AN IMPERIAL INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AS REVEALED BY ROMAN MEDALLIONS

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When Germanicus set off in A.D. 19, without a permit from Tiberius, on an archaeological trip to Egypt—*Aegyptum profiscitur cognoscendae antiquitatis*[1]—he undoubtedly transgressed in the letter, the *instituta Augusti*, a particular precept laid down by the first Emperor of Rome. But in spirit he expressed an attitude towards culture consistently maintained in imperial circles from the Augustan age down to the end of the second century and, intermittently, under the later Empire, down to the end of the Classical world. Both in Augustan literature and in the sculpture of the *Ara Pacis* deep veneration for the past and the antiquarian turn of mind are inextricably interwoven with the vision of the New Order, of the *novum saeculum* and the *nova urbs*. Egyptology in particular, the study of the most ancient civilization which Greece and Rome knew, obviously received fresh and lasting stimulus from the moment when Augustus added Egypt to the Empire of the Roman People. Germanicus gave the lead in this field, as far as the imperial family itself was concerned; while the stir caused among scholars by the alleged appearance of the phoenix in A.D. 34 clearly had, since Tacitus records it, its reverberations in Tiberian Rome.[2] Claudius, the scholar on the throne, traced the origin of the alphabet to Egypt:[3] her ancient cults cast their spell upon Vespasian;[4] and Hadrian's zest for things Egyptian is a familiar commonplace. But Egyptology was then, as now, a somewhat specialized department of archaeological study. It was the ancient cultures of Greece and early Rome which the great majority of well-educated and intellectual persons of imperial times venerated as their priceless legacy from the past. And here we have no evidence of any conflict of interests, or rivalry of any kind, between Roman and Hellenic studies. Suetonius, for example, reflects the tradition of an impartial patronage of both on the part of imperial authority. To his appraisement of Augustus' Latin style he adds *ne Graecarum quidem disciplinarum leviore studio tenebatur*;[5] of Claudius, renowned as a specialist in Roman and Etruscan antiquities,

[1] Tacitus, *Ann.* ii, 59-61.
[2] Tacitus, *Ann.* vi, 28.
[3] Tacitus, *Ann.* xi, 14. For the theory that this passage reflects an imperial discourse see A. Momigliano, *Claudius: the Emperor and his Achievement*, p. 10.
[4] Tacitus, *Hist.* iv, 81-84.
[5] *Div. Aug.* 89.

he writes *nec minore cura Graeca studia secutus est.*[1] It was the philhellenic Hadrian who instituted in A.D. 121 the *Romaia* or Jubilees of Rome; while the 'italianate' Antoninus Pius continued to cherish the enthusiasm for Greek art and archaeology so zealously promoted by his predecessor.

The cult of Greek and Roman antiquity in the Roman Empire is a complex subject. The object of this paper is to describe one fraction of it, where it touches imperial policy itself. Fully conscious of the value and significance of a knowledge of the past for their own day, the Emperors deliberately fostered interest in ancient art, history and institutions. They had their departments of propaganda and of public instruction through which they worked. But, as in every age, so in Roman imperial times, propaganda, to be successful, had to strike a responsive chord. Archaeological propaganda postulates an appreciative and educated audience; and thus the vehicle of this propaganda throws interesting light, not only upon the studies which imperial authority wished to encourage, but also upon the standard of education, tastes and culture of the students. As one means of educating the educated still further there was established a department of the imperial mint concerned with preparing and issuing pieces designed for presentation on special or solemn occasions to selected individuals—to courtiers and friends of the Emperors, to prominent senators and knights and to other persons distinguished in civil and military life. These special pieces are what we term 'medallions'; and in so far as medallion types are of artistic, antiquarian and historical interest, the department which produced them might be fairly described as an Imperial Institute of Archaeology.

The term 'medallion' is familiar enough to all students of Roman numismatics; but, so far, little attempt has been made to define the term accurately or to establish the criteria by which investigators of the subject may recognize their material. The establishment of such criteria has been the essential preliminary to the fresh study of Roman medallions which the writer of this paper is preparing for the press; and the first result of this has been to reject, as belonging to the province, not of medallions, but of the regular coinage, a substantial part of the harvest garnered in the first and third volumes of his great Corpus by that notable collector to whom all workers in this field are heavily indebted—Francesco Gnecchi.[2] It must be understood that throughout the whole range of Roman imperial issues such complete independence of the ordinary

[1] *Div. Claud.* 42.

[2] *I medaglioni romani* (Milan, 1912).

