual largess to the Holy See in favour of his captive brother. To our learned and lamented friend, Canon Rock, I am indebted for the assurance that his researches had been wholly in vain. We find minute narrations by Ciacconius, and his laborious annotator Victorellus, of the august ceremonial on the reception of the "celestial lance." Matthew Bossus, Canon of Verona, an eye-witness of the pompous welcome accorded to Zemes, relates the minutest particulars, and describes the unsightly aspect and grotesque figure of the barbarian prince; but no allusion has been

<sup>1</sup> 'Art-Journal,' series iv. vol. vii. 1861.

Vol. cxxiii. p. 490.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i. p. 31.

found to the precious emerald, that could not fail, we might suppose, to excite the utmost veneration.

The recent production, through the friendly courtesy of Sir Edmund H. Lechmere, Bart., of another example of these portraitures of our Lord, in unusually good preservation, has suggested to me to offer such incidental notices as I had formerly collected, and which may, I hope, prove serviceable as supplementary to the memoir by Mr. King. To him, our valued guide and master in all the intricate questions of ancient iconography, the student of the *incunabula* of sacred art is indebted for the elucidation of the origin of the remarkable portraits in question, that seem undoubtedly to have been singularly esteemed and treasured in former days, as shown by the numerous seicento reproductions still existing. It is to be regretted, however, that hitherto no example has been brought to our knowledge that can be regarded as the immediate prototype, possibly by some renowned master of the Italian school, of the period when the *icon* on the precious emerald of Bajazet may have excited the veneration of the Eternal City at the close of the fifteenth century.

The painting above mentioned, made known to us through the kindness of Sir Edmund Lechmere, has been long in possession of his family in Worcestershire, and is now preserved at his residence, The Rhydd, Upton-on-Severn. It is on panel, measuring  $10\frac{3}{4}$  inches in height by  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in breadth. In the upper part the head of the Saviour is seen in profile, to the left, on a gold ground; the features are of mild, pleasing expression; the long hair, of dark chestnut

colour, falls on the shoulders ; the beard is short, and slightly forked ; the dress dark green. The lower moiety of the panel bears the following inscription in gold letters (Roman capitals) on a black ground :—

THIS PRESENT FIGURE IS THE SIMILITVDE OF  
OVRE LORD IHV OVRE SAVIOR IMPRINTED IN  
AMIRALD BY THE PREDESESSORS OF THE GRETE  
TURKE AND SENT TO OVRE HOLY FATER (*sic*)  
THE POPE INNOSENT THE VIII. AT THE COST  
OF THE GRETE TURKE FOR A TOKIN FOR THIS  
CAUSE TO REDEME HIS BROTHER THAT WAS  
TAKYN PRESONER.

Several examples of this “similitude,” it may be remembered, have been brought before the Institute, at the London meetings and in our temporary museums. Those hitherto known to me appear without exception to be repetitions of a valued type, probably from the hand of some Italian painter, who had access to the precious emerald as his model ; in every instance the date of their execution seems to be about the commencement of the sixteenth century, possibly a few years earlier. Whilst they differ slightly in certain details, they are nearly uniform in dimension, and the inscription, that sometimes contains slight blunders, is always in English, and constantly sets forth the gift of the emerald prototype to Innocent VIII. by Bajazet II. to propitiate the Holy Father in favour of his younger brother, Zemes or Zizim, who had been defeated at Brousa in 1482, and sought refuge with the Soldan of Egypt. These curious details have been set forth by Mr. King in his memoir above cited.



The examples of the painting previously submitted to the Institute differ only from that transmitted to Mr. King from the Isle of Man in the absence of the radiant aureole, which is found in that instance only.

In 1851 one of these portraitures had been exhibited by Mr. Thomas Hart, of Reigate; it is described in the 'Archæological Journal' (vol. viii. p. 320). The inscription asserts that the similitude had been "FOUND IN AMARAT," evidently a blunder for emerald, and that the captive prince was taken prisoner by the Romans. Another, also slightly blundered, was brought in 1857 by Mr. Cumming, as recorded in vol. xiv. p. 95; a third was in possession of Henry Howard, Esq., at Greystoke Castle. It is described in the 'Beauties of England and Wales,' vol. iii. p. 167.

In the 'Antiquarian Repertory,'<sup>1</sup> an engraving will be found of one of these portraits communicated in 1780 by Mr. W. Lottie, of Canterbury, and described as painted on oak, on a gold ground, the colours fine, the legend in gold letters on a black ground. In 1793 Mr. Urban received also from Mr. T. Woolston, of Adderbury, a description of one in the possession of Mr. J. Barber; the legend is precisely the same as on the painting at The Rhydd, with the exception of the concluding lines, stating that the prototype, "imprinted in amirald by the predesessor of the Great Turke," was "sent to Pope Innosent (*sic*) the VIII. for a token to redeme his brother that was takyn presonor."<sup>2</sup> In 1793 another is described by R. K. as existing at Langton, near Spilsby; the legend con-

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii. p. 101, edit. 1808.

