

has, on the present occasion, been adduced, almost for the first time, in furtherance of such investigations ; and I trust that the interesting results developed by this means may stimulate archaeologists to seek a more intimate acquaintance with the character of ancient remains, and the details of processes in arts or manufactures, which may prove, even in our own times, of no trifling practical advantage.

NOTICE OF A STAMP USED BY A ROMAN OCULIST OR EMPIRIC,
DISCOVERED IN IRELAND.

THE little relic of Roman times, here brought under the notice of the archaeologist, belongs to a class of ancient remains bearing inscriptions, of a singular and interesting character, and to which the attention of various able antiquaries has been addressed. The example, hitherto inedited, and represented by the accompanying woodcuts, may be regarded with especial interest, not merely on account of the rarity of objects of this nature, but as presenting one of the very few vestiges of the Roman period, authenticated as having been found in Ireland.

I am not aware that any material facts of more recent discovery have been adduced to controvert the conclusions of Camden in reference to Ireland ;—"Animum vix inducere possum, ut hanc regionem in Romanorum potestatem ullo tempore concessisse credam." Whilst, however, no solid argument may be grounded on the expressions of certain ancient writers, to whom some poetical license may be conceded, such as the allusion of Juvenal, which might seem to imply that the sway of Rome had been extended even beyond the "*littora Juvernæ*," there appears sufficient evidence that intercourse subsisted between the conquerors of Britain and the natives of the adjacent island. Agricola, we are informed, entertained a *regulus* exiled from its shores ; and the statement of Tacitus, that the ports of Ireland were even better known than those of Britain, through the traffic of commerce,¹ would readily account for the casual occurrence in that country of coins or scattered traces of the Roman age.

The discovery of a hoard of Roman coins in the neighbourhood of the Giants' Causeway was communicated to the

¹ Agric. Vita, c. 24.

Society on a previous occasion ; and other notices of a like nature might be cited. It were to be desired that these Roman vestiges might be regarded by Dr. Petrie, or some other erudite antiquary in the sister kingdom, as of sufficient interest to claim a detailed examination. To Mr. Dunoyer, who has so freely placed at our disposal, on former occasions, the results of his valuable investigations, the Institute is now again indebted for the communication of a relic of no ordinary interest. Our thanks are likewise due to its possessor, Dr. Dowsley, of Clonmel, for his courteous permission that it should be submitted to our readers.

The stamp here represented was found in the county of Tipperary, which has produced so many curious remains of all periods. Mr. Dunoyer, with his accustomed zeal on such occasions, sought out the finder, a person named Bane, a sergeant in the Clonmel police, and has given us the following particulars :—"The tablet was discovered about the year 1842, in a dike on the rising ground above the green of the village of Golden Bridge, and in a plot of land four acres in extent, known by the name of 'the Spittle Fields or Lands.' On this may yet be seen some ruins known traditionally as 'the Hospital,' or Infirmary. In the dike where the tablet was found a quantity of human bones have been brought to light. This singular object is very smooth, apparently formed of a piece of hardened fine-grained slate, of a dark green or blue colour, easily scratched with a knife, and the colour then appears of a light grey hue. Golden Bridge is on the river Suire, about a mile above the celebrated abbey of Athassel, founded A.D. 1200 by William de Burgo. At Golden there existed, in 1842, a remarkable circular castle which defended the bridge, but it has since fallen." Mr. Dunoyer adds the conjecture—"Is it possible to suppose that this stamp had been used in medieval times by some cunning leech who practised the healing art at this Spittle of Golden ?"



Roman Oculist's Stamp, found in co. Tipperary.
(Size of original.)

