

THE BLACAS GEMS.

PART I.—INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

By C. W. KING, M.A.

EVER since the date, now almost three centuries remote, when Lorenzo dei Medici commenced founding his celebrated Cabinet of Antiquities, *Engraved Gems* have constantly been regarded as an important complement, or rather, essential portion of every national collection of works of art. And the reason is obvious to all who have given any attention to the subject. Gems are the sole imperishable vehicle of ancient genius ; they alone preserve to us the reflex of the departed glories of much of statuary, and of all of painting in the times from which they have descended to our own. The traditionary fame of Theodorus, Lysippus, and Eutychides, of Pamphilus, Parrhasius. and Apelles, is confirmed by no surviving evidence but what is to be deduced from them. Indeed, as a recent writer has tersely and happily expressed their claims to our attention : "In the gems that have been worn by any civilised people we possess an epitome of that people's arts, their religion, and their civilization, in a form at once the most portable, the most indestructible, and the most genuine."¹

Stimulated by the example, and well-merited fame of the "Magnificent" Florentine, the other Italian princes, the Valois kings of France, the German emperors, and many of their electors, and last, but assuredly not least, the Czarina of Russia, cultivated, with emulous zeal, this branch of amateurship, and formed the early established and splendid cabinets of the Vatican, Venice, Mantua, Parma, Naples, Paris, Vienna, Heidelburgh, Dresden, Berlin ; and most recent, but infinitely the most extensive of all, that of the Hermitage, St. Petersburg, so wonderfully enriched of late years, from the exploration of the tomb-treasures of Kertch.

¹ Edinburgh Review, Oct. 1866, p. 528.

But in our own country the national fund of antique art, stored up within the British Museum, though equalling, perhaps surpassing, any of its rivals on the Continent, in many important branches—classical sculpture, and fictile work, Assyrian, Egyptian and Celtic remains, but especially in numismatics—continued deplorably inferior to any, even the most inconsiderable amongst them, in all that concerns Glyptic Art. All that the Museum could *exhibit* in that line (if such a term may be used of things most carefully secluded from the public gaze) were the united small collections of three or four private amateurs—Townley, Payne Knight, Hamilton, Cracherode,—comprising, it is true, much that was pretty, but very little that was important, or commensurate with the requirements of their dignified place. This deficiency may, in great part, be attributed to one circumstance, the very recent foundation of the British Museum—the youngest of its sisters in Europe—its existence only commencing in 1753 with the transfer of the Sloane collection to Montague House. In fact for many years afterwards it remained a mere gallery of natural history and public library united; as a repository for monuments of ancient art, its creation only commences with the beginning of the present century, the purchase of the Townley marbles, &c., in 1804.²

A national collection, carrying out the idea in its completeness, had indeed been inaugurated long before, by Charles I., a prince possessing a refinement of taste, coupled with a knowledge of art, perfectly astonishing in one of his unfavourable position and semi-barbarian surroundings. He had joined to his noble collection of pictures, statues, and medals a respectable cabinet of gems, based upon that of Gorlæus³ (the first formed this side of the Alps), which had been purchased by his father, in 1609, for the use of Henry, the then Prince of Wales. This, however, was dispersed at the sale of the Whitehall Gallery by the Parliamentary Commissioners, and several of its former members encountered my observation, safely harboured ever since that disaster in the Arundel, now Marlborough, Cabinet. Almost coincidently with the appointment of the British Museum as

² At a total cost of £28,200: it was not opened to the public before 1808.

³ Of Delft, where he published in

1601, "*Gorlæi Dactyliotheca*," with copperplates of all his gems; reprinted in 1609 and 1695.

a repository for the treasures of ancient art, the taste for Glyptics in this country for causes unnecessary here to recapitulate, began rapidly to decline and soon totally expired, and thus all knowledge and interest in the pursuit simultaneously died out amongst the directors of the department of antiquities in that institution. The visitor to its public rooms would, for an interval of full quarter of a century, naturally have supposed the very existence of the Glyptic art to be ignored by the authorities of the place: its few gems, all resulting from previous bequests or purchases, being only accessible by special permission and under very incommensurable restrictions. During this long intermission, some very important collections of gems had from time to time been offered for sale to the Trustees; in some cases the timidity of conscious ignorance stood them in the place of critical knowledge, as when it prevented their acquiring (in spite of popular clamour) the then so extravagantly puffed Poniatowsky forgeries; but in too many others, alas! it occasioned the loss of golden opportunities such as fortune never offers twice. But *now*, happily, the cloud has passed away, and with "the right man in the right place," zeal going hand in hand with intelligence and taste are all assiduously labouring to raise this long-neglected section of their charge to a level with the high condition of the others surrounding it; and to make the *locale* as its name properly denotes, in its fullest sense, "a Temple of the Muses." A most auspicious beginning was made (in the summer of 1865) by the purchase of the, not extensive, but most choice collection, which the exquisite taste, great opportunities, and long continued researches of Signor Castellani had gathered from the flower of many an ancient, but now dispersed *cimelium*. So full of interest is every individual piece in this true *anthology* of Glyptics, that a detailed description of the whole would form a valuable addition to the literature of Dactyliology; for, although deficient in celebrity amongst the uninitiated, as being the work of a *private* collector, yet the practised connoisseur will discover far more to reward his study within its limited numbers, than in many another of vastly greater extent and more widely diffused reputation. Again (in the winter of 1866) the good work was continued, and this department of the national collection raised at once to a respectable *status* by a step displaying equal boldness

and sound judgment. This was the unhesitating acquisition, without mistimed stickling at terms (which lost the French government the opportunity, to their everlasting regret) of the art-treasury of the Duc de Blacas, rich in numismatics, sculpture, and vases; but above all, bringing what filled up the deficiency beginning so sensibly to be felt amongst ourselves—his Cabinet of Gems, equally important for extensiveness (951 pieces in all), completeness of series, rarity and beauty of most of its constituents; and last, by no means the least consideration in the case of an acquisition made for the nation (where the opinion of the *profanum vulgus* as well as of the *mystæ* must be consulted by the keepers of the public purse), the great celebrity this collection has enjoyed, under various names, for above a century and a half. For it has grown up to its present magnitude under the unremitting cultivation of the two Ducs de Blacas, who, profiting by opportunities that spread over a space of fifty years, have amalgamated into one, much of the far-famed Strozzi (formed at Rome early in the last century, and eulogised by Visconti as “containing a larger proportion of fine gems than any other of the kind”) the De la Turbie,⁴ the Schellersheim, and the well-chosen cabinet of Dr. Barth, physician to Joseph II. All of these sources are well known to the student of the subject, having been largely quoted from and published by such eminent authorities as Winckelmann, Gori, Köhler, Visconti, Panofka, Dr. Brunn, by the editors also of the “Trésor de Glyptique” and of the “Impronte Gemmarie.”

It has been represented to me, by one of all others the best enabled to judge, that a brief notice of the principal features of this splendid addition to our national art-treasures, drawn up in the same manner as my Notices of the Royal and Marlborough Gems, which appeared in this Journal (vols. xix. and xx.), would not be unacceptable to its readers—a labour of love which such an assurance has induced me very willingly to undertake. And it would be most ungrateful in me did I not preface these remarks with an acknowledgment of the great obligations I am under to Mr. Newton, the head of the department, and subsequently to Mr. Corkran

⁴ Formed at Turin towards the end of the last century. From it Visconti drew the fine portraits of Miltiades,

Posidonius, and Juba II., for his *Iconographia Græca*, published 1808.

of the medal-room, for the ready kindness with which they have afforded me every facility for making my notes, by the close and repeated examination of the gems,—a concession necessarily involving, on their part, the expenditure of much valuable time. In the second place, as some of my remarks will most assuredly run counter to the commonly-received opinion amongst connoisseurs, and especially so as regards the noble founders of the cabinet before us, I must be allowed, in justice to myself (as a defence against the charge of “jaunty audacity” to which I should otherwise be exposed for thus summarily deciding a truly “vexata quæstio” in the study), to introduce my critique with a brief statement of the grounds on which my judgment is founded concerning the real nature of the numerous supposed “artists’ signatures” which embellish this collection, and have added so enormously to its cost.

The senior Duc de Blacas, fully possessed with the prevailing hallucination of all the archæologists of his day, firmly believed in the common existence of the artist’s signature upon his works, and devoted all his efforts to the acquisition of gems thus authenticated to the eye of faith. It is, however, equally certain to me, that in no one instance was his pursuit rewarded by incontrovertible or even probable success. Even Dr. Brunn, with all his extreme indulgence to credulity on this point, rejects the claims of all the pretendants to this most coveted honour in the Blacas cabinet (or in those out of which it is composed), with the reservation of three only; the Germanicus of *Epitynchanus*, the Hercules of *Gnæus*, and the Medusa of *Solon*. The unsatisfactory nature of the pretensions of even this miserable remnant of so goodly a host shall be pointed out, and, probably, demonstrated to the satisfaction of every one competently acquainted with ancient usages, when the particular gems come to be described in my list; but, as before said, it is better to premise with my own conclusions, the result of long study of this very intricate subject. This intricacy indeed is the result, not so much of the true nature of the question, as of the obscurity thrown over it by modern fraud, for which, in one shape or another, it has been the favourite field ever since the revival of the taste for gem-collecting.

And to begin, experience forces me to avow my conviction that the rules laid down with so much “form and circum-

stance" by Dr. Brunn,⁵ are in their nature entirely arbitrary, inconsistent with themselves, and controverted by numerous and decisive examples. Reduced to their true elements, his rules require nothing more for establishing the fact that the name inscribed on any *fine* gem must indicate the engraver, than these three peculiarities: that it be in *Greek* characters; written in a *straight* line either across or along the field; and to have been published *before* the year 1712. This last was the date when the publication by Baudelot de Dairval of the *surmise* expressed by that "glass of fashion and the mould of form," the Regent Orleans, that "Solon" on the Vienna Mæcenæ meant the engraver, not the original of the portrait, furnished that unlucky starting point to roguery and credulity which, in a few years, stocked every cabinet with *signed* works, and espied the artist's in every name on a gem.