<sup>2</sup> 'Gent. Mag.' vol. lxxiii. part ii. p. 1177.

tains several blunders, and sets forth that the “sey-mylytude” was imprinted in “amyrlid.”<sup>1</sup>

I may here mention also that in the ‘Revue archéologique’<sup>2</sup> there is a notice of a profile portraiture of the Saviour, with the inscription in English. This painting, preserved in the south of France, claims special consideration as being the only specimen of the series hitherto found on the Continent.

M. Jules Courtet, sous-préfet of Die, author of the memoir, states that at Granbois, a village in the south of France (department of Vaucluse), several paintings are to be seen in a small country house, that retains its old furniture and ornaments. Amongst the paintings the most remarkable is a bust of our Lord, in profile, bearded, the head surrounded by an *auréole* composed of cherubs’ heads winged. The ground is gilded; the dimensions of the picture, which is on copper, with a frame of ebony and silver angle-mounts, is about 12 inches by 8 inches. The countenance of the Saviour is that of a man in the prime of life, of noble expression, rather serious than sorrowful. The lower part of this curious relic of Byzantine art, as M. Courtet considers it to be, is occupied by the following inscription, in six lines:—

THIS PRESENT FIGURE IS THE SIMILITVDE OF OVR LORD  
HĪN (*sic* for IHV?) OVRE SAVIOR IMPRINTED IN AMA-  
RILD BY THE PREDECESSORS OF THE GREATE TVRKE  
AND SENT TO THE POPE INNOSENT THE VIII AT THE  
COST OF THE GRETE TVRKE FOR A TOKEN FOR THIS  
CAWSE TO REDEME HIS BROTHER THAT WAS TAKVN  
PRESONOR.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Gent. Mag.’ vol. lxx. part i. p. 870.      <sup>2</sup> Vol. l. pp. 101, 185.

After noticing the history of the captive Zemes, M. Courtet states, apparently on the authority of the owner of the painting, that it was given by the family of the Surintendant Fouquet to Pierre Rappélis de Roquesante, one of the commission appointed to try Fouquet in 1661, and through whose exertions sentence of exile, not of death, was passed: he refused all recompense from Fouquet except the painting and a medal; the former, as was asserted, had been stolen from the Vatican, probably at the sack of Rome by Bourbon.<sup>1</sup> Of the medal no particulars are given; it may have been one of those bearing the profile bust, with a Hebrew inscription, or of those of larger module, of which notices will be given hereafter.

There is also another reproduction of the same type of the profile from the emerald, but slightly varied in the expression of the countenance, the pose of the figure, and some other details. It is, moreover, not a painting, but a piece of tapestry that was in possession of the late Mr. Samuel Bagster, the eminent publisher of many beautiful editions of the Holy Scriptures. It is familiar to collectors of engravings by a striking mezzotinto, published some years since. Under the bust there is the following inscription accompanied by an English version, as follows:—

‘ Vera Salvatoris nostri effigies ad imitationem imaginis smaragdo incisæ jussu Tiberii Cæsaris, quo smaragdo postea ex Thesauro Constantinopolit ano Turcarum Imperator Innocentium VIII. Pont. Max. Rom. donavit

<sup>1</sup> The ebony frame in chased silver mounts might suggest, as Mr. King remarked to me, that the picture had been appropriated from the Collection of Charles I. at the Revolution.

I proceed to notice briefly certain interesting reproductions of the profile type of another description. Mr. King has figured a beautiful medal,<sup>1</sup> from an example in my own possession, a portraiture that had been described as most precious by Ambrosius, who wrote in the times of Julius II. and Leo X. (1503–1521). It had been supposed contemporary with its divine prototype. Mr. King states that this medal is not uncommon, and that it is a sand-cast in white bell-metal; Ambrosius describes it as of brass; that which belongs to myself had long been accounted as of silver. Besides the engraving that has been given by Dr. Walsh, a medal of nearly similar type, and, as I believe, identical with that under consideration, was figured by Rowlands, in his ‘*Mona Antiqua.*’ It had been found, about 1723, at the “round cirque at Bryn Gwyn”—the supreme tribunal—in Anglesey.<sup>2</sup> This medal is described as of brass; this, however, might obviously designate bell-metal, especially if its surface were discoloured or decayed. We cannot marvel that the discovery, having occurred near Tre’r Dryw, with its supposed Druidical grove and megalithic monuments, was advanced in confirmation of the conjecture that the place had been the *Forum* or tribunal of the Druids. Edward Lhwyd, the learned *custos* of the Ashmolean, willingly sought aid from the most eminent Hebraists in the university to elucidate so rare a relic of antiquity, in those hazy times when erudite scholars gravely discussed the probability that Hebrew was

<sup>1</sup> ‘Arch. Journ.’ vol. xxvii, pp. 182, 186.

