

NOTICES OF THE PRECIOUS OBJECTS PRESENTED BY QUEEN
THEODELINDA TO THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST,
AT MONZA.

FEW travellers visit Milan without proceeding to pay a visit to the "Noble and Royal Basilica" of St. John the Baptist, in the city of Monza, situated about twelve miles from the capital. Famous in the eyes of the Italians as the depository of the celebrated Iron Crown, it is more so with the Lombards as possessing remarkable examples of goldsmiths' work in its treasury—gifts made by their kings and queens at the shrine of the Baptist, when they were an independent nation, and possessed the greater part of Italy. The names of Autharick, Agilulf, and above all of Flavia Theodelinda, are mentioned by a Lombard at the present day much in the same manner as that of King Arthur was with us in the middle ages, when England was a second-rate kingdom, and the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth was believed to be pure and true history.

We all know how often it falls to the lot of the antiquary, after reading a particular account in his guide-book of the objects of antiquity in some museum or treasury, to find that he has been greatly deceived, and that his journey might have been spared. This is not the case at Monza: here, at least, tradition has been a faithful guide, and when the traveller enters the small domed octagonal treasury, and the custode has unlocked the various doors contained in the side walls, a mass of goldsmith's work is presented to his view, sufficient to illustrate the progress of the art from the end of the VIth century to the present times. The nucleus of this was the gift of Queen Theodelinda, the foundress of the church; here we may give a short notice of her life, before entering into the description of her gifts. For this purpose we must have recourse to the history of Paulus Diaconus, availing ourselves at the same time of the dates assigned by his learned editor (Muratori, *Ital. Script.*

vol. i.). We must premise, that Autharick, King of the Lombards, had, in 588, been promised the sister of Childebert, King of the Franks, in marriage, but the lady had been given instead to Reccared, King of the Spanish Goths, the reason alleged being that the latter king and his nation had abjured Arianism, whereas the Lombards were still in error. Zanetti supposes that the real cause was in the intrigues of the Roman Pontiffs, who viewed with displeasure an alliance likely to compromise the feuds between the Franks and their natural enemies, the Lombards.

In the third book, and chapter xxix., Paulus Diaconus has given the following interesting narrative :—

“After these things, King Authari (*sic*) sent ambassadors to Bavaria, who might demand the daughter of Garibald their King in marriage for him. He, receiving them kindly, promised that he would give his daughter Theudelinda¹ to Authari. The ambassadors, on their return, related these things to Authari, who desiring to see his bride, chose one of his most faithful followers, a little older than himself, and without delay set out with him for Bavaria.² And when, after the custom of ambassadors, they had been introduced, and he who was the elder had made his salutation, Authari, perceiving he was known by none of the people present, approached nearer the King Garibaldus, and said, ‘My lord the King Authari has sent me here especially for this purpose that I should behold your daughter, his bride, who is about to be our Lady.’ And when the King, hearing these things, had commanded his daughter to appear, and Authari had seen that she was sufficiently handsome, and that she pleased him well in all things, he said to the King, ‘Forasmuch as we behold the person of your daughter to be such that rightly we may hope to have her for our Queen, if it may please your Majesty, we would wish to take a cup of wine from her hand, as we shall do hereafter.’ And when the King, consenting, had commanded it thus to be done, she having received the cup of wine, offered it to him who was the elder. Then she offered it to Authari, being ignorant that he was about to be her husband. He, after that he had

¹ The name of the queen is thus written by Paulus Diaconus throughout his narrative; and the king's name is written “Authari.”

² St. Æthelbert did the same thing, but with a very unfortunate issue. See Roger of Wendover, under date 792; also the Saxon Chronicle.

drunk, returned the cup, and touched her hand, no one being aware, with his finger, and drew his right hand from his forehead to his lips (*dextram suam sibi a fronte per nasum ac faciem produxit*). She, blushing greatly, related these things to her nurse, who replied, unless this man had been the king himself, and your future husband, he would not have dared to touch you at all. But he received a guard from the King, and having arrived on his return near to the borders of Italy, raised himself as much as he could upon his horse, and struck the nearest tree with his axe, using his whole force, and added, moreover, these words : ‘Such are the strokes of Authari.’ And when he had said these things, then the Bavarians understood that their companion was King Authari himself. After some time, Garibaldus, being troubled by the invasion of the Franks, Theudelinda his daughter, with Gundoald her brother, fled to Italy, and sent news of her arrival to Authari, her husband, who immediately met her with great pomp, and married her on the Ides of May, A.D. 589, in Campo Sardis, which is situated above Verona ; and there was there, among other of the Lombard Dukes, Agilulf, Duke of Turin, to whom a certain boy, a soothsayer, who foretold the future by diabolical art, thus said (when a log which was placed in the royal barriers had been struck by lightning), ‘this woman, who lately has married our King, will be your wife after no very long time.’ Which he hearing, threatened that he would cut off his head if he mentioned anything more about it ; to whom the latter replied, ‘You indeed may kill me, but you cannot alter the fates.’ * * * *