The single criterion which I advance in opposition to Dr. Brunn's code as the only sure one, is of a very simple nature. My own firm conviction is, that in the very exceptional cases where the ancient gem-engraver either thought good, or was permitted, to sign his works (whether trial or masterpieces), the name was invariably followed by ΕΠΟΙΕΙ. We have proof positive that this was done in the instances of those greatest triumphs of the art—the Stork of Dexamenos the Chian, the Arsinoë (wrongly restored as a Julia Titi) of Nicander, the Brutus of Heraclidas, the Minerva of Eutyches, the Julia of Evodus, &c. Such a form of signature was the universal rule in sculpture painting (as the vases conspicuously attest) and mosaic-work; how utterly inconsistent with reason, therefore, to suppose the practice dropped, where alone such precision was absolutely *necessary* to prevent the artist's name from being mistaken for that of the owner of the gem, since the latter, upon so many signets, was wont to accompany the device. This single objection has, with me, more than sufficient force to sweep away the pretensions of all names not followed by this unmistakeable certificate of authorship.

As to the subtle distinction of position, in the *field* instead of along the *margin* of the work, every large collection supplies instances of the undisputed owner's name introduced

⁵ "Geschichte der Griechischen Künstler."

in every possible variation of place that was suggested by the engraver's taste, as either interfering least with the effect of the design, or as presenting *itself* more conspicuously to the world, in proportion as his employer's love for the æsthetic or for the practical happened to preponderate. Lastly, *Greek* was used by everybody at Rome, as being the language of politeness and art, as early as Cato the Censor's days, when people of fashion "thought nothing good that was not Greek." Such persons, therefore, when they got their signets engraved by Greek artists, not merely used the Greek character,⁶ for their own superscription, but carried still further their adoption of Grecian usage, and admitted the *prænomen* only as the proper designation of the individual, dropping the Roman *nomen* of the family as both superfluous and barbaric. For the Greek had only one name, followed, if distinction was desired, by that of his father, or native city. This hypothesis alone offers a rational explanation for the appearance upon gems of ΑΥΑΟC, ΓΑΙΟC, ΓΝΑΙΟC, ΛΕΥΚΙΟC, and such like Roman *prænomena*, written in Greek letters. It was *impossible* that these could be borne by the Greek engravers of the gems; who if free born were called after the fashion of their country by significant appellations, as Dioscorides, Eutyches, Herophilus, and similar terms of good omen; or, if freedmen of patrician amateurs, had assumed upon manumission the family names of their *patroni* in addition to their own proper names: to take for example the eminent instances of *Antonius* Musa, *Manilius* Antiochus, *Staberius* Eros. No born Greek could have been denominated Aulus, or Gnæus, or Lucius, simply, and we may be sure from the analogy of the other arts flourishing under Roman patronage, as well as from the few unquestionable records transmitted to us in this, that all the best gem-engravers established at Rome were Greeks. And even allowing for a moment such an infraction of all the laws of ancient nomenclature, the notion of a mere artist signing his work with his bare *prænomen*, Aulus, Gnæus, &c., is in its very nature as preposterous as to imagine a modern designating himself on any of his performances by his Christian name alone—John, or William. Besides, it was as impossible for

⁶ It would be difficult to produce a fine intaglio inscribed in Latin, unless where such inscription is evidently the addition of a later and ruder hand.

the former to have constituted the single appellative of the individual Greek, as for the latter to be the surname of the individual Englishman. The two cases are exactly parallel. But when we recollect that certain prænomena were almost hereditary in the same Roman family, Gnæus, for example, recurring in every generation of the Cornelia, Aulus of the Postumia, Tiberius of the Claudia, &c., it will be perceived how the prænomen, especially when appended to the well-known signet-device of the *gens*, was amply sufficient to designate to the receivers of its impression, the individual of the family who happened to bear it at the time. It will also be noticed that in their familiar epistles the Romans sign themselves, and address their correspondents, by their prænomena alone, as "Marcus Quinto S." Modern usage still in some cases perpetuates the custom; royalty, and episcopal dignity signing with the Christian name alone, the latter adding, for distinction's sake, the See giving the title.

As for signatures on *camei*, when *incised*, by far the greater part are palpable modern interpolations, and the extremely few amongst their large number that stand the test of the microscope, being declared by their very nature subsequent additions (though of ancient hands), are for that reason of no authority upon the point under discussion: for common sense suggests that they denote nothing more than ownership. On the other hand, signatures in *relief* are as a necessary consequence contemporary with the actual making of the cameo, and therefore their genuineness rests upon exactly the same grounds as that of the whole of the work: but these are rare in the extreme, and the cabinet under consideration cannot boast of a single specimen. And even in these so uncommon examples, the remarkable coincidence that the names so displayed are the same as those borne by eminent painters and sculptors of the earlier Greek school, "Athenion," "Boethus," "Protarchus," &c., make it more than probable that such inscriptions perpetuate—not the fame of the engraver who actually cut them for his Roman employer, but of the celebrated "old master" whose *chef-d'œuvre* he thus reproduced in a more precious and imperishable material. Names of equal note in the higher walks of art, Myron, Pamphilus, Panæus, Polyclethus, Scopas, &c., present themselves not unfrequently incised upon intagli. In most cases the first glance suffices

to tell the practised eye that these ambitious signatures are equally spurious with the works they pretend to authenticate,—these names being naturally such as the half-educated Italian forger would be the first to lay hold of. There are left, however, a few out of the multitude, like the ΠΑΝΑΙΟΥ ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ (Paris), that satisfy the requirements of the severest criticism, and the existence of such can only be rationally explained on the supposition advanced above, with respect to the same kind of signatures occurring on camei. As all archæologists allow that much admired statues and pictures of previous ages were as a matter of course copied by subsequent gem-engravers, who being too modest to invent designs, were not ashamed to borrow from what had been done perfectly before ; it is very conceivable that the avowed copy of an ancient masterpiece would be considered all the more valuable for being marked with the name of its real author.

And to conclude, the names scratched in with all but invisible letters, and evidently only to be executed by the aid of a powerful lens, do in every way betray their own falsity. The genuine signatures must have been cut with the same instrument, guided by the same eye as the other details of the work ; besides which, in all the indisputable examples extant, the engraver, so far from endeavouring to conceal his authorship under the cloak of modestly inobtrusive characters, has inscribed his name and “made this” in bold letters conspicuous to all that read.

(To be continued.)

THE BLACAS GEMS.

By C. W. KING, M.A.

PART II.—THE SIGNED GEMS, ETRUSCAN SCARABEI, AND HEADS, IDEAL AND REAL.¹

THE gems of the Blacas Cabinet that especially arrested my attention during repeated and minute examinations in the course of the present year (1867) have supplied matter for the following observations. As the nature of my prefatory remarks suggests, the "Signed Works" demand the first to be passed in review. And, besides the interest attached to them as a class in consequence of the disputes to which their claims have so long given occasion, they, from the *factitious* value imparted to them by these very claims, represent a larger pecuniary equivalent than any other series in the collection.

Most important of the series is a finely-executed head of * Germanicus, in somewhat high relief. Behind the neck are incised the letters **ENITYΓX**, remains of the full name Epitynchanus, which passes for that of the engraver, but which the very fact of its being *incised* declares to indicate the owner, or perhaps the dedicator, of this memorial of a justly-beloved master. In fact, the latter is the way in which Dr. Brunn himself explains an inscription of identically the same nature, the "Alpheus with Arethon," upon the memorable cameo of St. Germain des Prés, representing the same Cæsar and Agrippina. Köhler, it is true, with inexplicable inconsistency, admits this signature amongst the *five*, of which alone he allows the authenticity, although open to the very objection that suffices his severe criticism for the immediate condemnation of innumerable others of the class. But that the inscription was added in ancient

¹ Continued from p. 148, *ante*. It is necessary to explain beforehand the reason of one great deficiency in the following Notice, the want of Nos. identifying the several gems. The absence of them was, however, unavoidable, those at present attached to the rings only

referring to a temporary arrangement to be entirely changed when the gems are hereafter arranged in the large showcase now in preparation. Those marked with a star were the first selected for exhibition.

times can admit of no doubt, the cameo having belonged to Fulvio Orsini, and actually been published, as we see it at present, as early as the date of 1598, in Faber's edition of the "*Imagines Virorum Illustrium*."

Next in point of long-established celebrity, and made known to the world at the same time, is a head of the youthful "Hercules, with the club upon his shoulder, in the exergue ΓΝΑΙΟC : a work in beauty equalled by that of the stone it adorns, a large blue beryl emulating the cerulean lustre of the sapphire. The style is the purest Greek, and as the features are evidently not ideal, we see here the portrait of some Greek prince who thus assumes the character of the mythic founder of his line—perhaps Philip himself, who was distinguished for his manly beauty.² The *name* must therefore have been added by a subsequent, and Roman, owner ; one it may reasonably be inferred of the family of the Scipios (Cornelia) with whom *Gnæus* was a regular prænomen, and upon whose consular mintage this identical head was an equally regular type. This *gens*, therefore, has a better claim to its ownership than that of Pompey, to whom Faber unhesitatingly gives it on the strength of the name. To see in it that of the engraver is perfectly preposterous, for the reasons above assigned, which I doubt not will suffice for every one versed in Roman usages. This gem was stolen at the sale of the Strozzi Cabinet, but reappeared some years after in the Scheller-sheim, and, being purchased by the Duc de Blacas in 1859, was restored to its former company. In the interim its vacancy was supplied by a modern facsimile in aqua-marine, which still accompanies the original, and affords a useful comparison between the different styles of art.

* Medusa's Head in profile, perhaps the best known gem in the whole Strozzi Cabinet, has to me, notwithstanding its long-established reputation as a masterpiece of Greek art, all the air of an early Cinque-cento work. In the first place, the type has no precedent amongst ancient remains, but has originated in a complete misconception of the antique idea of the subject. The Greeks had two unvarying types of the Medusa. The one, the most ancient, the living Gorgon,

² When Philip's partisans at Athens were praising his beauty, his eloquence, and his drinking powers, Demosthenes

retorted that the first was the merit of a woman, the second, of a sophist, the third, of a sponge (Plut.)

always shown in front-face, terrific and full of animated fury, representing in fact the Queen of Hell, the Destroying Principle, the Hindoo Bhavani³—the other its Praxitelean version, the *expiring* Medusa, soft and languid, generally in profile, but occasionally given in three-quarter face: *wings* on the brow belong to both—an expressive attribute never absent. Now this Strozzi Medusa displays no other expression in her face than that of a young lady rather pleased than otherwise with her novel style of *coiffure*. A very strong proof of its date is supplied by the material, a common white calcedony, much clouded by repeated application to heated wax; a stone never used for intagli in fine works of Greek or Roman age, but on the other hand a great favorite with the Cinque-cento engravers. The name **COΛΩΝΟC** in the field, which has given birth to the artist *Solon*, and to a long string of works by the same, was probably chosen to make the gem pass for the identical signet of the Athenian sage, who might be justly supposed to have a claim to this special attribute of his patron-goddess. In fact, the type of the first Attic coinage was the Gorgon, assumed for this very reason. The gem retains its Renaissance mounting, a slight case, chased with arabesques on the back, with two broad flat loops for a ribbon to fasten it to the cap after the common fashion of the age; this again is enclosed in a broad frame of serpents, intertwined with flowers executed in a very singular manner. The jewel was found exactly in its present state, near the church of Ss. Giovanni e Paolo, on the Monte Celio, at the beginning of the last century.