<sup>2</sup> Rowlands, second edition, pp. 90, 93; see also, in the appendix, pp. 297–300, the remarks of his learned correspondents at Oxford.

the tongue of Noah and his family. Be this as it may, and whether the want of precise conformity between the Tre'r Dryw medal and that figured by Mr. King may be due to the imperfect skill either of the engraver or of the Oxford Hebraists, it must be admitted that it would be unsafe to affirm that the medals are absolutely identical. On the obverse, the Hebrew characters denoting the name Jesus are omitted in Rowlands' plate; the five lines on the reverse are also reduced to four, which I have sought in vain to identify with the words on my medal, explained as signifying—"Messiah the King came in peace, and being made the light of men He lives." Hottinger, I may observe, mentions such pieces as occurring both in gold and silver. Waser had described the medal, of the same type as that which I possess, as of silver; he adverts to the letter of Lentulus and the description of the Saviour's person, received by Tiberius, as the authority for the portraiture.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Walsh states in his 'Essay on Ancient Medals and Gems, illustrating the Progress of Christianity in the Early Ages,' that he had obtained from a Polish Jew at Rostock, in Germany, one of these medals. It excited his curiosity, as appearing to have been struck from the same die as that found in county Cork in 1812,<sup>2</sup> and supposed to have been brought into Ireland at

<sup>1</sup> Hottinger, 'De Nummis Orientalium,' p. 149; Waserus, 'De Nummis Hebræorum,' fol. 63. See also representations of the medal by Morinus, 'De Ling. Primæv.' c. ix. p. 305; Wagenseil, 'Apud Surenhusius,' t. iii. p. 239; Alstedius, 'Præcognita Theologia'; &c.

<sup>2</sup> Walsh, 'Essay, &c.' second edition, p. 5. The medal had been found in digging potatoes on the site of a very ancient monastery, of the first Christian ages.

some early period after the introduction of the Faith. His observations will be read with interest; the metal, he observes, is a singular composition, paler than brass, does not tarnish, and is very sonorous. By the engraving that accompanies his account, there seems to have been a projection at the upper edge, possibly a broken loop, by which the piece might be worn as a pendant or talisman.

The learned Leusden figured the medal in question from one of brass in his possession, and describes it as a shekel—"Siclus est Judæo-Christianus," but he has wholly lost the fine type of the features, and, as also in Dr. Walsh's lithograph, the inscription on the reverse is imperfectly represented.<sup>1</sup> It should possibly, as has been suggested, be read thus:—

מִשִּׁיָּה מֶלֶךְ בָּא בְּשָׁלוֹם וְאֵר מֵאֲדָם עֶשְׂרֵי חו

Besides the medal last noticed and comparatively well known, there exists another of smaller module, and of rare occurrence. Both have been figured in the notes on the Mischna, in the edition by Surenhusius.<sup>2</sup> The former is described as frequently to be met with—"in multorum manibus"—and commonly ("*passim*") to be seen suspended to the necks of children. A somewhat varied reading of the Hebrew legend is given, with the interpretation—"Messias rex venit in pace et homo ex homine factus est vivus (seu verus)." It is observed, however, that the inscribed reverses of these medals, tooled up by some

<sup>1</sup> Leusden, 'Philologus Hebræus,' 1671, pp. 191, 192, "Dissertatio de Nummis." The medal is ascribed to Jewish converts by Alstedius.

<sup>2</sup> 'Legum Mischnicarum Liber,' pars iii. "De Re Uxoriam," edit. Gul. Surenhusius, Amstd. 1698, p. 239.

artificer ignorant of the Hebrew tongue, present many slight discrepancies that render the interpretation very difficult.

Of the smaller medal, apparently a repetition of the emerald type, but measuring, as shown by the engraver, 1 inch only in diameter, the learned editor had seen a single example, that had been shown to him at Vienna.<sup>1</sup> On the obverse is the head of our Lord, in profile to the right; there are no Hebrew letters in the field, as on the larger medal. On the reverse is the following legend, in four lines:—

ישוע נצרי משיה יהוה וארם יהו

thus interpreted:—"Jesus Nazarenius Messias Deus et homo simul."

These medals, as he observes, may be ascribed to some Christian artist acquainted with Hebrew, or to some Jewish convert, who thought that it would be pleasing to pilgrims to the Holy Places to bring home from the land that our Lord inhabited a coin (*moneta*) exhibiting His face. Hence such pieces were executed, and inscribed in Hebrew, so that they might excite greater veneration in the eyes of the unlearned, and, presenting the appearance of antiquity, might realise a better price.

Another remarkable medal is to be found in the King's Cabinet in the British Museum, for a notice of which I am indebted to Mr. Franks. By Mr. Ready's obliging assistance I have obtained a facsimile. This medal had not been mentioned by Mr. King. It

<sup>1</sup> "Non alibi vidimus quam Viennæ apud amplissimum, etc., nobis dilectum virum Ferdinandum Persium a Lohnsdorf, ser. Elect. Palat. in aula Cæsarea Legatum Residentem."

bears the head of the Saviour, to the left, with the inscription — YHS. XPC. SALVATOR MVNDI. On the reverse (in small capitals), “Præsentes figure ad similitudinem Domini Ihesu Salvatoris nostri et apostoli Pauli in amiraldo impresse per magni Theucri predecessoris antea singulariter observate misse sunt ab ipso magno Theucro s. d. n. Pape Innocencio octavo pro singulari clenodio ad hunc finem ut suum fratrem captivum retineret.” Here it will be observed that the true motive seems for the first time to be expressed, which induced Bajazet to propitiate the Pope in favour of the captive Zemes. His desire was in fact not to redeem his brother from captivity, but to ensure his safe custody; to this end, as alleged, Bajazet engaged to remit to the Pope annually 40,000 gold crowns, for fear lest Innocent should release the prisoner, on account of the expense of maintenance. Innocent, it is believed, had been desirous to retain Zemes for certain political reasons, probably at the instance of Sultan Bajazet, with whom Zemes had violently contested the sovereignty. Zemes remained at Rome till the invasion of Italy in 1489 by Charles VIII. of France, to whom he was delivered up, and died not long after, as suspected, by poison.