“In 590, King Authari died at Pavia from poison, as it was reported, after he had reigned six years. The Queen Theudelinda, who much pleased the Lombards, was permitted to remain in the Royal dignity, they agreeing that whomsoever she should choose from the Lombards for a husband, should be their king. She, indeed, having held council with the most prudent, chose Agilulf, Duke of Turin, whom immediately she commanded to come to her ; and she herself hastened to the town of Lomello, and when he had met her, she commanded him to be seated, and after some talk, ordered wine to be brought, of which, when she herself had first tasted, she offered the remainder to Agilulf. He receiving the cup, kissed her hand reverently, and the Queen,

laughing, but at the same time blushing, said, it does not behove him to kiss the hand who ought to kiss the mouth. Why should I relate more? The nuptials were celebrated with great joy, and Agilulf, who was a relation of the King Authari, received the royal dignity in the month of November." (Ibid. chap. xxxiv.)

"593. In these days the most wise and holy Pope Gregory, Bishop of the city of Rome, wrote four books concerning the lives of the saints, which book is called the 'Dialogue,' because he represents himself as talking with his deacon Peter. The aforesaid pope dedicated these books to Theodelinda, because he knew that she was attached to the faith of Christ, and given to good works." (Lib. iv., chap. v.)

"By means of this Queen much good was effected for the Church of God; for the Lombards, while they held the errors of the Gentiles, had seized on nearly all the substance of the Church. But the King being moved by the supplication of the Queen, both held the Catholic faith, and enriched the Church with many possessions; and the bishops, who had been depressed and abject, were restored to their accustomed dignity."³ (Chap. vi.)

The next event recorded is that the exarch of Ravenna caused several cities of Lombardy to be betrayed to him, and how Agilulf, after various successes, besieged Rome. But by means of Theodelinda, St. Gregory concluded a peace with the Lombards, and the letters are given, written by him to Theodelinda and Agilulf. The historian subsequently relates that,—“About this time Theodelinda, the Queen, dedicated the Royal Basilica of St. John Baptist, which she had constructed at Monza, and enriched it with many ornaments of gold and silver, and with estates.” (Chap. xxii.)

“In which place, also, Theodoric, formerly King of the Goths, had constructed a palace, because the place, on account of its vicinity to the Alps, was temperate and wholesome in time of summer. There, also, the same Queen built her palace, in which, also, she caused certain deeds of the Lombards to be painted: in which paintings it is clearly

³ Arianism, it would appear, was but partially destroyed in Lombardy, for during the reign of Rotharis, who ascended the throne twenty-two years after the

death of Agilulf, we are told, that not only was the King infected with heresy, but that in almost every city there were two bishops, one Catholic and one Arian.

shown how the Lombards of that time shaved the hair of the head, and what their costume was like ; for, indeed, they shaved the back of the head, having long hair which hung down to the chin, divided by a parting in the middle of the forehead. Their garments were loose, and chiefly of linen, such as the Anglo-Saxons are accustomed to wear, adorned with broad borders woven of different colours ; their shoes were open down to the toe, retained by crossed bands of leather. Afterwards, they took to wear hosen, over which, when riding, they had drawers of a red colour ;⁴ but this custom they adopted from the Romans." (Chap. xxiii.)

In the 26th chapter, the historian relates that in the year 603, "a son was born to Agilulf the King, and Theudelinda the Queen, in the palace at Monza, who was called Adaloaldus. The year afterwards Adaloaldus was baptised in St. John at Monza." There is extant a letter from Gregory to Theodelinda, congratulating her on the birth of her son, of which the following is the most important passage for our purpose : "To our most excellent son Adaloald we have sent a reliquary, that is, a cross with the wood of the holy cross of our Lord, and a lectionary of the Gospels, enclosed in a Persian case ; and to my daughter, his sister, I have sent three rings, two with hyacinths, and one with an *albula*." This cross still remains in the treasury.

In 605, Adaloald was crowned in his father's lifetime.

In 615, Agilulf, who also was called Ago, died after he had reigned twenty-five years, leaving in the kingdom his son Adaloaldus, a boy, together with his mother Theodelinda. Under their government the churches were restored, and many gifts presented to the holy places, But when Adaloaldus went mad, after he had reigned ten years with his mother, he was ejected from the kingdom, and Arioaldus was put into his place by the Lombards.⁵

Thus much for the history of Theodelinda. There is, unfortunately, very little to be added to it⁶ beyond the date of

⁴ Tubrugos birreos. See Ducange.

⁵ Arioaldus is supposed to have been the first husband of Gundibergera, the daughter of Theodelinda.