* Esculapius, a head in the noblest style of mature Greek art. Nothing in this branch can be cited more worthy of admiration for the dignified expression of the features, and the masterly treatment of the flowing hair and ample beard. In front is the mystic serpent-twined staff,—an idea taken from the similar distinctive of Egyptian priesthood. In the field, on a tablet, the name **ΑΥΑΟΥ** doubtlessly indicates a subsequent Roman possession of the gem. This signature became the most popular of all with the interpolators and forgers, on account of the celebrity of this piece, upon which it first appeared, for it has belonged to Lorenzo dei Medici,

³ Whose idol yet bears a head identical not only in character but in all its adjuncts.

and afterwards to Voltaire. The back part of the head, unfortunately broken away, has been neatly restored in gold.

* Alexander, a portrait endorsed with the signature of his own engraver, Pyrgoteles! is a work as unmistakably modern as its extravagant pretensions would predispose the experienced amateur to expect. Besides the recent style of the design, the material, a common white calcedony, alone suffices to declare its origin.

The same signature is *said* to be contained in certain illegible characters scratched on the field of a very noble antique work in amethyst, a * Medusa's head with closed eyes, as if just expiring, full of a dreamy voluptuous languor, and which may be pronounced, perhaps, the finest example in existence of this particular type.

* Silenus, a head in profile, a deeply-cut and vigorous impersonation of the character, but which is probably no more than a successful imitation of the antique, for the stone is a Bohemian amethyst of the most beautiful *ponceau* tint, not the *violet*, or the clouded Indian species, alone employed by the ancient engravers. Of course so pretentious a performance demanded a signature, and **ΥΛΛΟΥ** accordingly appears conspicuously in the field; but even the indulgent Dr. Brunn passes sentence against both work and name. Nevertheless, the Parisian connoisseurs, misled, as usual, by their too strong predilection for beauty of execution, have estimated this piece as highly almost as any other in the cabinet.

* Pan, a head in three-quarter face, replete with life and humorous fury, deeply sunk in a pale amethyst. Such is the merit of this gem that it extorts from Köhler himself, chary as he is of his praise, the well-deserved encomium "that both for invention, and extreme spirit of execution, it is one of the greatest masterpieces of antiquity." The name **ΚΥΛΛΕ** in the field, we need not reject, with Köhler, for an interpolation, but rather take it for the owner's, who chose the sylvan god for his patron, in allusion to the sense of his own appellation, "Scylax," a whelp. Wherever this name occurs on a gem it will be found that the designs it accompanies are all of a similar character, being fauns, satyrs, beasts of chase, &c.

Hercules, head with the name **ΚΕΛΕΥΚΟΥ** in front, though a long-celebrated piece, proves upon examination but a me-

diocre, and apparently a Cinque-cento production. Its engraver doubtless intended the name to pass, in his own day, not for the artist's, as subsequently interpreted by modern infatuation, but for that of the illustrious Syrian king. Sard.

Terpsichore, standing, tuning her lyre, and backed by a cippus supporting a statuette. A large intaglio at first sight very imposing, but which examined in its details, more particularly the folds of the drapery, betrays the feeble touch of the modern imitator. The pretended signature **ΑΛΛΙΩΝΟΣ** appears conspicuously in the field. The imaginary artist **ΑΛΛΙΩΝ** and its attempted better reading **ΑΛΛΥΩΝ** (names entirely inconsistent with the laws of Grecian nomenclature by which all appellatives are regularly formed from recognisable roots), was generated, as Köhler has clearly proved, from the **ΔΑΛΙΟΝ**, *Δηλίον*, "of the Delians," accompanying a head of Apollo, but which the ignorant forgers mistook for a proper name. Hence the very appearance of this preposterous signature on a gem, is alone sufficient to discredit its authenticity. The stone is an onyx of a curious sort, having a crystalline layer interposed between two of opaque grey; but it has been much *doctored* and roughened to give the whole the required air of antiquity.

The same subject, exactly repeated, though on a much smaller scale, in sard, has no real claims to the celebrity it has so long enjoyed, having all the appearance of a poor antique greatly retouched and that by no very skilful hand, and the inscription at the same time interpolated. The original is said to exist in Baron Roger's cabinet. To complete the deception, this sard has been purposely mutilated below in the same manner as its prototype.

We now come to three gems making the highest pretensions to importance, for each of them displays the honoured signature of Dioscorides, the court-engraver to Augustus. The *head of that emperor, with **ΔΙΟΚΚΟΥΡΙΔΟΥ** neatly cut in the exergue, has to me the appearance of an antique intaglio, although some have pronounced it a paste. But the portrait is certainly not that of Augustus, much more resembling Hadrian's. Amethyst.

A much finer work, bearing the same signature, running vertically down the field, is the bust of *Julius Cæsar, in front face, deeply sunk, with uncommon fineness of execution, in a

very beautiful jacinth. This execution, however, displays less of the antique character than the Townley sard with the same head and name, of which there is reason to believe the gem before us to be an *improved* copy.⁴

Thirdly, comes a *Thalia, holding up a comic mask, a three-quarter length semi-reclining figure, and worked out in the purest, most finished style of mature Greek art, so that it is certainly fully worthy to carry the illustrious name which some recent interpolator has selected it to display. He had, however, forgotten the acute remark of Köhler in a similar case, "that the work was too good for Dioscorides to have been its author."

Achilles seated in his tent playing the lyre, his arms suspended from a cippus before him, parallel to which is carefully engraved the signature ΠΑΜΦΙΛΟΥ in microscopic lettering, is a neatly-finished copy of the well-known Paris, or Devonshire, gems with this subject. But the copyist has had recourse to a clever device in order to disarm suspicion, having selected for his purpose an antique *sardoine*, bearing on the reverse ΙΑΩ, in the rude forms of the Lower Empire; the obverse of the amulet having been made to give place to a more elaborate performance, making higher pretensions to art.

To the same date, perhaps to the same hand, so marked is the similarity in their treatment, may be assigned the young Giant defying Jupiter, also cut upon a shaded *sardoine*, and marked on the field with ΔΙΟΣ, in which its former possessor doubtless paid dear for the endorsement of Dioscorides.

But the Achilles Citharædus, an unsigned work on sard, is beyond all cavil an excellent production of the Glyptic art at its most flourishing period.

Seated Sphinx scratching her ear with her hind paw, in the forced attitude such a favorite with the archaic artist, is an admirable example of the *scarabeus* manner in its highest development. The ΘΑΜΥΡΟΥ in the field in the Ionic character, and therefore much more recent than the execution of the intaglio, must necessarily be the addition of a later, though still an ancient hand. It is, however, impossible to assign the reason for his affixing the name of the old Thracian poet, the ill-starred lover of the Muses, to this

⁴ The ridiculous blunder in the name ΔΙΟΚΟΡΙΑΔΟΣ for ΔΙΟΚΟΡΤΙΑΔΗΣ plainly indicates an Italian fabrication.

beautifully-depicted monster, the proper symbol of Thebes. This gem, or else a replica, is always cited as existing in the Vienna Cabinet; but of the genuineness of *this* no experienced eye can have the slightest doubt. Sard.

One of the most celebrated of signed gems, the *Hercules Bibax, with the name **ΑΔΜΩΝ** in the field. This is the Molinari gem, and, in my judgment, the original of the Marlborough and the other numerous *repliche* of the type. The work is peculiarly soft, and fades into the stone in a manner no modern hand has ever caught. The quality of the stone, a rich golden sard, gives this work additional support against the pretensions of the Marlborough, which is cut on a poor cornelian. The name, however, must be taken from the invented artist, Admon, and restored to the first owner of the signet.⁵

Bust of Melpomene⁶ contemplating a mask with high fore-top and flowing beard, placed on a cippus before her—a pretty but sketchy antique; only deserving of notice from the inscription **ΓΝΑΙΟΥ**, which has occasioned its admission into the list of signed gems. Sard.

Dolon grasping the knees of Ulysses whilst Diomede is about to strike off his head. A very fine engraving in the early Greek manner; displaying in the exergue the signature **ΗΕΙΟΥ**, added for the sake of augmenting its value by some forger, who was not aware that in the age to which this work belongs **H** was not yet a vowel, and the genitive ended in **O** not **OY**. Sard.

*Rhœmetalces, king of Thrace, as this vigorously-executed portrait has been designated, upon no sufficient grounds.⁷ **ΑΜΦΟ** in the field has given birth to an imaginary artist, Amphoterus, but more probably the letters are the initials of a legend of a talismanic nature. Dark agate.

A portrait of an elderly lady, with her hair dressed in the quaint fashion set by Plotina, has also been valued as a "signed work," from its bearing the inscription **ΑΝΤΙΟΧΙC**,

⁵ The peculiar lettering of the name has long excited suspicion as to its antiquity; but I have recently seen a Nemesis (in the collection of Professor Churchill Babington) surrounded by the owner's name **ΔΙΟΜΗΔΗC**, in precisely the same tall characters: a mediocre Roman intaglio of which the genuineness was self-evident.

⁶ With the early antiquaries this passed for the authentic portrait of Virgil; later and more pedantic times discovered in the design Calliope weeping over the severed head of her son Orpheus.

⁷ The fineness of the style declares it long anterior to his date: in fact, the head much resembles that of Philip Arrhidæus on the coins.

though unmistakably referring to the original of the likeness. Sard.

* Sex. Pompey, with **ΑΓΑΘΩΠΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ** written across the field, can only be a copy of Andreini's well-known gem (Florence), which itself is considered of very dubious authenticity. Sard, large size.

