

ON THE USE OF ANTIQUE GEMS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

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THE natural sequel to the memoir on mediæval gem engraving, given in the previous volume of this Journal, is a brief notice of the seals and other metal work of the middle ages to which antique gems were so often adapted. The subjects engraved upon such gems were interpreted by their new possessors as representing scriptural or legendary subjects and events : nor could it be otherwise in the times

“ When Peter’s keys some christen’d Jove adorn,
And Pan to Moses lends his pagan horn.”

Thus the triple Bacchic mask of the Roman stage was revered as the Trinity in person, and so declared by the added legend “ *Hæc est Trinitatis imago ;* ” every veiled female head passed for a Madonna or a Magdalene, and received an appropriate motto ; and Isis nursing Horus could not but serve for the Virgin and the Infant Saviour. Nor was this substitution confined to gems alone, for the long-famed “ Black Virgins ” of Auvergne, when at last examined by the critical eye of the antiquary, proved to be actual basalt figures of these imported Egyptian divinities, which, having merely changed names, continued to attract devotees to their shrines, and in greater flocks than before. That frequent type, Thalia holding a mask in her hand, by an ingenious interpretation becomes Herodias carrying the Baptist’s head, and the skipping fawn, her dancing daughter, and as such appears in a seal of the fourteenth century with the allusive motto, “ *Jesus est amor meus.* ” Another remarkable example is supplied by an intaglio recently acquired for the British Museum on the dispersion of the Dineley collection. It is set in a silver mounting, in the usual fashion of privy seals or *secreta* of this class, in the fourteenth century, with a loop at the top, being thus conveniently carried about the person



Fig. I.—British Museum: from the Dineley Collection.



Fig. II.—Ring in the Waterton Collection.



Fig. III.—Ring in the Waterton Collection.

or by a cord around the neck; the margin bears an inscription common on amatory seals of the period—+ IE SVI SEL DE AMVR LEL. This fine gem is here figured on a scale double of the original (fig. 1.). Jupiter with his eagle at his side did duty amongst Charles VI.'s jewels for the similarly attended evangelist. Silenus, with his crooked *pedum*, was fittingly transformed into some crosiered abbot, "purple as his wines"; whilst Cupids made very orthodox angels. But the unlucky Pan and his Satyrs were for ever banished from the finger, and their forms now appear recast as devils in pictures of the realms of torment; and all this in virtue of their caprine extremities, for *Zernibog*, "the Black God," the Evil Principle of the ancient Slavonians, had become Zernebock in Teutonic parlance, and therefore was considered as compounded of man and goat.

Caracalla's head, with its curly locks close cropped, and its surly expression, was always taken for that of the irascible apostle, hence such a gem is known with the name ΠΕΤΡΟΣ added, to make all sure: I have myself observed the same head (in the Bosanquet collection) similarly *Petri-fied* by the insertion of a key in the field by some mediæval hand.

The monks of Durham took the head of Jupiter Fulgurator for St. Oswald's, and, as such, placed it on their common seal, with the title CAPVT SANCTI OSWALDI. Serapis passed current for the authentic portrait of Christ, and in all probability was the real original of the conventional likeness adopted by Byzantine art.

The finest cameo in the world, "the great agate of France," the Apotheosis of Augustus, was long respected in the Sainte Chapelle as a contemporary representation of the glory of Joseph in Egypt; whilst another noble work, the "Dispute between Neptune and Minerva," where a tree encircled by a vine (easily mistaken for the serpent) occupies the centre of the group, was presented to Louis XIV. (in 1685) by the authorities of a church in which, from time immemorial, it had been displayed as the picture of Adam and Eve in Paradise.

Antique intagli set in mediæval seals¹ have in general a Latin motto added around the setting. For this the Lom-

¹ The official seal was of large size, and always cut upon metal—silver for royalty, brass (latten) for other dignitaries.