⁶ Boccaccio, indeed, in the second novel of the third day of the Decameron, relates a story concerning Theodelinda, Agilulf and a groom ; but as it occurs in no other writer with these names attached to it, we shall probably not be very wrong in sup-

posing that Boccaccio, having got hold of the story (which to a certain degree resembles that told of Gyges and Candaules by Herodotus), added the names to give it more interest ; he has done the same thing in the second novel of the seventh day, and the sixth novel of the ninth day — both of which are taken from the Golden Ass of Apuleius.

her death, which Zanetti thinks occurred previously to the deposition of her son in 625. There is no document on the subject, and we only know that her obit was celebrated on a particular day.

Tradition has added two circumstances, which are recorded in the "*Chronicon Modoetiense*"⁷ of Bonincontro, written in the middle of the XIVth century. The first is that the Queen wishing to build her Basilica, it was revealed to her in a dream that the new building should be erected on the spot where the Holy Ghost should appear in the form of a dove. This did not take place until many years afterwards, when the Queen saw a dove alight on a large vine. The dove said "*Modo*," and the Queen replied, "*Etiam*;" thence the name *Modoetia*. The altar of the church was erected on the spot where the vine stood, and the tree itself was employed in the construction of the west door, which in the time of the author of the Chronicle had been placed in a doorway in one of the aisles, and was called the "*porta vitæ*."

The other tradition affirms that all the gold, silver, and jewels given by the Queen were made from an idol which her husband was in the habit of worshipping. The Arians of the VIth century were become idolators in the eyes of the XIVth.

Let us now consider what objects Theodelinda did present to the church, and how many have come down to our own day. Frisi enumerates the following as existing in his time.

The first is the cross of gold sent to Adaloaldus by Pope Gregory; it is $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide by 3 long, of pure gold; in front, underneath a very thick crystal, is a Greek Crucifixion, engraved and filled with niello. Our Lord is dressed in the tunic, but without the crown of thorns. The Blessed Virgin and St. John are at the sides, and the letters and inscription are Greek. Behind this and the back of the cross is a cavity, sufficient to contain a relique: most probably, it even now contains the wood of the true cross. The back itself has simply a raised pattern on it. The cross is used on certain occasions at the present time.

The next thing is the papyrus, containing an inventory of the oils from lamps burning at Rome before the tombs of

⁷ Muratori, vol. xii. p. 1072.

the Martyrs, sent by the Pope Gregory to the Queen. In the middle of the XVIIth century this papyrus was removed from the church into the Museo Settaliano, and was not brought back until 1777. It was conveyed with the other treasures to France in 1790, and was restored with them in 1813. The oils were discovered at the end of last century, concealed in the great altar ; they are enclosed in leaden ampullæ, enriched with subject from the Scriptures. There were six varieties, all of which have been engraved by Frisi, in vol. i., pp. 4 and 5, edit. 1794. The workmanship and inscriptions are Greek.

The third is the crown of Theodelinda, a plain circlet, enriched with a vast quantity of gems of more or less value, among which are conspicuous a great many pieces of mother-of-pearl.⁸

The treasury, as we learn from inventories, as well as from the celebrated bas-relief over the door (generally considered to be about two or three centuries posterior to Theodelinda, but which, I apprehend, is very much later), anciently possessed three other crowns, the first of which is the iron crown, now shown in a chapel dedicated to it. In point of art, it is very remarkable for the beauty of its cloissonné enamels, and in point of antiquarianism for the small thin rim of iron attached to the inside. Although composed of the metal most subject to oxidation, this betrays no signs of rust, while the original file-marks tell us that cleaning has had nothing to do with this fact. It is scarcely necessary to mention that tradition asserts this rim to have been formed from a nail used in our Lord's Passion. The second crown was that of Theodelinda's husband,⁹ Agilulf; it was divided into fifteen divisions, containing our Lord seated between two angels and the Twelve Apostles. The divisions were formed by twisted columns, from the top of which sprouted branches of laurel. These, and even the columns, have a very suspicious appearance, as far as one can judge from the plates of Muratori and Frisi. The inscription ran thus, in uncial letters : " Agilulfus gratia Dei vir gloriosus Rex totius Italiæ offert Sancto Johanni Baptistæ in Ecclesia

⁸ Theophilus, lib. iii. cap. 95, alludes to the practice of using mother-of-pearl in goldsmith's work : — "Secantur etiam chonchæ marinæ per partes et inde limantur margaritæ, in auro satis utiles, poliunturque ut supra."

⁹ Agilulf's crown was stolen, and melted at Paris in 1804. All the three crowns are engraved in Muratori, and in the various editions of Frisi.