This medal, of the obverse of which a representation accompanies these Notices, measures  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter; around the head there is a cruciferous nimb, the limbs of the cross are pierced, as shown in the woodcut. The face is rather long, in profile to the left, and of Hebrew expression, somewhat deficient in grace and dignity. The type, however, is evidently identical with that from which the various paintings



above described were taken. At the top there is a small loop for suspension.

There is also in the King's Cabinet, as I am informed by Mr. Franks, the companion medallion of St. Paul, to which the inscription on that last described makes allusion. It bears the head of the apostle, to the right, with the inscription—*VAS ELECTIONIS PAVLVS APOSTOLVS*. On the reverse—"Benedicite in excelsis Deo domino de fontibus Israel ibi boni animi adolescentulus in mentis excessu." In the Museum collection there is moreover a medallion with the head of our Lord on the obverse, and that of St. Paul on the reverse.

It is with gratification that I would here mention the friendly courtesy of Mr. Fortnum, whose treasures of mediæval art have so often been freely placed at our disposal. I am indebted to him for another example of the striking medal—the head of our Saviour—that I had obtained from the National Collection. It is apparently a casting of the same type in gilt metal; the details of the obverse with the profile head and the legend are identical; the dimensions are indeed slightly larger, the diameter being somewhat more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and the reverse bears, within a foliated chaplet tied by a riband at the bottom, the following legend:—*TV ES CHRISTVS FILIVS DEI VIVI QVI IN HVNC MVNDVM VENISTI*. The slight disparity in size is probably accidental, the edge of the disc having been left somewhat larger in finishing off the margin of the cast. At the top there is a small perforation, for the purpose of suspension.

It deserves notice that certain medals of the fine

Papal Series present a profile head of the Saviour, which bears in several instances resemblance to the type of the emerald *icon*. The kindness of Mrs. Meadows Frost, of Chester, has invited my attention to the beautiful medals of Gregory X., Alexander VII., and Pius V., in her possession.

ALBERT WAY.



Medal of white mixed metal, probably a fine sand-casting. Date *circa* A.D. 1500.

From an example in the possession of ALBERT WAY.

## NOTES.

## SPES PVBLICA—p. 25.

THIS same legend is found accompanying different emblematic figures, the changes in which curiously mark the corresponding changes in the spirit of their times. On the coins of Gallienus the "Public Hope" is typified by the regular appearance of the goddess in person: by the time of Tacitus, taste had grown more prosaic, and the same idea is expressed by Victory and the Emperor joining hands: and, lastly, under Claudius Gothicus, by Æsculapius and Hygiea, in whose aid lay the only hope of the empire against the pestilence then devastating it. As for this most interesting type of Constantine's, the legend was probably not intended to be taken in a purely spiritual sense; the "Old Serpent," transfixed by the banner of the Cross, does not here typify the enemy of the soul, but the troubler of the Christian world. Notwithstanding this materialistic interpretation, the design exhibits a taste for poetical allegory far in advance of that which inspired a type with a very similar legend, "*Spes Reipublicæ*," much used in Constantine's earlier years. In this the "Hope of the Empire" is represented by the Cæsar himself upon his war-horse, riding down a barbarian foe. One cannot help suspecting that Julian's mint-master, when the ancient order of things was for a brief space restored, intended a rejoinder to the pious conception just previously dictated by the triumph of the hostile religion, when he embodied the same Hope in the person of Julian himself, holding in one hand the imperial orb, in the other the spear ready to defend it against all assailants.

*Helena*—p. 37.

Eckhel divided the coins bearing the name of Helena between *three* ladies of that name—the mother and the daughter of Constantine, and a wife of the Cæsar Crispus, as is supposed, because she is named together with him in a law of the Theodosian Code. To this last Helena, Eckhel assigns the coins with the title **N.F.**, with reverse of the star within a wreath. He did not perceive the insuperable historical difficulty, which I have pointed out, in giving, as he does, to Julian's wife those bearing the title "Augusta." In our day, Baron Marchant, in his 'XVII<sup>ième</sup> Lettre numismatique,' sweeps away all Eckhel's distinctions, allowing none but the *mother* of Constantine a claim to any of these medals. Lenormant follows with an elaborate essay in the 'Revue numismatique' for 1843, with the object of supporting Marchant's system by fresh arguments and unpublished examples of coins. To meet the difficulty that stares one in the face at the first sight of the very portraits he engraves as those of the same empress, he argues, with the misplaced ingenuity characterizing him, that the face of an *elderly* woman with *aquiline* nose distinguishes the coins struck in the lifetime of Helena, whilst the girlish and regular profile is the mark of those struck to her memory after she had been *rejuvenated* by the process of apotheosis! The reverse of the *star* he interprets as a symbol of this apotheosis; urging that Constantine's religious scruples forbade his giving his deceased mother the regular title of "Diva." It is not worth while attempting to refute Lenormant's discovery of this "grinding up old people into young ones" by the easy method of *consecration*; it is enough to note that all the preceding "Divæ" wear on the coins the self-same features they carried with them into the next world.