It was for the *secretum* or private seal of the individual that antique stones were so much in request.

bard letter is almost invariably employed, seldom the black letter, whence it may be inferred, which indeed was likely on other grounds, that such seals for the most part came from Italy, where the Lombard alphabet was the sole one in use until superseded by the revived Roman capitals about the year 1450. Of such mottos a few examples will serve to give an idea, premising that the stock was not very extensive, judging from the frequent repetition of the same legends on seals of widely different devices. Thus a very spirited intaglio of a lion passant, found in Kent, proclaims—"SUM LEO QUOVIS EO NON NISI VERA VEHO"; another gives the admonition to secrecy—"TECTA LEGE, LECTA TEGE"; a third, in the same strain,—"*CLAUSA SECRETA TEGO.*" Less frequently seen are legends in old French, and these are more quaint in their style; for instance, around a female bust—"PRIVE SUY E PEU CONNU"; whilst a gryllus of a head covered with a fantastic helmet made up of masks gives the advice, in allusion to the enigmatical type,—"*CREEZ CE KE VUUS LIRREZ,*" for "*Croyez ce que vous lirez.*"

The young head of M. Aurelius, mounted in a pointed-oval setting, gives the strange notice, "*Credat omnis pii jaspidis*" (*signo* being understood). Perhaps it was taken for the portrait of Jasper, or Caspar, the first of the Three Kings of Cologne.

Often the legend merely expresses the owner's name; thus an intaglio, Pegasus, reads—"S. JOHANNIS DE BOSCO," who, from the device he has adopted, may be supposed a Templar. The most valuable example known to me is one (fig. II.) in the Waterton collection, set with an intaglio of three heads; Julia's between her sons Caius and Lucius, exactly as the same type appears on a denarius minted by C. Marius Trogus (a moneyer of Augustus), whose signet the gem in all likelihood was at the first. The inscription, "*S. ANDRE-OCTI DE S'RA,*" proves it to have been reset for some Italian *Andreotto* di Serra(?).² Another (in the same collection), finely engraved Persian vizored helmet, the so-called "Head

² A gold ring set with a small rude intaglio of Pax, bearing the legend *RICARDVS ESP*, said to have been found at Ratisbon, was sold (a few years back) to a certain enthusiastic amateur for the monstrous price of 45*l.*, as the identical ring which betrayed our Cœur de Lion in that city

into the power of the recreant Austrian Duke. The astute importer, on my remarking, at its first sight, that *ESP* bore more analogy to *Episcopus* than to *Plantagenet*, skilfully altered the letters so as to support its pretensions, and his ingenuity was fully rewarded.

of Darius," is encircled with the legend *s' CONRADI DE COMITE*, "*Corrado del Conte*," also an Italian, as appears besides from the pattern of the elegant ring enchasing it (fig. III.).

It, however, appears to me that the earliest adaptation of antique gems to the purpose of mediæval signets had another and a more rational motive in its origin than the one usually assigned. The Frankish successors to the name of the Cæsars also appropriated by a similar usurpation their images upon gems, by the simple expedient of adding their own superscriptions around the setting. Carloman (764) takes for his seal a female bust with the hair tied in a knot upon the head: Charlemagne, the laureated head of M. Aurelius; and later, that of Serapis; both profiles, be it observed, being almost identical in character. Louis I. (816) seals with that of Antoninus Pius: Pepin le Bref with the Indian Bacchus; Pepin duc d'Aquitaine with Caligula's portrait. Charles II. (843) adopts an imperial laureated head (not identified); Lothaire, that of Caracalla (*Révue Archéologique* for 1858). It is usual to consider all such portraits as having been regarded in those days as authentic likenesses of divine personages or of the saints, and to have been adopted merely out of veneration for the supposed prototypes; but a circumstance has lately come under my notice almost carrying with it the conviction that these princes selected, out of the numerous antique gems at their command, such portraits as presented a resemblance either real or fancied to their own features. However remote the likeness, it could not but be more faithful to nature than aught that the decrepit art of their day could produce, even upon metal. Amongst the Anglo-Saxon charters of St. Denys, two seals of our kings (published by Sir F. Madden in this *Journal*, vol. xiii.) have furnished me both with the first idea, and also with the strongest support of this explanation of the practice. The first seal, that of Offa (a great patron of the art of engraving, as his coins, the best executed in the Saxon series, amply demonstrate), is a profile of himself crowned, full of an individuality perfectly marvellous in a work of that epoch, and evidently cut upon a metal seal. But the later Edgar (whose the second is), could command the services of no such skilful hand to supply him with his portrait from the life; he, therefore, has converted into his own the diademed head of some youthful Seleucidan prince,

a superb intaglio in a large *cabochon* gem, 1 inch by $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in measurement. In my previous memoir in this Journal a full description has been given of Lothaire's attempt to resuscitate the glyptic art sufficiently to perpetuate his own image in a gem: disappointed, however, in the results obtained, he appears finally reduced, like the others of his dynasty, to content himself with the borrowed face of a Roman predecessor. The oldest example in this series where a religious motive appears to have dictated the choice of the antique subject does not occur before the date of 1176, when Louis VIII. uses for his seal, first the Abraxas god; and at a later period a Diana Venatrix.