Modicia." Of the third crown we have no notice : it was probably that of Berengarius. It appears, from various quotations given by Frisi, that it was a common custom for monarchs to give their crowns to the churches. In our own country King Canute did the same.¹

The tympanum of the west door also shows us a great vase or chalice, with handles ; this, being one of the most precious objects of the treasury, was of course one of the first to be pawned on any emergency.

There was also a cup of oriental agate, enriched with silver gilt, forty-six precious stones and ninety-five pearls.

Both of these, as well as a corporal, embroidered in gold and gems by Theodelinda herself, have disappeared.

The cup of sapphire, also shown on the tympanum (the sculpture in Muratori's time still retaining traces of the colour with which it was anciently painted), is to be found in the sacristy at the present day, but the original mounting has long since disappeared. However, it has been supplied by a very beautiful work of the XVth century, and if we may believe a document quoted by Frisi, 1490 was the date of the alteration.

At the present day the sapphire, which is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter, is believed to be simply one of those precious glass fabrics of antiquity which, like the Santo Catino of Genoa, were in the middle ages so often mistaken for gems.²

The next object is the Evangelarium of Theodelinda, bound in gold, and ornamented with eight cameos, four on either side. In the middle is a cross, surrounded by a border, running round the margin ; the cross is partly composed of precious stones, and partly by a pattern formed by red glass set in gold ; the border is wholly of the latter material. In two parallel lines, running quite across the field, are these words in Roman capitals : "De donis dei offerit Theodelinda regina gloriosissima Sancto Johanni Bapt. in Basilica quam ipsa fundavit in Modicia prope pal. suum."³

¹ Roger of Wendover, under the year 1035.

² Theophilus gives directions to make light purple glass, lib. II. chap. viii. ; and in chap. x. of the same book, he also tells us how to make glass vases.

³ Theophilus does not mention the red glass mosaic. On the other hand, none of the objects which can be traced to Theo-

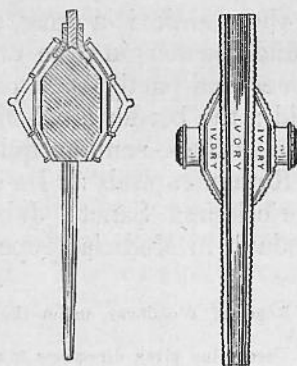
delinda or Berengarius present us with enamel, properly so called. The only exception is the iron crown, which some writers assert to have been a gift from the Emperor Phocas to Agilulf, but we have no proof of this, except tradition,—not a very safe guide when unsupported by other evidence.

Another gift was a golden cross (probably processional), with a silver handle. On one side there was represented in relief the life of Christ, and on the other that of the Precursor. In the centre was a circle representing the Blessed Virgin attended by four angels, with the Queen at her feet. This, from the costume of the angels, was evidently a restoration of the XVth or XVIth century, but the attitude of Theodelinda is so like that of Suger in the stained glass at St. Denis, that it is difficult not to believe that an original was followed in this instance at least. Frisi has engraved this part of the cross, but as the original was melted for the expenses of the war during the consulate of Napoleon, it is impossible to decide on its authenticity.

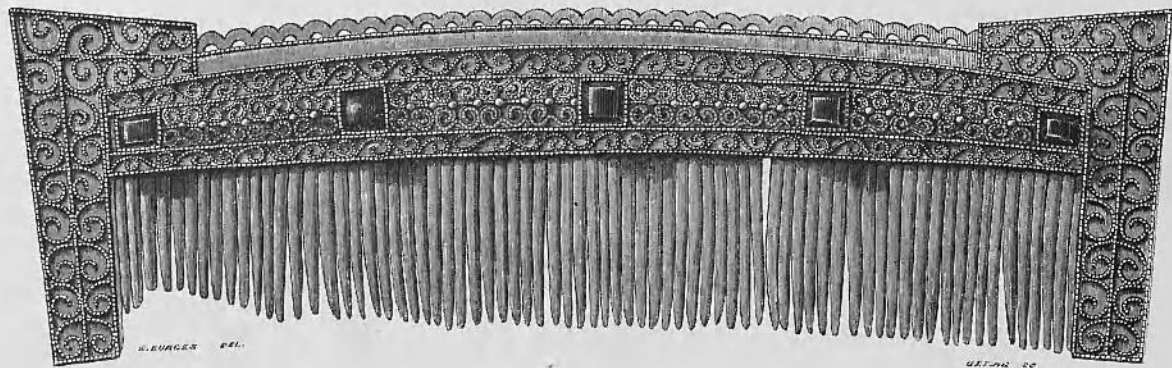
The hen and chickens, of which I have presented a drawing to the Institute, although represented on the tympanum along with the other things, and mentioned in the inventory, has, to say the least, a very artistic appearance, when we consider the period at which it is supposed to have been executed. It is just probable that when the jewels were stolen at Avignon, this may have been among those broken up and afterwards restored by Antelotto Braccioforte in the middle of the XIVth century. As it is, only the golden birds can claim any antiquity, the bottom, or plateau, being of copper gilt, the original, probably, having found its way to the mint at Milan, at the end of the last century. Much has been written concerning the symbolical meaning of this ornament: the most probable explanation is, that it was simply a plateau to ornament a banquet-table.