The annexed representation will readily show that this object is one of those curious relics designated by Gough and other

writers as stamps or seals used anciently by oculists (*medici ocularii*) or empirics. They served either to impress upon the *collyrium* and other medicaments, or upon the wrapper in which these nostrums were vended, the description of their virtues with the name of the compounder. The drugs were doubtless moulded in the form of a paste, with white of egg (*ex ovo*) or some adhesive compound, and the tablets being engraved in intaglio, with the letters inverted, as shown in the woodcut, an impression was readily produced. Usually the stone was incised with an inscription on each of the four sides, and it served to stamp as many nostrums distinct in their virtues. On the example now published there is only one inscription, indicating the name of the empiric, with the quality of the remedy,—*MARCI JUVENTII TUTIANI DIAMYSUS AD VETERES CICATRICES*. A little mark at the close of the first line, resembling a minuscule C is somewhat indistinct. If taken as a letter, it *may* signify the word *collyrium*. Juventius and Tutianus are names occurring in inscriptions given by Gruter.

The compound termed *Diamysus* occurs on other stamps of this description; on one, published by Schmidt, in his *Antiquities of Nimeguen*, and by Spon, is read,—*Marci Ulpi Heracleitis diamysus*. "It is" (observes Gough) "a mineral composition, of which see Marcus Empiricus, viii. 72, and Pliny, xxxiv. 12."² Marcellus speaks of *dyamysios*, as of virtue "*ad aspritudines oculorum*." *Misy* (probably from *μύω* *comprimo*) appears to have been a kind of copperas, or Roman vitriol, of a caustic or astringent quality, of which Celsus and Dioscorides, as well as Pliny, have detailed the virtues.³ The latter states emphatically those for which it was formerly esteemed by the *ocularii*. "Extenuat scabritias oculorum inveteratas:—collyriis additur," &c. Marcellus, a native of Bordeaux who lived in the fourth century, in his singular Treatise, "*de Medicamentis Empiricis, Physicis ac Rationabilibus*," speaks of "*collyrium, diamysos quod facit, ad aspritudines oculorum tollendas, et ad lacrymas substringendas*."

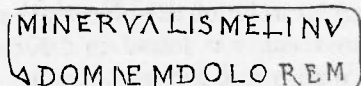
Maffei, in his "*Museum Veronense*," p. 135, mentions another of these stamps, of which the correct reading is probably *Diamisus ad veteres cicatrices*, as upon that found in

² *Archæologia*, vol. ix., p. 229.

³ The term was retained by the medieval alchemists. See Rulandi, *Lexicon Alchemiæ*, &c., v. *Misy*. They used also the

word "*Dymassien*," *i. e.* flos æris. Compare Ducange, *Gloss. Inf. Græcit.*—"*Μύσιν, τὸ χαλκανθόν*," in *Glossis Iatricis MSS. ex Cod. Reg.*"

Ireland. He proposes, however, the explanation—*Dianusus ad vulnera et cicatrices*; the contracted words are nearly identical with those upon Dr. Dowsley's stamp, AD VET CI. (The two first, as also the fourth and fifth letters, are conjoined.) The same remedy, possibly, is indicated by one of four inscriptions on another of these stamps, found in 1731, in the Abbey Yard, Bath, which reads thus,—T. IVNIAN. D . . . VM AD VETERES CICATRICES. The three characters following the D are of singular form, and not readily to be decyphered. Impressions of these inscriptions, as also from two other similar relics, are preserved in the museum of the Society of Antiquaries, as described in the printed catalogue, p. 12. Amongst them may be noticed the stamp of hone-stone, or whet-slate, found in 1818, near the Leauses garden, at Cirencester, and now in the possession of P. B. Purnell, Esq. It may claim especial mention as having been discovered deposited in a fictile urn; and also as bearing the Christian symbol of an X traversed by a cross, traced on one extremity of the stone. A detailed account of this curious object has been recently given in the valuable work on *Corinium*, produced by Professor Buckman and Mr. Newmarch. By their kindness I am enabled to submit a representation to the reader:—



Oculist's Stamp found at Cirencester. Orig. size.