Ecclesiastical jewels and plate were at the same time profusely enriched with engraved stones (mostly brought back from the East by returning pilgrims), a practice indeed of which the example had been set long before, even under the Cæsars, for Juvenal laughs at the ostentatious patron who transferred his gems from his fingers to the exterior of his goblets.

“Nam Virro ut multi gemmas in pocula transfert
A digitis.”

And Martial more pithily alludes to the same folly—

“Gemmatum Scythicis ut luceat ignibus aurum,
Aspice quot digitos exuit iste calix!”

“How many a finger hath that cup left bare,
That gemmed with Scythian fires its gold might glare!”

But the finest and most important were reserved to embellish the golden casing of the actual shrine containing the bones of the saint, the “*decus et tutamen*” of the place. An early instance in this country is recorded of this usage. In a great dearth, Leofric, tenth Abbot of St. Alban's, sold all the gold and silver vessels of his church, “*retentis tantummodo quibusdam gemmis preciosis ad quas non invenit emptores, et quibusdam nobilibus lapidibus insculptis quos cameos vulgariter appellamus—quorum magna pars ad feretrum (the shrine) decorandum cum fabricaretur, est reservata.*”³ The last passage refers to the shrine made by the monk Anketil, soon after A.D. 1120. “*Et cum de antiquo hujus ecclesiæ thesauro prolata fuissent gemmæ ad*

³ Matt. Paris, in Vit. Abbatum, p. 26.

opus feretri decorandum, allati sunt quidam ampli lapides quos *sardios-onicleos* appellamus, et vulgariter *cadineos* [corruption of cameos] nuncupamus.”⁴ Of these shrines, the most ancient now existing is the *paliotto* of S. Ambrogio, Milan, forming by a series of bas-reliefs in gold and silver-gilt a complete casing for the high altar, and executed before the year 850. In it appear numerous antique gems, but the most interesting is a large yellow stone, irregularly oval, engraved in coarse letters (reversed on the gem), VOTV RIADÉ, expressing it to be the offering *exvoto* of some pious Lombard named Riada; by its dedicatory inscription, reminding us of the Besborough nicolo offered by Ammonius to Astarte. In Edward the Confessor’s shrine, erected by our Henry III., amongst the other jewels are enumerated many camei, fifty-five described as large, and one of special magnitude in a gold case with a chain attached, valued at 200*l.* of the money of the times.⁵

How such gems were introduced into Gothic ornamentation may be learned from this example in the Trésor de S. Denys—

“Une grande image représentée de la ceinture en haut au naturel, ayant sur la teste une très précieuse mitre enrichie de grande quantité de perles et de pierreries, avec un orfray autour du col, le tout en argent doré . . . dans le chef de l’image est aussi le chef du mesme Saint (Hilaire), l’orfray du col est enrichi par le devant d’une très belle agathe d’une face d’homme depuis la teste jusque aux espauls; et est l’effigie auprès du naturel de l’empereur Auguste, environnée comme est aussi tout l’orfray de grande quantité de perles et riches pierreries.”

“L’orfray ou collet qui est autour du col (de S. Benoist) est enrichi de grand nombre de perles et de pierreries, et par le devant d’une excellente agathe, représentant la teste d’un homme jusques aux espauls, qui est l’effigie au naturel de l’empereur Tibere. La mitre est admirable car elle est toute parsemée de riches agathes sur lesquelles sont représentées diverses faces d’anges, d’hommes, de femmes, et d’animaux, très bien taillées et elabourées: et outre cela de plusieurs beaux rubis et saphirs et autres pierres avec plus de 300

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 38.

⁵ See, at the end of this memoir, the list of camei and gems collected by

Henry III. to enrich the shrine of the Confessor.

perles orientales. Ce reliquaire si précieux fut donné par le bon prince, Jean, Duc de Berry, l'an 1393, en reconnaissance des reliques de S. Hilaire qu'il avoit eues de l'abbé et des religieux de S. Denys."—(P. 105.)