Besides a rich paten of gold, enriched with many pearls and jewels, which has disappeared, there remain to be noticed only two more of the gifts of Theodelinda; these, of the least intrinsic value of all her donations, are at the same time almost unique examples of the comb and flabellum.

As to the comb, it is met with in the various inventories which have been taken at Monza in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries, being in most

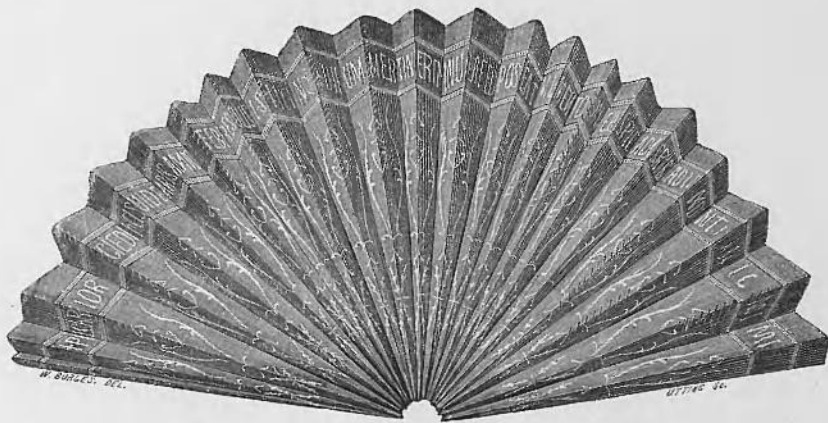


Section and end. Comb of Theodelinda.



The ivory comb, ornamented with filigree and jewels, preserved in the Treasury at the Basilica of St. John Baptist, at Monza, as one of the gifts of the Foundress, Theodelinda, Queen of the Lombards, (Circa A.D. 590.)

Length of the original 9 inches and one-eighth; breadth, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches.



The Fan or Flabellum preserved in the Treasury at the Basilica of St. John Baptist, at Monza, as having been given by the Foundress, Theodelinda, Queen of the Lombards, at the close of the VIth century. The case is of wood cased with silver: the fan of purple vellum illuminated with gold and silver.

Length of the case with its handle $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches; diameter of the fan expanded, 10 inches.

cases called the Queen's comb—"Pecten Reginæ." The engraving will give a better idea of it than any description. It is formed of ivory, enclosed in a filagree setting of silver gilt. The accompanying section shows the construction and adjustment of the various parts, ivory and metal; as also the open-work and jewels, and the teeth of the comb, still in fair preservation. The woodcuts (section and end view) are on a scale of two-thirds of the original size. A comb of precisely similar form, but without the setting, is figured in Mr. J. Y. Akerman's *Remains of Saxon Pagandom*, Plate xxxi. Fig. 1. This latter was found in 1771 on Barham Downs, about five miles from Canterbury, in the grave, evidently, of a female. The remark of Paulus Diaconus is thus confirmed in the resemblance of the costume of the Lombards with that of the Anglo-Saxons.

A comb appears anciently to have formed part of the regular furniture of a sacristy. Miræus, cap. 21, gives us in full the will of S. Everard, the father of the Emperor Berengarius: the rich vessels of the chapel are distributed among his sons. Among other things, Unroch, the eldest, has "Pecten auro paratum unum." Everard dates his will in 837. The next entry to the comb is "Flavellum (Flabellum) argenteum unum." A jewelled comb, said to be that of St. Loup, is preserved in the *trésor* of the Cathedral of Sens. M. Didron, "*Manuel d'Iconographie chrétienne*," p. 72, mentions a silver fan, with raised figures and ornaments, which he saw in use in the convent of Megaspilæon in Achaia.