Socrates, signed **ΑΓΑΘΗΜΕΡΟΥ** across the field, although done in a very masterly style, seems to display more of the *technique* of the Cinque-cento than of the antique school in the cutting of the intaglio. Sard, of fine colour.

Diana standing, backed by a stag which she grasps by the horn. The whole attitude of the figure, and the drapery falling in stiff parallel lines, declare the original intaglio a transcript from an archaic group in bronze. In the exergue **ΗΕΙΟΥ**, the owner's name, whom Letronne takes to be Heius, the *Oscan*, the friend of Verres. Although the work of the gem is long anterior to that date, yet the name probably indicates the nationality of the school producing it. Antique paste.

Fragment, exhibiting two legs of a standing figure backed by an outspread robe. The latter adjunct suffices to inform us that the complete design was a Hermaphroditus unrobing himself, in the customary action of the type. In the exergue **ΑΛΛΙΩΝΟΣ**. A very amusing exemplification of the impudence of the fabricators of signed gems; this being a replica in amethyst of the Demidoff *fragment* in chrysolite.

ETRUSCAN SCARABEI.

A most interesting and valuable portion of this cabinet are its numerous *Etruscan Scarabei*, the monuments that enable us so clearly to trace the introduction of the arts of design from Asia into Greece and Italy, as well as the successive stages in their naturalisation and growth to perfection in those more tasteful regions.

First in the class may justly be placed the *Combat between Hercules and Cynus, son of Mars, upon the banks of the Echedorus. The hero appears lifting on high his club and rushing in to give the finishing blow to his heavy armed adversary, already sinking back fainting from its previous strokes. The grouping of the figures is truly wonderful, scarcely any composition in the whole range of

glyptics can be pointed out so full of spirit and movement, and this is matched with equal excellence in the execution: the artist's talent being as conspicuously displayed in his treatment of the nude in Hercules, as of the minute details of the panoply in his opponent. The names of the two, inscribed in large Etruscan letters, *HEPKLE KVKNE*, leave no doubt as to the nationality of the artist claiming the honour of this wonderful performance. Sard, blanché by fire.

Sisyphus engaged in his hopeless labour; not, as in the later representations of the story, copied from Homer, of rolling a huge rock up a steep, but more prosaically and quite in accordance with the matter-of-fact character of Etruscan design, lifting a big building-stone up the steps of a pyramid, which, evidently, is supposed ever to fall to pieces at the moment of completion. The drawing of the figure is very correct, but its execution, almost entirely drill-wrought, not equally commendable. Sard.

* Head of Castor, with boyish and beautiful features and a very fine profile, wearing a tall conical *petasus* having a loop at the top, and tied under the chin with a string. The personage intended would have admitted of some uncertainty, but for the fortunate discovery of an Oscan vase,⁸ upon which are painted two heads, unmistakably meant for the twin Dioscuri, but each so exactly identical in design with *this*, that both painting and intaglio would appear the work of the same hand, or else both copies from the same famous original. Intaglio shallow, and most exquisitely finished, in a very fine amethyst, an unusual material for works in this early style.

* Capaneus struck down by Jove's bolt, a carefully worked engraving: but the gem, a *scarabeoid*⁹ in yellow and green onyx, is chiefly remarkable for its adjuncts. Upon the back is engraved, in faint relief, a negro kneeling, with a *situla*, or bucket, upon his arm, an example of Etruscan cameo-work of which not above half-a-dozen other instances are known; whilst the vertical edge of the stone is covered with a bold *guilloche*, also in relief, very skilfully applied.

* Head with long hair, bound with a fillet, and peaked beard; an invaluable specimen of the first essays at por-

⁸ Figured in the *Bulletino dell' Inst. Arch. di Roma* for 1865.

⁹ An elliptical flat disk, perforated

through its axis, as common a vehicle for archaic Greek art as the complete beetle-form for Etruscan.

traiture from the life, for though some may consider the head to be an archaic Jupiter's, yet there is better reason for supposing it drawn as the *vera effigies* of some Etruscan *lucumo*, or early Italiote *tyrannus*. Very minutely worked out with the diamond point, in the highest archaic style. The scarabeus is above the average size, and formed of the rare sap-green Indian jasper.

* Hercules and Mercury standing side by side, the latter holding his *petasus* in his hand. The character of the work is late, almost Roman in style, and the outlines are much damaged by the injudicious repolishing of the field. The scarabeus is unusually large, admirably cut out of a sard of singular beauty.

Patroclus lifting up the armour of Achilles from the ground, as antiquaries are pleased to understand the subject, is good both for its drawing and finish. Sard.

Ulysses kneeling upon the back of a monster turtle that is carrying him over the waves, and which he rewards by holding a bunch of grapes above its upturned mouth.¹ The Bull. dell' Instituto interprets this group as emblematic of the patience of the wandering hero, but this idea appears to me much too sentimental for the early period of art to which the *original* of this work must be referred: it is more reasonable to see in the subject some old Pelasgic myth now no longer recorded, concerning the preservation of a hero by a turtle, like that of Icadius Arion, and Telemachus by a dolphin. Sard.

*Tantalus stooping eagerly down to catch at the water that recedes from his grasp. The element is represented by the usual conventional wave-pattern, and the manner in which it is shown to fly back from the feet of the damned one into a sloping heap is singularly curious, and expressive. The work of this intaglio is of the most finished kind, but on a very small scale.

Hercules standing before a fountain which gushes from a lion's head: he lifts to his mouth a cup of the water, and rests his other hand upon his club. As this type appears exactly upon a coin of Himera, where it commemorates the

¹ This is a poor, perhaps modern, copy of Sibilio's admirable gem (I. G. iii. 45), but omitting the bunch of grapes, and the waves, from a want of intelligence in the copyist. From the absence of these two

explanatory adjuncts the present design is ridiculously catalogued as Hermes about to slay the tortoise that supplied the sounding-board for his lyre.

hot-springs of that place, this gem may with good reason be supposed of Sicilian origin. Amethyst, discoloured by fire.

Hercules seated on the funeral pyre, the tongues of flame rising from all points towards him. The easy posture by which the artist meant to depict the composure with which the hero meets his fiery death, has a comic gravity about it that is irresistibly ludicrous, suggesting, coupled with the shape of the pile, a most ridiculous idea. Banded agate.

Warrior stooping to pick up his helmet, declared to be a Capaneus by the legend **KAPNE** in the field, seems a modern work : and what augments the suspicion, the action of the hero has no connection with the story of Capaneus.² The setting, too, which is of singular and elegant pattern, is indubitably an imitation of the antique. Banded agate.

* Achilles wrapped in his chlamys, seated on a chair ; Patroclus, in his friend's armour, going forth to battle, is taking leave of him. A highly finished work. The subject has been kindly explained to us by the Etruscan artist, who has written the ill-fated hero's name, **PATROCLE**, in the field. Sard.

Warrior fallen on one knee, holding a bow and brandishing a club ; overhead, a star. This last symbol has given occasion for naming the hero Orion ; but the agent of that giant's punishment was a *scorpion*. The subject must rather be explained as another rendering of the legend so popular in Etruscan art, Philoctetes serpent-stung in the act of violating his promise to the dying Hercules, by betraying to the Greeks his concealed weapons, required for the capture of Troy. The star, according to the rule of ancient pictorial symbolism, only serves to indicate that the time of the occurrence was night. Sard.

Another intaglio, of much more finished work, may plausibly be supposed to exhibit the same false friend cautiously approaching the heap of rocks under which the weapons lie : the club being represented as visible, in order to tell the story better. Sard.

² Kohler asserts that J. Pichler executed many scarabei, copied from the antique, and intended to pass for the

originals: *this* has all the appearance of belonging to his fabrique.

HEADS, IDEAL AND REAL.

Next to be considered are the heads and portraits of deities and celebrated men, which form a very important constituent of this collection. The following are noticed not in any regular order, but as they attracted my attention in looking over the cases at different times.

No man of taste will, I think, differ from me in giving the post of honor to an Apollo, with long curled tresses, bay-crowned; the very beau ideal of gem-work, in the best Greek style. In front are indicated the bow and arrows of the god; some later possessor has cut his initials, a v, in the field. Amethyst of large size, and very deep violet; the surface much worn, as is customary with antiques in this softish gem.

The same head, repeated in a more sketchy and flowing manner upon a similar material, has much the appearance of imitative modern work.

Jupiter, a very noble head in the perfect Greek style, is to be reckoned amongst the finest of its class for dignity of expression and beauty of work. Large sard.

*Deus Lunus, wearing a Phrygian bonnet encircled with bay, his bust resting upon the crescent luminary whose presiding genius he was accounted, is done with much spirit in the manner of the school of Hadrian. A highly interesting subject, representations of the patron-god of Carrhæ being extremely rare. Sard.

Cupid, a bust seen in front-face, with a string of *crepundia* about his neck, belongs to the same period. This subject is chiefly valuable from its so clearly exhibiting the nature of this ornament, a necklace composed of various *charms* embossed in hollow gold. Sard.

*Victory, a bust in front-face, the head slightly inclined forward as if the goddess were descending from above, is perhaps the finest example I have met with of work in this extremely difficult style, the relief of the impression being considerably above half. Large sard.

Young Hercules, a delicately-finished work, in a pale pink stone, perhaps a balais-ruby, though very highly prized by the late owner, affords room for suspicion that it emanated from the school of the Pichlers.

The Julius Cæsar, on a large *sardoine*, though received for

a contemporary likeness, and highly admired by the Parisian connoisseurs, strikes me, on the contrary, as no more than a mediocre performance of the Cinque-cento school.

To the same period, but to one of its most eminent artists, I assign the *Bacchante bust seen in front; for in spite of the technical excellence of the engraving, the vulgar and gross conception of the Mænad, a mere drunken, jolly beauty, is utterly repugnant to the antique idea of the same character, which was that of inspiration, or rather frantic possession by the deity, having nothing at all jocose in its nature. This Bacchante, on the contrary, is little more than a half-intoxicated, good-looking courtesan, laughing heartily at some coarse pleasantry; Bacchus being no longer the god of the Mysteries, but only the synonym for intoxicating liquor in the estimation of the age which produced this work.

Perseus, the last king of Macedon, wearing the winged helmet, and carrying on his shoulder the hooked falchion of the hero, his namesake. The features of this clever portrait clearly exhibit the crafty and mean character of this miserable and ill-fated successor of Alexander. This gem is of unusual historical value, having in all probability served for the signet of the king himself; a supposition confirmed by its material, lapis-lazuli, which, as Epiphanius informs us, was styled *royal*, doubtless by reason of its original appropriation to this usage.