Caylus figures several antiques, both camei and intagli, selected from nearly three hundred, at that time (1760) enchased in the sacred vessels and other ornaments belonging to the treasury of Troyes cathedral.⁶ The majority, however, remarks Caylus, were only small intagli in cornelian, and set in the *châsse*, or portable shrine, containing a most precious tooth of St. Peter, and the entire head of the cheaper St. Philip. This *châsse* had been made for Bishop Garnier, almoner to the French crusaders at the taking of Constantinople in 1204, whence he piously *stole*, "conveyed, the wise it call," the apostle's skull.

The shrine of the Three Kings of Cologne, a work of the twelfth century, is a rich store-house of antiques. The two gable-ends are adorned with the most important pieces at the goldsmith's disposal, large and beautiful camei, and the sides are studded with engraved stones of all kinds; for some subjects amongst them, Leda and the swan, for instance, the devotees of that age must have been puzzled to find a scriptural prototype.⁷ Their original number was 226, when described by Boisserée, but the best were picked out in the *hejira* of 1794. This extraordinary specimen of mediæval metal-work was made by order of Philip von Heinsberg, dom-probst, or dean, in 1170, to contain the three skulls, brought from Constantinople, and presented by the Emperor Frederic I. to the Archbishop of Cologne six years before. In 1794, out of fear of the advancing French army, all the treasures of the cathedral were hastily carried off to Arnberg, whence in 1804 they were solemnly brought back to Cologne. In this interval the shrine had been crushed, many parts of it were lost, and several gems stolen—others say, "sold for the maintenance of the ecclesiastics," in which case it would naturally be only the precious stones, not the antiques, that

⁶ Caylus, *Recueil d'Antiqu.*, t. v. pl. 52.

⁷ Could they have interpreted the swan into a gigantic dove, and have discovered in the group a most materialistic representation of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Virgin? The frequency with which this apparently most inappropriate design is introduced into

ecclesiastical ornaments, affords but too much foundation for this belief; in fact, Valentinus the Gnostic, in his application of the Greek mythology to the support of his own system of Christianity, expands this very fable, as one of those foreshowing the descent of the Saviour.

were the first to be converted into money. It was therefore completely re-made by the *Polacks*, artificers of Cologne, the missing parts of the metal-work replaced by copies, and many precious stones, as well as antiques, were supplied by the devotion of the citizens to make up the deficiencies. The length of the shrine was at the time reduced to 6 ft. 7 in.; the height and breadth remaining as before. The material is silver-gilt. No more than the one end exhibiting the skulls, blazing with diamonds (perhaps pastes) can be seen from the choir, through a strong grating. To inspect the monument, admittance into the chapel is obtained by a fee of one thaler, and a small lantern is supplied, the vaulted strong room being in utter darkness.

Next in importance as a mediæval storehouse of antique gems was the shrine at Marburg, constructed about 1250 to contain the bones of Elizabeth, Landgravine of Thüringen and Hesse, and canonized in 1235. This shrine, in the usual form of a house, surrounded by a Byzantine arcade, is 6 ft. long, 2 deep, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ high, above which the roof rises $1\frac{1}{4}$ ft. It is constructed of oak overlaid with copper thickly gilt. The arcade is filled with seated figures of the Apostles, in silver gilt, of which metal are also made the elaborate bas-reliefs covering the roof. Under pediments, one in the middle of each side, corresponding in elevation with the gable ends of the edifice, are the four principal figures, two feet in height, seated on thrones, and projecting beyond the general outlines; they are, Christ seated, Christ crucified, an angel hovering above him (stolen in 1810), the Virgin and Child, and Saint Elizabeth. The eight bas-reliefs on the roof represented scenes of the life of that saint.