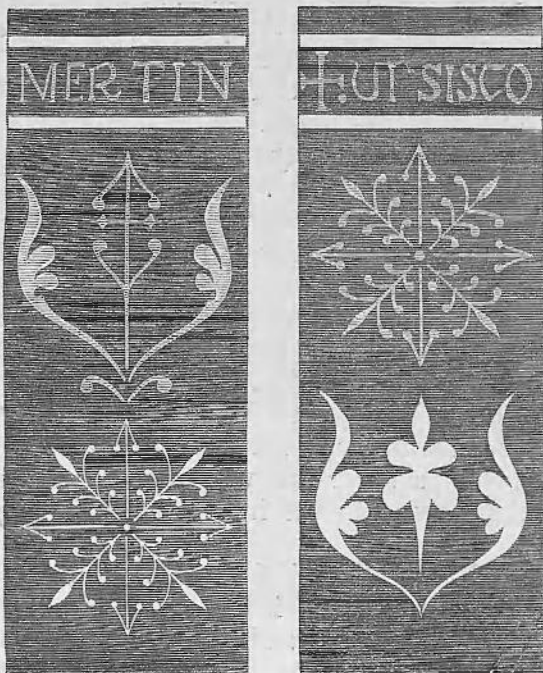
The fan of Theodelinda is formed of the beautiful purple vellum which we admire in contemporary manuscripts; it is decorated with gold and silver ornaments, and round the upper edge we find the following inscriptions, for the deciphering of which I am indebted to my friend, Il Rev. Signore Cesare Aguilhou, professor at Monza, assisted by the Canon, Signore Robbiati, of the Ambrosian Library at Milan. From their examination it results that each side had originally contained four hexameter lines. The inscription on one side may be read thus:—

"Ut sis conspectu præclara et cara venusta,
Hac rogo defendens solem requiesce sub umbra,
Has soror obtutu depictas arte figuras
Prælegeris flavido ut decoreris casta colore."

And on the other, now much obliterated—

“Pulchrior et facie dulcis videaris amica
 . . . fervores solis . . .
 Me retinere manu Ulfeda (?) poscente memento
 . . . splendoris.” . . .

I must at the same time observe that the name Ulfeda is by no means the most legible part of the inscription. I have been able to discover no one of that name, who lived at the period; the nearest approach is the name of Ulfaris



Two divisions of the purple vellum, forming the fan of Theodelinda, showing the ornaments of gold and silver alternately. Scale, two-thirds original size.

Duke of Treviso, who rebelling against Agilulf at the beginning of his reign, was taken and imprisoned.

Again, the word *soror* might imply that the donor was Gundoald, who fled with his sister into Lombardy, and afterwards becoming Duke of Turin, was shot by an arrow at the end of the reign of Agilulf, at the instigation, it is said, of Agilulf and Theodelinda, because he was becoming too popular. The donor might even be St. Gregory. However

that may be, if we compare the form of the letters, which are Roman with some slight Rustic variations, with the forms of those in the first few leaves of St. Augustine's Psalter, Cotton MS., Vesp. A. 1., which Mr. Westwood considers may have been brought by St. Augustine from Italy, in 596, we find quite a sufficient similarity to warrant our believing the inscriptions on the fan to be of the same date.

Again, the colour of the purple dye perfectly corresponds with another of St. Augustine's books, Royal MS. B.1., which Mr. Westwood also considers to be of his age; it is true the writing and ornaments may have been executed in this country, but from the rarity of the purple leaves these may probably have been imported from Rome.

Theophilus does not mention purple or rose-coloured vellum;⁴ but he gives us, Lib. iii, cap. 93, a receipt for reddening ivory, by means of a decoction of madder and vinegar. I have tried the receipt with vellum, and have succeeded very fairly. The method of writing in gold contained in cap. 96, is copied from Eraclius, well-known to be an earlier writer than Theophilus. See also Lib. i., cap. 30, where the process is given at greater length.

The Case of the Fan presents by no means such clear marks of authenticity; but it agrees perfectly in shape with that formerly in the Abbey of Tournus, and figured by Du Sommerard in his atlas and album.⁵ Upon the whole, I am inclined to believe that the wooden part is modern, made according to the old shape, such parts of the old silver covering as remained, being used again. The outside flap was anciently fastened to the fan itself, which was placed in the box in a reversed position; the bottom of the fan formed the top of the case when shut, and was strengthened by a small piece of leather to which it was sewn. When occasion occurred to open the fan, the outside flap was raised and turned round until it met the opposite side; the whole fan then presented the appearance of a circle.

I must refer to the paper by Mr. Way, published in the fifth volume of this Journal, for information concerning the use of the Flabellum, merely adding that in a Greek Psalter among the Additional MSS. in the British Museum,⁶

⁴ MS. Titus, C. XV. is an example of the rose-colour stain, although now nearly faded. Afterwards, we find MSS. with

the leaves painted instead of stained.

⁵ Atlas, P. IV. Album IX. serie, P. XVII.

⁶ Additional MS. Brit. Mus. 19,352.

is a representation of an angel fanning David, who is asleep, with a flabellum similar to that attributed to Queen Theodelinda, the only difference being that the handle is much longer.

Such are the various objects with which Theodelinda enriched the church at Monza. The next benefactor was Berengarius, who presented the whole of the furniture of his private chapel. Space will not allow me to enter into the details of his gifts; suffice it to say, that the rich pectoral cross, called in the inventories "*crux regni*," enriched with reliques and gems, as well as the diptychs, published by the Arundel Society, remain to the present day to testify to his liberality.