*The Dying Medusa, with the wings drooping low over the face; an intaglio without a rival for the delicacy of its finish, as well as the exquisite beauty of the profile. This is the original of the numerous repetitions of the type that so frequently present themselves to the collector. Pale amethyst.

*Young Faun, a front-face full of sportive mischief; the work of the highest order, very deeply cut in a large pale jacinth.

***"Jugurtha" is the *conjectural* name given to a head with a somewhat African profile, and the hair and beard closely cropped. The work, however, does not bear the genuine impress of antiquity although executed by a masterly hand, and doubtless intended to embody the popular idea of the Numidian usurper. Yellow sard of considerable size.

Gordian III., an excellent likeness of this prince imme-

diately upon his accession as a boy of twelve years. The execution of the intaglio is equal to any to be met with in the material, a nicolo, on the flat face of which it is deeply engraved. On the reverse, which is convex, a singular addition, the purport of which baffles conjecture, has been made by a contemporary hand—a column supporting a concave sun-dial, from the capital hangs a sword, a shield rests on one side, and on the other is marked the owner's name in large letters, A. FOL.

Head of an elderly man in a Phrygian cap, round which is tied the regal diadem. At first sight this would be taken for the conventional portrait of Priam, but the face upon examination shows so much individuality that I cannot doubt its being a likeness from the life of some petty Phrygian or Parthian prince of historic times. The work is very peculiar, much resembling that of the Sassanian engravers. Sard.

*Juba II., king of Mauritania. The erudite and virtuous prince in this admirable portrait fully deserves the epithet Cicero jocosely applies to his father during his visit to Rome—he is certainly “bene capillatus,” his amazingly thick and flowing locks bound with the regal diadem. Perhaps, like the Carthaginians, who must have been the Parisians of Africa (and the Egyptians ages before them), the Moorish noblesse wore full-bottomed wigs when *en grande tenue*. Silius describes a Punic hero, “horrentes effingens crine galeros;” and Hannibal in his bust is unmistakably be-wigged. This fine intaglio must have been cut by the court engraver of Juba's patron Augustus, and from the extreme youthfulness of the portrait, probably on the occasion of his being restored to the paternal throne. Visconti figures it, (Icon. Grec. pl. xvi. 3,) when it was in the De la Turbie Cabinet. The catalogue, by some unaccountable mistake, gives this youthful portrait to Juba I., whose monstrous peruke of bee-hive shape, and long-peaked beard, are familiar enough to us from his coins to have prevented such confusion. It also, with still stranger perversity, styles Juba II. a diademed head of some elderly Greek king, with features totally unlike either of the Numidian princes. Sard.

*Livia Augusta, her head veiled, and wheat-crowned as a Ceres; intaglio very delicately finished. It is surrounded by

seven groups in *relief* of objects, the recognised attributes of all the other goddesses. Thus we see the lion of Cybele joined with the crook and cymbals of Atys; the Eleusinian cista mystica, whence issues an asp, supporting the modius of Serapis; Minerva's owl perched upon her gorgon-embossed shield; the cornucopia crossed with the caduceus above a patera, symbols of Justice and Piety; then some mysterious sacred thing; next Juno's peacock; and lastly, something undefined, but perhaps meant for a distaff. Such a combination of sunken and relieved work in the same gem is of the utmost rarity. Only one other example is known to me—a bust of Antinous as Bacchus, intaglio in nicolo, surrounded by a frieze in relief of Bacchantes, Satyrs and Cupids, infinitely superior to the work before us in tastefulness of design, and fully equalling it in execution.³ The material of our Livia is agate-onyx, the ground transparent, the relief opaque white, $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter; unfortunately cracked across.

Another veiled head of Livia is in a much higher style of art, worthy of the best Greek times, in a large clear yellow sard.

Augustus, a laureated head admirably done, but by a modern hand, as is perfectly demonstrable, not merely from the style, but from the material—a brilliant red jasper; the employment of which is entirely inconsistent with the pretended date of the work upon it. It is evidently an antique stone, the poor original intaglio upon it having made plane for this more important performance—a mode of deception the most successful of all, and consequently much in vogue with the fabricators of the last century.

M. Agrippa, a good portrait, though somewhat stiffly drawn, occupying the middle of a large jacinth, the edges of which have been faceted in recent times in order to elicit the beauty of the material.

Plato, with the Psyche-wings attached to his temples, and represented as a terminal bust; a good specimen of the Roman imperial school, to which nearly all our gem-portraits of philosophers in reality belong. Sardoine.

The portrait, however, of Posidonius the Stoic, and friend

³ Published by Millin in his *Pierres gravées inédites*. Now in the possession of Mr. Heywood Hawkins, and to be

seen amongst his contributions to the Loan Museum, South Kensington.

of Cicero, is of much greater value ; for its admirable style proves it taken from the life, and probably at his residence, Rhodes, as a present to one of his admirers at Rome, perhaps Cicero himself. Sard.⁴

Germanicus and Agrippina, their portraits in miniature occupying two votive clypei borne aloft by a winged Victory ; a very remarkable performance of the Augustan age ; the subject having been so cleverly adapted to the material that the clypei coincide exactly with the two *eyes* of a richly-coloured cabochon onyx.

Herodes Atticus, a noble example of the style in which Roman glyptic art succeeded best—portraiture ; so life-like and full of individuality is this face. Sard of large size and very fine quality.

Of the three portraits ascribed to L. Verus, the earliest, a very finished work in sard, is, beyond all doubt, his father L. Ælius : the second, in semi-opal mounted in an octagonal frame of green enamel set with diamonds, his *reputed* son, Commodus ; and the third, most valuable of all, a most indubitable Pertinax, in a fine paste imitation of the sardonyx.

Head of a hero wearing a Corinthian helmet, with a singular peaked crest. The work very fine, and an interesting example of a portrait in the very earliest style. Sard.

The "Sardanapalus," in the finest possible sard, with an exact copy in red and white agate ; a head in a somewhat archaic style, with the hair bound with a fillet, and a long beard of "antique cut," has certainly no just right to the name it goes by. The *fillet* would rather lead one to attribute it, as the copy from a bust, to some ancient soothsayer⁵ or poet.

Carinus and Magnia Urbica, confronted busts done in the stiff neat manner of the gold coins of their date, and undoubtedly a contemporary work ; valuable, therefore, by reason of the extreme rarity of glyptic remains of the Lower Empire. Red jasper.

*Caracalla, as the portrait is styled in the catalogue, but

⁴ Visconti first discovered and identified this gem portrait by comparison with the *named* bust, when in the De la Turbie cabinet.

⁵ The character would well suit Attus Nævius, whose bronze statue (necessarily an Etruscan work) was standing when Pliny wrote. That the augurs wore the

fillets *ex officio* appears from the anecdote Plutarch tells of Q. Cornelius, a Paduan augur, a friend of Livy's, vowing he would never again wear one, if his prediction (on the very day) of the event of the battle of Pharsalia were not verified.

assuredly of too debased a style for his times. The work, though semi-barbarous, has evidently been executed with great care, and the best its period could produce. This circumstance would well tally with the reign of Galerius Maximian, whom moreover the features much resemble, and the close-cropped hair and beard, "*ad pectinem tonsus*," are the fashion of his age, not of Caracalla's. Engraved in a shallow manner upon the plane surface of a large and beautiful sardonyx, a precious material indicating the importance of the signet.

Another interesting example of this very rare class of Lower Empire portraits is the head of Hercules covered with the lion's skin, under which disguise the strongly-marked features of *Herculius* Maximian are easily to be recognised, boldly though coarsely sunk in the sard by a hand yet retaining somewhat of the spirit of an expiring school.

Augustus, a fine portrait in a brilliant white stone, of a singularly striated texture ; apparently a colourless beryl.

Hadrian wearing a mural crown, like the head upon the coins of Evagoras the Cyprian. Red jasper.

"Poppæa and Silanus" must, on better grounds, be restored to the memory of some nameless bride and bridegroom (as the wheat-ears and poppies proclaim) of the times of Hadrian, to which the *coiffure* of the lady assigns them, as well as the material, red jasper, which had not come into use in Nero's reign. Red jasper.

Aristippus the Epicurean : his portrait in the midst of figures of Venus, who crowns him, and Bacchus offering his bowl, and the busts of Apollo and Pallas, in allusion to the deities inspiring the works of this very popular philosopher. Antique paste, taken from a well executed gem of Roman work.

* Youthful Poet, as the bay-sprig in front clearly indicates. The face has been given to Horace, on the testimony of the H. placed conspicuously in the field : and there seems no reason for disputing the validity of the attribution. This gem is shown by its style to have been engraved some two centuries after the poet's demise, but when authentic likenesses of him were still extant in abundance : amongst others, a statue in the forum of his birthplace, Venusia. Yellow crystal, wrongly described as a topaz.

* Bust of a warrior, with an Attic helmet on his head, and chlamys hanging over the shoulder. One of the earliest and finest portraits in the early Greek style anywhere to be discovered ; and of extreme interest as being the actual one⁶ that Visconti, on very convincing grounds, has assigned to Miltiades (Icon. Grec. pl. xiii. 4). The work of the intaglio is exactly what the glyptic art in that hero's epoch might have been expected to produce ; delicate in the extreme, but still retaining some archaic stiffness. Pale amethyst, unusually large.

Hercules, the young head, the most beautiful example of the type possible to be met with, in a sard of a quality commensurate with that of the work upon it ; accompanied by Omphale, a delicately worked, miniature head. Sard.

* Minerva, three-quarter length figure : her hair hanging in short stiff curls, tied with a fillet, has a lofty crest bound over all : her breast is covered with a transparent drapery, perfectly exhibiting the contour of the bosom underneath, over which play the serpents of the Ægis on the other side and not in sight. It is evident that this very fine gem is a transcript from some celebrated bronze colossus, a masterpiece of archaic art. This is proved by the peculiar treatment of the hair, unmistakably speaking of antique metal work ; and yet more, by the existence of an exact *replica* of the same bust (Florence), only upon a much larger scale than this sard, which itself considerably exceeds the customary extent of a signet gem.

* Paris in his Phrygian bonnet, with his goat-skin chlamys and shepherd's crook, holding out the golden Apple of Discord : a pretty example of a good Roman period.