But that the mother of Constantine never bore any other title than the one she received, late in life, from the piety of her son, is made clear (even without the moral arguments I have used in the text) by the following words of Eusebius


(iii. 47): "He honoured his mother so highly that he proclaimed her 'Augusta,' that is, *empress*, amongst all nations, and in the legions of his army; he caused her portrait to be stamped upon *gold coins*, and placed all his treasures at her disposal." The context shows this gold coinage to have been minted in Helena's *lifetime*, in the way of a public proclamation of the imperial dignity conferred upon her; and nothing of the nature of a consecration medal was known to the biographer—who otherwise, we may be sure, had not lost the opportunity to descant upon the piety that dictated its emission.

One acute conjecture of the French numismatist well merits our attention. He takes the draped female holding a bay-branch, legend "*Securitas Reipublicæ*," to be an actual representation of the statue on a column raised by Constantine in honour of his mother at the suburb of Antioch named after him "*Constantiniana Daphne*" (of which erection Suidas has preserved the record); and the branch of *bay* held forth so conspicuously in Helena's hand may reasonably be interpreted as allusive to the proper sense of the appellation (*Daphne*) of the place. Eckhel, followed by Mionnet, assigns all pieces with this reverse to the wife of Julian, for no better reason than because "*Securitas Reipublicæ*" is a common legend on his coins, although it there accompanies a totally different type, the bull *Apis*. But even setting aside the argument derived from the title "*Augusta*" (which appears to me quite unanswerable), the portrait of this same Helena seen in the best example, the finely executed *solidus* (which bears this legend) of the French Cabinet, is that of a woman far advanced in life, and such as could not possibly suit her granddaughter, who died in the flower of her age. She died in the fifth year after her marriage to Julian, who was twenty-four years of age at the time of their union: the princess probably was very much his junior, and not yet of marriageable age when her sister, Constantia, was given to his brother Gallus, four years previously. Julian received Helena as one of the conditions of his elevation to the dignity of *Cæsar*.

*Denarius Æreus*—p. 43.

In order to satisfy myself as to the real quality of the *denarius æreus*, I caused one of Claudius Gothicus to be assayed by Messrs. Johnson and Mathey, of Hatton Garden. It yielded dwts. 4·017 to the pound troy, or about one-sixtieth part of silver in the mass. For comparison with modern billon coinages, it may be stated that the Prussian *Silbergroschen* contains 222 parts of silver in 1000, the Swiss 10-*Rappen* piece one in ten; the 4-*Rappen* piece one in twenty, or thrice the proportion of silver contained by the *silver* currency of Claudius Gothicus.

*Initials in Field of Coin*—p. 44.

The usual initial is replaced by the monogram of Christ, very singularly constructed, , upon a Third Brass of Constantius II. Augustus, with the mint-mark of Lugdunum. If this monogram be viewed sideways, it will be found to assume the shape of that primitive pattern where the Latin cross, erect, has the upper limb bent into a P. Was it the object of the die-sinker to disguise the true nature of the *sigla* he employed in this instance? This coin was found at Caerleon, and is now in the museum of that town. A second exactly similar, but not so well preserved, has been picked up in the same place, and forms part of the collection of Mr. Lee; to whose skilful graver I am indebted for the cut here inserted.

*The Last Days of Gallienus*—p. 49.

The Byzantine Zonaras, who, though writing in the twelfth century, appears to have had access to valuable authorities on the history of the empire, now entirely lost, gives some curious particulars respecting the fate of Gallienus. As they serve to throw a light upon what has been already stated

by me on the subject, and even, when carefully weighed, afford considerable support to my hypothesis, I append a literal translation of his narrative.

“After this, another rebellion against Gallienus took place, headed by Aureolus, commander-in-chief of the cavalry, and a man of great influence, who, having occupied the city of Milan, had the audacity to measure forces with the emperor. The latter, marching thither with his army, and coming to a pitched battle with the usurper, destroyed many of his accomplices; so that Aureolus, being himself wounded in the action, and shut up by the emperor within the walls of Milan, was there besieged by him. Now Gallienus having undertaken an expedition against some detachment of the enemy, the empress incurred a great danger, for she had accompanied him to the war: for when the emperor had started off on an attempt with the greater part of his troops, only a few soldiers were left to guard the camp. This being discovered by the enemy, they came and attacked the imperial tent, in the hopes of carrying off the empress; but it chanced that one of the soldiers that had been left behind as unfit for service (τῶν ἡμελημένων) was sitting in front of the tent, and was mending his shoe, which he had drawn off his foot for the purpose. But when he perceived the enemy coming on, he snatched up a shield and a dagger, and valiantly rushed to meet them; and, having wounded one or two of their numbers, he cooled the ardour of the rest, until, several of his own side running up to his assistance, the consort of the emperor was rescued from peril.”

It will be remarked that Zonaraos does not give the name of this lady; she may, therefore, have been Pipara, and not Salonina. In fact, the very unusual circumstance of an empress accompanying her husband in a dangerous campaign (a most inconvenient “civilis sarcina belli”) applies much better to the case of his new barbarian bride, “quam perditæ amavit,” than to the decorous patrician lady who had been so long his wife, and whose society he could very well dispense with

during his absence from the capital; where, too, she, according to rule, would have remained in the direction of affairs, as president (in modern parlance) of the council of regency.