The cross forms together with the iron crown the two principal insignia in the coronations of the Kings of Italy. A purple amethyst engraved with a figure of Diana is attached to it by a chain, the mounting of the gem belonging probably to the XVIIth. century. Few objects of antiquity have such vouchers as the diptychs, they are first mentioned in the will of S. Everard, published by Miræus. Berengarius received as many as six books, bound in ivory, besides a psalter written in gold. At the end of the Sacramentarium, written in a hand which Frisi considers coeval with Berengarius, are two inventories, thus headed: "*Capitulatio ecclesiasticæ rei de capella serenissimi regis Berengarii quando Adelberto subdiacono commendavit: Ego Adelbertus cum distinctione numeri expono.*" And, "*De capella Domini Berengarii regis quando ego Adelbertus magistro meo Egilolfo presentavi.*" In the first of these inventories we find the following: "*Tabulas Eburneas II. in unam conjunctas.*" And in the second:

"*Tabulæ II. inscriptæ de*"

"*Et alteræ II. eburneæ inscriptæ de evangelio*"

"*Et alteræ ligneæ inscriptæ de libro sacramentorum.*"

One of the diptychs at present contains a gradual of St. Gregory, in gold and silver letters on purple vellum; the ivory leaves are supposed to have had the figures of the consuls altered into King David and St. Gregory. Frisi thinks the writing to be of the latter half of the IXth century. I took no note of it, and can therefore offer no opinion.

Another of the diptychs has a warrior on one side, and a

lady and boy on the other. These have been respectively connected with the Regent Galla Placidia, her son Valentinian III., and Theodosius the younger. Mr. Oldfield has suggested Valentinian II. and his mother Justina.

The last diptych has on one side a seated figure of a philosopher or poet, and on the other a Muse with a lyre. Claudian, Ausonius, and Boethius have been by some identified with the seated figure ; but on no sufficient grounds. We may sum up the whole controversy when we say, that nothing at all certain is known concerning the identification of two out of the three diptychs ; and it is still doubtful whether the remaining one is a palimpsest, or a copy of an earlier production. The reader will find a full description, as well as a résumé of the different opinions, in the Essay by M. Pulszky, prefixed to the catalogue of the "Fejérváry Ivories." Casts of all three have also been published by the Arundel Society.

The Sacramentarium given by Berengarius to the church, and preserved in the treasury, is remarkable as containing a prayer for the king and queen, the inventories above referred to, prayers on the occasions of the ordeal by means of bread and cheese and by boiling water ; and, lastly, for its binding, composed of perforated ivory with a plate of gold underneath, affording another illustration of the *Schedula* of Theophilus, who describes the process, although applied to a different article, in lib. iii. cap. 92.

The treasury also contains two mitres, in shape not unlike that in the museum at Beauvais, published in vol. xiii. of this Journal ; the material is a tissue of gold and red silk, the pattern being very small, and somewhat difficult to make out, as the mitres are kept in a glazed frame, which, however, has not been successful in preventing the entry of dust : both of them preserve their *infulæ* or labels.

There are, besides, two statuettes of silver, representing St. John the Baptist. One of them, probably of the XVIth. century ; the other is much earlier, perhaps of the XIIIth. or XIVth. The figure, which is very spirited, stands on an enamelled pedestal, ornamented with *champlevé* enamels ; these, if I remember rightly, have only once been through the fire, in this respect resembling the Oriental specimens. Tradition asserts that this figure was received from the Venetians in commutation of some yearly payment.

The last thing I shall notice, as remaining in the treasury, is a most superb chalice, rivalling in richness that preserved in the sacristy at Mayence; it is covered with figures and architectural ornaments, and was the donation of Giovanni Visconti in 1345.

The high altar of the Cathedral at Monza is remarkable as possessing one of the very few remaining precious frontals. It consists of a number of square compartments in silver-gilt repoussé, representing scenes from the life of St. John the Baptist; in the middle is a vesica piscis, containing the Baptism of our Lord by St. John; at the four cardinal points of this vesica are the evangelistic symbols, with angels, and four of the prophets. The compartments are separated by means of a narrow border composed of translucent enamels and gems, alternately. The enamels are very well executed. The gems are believed to have been taken from several of the jewelled vestments, corporals, &c., of the treasury. But the execution of the repoussé groups is most rude and inartistic; they have exactly the same barbarous appearance as the illuminations in the "Catalogus Benefactorum" of St. Albans, Brit. Mus., Nero D. VII.⁷ The following inscription in silver letters, relieved by blue champlevé enamel, is to be found at the bottom of all, close to the ground. The words in the original are arranged in twenty-four small rectangular compartments, each containing about three words, in two lines. The inscription is here given as it would read, written continuously. A few contractions, such as are of ordinary occurrence, are printed *in extenso*.—"M.CCCL. HOC OPUS FUIT INCEPTUM ET FINITUM EST M.CCCLVII. ET IN PRESENTI ALTARI COLLOCATUM EXTITIT DIE XXVIII. MENSIS AUGUSTI DICTI ANNI SCILICET IN FESTO DECOLLATIONIS BAPTISTE

⁷ The following are some of the principal precious frontals and dossels which have escaped the crucible:—

S. Ambrogio, Milan.—The whole of the four sides of the altar are cased with goldsmith's work and cloisonné enamels. The little folding-doors on the east side, are covered inside with most curious fragments of an Eastern textile fabric, representing warriors on horseback attacking wild beasts.