The architectural portions of the metal-work were originally set with the enormous number of 824 stones, fifty-nine plates of mother-of-pearl, two large, one middle-sized, and many smaller pearls. The stones were sapphires, emeralds, amethysts, jacinths, crystals, onyxes, almandines, calcedonies, and carnelians, thus distributed: 259 in the four principal figures; 252 in the smaller: in the ornamental portions of the roof and of the frames, 313. Of these, sixty-five stones were missing, as their empty settings showed. In November, 1810, it was carried off to Cassel by the orders of the Westphalian government, but was returned to Marburg in 1814. During its absence, however, some archæological thief had

extracted every engraved gem but one, and these have disappeared for ever. Fortunately, Professor Ullman availed himself of its removal from under the grating which had preserved it for six centuries to take impressions in sealing-wax of thirty-four intagli and one cameo. The most famous of all the camei was placed above the Madonna, a splendid sardonyx of three layers, the heads of Castor and Pollux, regarded during the middle ages as a most wonderful natural production, and for which a former Elector of Mayence is said to have offered in vain the whole village of Anemöneburg. Of this, unluckily, no drawing has been preserved. Of these wax impressions Creuzer has published accurate fac-similes in his *Archæologie*, vol. iii., with a long and instructive commentary upon the subject of each. These subjects may be briefly enumerated, to exhibit the strange variety of engraved gems offered by the piety of crusaders and pilgrims, chiefly valuable then for their occult virtues. The cathedral at Marburg is the first pure gothic building raised in Germany, begun in 1235, and finished in forty-eight years, as the church of the Knights of the Teutonic Order.

The species of the stones were not marked by Ullman; probably the settings, and the hurry of the commissioners to be off with their booty, prevented his doing more than take the impressions, which we may conclude were those of all the engraved gems.

1. Two goats under a tree; good work. 2. Cupid on a lion; very archaic. 3. Jove seated; common Roman. 4. Horse lying down, the head and neck of a cow appear above him; good. 5. Warrior seated, his helmet on a cippus in front. I have little doubt that, in 1854 (at the sale of the Webb Gems), by one of those extraordinary chances so frequent in this study, this identical gem, a nicolo, came into my possession. The exact agreement in size, and in the singular false perspective of the hero's further leg, renders this opinion almost a certainty. 6. Warrior advancing; fine. 7. Jove seated; rude. 8. Head of Pallas; fine; a largish stone. 9. Raven, above him the Delphic E; rude. 10. Bonus Eventus, standing, with cornucopia; fine. 10a. A Cufic legend. 11. Jove seated; rude. 12. Fox in a car drawn by two cocks; fine. 13. Fortuna Nemesis, winged and helmeted; fine and large. 14. A horseman, with what seems a torch over his shoulder (more probably his mantle);

rude work ; the only gem that has escaped, resembling a ruby. 15. Warrior seated, upon his hand a Victory, as it seems ; fair. 16. A dolphin and two shells ; Greek. 17. Head, laureated ; rude Roman. 18. Head, perhaps Medusa's ; fine. 19. Cray-fish ; rude. 20. Arabic, not Cufic, legend, translated by Wahl as a Dutch name, "von Frank." 21. Roma seated between two Victories ; large stone, in the rudest Roman style. 22. Arabic legend. 23. Hercules standing, his hand resting on his club ; good. 24. Pegasus, or the Sassanian Winged Bull ; rude. 25. Potter at work ; good. 26. Persian king, slaying a monster ; rude. 27. Cufic legend ; very neat. 29. Fortuna, or Nemesis ; good. 31. Head of Apollo, bay-crowned ; in the field ΠΑΙΑΝ behind the head, and bay-sprig in front ; fine Greek work : large stone. 32. Bacchante, standing, with a tray upon her head ; rude. 33. Cupid mounted upon a hippocampus ; fine. 34. Aquarius pouring an amphora into a crater, or perhaps a Faun ; in the field four large letters, the rest on the reverse, three letters, imperfect : Creuzer proposes the reading ΤΩ ΑΜΠΕΛΩ, "to Ampelus." 35. Circular cameo, head of Pallas in the early Greek manner and flat relief. This stone, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide, was placed in the centre of the canopy over the fifth apostle.

We find attached to this shrine the same story of a luminous gem, as in the shrine at Egmond ; a large egg-shaped stone, placed above the grand cameo, was ever believed to give light in the hours of darkness ; but Creuzer ascertained it to be no more than rock-crystal. It was famous in the middle ages, as the "Karfunkel" of Marburg.