Youthful Hercules, a minutely finished head in a plasma closely resembling the emerald, so pure and brilliant its texture, doubtless representing the *Smaragdus Cyprius* of Pliny. The extreme uncommonness of fine work in plasma renders this little gem well deserving of the attention of mineralogists.

Africa, typified as a female bust seen in front, her head covered with the hide of an elephant whose ears depend on each side and form lappets. This work is in a much earlier style than any others of the type known to me, which all

⁶ Then in the De la Turbie Cabinet.

belong to Roman art. As we perceive from the medals that Ptolemy-Alexander chose to be figured in the same singular head-gear, it is a reasonable inference that his queen may have been similarly depicted ;⁷ and the workmanship of the gem before us would well suit the same flourishing period of the glyptic art. Yellow sard.

Silenus, a meritorious work, the field of which having been cut down to very narrow limits, the gem (sard) has been neatly inserted into a second of red jasper, so as to afford it sufficient space. The **CKYΛAKO** is a modern addition.

Thalia's head, in profile, the hair hanging down in thick stiff curls : the style, which is uncommonly bold, is similar to that of some Thasian tetradrachms : annexed is her comic mask in full face roughly cut in, and seemingly unfinished. Large yellow sard.

Of nearly equal merit is the full-face Mask of an old man, having the beard spread out in the shape of a fan. The expression is so replete with comic drollery, that one can have no hesitation in assigning it to the character of the parasite. Yellow sard.

⁷ In fact his mother Cleopatra, wife of Physcon is thus represented on a bronze medal figured by Visconti (Icon. Grec. Pl. xiv. 6). I can only offer a conjecture as to the significance, that since the Macedonian kings chose to appear on their medals like the Grecian Hercules clothed in the lion's hide, so the Ptolemies assumed the charioteer of the Libyan Hercules, thus suitably distinguished from the other. The Egyptian queen assumed the elephant's head-dress

by the same right as Iole or Omphale so frequently does with the lion's. In Roman times this same type stood for the city of Alexandria; but such ideal heads were not in fashion so early as the times of Cleopatra and her son. It is even conceivable that the first idea was supplied by the elephant-headed Ganesa, the Hindoo Hermes, with whose figures the Greeks of Bactria must have been very familiar.

(To be continued.)

THE BLACAS GEMS.

By C. W. KING, M.A.

PART III.—FIGURES AND GROUPS.¹

THE figures and groups that struck me as most worthy of notice may be estimated from the following scanty gleanings taken almost at random out of so large a number, where scarcely one does not possess a special interest of its own.

Amethyst, about half-an-inch long, cut with four equal sides, perforated through the axis and traversed by a gold wire with a loop, showing that the gem served for a pendant. On each face a good Greek hand has engraved a Bacchante, each in a different attitude of frenzied inspiration, in allusion to the supposed protective influence of the gem against the power of wine, whence the name "amethyst" was derived.

Silenus, with the infant Bacchus seated on his one knee, whom he is contemplating with the most affectionate interest. The little god smiles lovingly back upon his foster-father, holding in one hand a huge bunch of grapes, in the other his thyrsus. The drawing of the old Faun strongly reminds us of the somewhat analogous type upon the coins of Naxos. It would hardly be possible to find a grander example of the Early Sicilian style than is afforded by this work. Large square sard of bright yellow tint.

*Bacchante falling backwards, as if sinking under the influence of her god, and vainly supporting herself by placing her hand upon a tall amphora, of extremely graceful shape. The work is wonderful, for both design and finish, and as precious a monument of the mature Greek manner as the last-quoted intaglio is of the early. It is almost equally remarkable for the uncommon beauty of the material, a sard closely imitating the darker jacinth.

¹ Continued from page 221, *ante*.

Young Faun, standing and lifting his cup on high, as if about to make a libation ; a large vase is set before him. A pretty engraving, but much more to be noticed for the material, that rare variety of the plasma, Pliny's *Jaspis monogrammos*, exactly "like the emerald, but traversed by an opaque white band through the middle." It was highly valued in all the East as an amulet, and declared by the Magi to be especially serviceable to orators.

Silenus, ready to fall off his donkey, balancing his thyrsus on his shoulder, with his wreath put on the end of the staff for the sake of equilibrium, is a masterly rendering of the idea of the drunken demi-god, by a skilful Greek hand. Sard.

The Indian Bacchus seated, with a Faun standing at his side : to him old Silenus, kneeling, proffers a huge bowl of wine. The drawing of the group is extremely good, and it is engraved with extraordinary skill ; but the very pictorial arrangement of the figures, coupled with the Etruscan border utterly inconsistent with the freedom of the style, inspires a strong suspicion of a modern origin. Sard of large size.

Maiden with a pitcher in her hand, standing in a pensive attitude before a sepulchral cippus, as if bringing thither libations to the *manes* of a parent. If therefore the subject demands an appellation, we may see in it Electra at the tomb of Agamemnon. The Ὑδρόφορος, "Girl with Pitcher," was a popular subject at Athens : the figure was a regular decoration upon the tombs of girls who had died before marriage. Themistocles, when surveyor of the aqueducts, had one made in bronze out of the fines paid by offenders against his jurisdiction, which the Persians carried off from the sack of Athens to Sardis, where he recognised it during his exile. The pure style of this work warrants its assignment to the times of Phidias ; gems referable to that period with certainty, are, as K. O. Müller justly remarks, very rarely to be met with. Pale sard.

Esculapius, leaning on his club, a vigorous work in the later Roman manner, is made precious by the unparalleled beauty of the stone, a jacinth-like sard. A bust of the same god, showing the shoulders, and contemplating his staff, is to be noticed as a *Greek* work. Sard.

The "Pyrrhus" of the catalogue is nothing more than

a Mars Ultor of mediocre Roman work, but in a very fine sard.

Mercury, weighing a soul in his balance, is beyond all question a copy of the once celebrated Hamilton scarabæus, itself a modern imitation of the well-known Etruscan mirror-picture. Sardonyx of remarkably rich colours.

Lion seen in front, standing on his fore-paws, with body erect in the air, as if just alighting from a bound: a singular example of foreshortening, and very successfully carried out. Nicolo.

Diomede seated, grasping the Palladium, a Roman engraving of the better class, but infinitely more interesting for the quality of the stone itself, a pure deep green plasma, easily to be mistaken for a deep coloured emerald.

"Hercules Musarum," the hero seated on a rock and playing on the lyre: bold Roman work, on a large dark amethyst, one of the very finest intagli to be met with in this stone.

Hunter about to spear a monstrous wild-boar ensconced within a reedy thicket; like Horace's Hebrus—

"Celer alto latitantem fruticeto excipere aprum."

A curious subject, but done in a mediocre Roman style. Sard.

Lyre, formed by two Cupids supporting an oviform vase, from which the strings proceed. Very curious, from its unmistakably being a clumsy adaptation of the unique representation of the Clepsydra of the Circus Maximus,² made by a modern artist who totally misunderstood the meaning of his prototype. Visconti consequently describes it as the shield of Minerva, borne up by two genii, so making a lyre. Banded agate, like the original.

Achilles disarmed, standing amongst the pieces of his panoply, which lie scattered on the ground about him. Done in a strangely loose, flowing manner upon a very large nicolo, but of poor quality, apparently the occidental.

Two heroes in conversation; drawn in a fine manner, that indicates the best Greek period, which makes the intaglio doubly curious, its material being a remarkably clear plasma.

² Figured in Arch. Journ. vol. xxi. p. 138.

Phorbas, son of Apollo, who, having delivered Rhodes from a plague of serpents, was therefore immortalized as the constellation Ophiuchus. He on the same account is figured here as a youth moving forwards begirt with an immense serpent, studded with his stars arranged in their proper order in the heavens. Engraved with a delicate touch and careful finish, making it one of the finest astrological gems that have come under my observation. Sap-green jasper.

Hercules bearing off the Cretan bull ; a beautiful Greek work of the best period. Sard.

The same favourite subject repeated in the early Roman style. Sard.

Omphale clad in the spoils of Hercules, engraved with much spirit. Banded agate, partially calcined.

The horses of Diomedes seen in front face : a curious *tour de force* of the Roman engraver. Sard.

Hercules leading away a pair of these same anthropophagous steeds. Early Roman work. Sard.

Satyr surprising a sleeping nymph (Jupiter and Antiope) : a good Roman work, but invaluable on the score of the material, a true *emerald* of the best quality.

Ceres seated in a *thensa* (sacred chariot), adorned with a frieze of figures, drawn by two elephants,³ each mounted by his *mahout*. This design, which is executed in the best Roman style, is the original of the numerous copies everywhere to be met with ; one of the most exact in sardonyx being admitted amongst the Castellani gems. Sard, entirely calcined and opaque.

Plire, the hawk-headed sun-god, standing wrapped in a toga, and holding an Egyptian sceptre : a valuable and rare specimen of the Roman-Egyptian style. Pale amethyst.

Cupid driving a goat ; inscribed ΠΙΒΑΤΑ, *Privata*, the name of some Roman lady who owned the signet in the second century. Sard.

Two Cupids wrestling in front of a terminal figure of Hermes, the patron of the palæstra :⁴ the pædotribes (trainer) standing by and directing their exercise. Later Roman style. Sard.

³ This same type appears on certain medals of deified Augustæ, where the legend "ÆTERNITAS" declares it to have symbolized perpetuity of fame.

⁴ Qui feros cultus hominum recentum
Voce formasti catus, et decoræ
More palæstræ.

Mars, fully armed, descending from the skies upon the sleeping Ilia. Engraved in the most finished Roman manner upon a very beautiful plasma.

Prometheus constructing the skeleton of man : this very curious subject is engraved in a poor, sketchy manner, but has all the appearance of a genuine production of latish Roman art. Sard.

Victory advancing, her figure occupying the top layer of a large and richly-coloured sardonyx. Another Victory, combining the character of Hygiea, for she holds and feeds her serpent in the regular attitude of that goddess. The manner of this latter is extremely grand. Sard.

The giant Gyges, serpent-legged, wrestling with the gryphon, under which form Apollo engaged him in the famous War of the Giants. The present is a clever modern copy of the well-known Townley gem. Sard.

Mithraic sacramental table, supporting the holy things, and flanked by two erect flambeaux entwined with crested serpents, guardians of the mysteries. An exceptionally well-engraved example of the talismanic class. Sardoine.