“Whilst the emperor was still pressing the siege of Milan, Aurelian arrived, bringing a reinforcement of cavalry; with whom the chief officers held council about taking off the emperor, but the execution was deferred until the surrender of Milan. But perceiving that their design had got generally known, they resolved to carry it out at once, and for this purpose suborned persons to announce to Gallienus the approach of the enemy. He immediately leaped up from his breakfast just set before him, and rushed to meet them with only a few accompanying him; and as he was riding off, he was met by some horsemen who, because they neither dismounted nor behaved in the manner that is customary towards the sovereign [*i.e.* showed the proper marks of respect], he asked those about him, ‘What those fellows meant.’ To which they replied, ‘To stop thee from reigning.’ Gallienus upon this gave his horse the rein, and took to flight, and even would have escaped his pursuers, through swiftness of horse, had not a canal full of water come in his way, which his horse refused to leap, and stopped short; thus his pursuers caught him up, and one of them threw his dart at him. Gallienus was hit, and fell from his steed, and survived but a short time, dying from the loss of blood. He had reigned fifteen years, counting those as colleague with his father. He was naturally fond of praise, and of gaining popularity, so that no one that asked a favour of him went away disappointed; he did not even punish those who had opposed him, or taken part with the usurpers.” This last remark is very deserving of notice, being in direct opposition to the testimony of all contemporary writers, who particularly censure his *implacable cruelty* in exterminating every person suspected of rebellion; of which savage ferocity his letter to Celer Venerianus, governor of Pannonia, upon the suppression of the revolt of Ingenuus, remains as an incontestable proof. The only way to reconcile this discrepancy



in the two portraits is to suppose Zonaras copying from some Christian historian, with whom the indulgence shown by Gallienus to his fellow-religionists was ample redemption for every other crime.

“The foregoing account of his death is given by some historians; but others assert that he was killed by the contrivance of Heraclian the prefect. For when Aureolus, who had commanded amongst the Celts, and had raised his standard against him, had marched with his forces into Italy, Gallienus advanced with his army to meet him: when Heraclian, who had made a confidant of Claudius, a general in command, came to Gallienus by night as he was asleep in his tent with the news that Aureolus was coming upon them in full force; whereupon he, leaping from his bed, half naked, being all in confusion at the suddenness of the news, was demanding his armour, when Heraclian gives him a mortal blow and slays him.” Zonaras adds a little further on: “At Rome the senate, when informed of the taking off of Gallienus, put to death his brother and his son.” This report seems compatible with the silence of Zosimus upon the fate of these two Cæsars, and from the circumstances appears more probable than Trebellius Pollio’s assertion that Valerian Junior met his death at Milan. It will also be observed that not one of these writers makes any mention of the death of the empress, whom modern numismatists so gratuitously assume to have perished with her husband. Her slaughter would have been a piece of useless barbarity, for which no precedent can be found in the history of even those troublous times; although the male children and relations of fallen Cæsars and usurpers were carefully exterminated by the successor to their power, but purely from political necessity, to preclude any future assertion of their rights.

There is another reason for accepting the statement that the destruction of the family of Gallienus (which seems to have been numerous, for he calls himself in the above-quoted letter to Venerianus “*tot principum frater et pater*”) took place at Rome by order of the senate, rather than at the

camp through the resentment of the soldiery. For Aur. Victor represents Gallienus as falling in the nocturnal tumult, and, without any suspicion of the affair being a concerted plot, nominating Claudius (who was then absent in command of a detachment upon the Ticinus) for his successor with his dying breath—a sufficient proof that his authority was acknowledged to the last. The brave spendthrift and debauchee was clearly, as might be expected, a favourite with the troops, for Trebellius alludes to their exasperation and murmurs at his death (the true cause of which they probably suspected)—murmurs only stilled by the large donative of twenty gold-pieces per man, paid to them out of the military chest by those concerned in the elevation of Claudius. Nay, more; Victor states that Claudius forced the senate, sorely against their will (they had just before ordered all the agents and relations of Gallienus to be cast down the Gemonian steps<sup>1</sup>), to declare his predecessor a “Divus” in return for this real or pretended bequest of the empire. Claudius also put a stop, “at the request of the army,” to the violences going on at *Rome* against the friends of the deceased emperor. It is therefore evident that the “empress” (whoever she may have been) remaining in the camp at Milan would continue to be treated with all the respect due to her position.

Lastly, certain passages in Victor can only be understood on the supposition that Salonina was no more at the time when Gallienus fell a victim to the fascinations of the Teutonic fair one. In the ‘Cæsars’ we read of him as “*expositus Saloninæ conjugii, atque amori flagitioso filiæ Attali Germanorum regis, Pipæ nomine.*” Now it is an evident contradiction to suppose a man the “helpless victim” of his lawful wife and of her rival at one and the same time:

<sup>1</sup> They also dragged his “*patronus fisci*” (income-tax commissioner, in our phrase), “with his eyes torn out and hanging down on his cheeks, through the senate-house: whilst the populace rushing in, with equal clamorousness, invoked Mother Earth and the infernal gods to allot Gallienus the place of the impious.” This last trait was probably connected with the avowal of his contempt for the national religion.