The "Trésor de Conques," a secluded abbey in Auvergne, still preserves the most important monuments of Carlo-vingian art in existence, dedicated there by Charlemagne. Here is the statuette of Sainte Foy, Virgin and Martyr, seated on a throne, with a Byzantine crown on her head, and large square pendants in her ears, richly set with gems, the whole in gold *repoussé*, 80 c. (32 in.) high. Also the A of Charlemagne, only survivor of the alphabet, one letter of which was presented to each of the principal abbeys of his time, framed of oak overlaid with silver gilt, 45 c. high, in form a triangle, with two verticals upon the base inside. In these, in the processional cross, and in the enameled phylacteries of the reliquaries, are set, amongst other stones, some sixty en-

graved gems and three camei, mostly of the Lower Empire. The most curious are, a large sard, "a head of Caracalla, very coarse work ; a seated Isis, on a large "tourmaline" ; and, most singular of all, an amethyst intaglio, a man, his head in front face, in a pleated robe, standing, in each hand a long foliated cross, precisely the type of a Carolingian denier, legend, **CARN**. The *Annales Archéologiques* for 1860 give many plates of the figures, and all the engraved stones.

Amongst the "*Vesselle de Chapelle*" of Louis, Duc d'Anjou, according to the inventory drawn up about 1365, we find some instructive instances of this employment of camei. No. 23, "Un tableau d'argent doré, semé par dedenz de esmeraudes granz et petites, balaiz granz et petiz, *camahieu* granz et petiz, et menues perles grant quantité. Et ou milieu dudit tableau a un très grant *camahieu vermeil*, ou quel a Nostre Dame gisant Nostre Seigneur en la cresse, et les anges tout entour, et dessouz a Nostre Dame qui baigne son enfant, et derriere elle a Saint Josef seant. Et sient le dit tableau sur un souage qui est semé de esmeraudes, de rubis d'Alisandre et de petites perles," &c. This cameo, with its figures in red relief, "*vermeil*," abounds too much in figures, although interpreted as angels, and is altogether too elaborate a composition for a Byzantine Christian work, as the minute description of the subject at first would tempt one to conclude. Doubtless it was antique, and represented that favorite theme of the Roman artists, the education of Bacchus. The good monk who drew up the inventory for Louis saw in the nymph Leucothea the Virgin Mary ; in the attendant genii, so many sportive angels ; and in the seated Silenus, that ever-present actor in the history of Bacchus, the patriarchal-looking Joseph.

No. 25 is "Une crois longue et grelle d'argent doré, et y est Nostre Seigneur en la dicte croiz tout estandu ; et est l'arbre d'icelle croiz semé de perles et de pierrerie. Et a ou bout du bras de la croiz par en haut un *camahieu* ouquel a ij. chevaux qui menent un chariot, e les mene un home. Et es ij. boux des travers de la croiz a ij. testes d'omme, et est l'une blanche et l'autre vermeille. Et ou bout d'icelle crois a un autre *camahieu* ou quel a une femme quise siet en une chaire."

The following extract from the Trésor de S. Denys is extremely valuable, since it describes a most elaborate

specimen of Carlovingian metal-work, as well as the manner in which remarkable engraved stones continued to retain their primary estimation, although for reasons totally diverse—for the aqua-marine here mentioned is the celebrated *Julia Titi*, the work of Evodus; the “gem of King David” is a lump of antique *schmelze* paste, of which I have seen specimens exhibiting the same odd transition of colors on the change of light:—

“Un très riche joyau et très précieux reliquaire nommé l’escrain de Charlemagne à cause qu’il a jadis servy à la chapelle de ce saint empereur. Cette rare piece est en façon de tableau, composée de trois estages d’or, enrichie de grand nombre de pierres précieuses, comme d’aigues marines, saphirs, esmeraudes, cassidoines, rubis, grénats, et de tres belles perles orientales toutes enchassées en or. Entre ces pierreries il y en a une admirable large comme un douzain de France, taillée en ovale et enchassée en or comme les autres, laquelle, estant posée sur la paulme de la main ou sur quelque autre lieu plat, paroist verte, et levée au jour elle semble estre de couleur de pourpre. Elle a autrefois servy au grand Roy David, comme il appert par les lettres, burinées sur l’enchaussure que disent—‘Hic lapis fuit Davidis regis et prophetæ.’