Sleeping nymph, two goats pasturing in the field above : (the constellation Hædi ?) a curious instance of an ancient attempt at perspective in this branch of art. Sard.

Cupid holding the Psyche butterfly over the flame of an altar : the work belongs to a better and more early period than the usual run of these sentimental subjects. Sard.

Agave, in flowing robes, taken from an admirable original. Antique paste of a brilliant pale green, and evidently that imitation of the *Callaina*, peridot, mentioned by Pliny as the most successful of all the counterfeit precious stones. A second paste of the same description may be noticed in this collection.

Apollo standing and resting his lyre upon the head of a small female figure, which holds forth a branch of the Delphic *faqus*. This attendant has been variously explained as a choral virgin, or Themis, the primal guardian of Delphi ; the former explanation being the most plausible. Of this group many antique *repliche* are in existence. A fine jacinth, very convex.

Little boy, holding before him a monstrous mask of a giant's head, entirely covering himself, with which he scares

two of his playmates, one of whom tumbles backwards in his fright whilst the other makes his escape. At the back is a statuette of Pallas on a cippus under a tree ; upon the ground a large wine-cooler. This pretty work is undoubtedly of the Cinque-cento period, as is apparent, not merely from the peculiar cutting of the intaglio, but from the infant actors being wingless, and therefore representing mortal children, not Cupids ; from the mask having no recognisable scenic character of its own ; and lastly, the ground is represented in a naturalistic manner, not by a plain line, as is the invariable rule in ancient pictures. Black agate.

Ajax extending his broad shield over the wounded Teucer is a very mediocre Italo-Greek work, which makes the honour formerly done to it the more unaccountable. It bears engraved on the back the German imperial shield, having been used for his private signet by Joseph II., who afterwards presented it, as something of great value, to his physician, Dr. Barth. Banded agate.

The same subject, but done in a far superior style, and that had not been unworthy of the dignity assigned to the foregoing gem, is placed by its side in the case.

Boxer, "squaring his arms," and advancing to the combat, can be no other than Pollux, the patron of pugilists. A fine intaglio on a very contracted field, which has been skilfully inserted into a larger sard in order to give the design the fitting area.

Pig, walking, displaying all the points Farmer Bull still admires in a prize specimen of its kind, is a wonderful proof of Greek skill in drawing animals. Sard of large size.

Boy with his bat about to knock off a ball placed on a stump set in the ground : a memento of some forgotten game amongst the school-boys of Rome. Sard. Another relic of the same kind is the lovely little gem, a boy trundling his hoop (trochus) and bearing on his shoulder the palm tied with ribbons, the prize of victory in the race. Sard.

Pallas and Neptune disputing for the honour of giving a name to Athens. An exact repetition of the design of the far-famed cameo,⁵ signed ΠΥ (Paris), but in a highly-

⁵ There can be little doubt this preserves to us an exact copy of one of the

most important pieces of marble sculpture in Greece, the central group of the

finished Greek manner, and offering every appearance of genuine antiquity. Sard.

Chimera, formed of a mask and other adjuncts united into the figure of a bird : engraved in a coarse but vigorous manner not common in this class. Sard, set in a gold ring of the simplest pattern, but of the most unwieldy weight.

Antique gold ring, the shank broken, set with a fine *cabochon* jacinth, engraved with a Victory, of fair Roman work.

The *Gnostic* stones in this cabinet, though few, are worth notice for the goodness of their execution, or for their uncommon magnitude and rare material. Amongst the latter particularly to be observed are :—

Isis holding out her sacred asp in the attitude of Hygiea, a crocodile beneath her feet : the field of the stone occupied with several large and complicated monograms, doubtless inclosing an invocation understood by the initiated, and communicated to the receiver of the gem—"a new name written that no man knoweth save he that receiveth the stone." Reverse, a gryphon resting his paw on a wheel, the usual symbol of the sun-god ; the talisman thus uniting the ideas of the Isiac and the Mithraic creeds. Its composition displays an uncommon richness of symbolism, the gryphon's tail terminates in a serapis-head, his wheel squeezes out of the chrysalis a tiny human soul with outstretched hands, in front stands Thoth's ibis holding Libra, the horoscope of the *native* owning the gem.—A stone of which hardly a second *antique* example can be adduced, is an obsidian, polished like a mirror, engraved with Horas seated on the lotus, and the spell **APCENOΦPH** on the reverse. Green jasper (about $2\frac{1}{2}$ by 2 in.), set in a heavy gold swivel.

Assyrian and *Persian* art, whether early or late, are but poorly represented in this glyptic assembly. Of the former, the only thing worth attention is a fine calcedony cylinder, about 2 in. long, which, besides the design, has several vertical lines of unusually neat cuneiform letters. Of the latter class, are two scarabeoids in calcedony, one with a king on horseback hunting the lion ; the other, a boar attacked by hounds, both of better execution than is usual with Sassanian intagli.

western pediment of the Parthenon. Its appearing on this early Greek gem (which belongs to the period of Phidias), and its selection for the subject of so

grand a cameo, equally attest the importance of the original thus reproduced at widely separated epochs of the glyptic art.

The *Camei* are a part of the collection to which an enormous expenditure of money as well as of care has been devoted by its late owners, and that too with the happiest results.

First comes the most beautiful piece of all Roman portrait-work, the diademed *Head in profile, with the Ægis-covered bust, long known as that of Constantinus Junior, in consequence of having been first published under that title by Gori in the "Museum Florentinum." Yet the more sagacious Raspe declared at the time that both style and face belonged to Augustus, who appears here with the true Apollo type of countenance of which he was so proud in life. But Gori was misled by the *diadem* in gold, originally set with precious stones, an addition of Byzantine times, to make way for which the former laurel-wreath has been purposely obliterated, leaving, however, unmistakable traces of its previous existence. By this mean expedient the portrait was metamorphosed into one of a prince, whose own times were incapable of producing anything of merit in this line. The age of Constantine, to go no lower down, was well capable of so disingenuous an appropriation of the labours of a better period. Witness his Triumphal Arch, still decorated with bas-reliefs stolen from that of Trajan, its Parthian victories applied to commemorate the fall of Maxentius. The cameo, thus new-christened, was probably introduced into the ornamentation of a shrine intended for some cathedral enriched by the devotion of the new convent.⁶ The little heads in emerald and plasma, now seen in the diadem, were inserted by Leone Strozzi to replace the original stones, lost before the cameo came into his possession. This cameo can, without dispute, be placed first amongst the numerous portraits of Augustus, possessing, as it does, in addition to wondrous elaborateness of detail and beauty of finish, unusual magnitude, being an oval of $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. by $4\frac{1}{2}$ in., in a sardonyx of three layers, of which colours a happy use has been made by the artist; the face being rendered in pearly white, kept in flat relief upon a light sard ground, the hair and the Ægis in different shades of drab

⁶ Constantine by the advice of Pope Sylvester, on changing the seat of Empire, presented the churches of Rome with an incredible amount of the precious

metals in the form of ecclesiastical plate, fonts, statues, &c., including crosses weighing 300 pounds of gold. (Anast. Bib.)

and brown. It is a curious fact that the cast of this cameo usually sold (from which Raspe's drawing was made) does not exhibit the Byzantine gold diadem, but only a plain bandeau; the former, it would seem, was omitted by the modeller in plaster, as being too evidently the interpolation of barbarism.

*Another profile head of the same Cæsar, but taken at a more advanced time of life, and on a scale about one-third of the preceding. This head is in very high relief, and the manner strikingly bold and full of expression. It is set for a pendant jewel in a Cinque-cento frame of enameled gold, wrought in a very elegant pattern.

*A third profile, of somewhat larger size, but wanting the neck, is executed with much higher finish, and in very flat relief, displaying more of the Greek than the Roman manner of treatment.

*A fourth, in front-face, and in high relief, on a still more extensive scale, is probably due to a skilful modern hand. The work reminds one of Pistrucci's or Girometti's best performances.

*Messalina, with hair dressed in short curls in the peculiar fashion by which all her portraits are recognised. A good likeness and expressive of character, although marked by the stiffness of the already declining art of her times. The part below the mouth is deficient, but has been skilfully restored in a sardonyx of the same kind, one of rather poor quality. The relief, in buff upon a white ground, has been kept very flat, as is most of the camei of Claudian date. Dimensions but slightly less than those of the great Augustus.

"Livia," as the finest female head amongst the camei is catalogued, exhibits neither the well-known profile of that empress, nor the Roman style of engraving. It may with good reason be removed to a much earlier school, and indeed seems strongly to resemble the medal-portraits of Berenice II., the head being also veiled and diademed. In flat relief, white upon black; size $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. by 1 in. It is set in a remarkable enameled frame, with small eyelet holes for affixing it to the wood; having been one of the seven camei decorating the cabinet of the Sala Grande, Venice, and *presented* (involuntarily) by the municipality to M. Lallemand, the French Commissary, in 1797.

Tiberius, a head in front face, with that of the infant Drusus by the side, is a curious turquoise paste taken from a large cameo of very great merit.

Galba, a magnificent head in high relief, has all the marks of the best period of the Cinque-cento. Nothing can exceed the spirit of the drawing except the skilfulness of the execution. Fine onyx of two layers, 2 in. by $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in size. Its companion, about half that measurement, is an indubitable ancient work, and thus affords an excellent means of comparison between the two styles.

Diadumenian, a head executed with unusual breadth of manner, and

Carinus, a laureated head within a reserved rim, worked out in the peculiar, neat style of his *solidi*, are camei well deserving of notice, from the rarity of glyptic relics of so late a period.

The so-called "Licinius" is a bust in front-face and high relief, of agate onyx two inches high. The head is *laureated*, a distinction which, coupled with the close-shaven chin and long throat, combines to prove it *cannot* belong to the age or person of the thick-bearded, bull-necked Dacian, Constantine's colleague, but, on the contrary, to the days of the first Cæsars. Although the nose is gone, there is no difficulty in recognising in the face the well-known physiognomy of Claudius.

The same emperor in profile, of work unusually good for the artists he patronised. The face is in white, the hair is brown, the field dark: in a small sardonyx of the most vivid colours.

Jupiter and Antiope: a satyr guided by Cupid is rushing upon a sleeping nymph, whilst a young Faun attempts, mischievously, to hold him back from the prize: in the centre is a cippus supporting a statue of Bacchus. The work of the figures, which are in white upon a sard ground, is truly admirable, but the entire composition is in the taste of the Cinque-cento school, and belongs to the same class as the Marlborough "Marriage of Cupid and Psyche." The gem has been about three inches wide, but has lost one-third of its area.