It may be acceptable to the antiquary to enumerate various "oculists' stamps," hitherto found or noticed in England. Dr. Chishull, in a *Numismatic Dissertation* (appended to *Antiqu. Asiat. Lond.*, 1728), described one found at Colchester. This notice had been also given in the "*Tesoro Britannico*," 1719, by Haym, to whom it was addressed. In Gough's memoir, in which the "*Tesoro*" apparently is cited, this relic, possibly by an accidental inadvertence, is described as discovered at Gloucester.⁴ It bears two legends, with the

⁴ Mr. C. Roach Smith (*Journal Archæol. Assoc.* vol. iv. p. 280) is disposed to assign this discovery to Gloucester, but

without giving any authority; the notion possibly originated with Gough. The statement as recorded by Dr. Chishull

name, Q. IVL. MVRRANI. The next discovery appears to have been that made at Bath, already mentioned; this stamp was formerly in the possession of Mr. Thomas Mitchell, of Bristol (*Archæologia*, vol. ix, p. 228). In 1767, Mr. R. Forster exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries, a cast of a similar stone bearing two inscriptions: no record of the place of its discovery has been preserved. It is, however, very probable that this may have been the identical specimen found at Colchester, given by Dr. Chishull. In 1772, a stamp was found in excavations near Littleborough, Nottinghamshire, inscribed on three of its sides. A representation of this example, which appears to have been accidentally lost, may be found in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for that year. It was communicated by C. D., from Southwell.⁵ In 1778, the late Francis Douce, Esq., addressed to Mr. Urban a notice of another stamp, in his possession, with four inscriptions (See *Gent. Mag.*, vol. xlviii. pp. 472, 509; and *Archæologia*, vol. ix, p. 227). It is probably now in the "Doucean Museum," at Goodrich Court. Gough produced another, figured with the last in his *Memoir* in the *Archæologia*: it bore three inscriptions. Impressions of these are preserved in the museum of the Society of Antiquaries.⁶ Gough has described twenty-one of these relics, found in various countries, and it is to be regretted that he has not stated where the two, last mentioned, were found. It has been stated that a stamp of this nature had been found at St. Albans. (*Gent. Mag.*, vol. xlviii. p. 510.)



Impression on a Circular Stamp
found at Wroxeter.

A singular relic of this description, but of *circular* form, was found in 1808, near the Old Wall of Wroxeter, Salop. It is remarkable that this unique variety has remained unexplained and unnoticed by writers on this subject. It was first engraved in *Gent. Mag.*, vol. lxxx. p. 617; it was also mentioned in *Beauties of England and Wales*, co. Salop, p. 191: and given by Mr. Hartshorne in his *Salopia Antiqua*, p. 126, as an

(*Tesoro Brit. and Antiqu. Asiat.*) is as follows. "Duas (publicationes) cere pulchræ impressas, et a tesseris archetypis longiusculis more quodam Typographico desumptas, adhuc apud me servo; aliquot ab hinc annis a domino *Lufkins Pharmacopola Colcestrensi*, antiquitatum harum studioso, humaniter mihi communicatas.

Hæ igitur ad *Colcestriam* Romanam olim coloniam repertæ," &c. Caylus, however, *Recueil*, t. 1., p. 224, cites Chishull as noticing such a stamp found at *Gloucester*.

⁵ See *Gent. Mag.* vol. xlii. 1772, p. 415; vol. xlviii. 1778, p. 509.

⁶ *Catalogue of Antiquities, &c.* p. 12.

“ amuletal seal,” with letters incised upon a circular piece of jade, seven-eighths of an inch in diam. and a quarter thick. “ It has hitherto (he observes) baffled the endeavours of those who have attempted to explain it.” The accompanying wood-cut is taken from the representation in the “ Gentleman’s Magazine.”

Dialibanus, supposed to have been a compound of frankincense, is one of the medicaments named upon the stamp, formerly in Mr. Douce’s possession; it probably was identical with the *collyrium dialepidos*, mentioned by Marcellus Empiricus, and occurring on a stamp found in Normandy.⁷ The concluding letters on the Wroxeter stamp obviously indicate the compound *ex ovo*, as on the example from Cirencester; on Mr. Douce’s—*lene(mentum) ex ovo*; and on that produced by Gough.