“no man can serve two mistresses” is more true than “two masters.” But the ‘*Epitome*’ of the same historian goes far to clear up the apparent impossibility of the fact. Victor there states “that Gallienus substituted in the place [*i. e.* Cæsarian rank] of his son ‘Cornelius’ [meaning the one cut off by Postumus at Cologne] his other son ‘Saloninus,’ through his infatuated love for two different partners of his bed [“*amori diverso pellicum deditus*”]. These were his wife Salonina, and his concubine whom he obtained from her father, king of the Marcomanni, by a *convention* [“*per pactionem*”], the terms being his giving up a part of Upper Pannonia, in a *sort of marriage* [“*specie matrimonii*”]: her name was Pipara.” Victor begins with a mistake by making Saloninus, in defiance of the medals and Pollio, to be another than Cornelius, and the son of Pipara. But *we* know that Cornelius Saloninus must have been the son of Cornelia Salonina; and it is clear that Victor had not ascertained the name of the younger Cæsar (probably Q. Jul. Gallienus), the son of Pipara, made Cæsar upon the death of his half-brother. The patrician Roman gives the German princess the contemptuous name of “concubine,” and terms her union with Gallienus “a sort of marriage,” and a “flagitious amour,” because he held to the old maxim that no legal marriage could exist between a Roman and a foreigner; on exactly the same principle as that which stigmatised M. Antony’s regular wedlock with the Greek queen of Egypt as mere disgraceful concubinage. But it was something much more stringent and sacred than such a tie, at least in the sight of one party to the contract, for the German king exacted the half of an important province as the price of his daughter’s hand; and the barbarian was at that time in a condition to make his own terms with the Roman suitor. Again, had this Pipara been regarded at Rome as merely a *concubine*, Gallienus would not have dared to so outrageously brave public opinion as by raising his natural son to the dignity of Cæsar, and heir-apparent to the empire: a course for which no precedent can be found either before or after his reign. Taking

all these circumstances into the account, it appears to me a matter of necessity that Salonina had been removed by death to make way for Pipara, and that the latter was recognised, at least by such of the world as were not bound by antiquated prejudices, as the lawful wife of Gallienus, and was really the empress who accompanied him to the fatal siege of Mediolanum.

*Debasement of the Bezant*—p. 80.

I gladly avail myself of this opportunity to correct a false statement ('History of the Precious Metals,' p. 200) into which I had been led (though not to the same extent) by following Gibbon, who has here evidently trusted to the Latin version of that conceited Jesuit P. Possinus, instead of translating Pachymer's own words. So immortal is error of this sort that Sabatier (pub. 1862) goes on repeating the same story of Michael's lowering the standard to nine carats—a proceeding which reflection would show must have prevented such a pretence for a gold coinage from having currency anywhere out of his dominions. But in reality Pachymer begins by stating that John Ducas (at Nicæa) coined bezants of two-thirds fine (*δίμοιρον τοῦ ταλάντου*), that is, of 16 carats. This standard Michael, on altering the type of the coin, lowered by *one* carat, *καθυφίετο παρὰ κεράτιον ὡς πεντεκαίδεκα πρὸς τὰ εἴκοσι καὶ τέσσαρα γενέσθαι*; thus reducing the standard to fifteen carats fine. But after his death it was lowered by another carat—*ἐς τεσσαρακαίδεκα περίεστη πρὸς δεκα*, "it was changed to 14 parts (of gold) against 10 alloy;" that is, to 14 carats. Lastly, his poverty pressing harder yet, Andronicus sinks it by two carats at once, reducing it to 12 or equal parts of gold and alloy!—*ἐφ' ἡμισείας τὸ ἀπεφθον καταμίγνυται*; which naturally produced a stoppage of trade. It must, however, be kept in mind that the emperor was driven to this expedient to find pay for his Catalan mercenaries, who demanded from one to two ounces per

month (6 or 12 bezants, the regular pay being only 3). These debased pieces would, fresh from the mint, put "a good face on the matter," for their gold would be forced to the surface, as in the silver of similar alloy, and thus serve to impose upon those barbarians. Possinus had begun by making the schoolboy blunder of translating *δίμοισρον* by "one-half," and was consequently driven into wresting Pachymer's other rates of standard into conformity with this his starting-point. The lively Father's grand object was to produce a flowing version of the old chronicler's plain, unvarnished tale, and he has therefore paraphrased, and amplified from his own imagination, every statement he makes. He has done the same *disservice* to Anna Comnena, and with the same results to future writers, too ignorant or indolent to refer to the Greek text. Her simple notice that the armour of the Normans was "a coat woven out of rings," he expands into "ringed, plumated, and banded defences"; all of which has been duly copied by writers on mediæval armour—for example, Planché, 'History of British Costume,' p. 73.

*Cypriote Sculpture*—p. 162.

Pliny's statement, to which little attention has hitherto been paid, that Cyprus, whilst still under Persian rule, was the real birthplace of Greek *sculpture in stone* (as opposed to *statuaria* in bronze), has now received full and most unexpected confirmation by Cesnola's recent discovery of the remains of Astarte's temple at Golgos. He found there upwards of a thousand statues, some yet standing on their pedestals, which had been ranged in line along the inner walls of the temple. These walls, constructed of sun-dried brick after the Assyrian fashion, had evidently been thrown down by an earthquake whilst the worship was still in its glory, enveloping in their soft material, and so preserving from all injury of the elements, the statues buried, and partly crushed, in their fall.