“Sur la faisse de cet escrain ou buffet d’honneur on voit une aigue marine des plus belles, sur laquelle est représentée en *demy-relief* l’effigie de Cleopatre, Royné d’Egypte, ou selon aucuns de la princesse Julia, fille de l’Empereur Tite; pièce très rare et admirée de tous ceux qui la voyent. Autour de cette effigie sont gravés ces deux mots Grecs—**ΕΥΘΔΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ.**”⁸

“Un excellent camahieu d’agate blanche sur laquelle est relevée la face d’une femme couronnée, qui est l’effigie de la *Royne de Saba*, laquelle se transporta de son royaume en Jerusalem pour y voir le Roy Solomon et ouyr sa sapience, comme dict l’Escriture Sainte (3 Reg. 10). Cette pièce est très antique et digne de remarque. Elle est enchassée en argent doré et enrichie de plusieurs pierres précieuses.”⁹

The Trésor also boasted of important examples of imperial “onychina et murrhina,” now dedicated to the service of the altar; *e. g.*:—

⁸ Trésor de S. Denys, p. 102.

⁹ *Ib.*, p. 124.

“Un calice très exquis fait d’une très belle agathe, gaude-ronné par dehors, admirable pour la beauté et variété des couleurs que s’y sont trouvées naturellement esparses ça et là en façon de papier marbré,” a comparison aptly, though undesignedly, illustrating Pliny’s description of the *Murrhina*.

“Une autre gondole de crysolite très exquise, couleur de verd de mer : le pied et la bordure garnis d’or et enrichis de saphirs, grénats, prismes d’esmeraudes, et de soixante et dix perles orientales. Cette pièce est grandement estimée par ceux qui se connoissent en pierreries. Elle fut jadis engagée par le Roy Louis le Gros (1108—1137) et desengagée de son consentement par l’Abbé Suger, qui en paya 60 marcs d’argent, grande somme pour ces temps là. Elle a esté faite ou du moins garnie par Saint Eloy, comme le mesme Suger asseure au livre de ses gestes. ‘Quod vas’ (dit il, parlant de cette gondole) ‘tam pro pretiosa lapidis qualitate quam integra sui quantitate mirificum, inclusorio Sancti Eligii opere constat esse ornatum ; quod omnium artificum iudicio pretiosissimum æstimatur.’”

In the cathedral of Brunswick is still shown a singular adaptation of antique jewels to the decoration of a reliquary ; it is the arm of St. Blaize, brought from Palestine by Henry the Lion in the eleventh century, encased in silver, on the fingers of which are no less than fourteen rings.

Numerous “Lapidaria” are extant, both in MS. and in the collection published by Camillo Leonardo in 1502 (ascribed to Solomon, Chael, Ragiel, and Rabanus Maurus), minutely describing the virtues of the different figures engraved on gems. Nonsensical as are their explanations of the designs and of their deductions thence, these doctrines were firmly believed during the middle ages. The mode of expression occasionally used makes the reader more than suspect that the compilers of these guides mistook (like the Marburghers above mentioned) the engravings upon the stones for the actual work of nature, so completely had all knowledge of this art perished.

In the Patent Roll 51 Henry III. (A.D. 1266—67) a list has been preserved of jewels collected by that king for the enrichment of the shrine of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. Some may have been obtained at Rome by the Abbot of Westminster, Richard de Ware, who was sent to Italy at that time, and brought over Pcter, “civis

Romanus," by whom the basement of the shrine was constructed, ornamented with glass mosaic and marbles, and upon this was placed the golden jeweled feretory wrought by two goldsmiths of London, Fitz-Otho and Edward his son. The entry on the Patent Roll, from which the following particulars regarding this shrine are derived, enumerates the costly provision made by Henry III.—"*Lapides pretiosos et jocalia deputata casse sive feretro in quo corpus beatissimi Edwardi Regis disposuimus collocari.*"¹

"*Firmaculum cum camauto in medio...anulus cum saphiro inciso*²... *baculus continens vij. anulos cum chamahutis parvis...pulchrum chamahutum cum imaginibus filiorum Jacobi in capsâ aurea cum rubettis et smaragdinibus in circumferentia...camahutum cum tribus imaginibus in capsâ aurea*³... *camahutum cum imaginibus Moysis et serpentis*" (*Esculapius*?) "... *camahutum cum magno capite...chamahutum cum curru et equitibus...chamahutum cum imagine in medio...chamahutum cum imagine regis...chamahutum optimum cum ij. albis imaginibus...chamahutum cum imagine leonis...chamahutum cum duabus imaginibus et arbore...chamahutum cum capite elevato...chamahutum cum ij. capitibus...chamahutum cum imagine beate Marie...chamahutum cum capite duplicato...magna perla ad modum chamahuti...chamahutum cum aquila...*"