* Medusa's Head, in $\frac{3}{4}$ -face and half-relief, carved in a dark amethyst, $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter. Of all rilievi in single-coloured gems none that I have seen can compete with this

in grandeur of style, excellence of workmanship, and splendour of material. There can be little doubt its primary destination was to decorate the imperial cuirass, an idea first borrowed from the *Ægis* of Jupiter.

* Conjugated busts of a youthful king and queen. The family likeness to Apollo, conspicuous in the prince's features, declares that we see here one of the early Seleucidæ, lineal descendants of the god of day, not one of the hard-featured Ptolemies to whose memory the gem is commonly given. The relief, flat, in white upon a sard field, is finished with astonishing delicacy, and with a manner as superior as it is dissimilar to that of the best camei of Roman times.

Drunken Faun dancing, brandishing his thyrsus, and with the skin of a deer thrown across his arm, an overturned vase lying on the ground, is a piece that has been repeatedly published, and fully equal to the reputation it has so long enjoyed. The relief is flat and in dark brown upon a white field: the style belongs to the Greek school.

* Lion pulling down a bull is executed in precisely the same style and material, and is one of the best pieces of antique animal-painting in stone anywhere to be met with.

Jupiter, a profile bust in high relief in agate-onyx, 2 in. high, has a coarse but bold style of its own, which induces me to refer it to a late Roman period.

Venus standing with Cupid in her arms, done in the boldest possible relief and in an agate-onyx, 3 in. high, has that peculiar air about it that marks the works of Girometti, the last of the modern Roman masters.

Centauress recumbent, suckling her infant foal, engraved after the Greek manner in a peculiar and flat relief, is a very interesting work, as there is the best reason to suppose it preserves to us a copy from the picture by Zeuxis of the same subject so minutely described by Lucian. ("Zeuxis," c. 6.) His account of that portion of the painting would serve literally for this cameo.

Medusa's Head, in $\frac{3}{4}$ -face, is precisely of the type made famous by Da Vinci's early picture at Florence, the parent of such a swarm of cameo-copies, and probably to be referred to no earlier origin. Coarsely carved in almost full relief in a large and fine-coloured sardonyx, the back of which remains rough from the hammer.

The same head in front face, exquisitely carved by a

clever hand of the last century, out of one large and perfect Peruvian emerald. So beautiful a work has obtained a setting of equal merit in its way, being mounted with true Parisian taste in an *enchassure* of the most appropriate character that could be imagined. Numerous serpents in enameled gold continuously entwining produce a broad open-work frame, that marvellously augments the effect of the Gorgon in their midst. Thus becoming an unparagoned brooch, it had been presented by the late Duc de Blacas to his daughter, who was unfortunate enough to lose possession of the gift in consequence of its having remained in the cabinet at the time the gems were valued for sale. Under such circumstances both equity and politeness suggest its restitution to the lady.

Aged Faun seated and stroking the beard of his favourite goat, which returns his looks of affection with comic expressiveness. The work is vigorous, yet not without finish: relieved in white upon sard. It is set for a brooch in a modern *rococo* frame of execrable taste, that greatly mars the effect of the antique design.

Mask of the Indian Bacchus, in front face, a fine work, apparently of a good Greek age. It is, however, more noteworthy for the material, amongst the most rare in antique glyptics, a large, green *turquoise*.

Head of an old Faun, shown in front face, the beard hanging in long twisted curls, is the most spirited embodiment of that semi-divine, semi-bestial character, that has ever come under my notice. In very high relief, size $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. by 1 in.

Pegasus, the forequarters only, is a wonderfully delicate Greek relief in opaque white upon black; a miniature gem in every sense of the word.

Ariadne's head, ivy-crowned, is a very noble performance of the times of Hadrian; but the stone is discoloured by the action of fire.

Ganymede seated, feeding his eagle, is a miniature piece of extraordinary elaboration upon a sardonyx of great beauty.

Horse *passant*, in dark upon a white field, and within a curiously-designed reserved rim of the same colour, is, of itself, but a mediocre performance, but deserves notice on account of that embellishment.

Minerva, in a biga, is spirited in design, and to be ad-

mired for the ingenious employment of the different colours of the sardonyx, to give her a pair of black and white steeds.

But the same artistic adaptation of the capabilities of material to the requirements of the design, has nowhere been better exemplified than in the **Victory borne in a quadriga*, in which each of the four horses is made out in a perfectly distinct colour. The drawing, however, is very stiff, and savours of the decadence; indeed, it strongly reminds one of that in the *quadriga* of Centaurs upon a medallion of M. Aurelius. Sardonyx, about 3 in. wide.

Alexander, helmeted head, much undercut in the coarse style of the close of the Cinque-cento. It is, however, deserving of notice for the stone, a large irregularly-shaped sardonyx, hollowed internally, and seemingly the fragment of a magnificent antique vase in that costly substance.

Metastasio's ring, set with a small cameo of a lyre neatly relieved in black upon a white ground; apparently an antique. The ring itself is of a very elegant, open-work pattern in the Louis XV. taste.

A Bacchante holding two spears and a bunch of grapes, deserves the highest commendation for its careful finish.

Hermaphroditus, reclining on a lion's hide spread under a tree, before a terminal Priapus, is drawn with extreme grace and perfect finish. Relief, in pearly white upon black. (1 in. by $\frac{3}{4}$ in.)

Triton, winding his shell-trumpet, is a spirited work in the same manner and kind of onyx.

The same description applies to the small Nero, $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high: one of the best cameo-portraits of him that have ever come under my notice. These four camei belonged to the De la Turbie cabinet, and may be recognised by their setting,—a broad border of dead gold surrounded by another of blue enamel.

Victory triumphing in a quadriga, a piece of some pretensions from its magnitude (2 in. wide) and skilfully utilised strata, proves on examination to be an indifferent Cinque-cento work in high relief, much under-cut.

Mediæval ship with mast and crossyard, a sailor climbing the shrouds, carries for passengers two youthful *heads*, generally taken for portraits of the sons of Lorenzo de' Medici. But, considering that the ship is the very one borne in the arms of the city of Paris, it seems to me much more probable

that this cameo, retaining so much of the Gothic taste in its design, belongs to the early French school, and commemorates the sons of Henri II. Engraved in a peculiar flat style, like the cameo-portraits of our Henry VIII. A fine nicolo.

Diana, the full bust shown in front face, and in very high relief; on her brow is the crescent: the quiver at her back is added in intaglio. This is a masterpiece of Renaissance work, the treatment of the flesh is admirable, as is the transparent texture of the thin drapery covering the bosom without concealing its contour. As the face can easily be recognised for a portrait of Diana de Poitiers, the work must necessarily be due to Matteo del Nassaro, the court engraver under Henri II., of whose reputation its merit is fully worthy.⁷ A fine agate onyx, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 2 in. in size.

Ulysses, a fine bust by J. Pichler, whose well-known signature, ΠΙΧΛΕΡ, appears on the shoulder-strap.

Venus seizing Cupid by the arm, as if about to inflict upon him a maternal chastisement, is a remarkable instance of successful imitation of the antique mode of cutting camei, although the design sadly controverts its own pretensions, being quite in the Louis XV. style. A large sardonyx of great beauty: signed in the exergue AMASTINI, an engraver whose name I cannot discover elsewhere.

The Infant Saviour raised aloft in two large *hands* alone, is a singular caprice of some Cinque-cento artist, who has carried out his design with uncommon skill.

The *Modern Intagli* are numerous, and furnish excellent specimens of signed and unsigned works of the best masters in the art, from the date of its revival to its extinction.

No glyptic work of any age or country can surpass in historic and artistic interest the crystal plaque engraved with "Tityus and the Vulture," being the very one mentioned by Vasari as engraved by Giovanni dal Castel Bolognese, from a drawing made by M. Angelo,⁸ for the Card. Ippolito de' Medici. This "Tizio a cui mangia un avoltoio il cuore," as the old Tuscan quaintly phrases it, is a naked youthful giant fastened down at full length and writhing

⁷ This great artist, contrary to the custom of his rivals, never signed his works: none therefore can be positively assigned to him, although his genius was most prolific, Vasari stating that there was hardly a noble of the court who did

not think himself obliged to wear something from his hand "round the neck or in the cap."

⁸ With a companion "The Fall of Phaeton," the present locality of which I know not.

upon the earth, a posture the best fitted to display the anatomical skill of its illustrious designer: the intaglio is not polished internally. In the exergue is seen the abbreviated signature, IO.C.B. (Oval, $3 + 2\frac{1}{2}$ in full size).

Female seated before an altar, an attendant standing behind places a garland on her head, whilst another lifts a basket in the air; a design well known by Wedgwood's copies on a reduced scale. Highly interesting, as the genuine work of the celebrated Valerio Vicentino, whose signature, VA.F. appears in the exergue. This intaglio too is unpolished internally; and is an oval of the same size as the preceding. It is set for a pendant jewel in a gold frame, curiously enameled with lines of black.

Two other crystal plaques, somewhat smaller, but similarly mounted for pendants, are in a more finished style, being highly polished in the intaglio; and both evidently come from the same hand. The subjects are "Hercules strangling Antæus," and "Neptune in his Car," seen in front face; both, for composition and elaborate finish, *chef-d'œuvres* in this peculiar branch of engraving. It is more than probable that they are due to Matteo del Nassaro, who, as Vasari expressly states, executed many such crystal plaques during his residence at Paris. From that historian's high praise of these works, casts of which he had seen at Verona, Matteo's native place, it may be inferred that he considered them the best he knew of that description. I have already mentioned that Matteo, either from modesty, or more likely pride, expecting his works to speak sufficiently for him, never signed anything he did, whereas had these elaborate compositions been due to either Valerio, or Giovanni, they would undoubtedly have borne their signature. This fact, therefore, coupled with their superior merit, justifies us in regarding Matteo as their author.

Warrior sacrificing at an altar, with two attendants, one of whom holds the ox—the victim—must be intended for Æneas, from the Venus Anadyomene emblazoned on his shield. An excellent imitation of the antique. Sardoine.

To conclude,—modern art has never to my knowledge produced anything so truly charming, for the combined beauties of drawing, workmanship, and material, as the Head of Leander swimming. A very large emerald-like aqua-marine.