These statues are carved in a soft calcareous stone, much resembling the Cambridgeshire "clunch," and retain traces of thick painting in encaustic colours, to which coating may be attributed the wonderful preservation of their surface, which in most of them appears as if fresh from the chisel. The dimensions of several are the so-called Heroic (about 8 feet high); but the majority are of life-size. They represent, in my opinion, the succession of the high-priests of the temple from its first foundation down to the moment of its destruction, for each bears in one hand the sacrificial *patera*, in the other the *pyxis* for incense, together with the lustral bay-branch, or, in the later part of the series, the regular *aspergillum*. That such was the object of these sculptures is almost placed out of doubt by what Herodotus recounts of the temple of Zeus at Thebes in Egypt. He was there shown (as Hecatæus had been long before) a series of 341 wooden statues arranged around an immense hall, and was informed they represented the unbroken line of the high-priests, from father to son, "Piromis after Piromis;" each individual having in his life-time added his own portrait-statue to the rest. The Cypriote hierarchy had, fortunately for us, chosen a more enduring material to transmit its memory to future times, and to furnish a most instructive and unexampled illustration of the rise and progress of the art of sculpture.

These statues offer in the gradation of their style a sculptured record of the political vicissitudes of Cyprus: commencing with figures exactly corresponding in design, workmanship, costume, and attitude, with those of Persepolis; thence passing into the Phœnician, or, if you prefer it, the Archaic Greek, and closing with a gracefully draped life-size portrait in a good Græco-Roman manner. Intermixed are those of deities, the most conspicuous and worthy of notice being a Hercules of the "Heroic" side, clad in the lion's hide drawn over the head, and knotted across the breast by the forepaws, in the style so commonly seen in Etruscan bronzes. All these statues were originally erected

on pedestals ranged close together along the walls of the temple; their array must have rivalled that of the Theban Piromis in point of number, which may be estimated from the fact that those brought away, being only the best preserved (200 or 300 being left *in situ* as too much mutilated to be worth removal), were sufficient, when placed together as close as possible, to line the walls of a room, about 20 feet square, in the house of M. G. Feuardent, to whose courtesy I am indebted for frequent opportunities for their careful examination.

Together with these larger works, the same excavations brought to light an endless number of figures of Astarte, goddess of the place, carved in the same soft stone, or modelled in terracotta, and exhibiting the same gradations of taste as those of greater dimensions. These "dolls" were evidently made for *ex voto* offerings, for they were accompanied by a great variety of little animals, and household utensils similarly composed, and clearly intended for the same purpose. It is worth remarking here that the nature of the stone employed for these works, intended for the highest destination to which sculpture can be devoted, would lead us to infer that the λίθος λευκός, so often named by Greek writers as the material of statues, was not necessarily marble, as the term is now commonly translated.

Another testimony to the high antiquity of these remains is given by the weapons found in the same locality. I noticed in the collection numerous sword blades in bronze, shaped like a slender lanceolate leaf (that of the wild spinach is the nearest in outline), and from 18 to 24 inches long, including the tang. A casual observer would take them for spear-heads, but the archæologist knows that such weapons were always socketed; and in the present case the tang in every specimen has the end bent up, a plain indication that it had passed through the whole length of a hilt, and then been riveted for security. The extreme shortness of these hilts, which would hardly fill the hand of a child, convincingly attests the diminutive stature of the warriors who wielded them in the Heroic ages of Greece.

This collection, so unique and important in its bearings upon the history of art, has most unfortunately been lost to Europe. It was brought to London in the summer of this year (1872), and exhibited during the autumn months by the discoverer in the hopes of its finding a purchaser as a *whole* (the chief element of its value) in our National Museum. But our authorities, acting on their favourite maxim, “mal spender, mal tener” (as Dante phrases it), have rejected the opportunity to which no parallel can be found in the annals of antiquarian discovery. The precious series has consequently become the property, at the cost of 10,000*l.*, of some public-spirited citizens of New York, and has been transferred to that city, where it will occupy a museum now building for its reception in the Central Park.

*Physician's Ring*—p. 202.

Mightily esteemed during the middle ages as a prophylactic against all disease was the “Sign of Health”—the masonic pentacle, or Solomon's seal, having in each of its exterior angles one of the letters of the word **SALVS**, thus arranged for the sake of mystery, **V . A . L . S . S .** It became the badge of the medical profession, and was regularly carried by physicians engraved in their rings. A grand example of the fashion I observed in that treasure-house of similar rarities, the dactyliotheca of Mr. Octavius Morgan, a gold ring of extraordinary weight, bearing the life-giving symbol elegantly engraved in a circle formed by the coiled serpent of the god of health. Marguerite de Valois adopted this for her device, perhaps induced by the analogy of the word to her own family name. Her husband and his sister, Catharine of Navarre, took for theirs the “S fermée,” the ancient rebus of *fermesse*, “constancy”; and the most probable origin of our own “Collar of SS.”



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