Amongst the antiquities in the British Museum three of these remarkable stamps are preserved. It is believed that they formed part of the Sloane Collection. No record of the place of discovery can be ascertained. They are all formed of a similar substance, a greenish-coloured schist: one of them is the identical specimen exhibited by Gough to the Society of Antiquaries, and figured in the *Archæologia*, vol. ix. p. 227. On another is to be seen a single inscription,—COLLYR. P. CL. OC. The third bears three inscriptions; the name of the Empiric is *Sextus Julius Sedatus*, the remedies being three varieties of *Crocodæ*, namely,—DIALEPIDOS—ADDIATHES and PACCIANI. It may be hoped that all these, with other unexplained examples, and one found at Tranent, in North Britain, will be illustrated by the researches of Professor Simpson, of Edinburgh, who is engaged in preparing a dissertation upon the subject. The latest discovery of this nature has been described by Mr. C. Roach Smith, in an interesting Memoir “on a Roman medicine Stamp, &c., found at Kenchester” (*Journal of the British Archæol. Assoc.*, vol. iv., p. 280). It was communicated by Mr. R. Johnson, of Hereford. Mr. Smith appears to have been acquainted with two other examples only, authenticated as found in England. He cites the curious Dissertation by M. Dufour, who remarks, that of fifty-three stamps hitherto described by writers on antiquity, all, with a single exception, have been found in France, Germany, or England; seeming to indicate that

⁷ Gough, from the *Mercure François*, in *Archæol.*, vol. ix., p. 233.

these empirical remedies were less esteemed in Italy than in the more remote provinces. It would be essential to ascertain whether the schist, of which these relics appear mostly, if not invariably, to have been formed, can be traced to any particular locality : and a careful comparison of the personal names of the Empirics might tend to throw a curious light upon the origin of these remedies, and the countries in which they were in vogue.

ALBERT WAY.

Those who may desire further information on this subject, may consult the foreign works cited by Gough (*Archæol.*, vol. ix. p. 227) ; the Dissertations by Professor Walch, Jena, 1763 ; and by Saxius, at Utrecht, 1773, in which last eighteen examples are given. Count Caylus enumerates eleven. In *Gent. Mag.*, vol. xlviii. p. 472, is cited a notice of one at Lyons, by the Père Beraud, a Jesuit. M. d'Anneci published a Dissertation at Paris, in 1816, giving all the examples then known. See also,—*Cinq Cachets inedites de medecins oculistes*; par le Dr. Sichel, Paris, 1845;—*Observations sur les Cachets de medecins oculistes*, par Adolphe Duchalais, Paris, 1846 ; and the curious paper above mentioned, by Charles Dufour, in the *Memoires de la Soc. des Antiqu. de Picardie*, tome 8. The Memoirs by Professor Simpson, above mentioned, will be given in the *Monthly Medical Journal*.

EFFIGIES OF THE DE SULNEYS, AT NEWTON SOLNEY, DERBYSHIRE.

ON a richly-wooded bank, overhanging the river Trent, stands the little village church of Newton Solney. At a short distance higher up the stream, is the old abbey of Burton ; a little lower down, is the Priory of Repton—Repton, the ancient home of the Mercian monarchs. At the edge of the landscape, in front, is the noble fortress of John of Gaunt, Tutbury Castle, perched on its rock of alabaster ; from whose foot the river Dove comes winding and sparkling through the most luxuriant meadows, to mingle its waters with those of the Trent, close under the walls of the pleasant little church of Newton Solney. North of Trent or South of Trent, you will scarcely find a spot more rich in present abundance or in middle-age memories.

The church itself, though picturesque in its ivied tower, its grey walls, its windows of every style, and its bowery back-ground, has no striking architectural feature, and is as little promising to the archaeological adventurer as can well be