The list continues with a further enumeration of camei thus described—"cum ij. angelis...cum ymagine alba...cum capite albo...cum capite bene crinato...chamahutum album cum imagine mulieris cum puero et dracone" (*Ceres and Triptolemus*?) "...chamahutum cum equo...cum capite et leone opposito in capsâ aurea ad modum crucis...cum capite albo barbato...in capsâ aurea ad modum crucis cum bove...cum imagine alba cum magestate ex parte alba"⁴...chamahutum in capsâ aurea ad modum targie...cum ij. capitibus albis...cum laticibus (*lyncibus*?) et curru...cum cane...cum capite barbato...chamahutum cristallinum cum capite...cum capite ruffo"⁵...cum capite bipertito" (*Janus*?) "crinato...cum

¹ Extracted from Canon Rock's invaluable repertory of Ecclesiastical Antiquities, the "Church of Our Fathers," vol. iii. part 1, p. 393.

² Mention is made of a second ring "cum saphiro inciso."

³ In each case, in the following items,

the "camahutum," is described as "in capsâ aurea," or "in capsâ auri."

⁴ Other camei are mentioned "cum magestate," i. e., God the Father (a *Scrapis*, or *Jupiter* possibly?).

⁵ This description occurs again in other instances.

leone...j. chamahutum in anulo pontificali." The number of camei is in all not less than eighty-five.

Amongst precious stones the following are enumerated; each is described as "in capsâ aurea," or "in capsâ argenti."—"Onicleus—saphirus—citrinus—amatista—prasina—canis onicleus—phiola oniclea et alia cristallina—balesii—minute prasine in una chinchia—perle in una chinchia,"⁶ &c. "Saphirus *crinitus* in capsâ aurea" may have been an asteria sapphire. We find also "ij. panchii calcidonii," probably for *panchri* (Pliny), multicolored; also "decem cokille et unum album capud;" these cokille, *coquilles*, were possibly disks of mother-o'-pearl, at that time accounted very precious, and of which numerous examples are to be seen on the Gothic crowns found at Guarrazar, and now preserved at Paris in the Musée des Thermes.⁷ They occur also on the Marburg shrine, and on the crown of Queen Theodelinda at Monza noticed by Mr. Burges in this Journal.⁸ Theophilus alludes to the use of mother-o'-pearl in goldsmiths' work.⁹ The expression "capite elevato," repeatedly occurring in the foregoing list of camei, clearly signifies work in very high relief, or more than mezzo-relievo. The "capita oniclea" I suppose to have been heads carved *en ronde bosse*.

The feretrum was furthermore enriched by Henry III. with images representing St. Peter trampling upon Nero, St. Edmund, and other regal personages, set with precious stones, emeralds, sapphires, "balesiis, granatis, rubettis," &c. I may refer to the Patent Roll, as cited by Canon Rock, for more full details.

The following item claims notice:—"unum magnum chamahutum in capsâ aurea cum cathena aurea," valued at the enormous price of 200*l.*, equal to about 4000*l.* at the present time.

This shrine may be supposed to have remained intact down to the time of the suppression of the monastery. All the valuable portion would then have been confiscated for the king's

⁶ This term here occurs repeatedly; it is somewhat obscure; the glossaries give *chinchitha* (whence Fr. *quincaillerie*), or *chinsica*, reconditorium, apotheca, &c. In old French *chinche* signifies a piece of cloth, *chiffon*, in which possibly the jewels may have been wrapped up.

⁷ Catalogue des Objets d'Art, &c., exposés au Musée des Thermes. pp. 355, 357, edit. 1864.

⁸ Arch. Journ., vol., xiv. p. 14.

⁹ Theophilus, lib. iii. c. 95. "Secantur chonchæ marinæ per partes et inde limatur margaritæ."

use, as is recorded in the case of the Canterbury shrine, of which the spoils in gold and jewels filled two chests, that required six or eight strong men, according to Stow, to carry each chest out of the church. Henry VIII. being a man of taste and a particular admirer of camei, as would appear from the number of fine ones with his portrait still extant, the antique gems in this grand acquisition must have been highly appreciated by him, and very probably were added to his other numerous treasures of art. Hence it may be a question whether some of those now in the Royal Collection may not descend from this source; something tangible might be ascertained by comparing their subjects with those described in the above list.