S. Mark's, Venice—possesses an altar frontal of a decidedly Gothic design, perhaps of the XIIIth century; also the celebrated Pala d'oro, rich in cloisonné enamels and Byzantine workmanship; it

is divided into two distinct pieces, now united; they have done duty anciently, I think, as superaltar and dossel.

Pistoia—has an altar front with translucent enamels; also a dossel disfigured by additions.

Florence—preserves in the Guardaroba of the Cathedral the enamelled dossel of the altar of the Baptism.

Bale—anciently possessed the dossel or frontal (it is rather difficult to decide which) now in the Musée de Cluny at Paris.

In the work of Du Sommerard will be found a representation of the dossel at Sens, melted down in the reign of Louis XV. to defray the expenses of the war.

JOHANNIS PER DISCRETUM VIRUM MAGISTRUM BORGINUM DE PUTEO CIVITATIS MLI (Mediolani?) AURIFICEM PROPRIA MANU SUA. CUJUS ANIMA IN BEATITUDINE REQUIESCAT. DICATUR VERO (?) PRO EJUS REMEDIO AVE MARIA TPR (tempore?) VICARIATUS VEN VIRI DOMINI GRATIANI DE ARONA (?) CANONICI ET VICARII HUIUS ECCLESIE DE MONOA (Monoetia?) ET ALIORUM CANONICORUM SUORUM TUNC IN DICTA ECCLESIA RESIDENTIUM."

Such was the treasury of Monza. It continued for many years the pride of the city, but at length troubles came fast and heavily upon Lombardy, and during the XIIIth and XIVth centuries we continually find the more valuable of these jewels pawned—at one time by the Milanese, to defend themselves against Frederick Barbarossa; at another by the Torriani and Visconti; at last, they were hidden by the Chapter, but discovered by the papal legate, and carried off to Avignon. There a thief stole them, and broke up several of the vases, &c. Recovered by the intercession of St. John Baptist, and the caution of a Florentine goldsmith, they were placed in a strong chest, and affixed to the vault of the Cathedral at Avignon, so that they should be in the sight of all. They did not return to Monza until 1345, when Giovanni Visconti offered the beautiful chalice noticed above. In the following year they were repaired by Antellotto Bracchioforte, and remained there until 1796, when two-thirds of the gold and half the silver were sent to Milan, and shortly after all the rest were taken to Paris, where the crown of Agilulf was stolen and melted in 1804. In 1816, all, with that exception, was restored.

Frisi has published no less than three inventories of the treasury at Monza, taken respectively in the years 1275, 1345, and 1353; of these that of 1275 is by far the fullest and most interesting, two of the items are particularly deserving of notice:—

"Item piscis (*pixis*) una de auro cum pede argenteo in qua portatur corpus X'ti."

"Item Gausape contextum ab utroque capite de perlis in magna quantitudine cum campanellis deauratis quinquaginta tres, et deficiunt decem, et de illis sunt novem in saculo uno."

There was also a pallium, adorned with 223 tintinnabula. With regard to the tintinnabula and campanellæ, I may remark that I have been shown a cope by the Sacristan of

the Cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle, the lower part of which had a number of small bells, of a sugarloaf shape, attached all round it.

Queen Theodelinda is said to have been anciently buried in the Capella del Santo Rosario, within a sarcophagus which is now deposited at the side of the greater sacristy. The chapel was painted in 1444 by Troso Monzese, with scenes from the life of Theodelinda. It has been conjectured, although without any sufficient grounds, that these were copies of the paintings in the old Lombard palace, mentioned by Paulus Diaconus. At present they have become exceedingly dirty and dark, so much so indeed, as to be scarcely intelligible. However, the Library of the Cathedral possesses a series of sketches made from them, in pen and ink, by Il Signore Gio. Battista Fossati, in the year 1722, and it is to his namesake, Il Signore Giuseppe Antonio Fossati, the present courteous *custode* of the treasury, that I must offer here in conclusion, not only my own best thanks, but also those of the Archaeological Institute, for his kindness in giving every possible facility in making the drawings of the comb, fan, the hen and chickens, and the remarkable inscribed *Flabellum*, the reliques of the royal foundress of the Basilica of Monza, to which I have desired to invite the attention of archaeologists.

W. BURGESS.