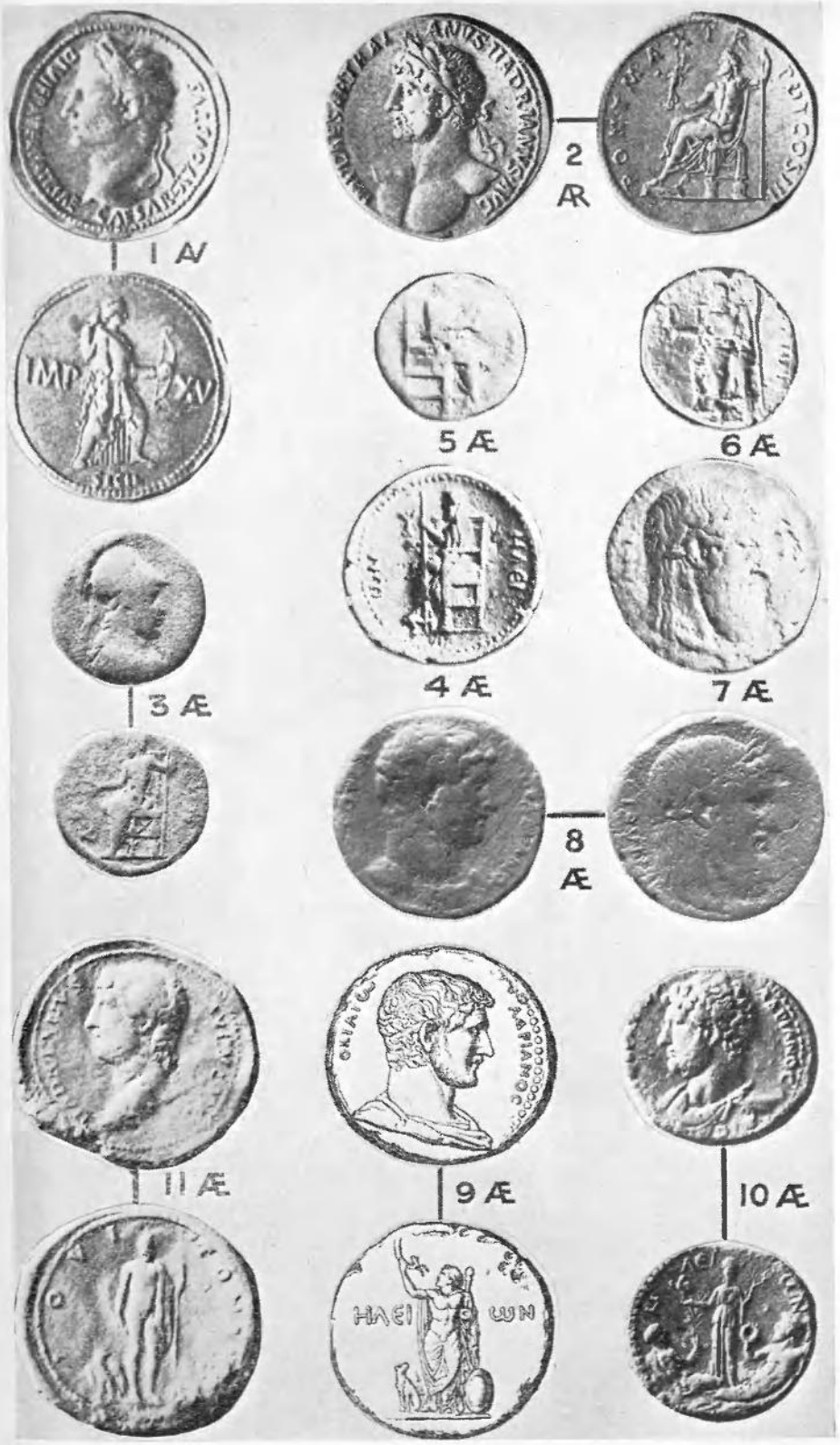
official and legal monetary systems as that enjoyed by Renaissance and modern medals was a phenomenon quite unknown. Roman medals, or medallions, conform to many of the general rules governing the ordinary coinage : they admit of no ready-made, hard-and-fast, single definition ; and the frontier between coin and medallion can never be drawn with mechanical precision. We can, however, detect medallions as ' moneti-form ' (or coin-like) pieces standing, indubitably, above and apart from the regular currencies, as intended, primarily and specifically, not for circulation as cash, but for distribution as gifts and, as such, fulfilling a quite special and unmistakably medallic role. They fall into three well-defined categories, of which the two largest and most important concern us here.

Medallions of the first category may be described as medallions proper or medallions in the strictest sense of the term. They are bronze pieces, clearly differentiated from the ordinary bronze coins by certain distinctive features of structure, style and content. First, as regards their structure, the great majority are large pieces, easily recognizable as exceeding the *sestertii* in size of diameter, thickness of flan and weight. They do not seem to have been struck on any fixed scheme or standard of weights. From the time of Hadrian to that of Gallienus weights of bronze medallions are, indeed, to be registered for almost every point on the scale from thirty to eighty grammes. Exceptional pieces display specially obvious devices for enhancing their medallic character : some are set in elaborate bronze ' frames ', either added separately or forming part of the same flan as the central piece ; others are bi-metallic, the centre-piece being struck in one quality of *aes*, the circumference in another. As for their style, they are generally executed in high relief and often display an exquisitely finished and even gem-like technique. In content they show a striking independence of the regular currencies. The great majority of their reverse types either do not appear at all on ordinary coins or are only found there in less rich and complex versions. Besides the large bronze medallions there is also a series of smaller pieces, often indistinguishable from the ordinary coins structurally, that is to say, in size and weight and sometimes also in thickness of flan. But in style and content they are quite decisively medallic. They show the same artistic finish as do the large bronze medallions and often identical reverse types. They merit an unquestioned place in the category of bronze medallions proper.

The second century of our era, from Trajan to Commodus, the period of the great imperial peace, when the widespread

cultivation of art and letters by a leisured urban society reached its zenith, was essentially the period of the bronze medallions proper, prized, not for their intrinsic monetary worth, but for their artistic excellence, for the appeal made by their extensively varied types to a refined and educated taste. The invention of medallions opened up, indeed, a fresh field of 'minor' imperial art precisely adjusted to the tastes and culture of the time. In an age specially sensitive to the past, peculiarly aware of the significance of its archaic, classical and Hellenistic heritage, here was an accessible and convenient medium in which all styles and subjects could be studied and appreciated, which offered a history in miniature, an epitome or anthology, of ancient art in all its phases. Indeed, in their medallions the Emperors provided for cultured circles throughout the Empire what might be described as a portable Museum of Fine Art, consisting of a series of miniature bas-reliefs, more closely related in technique and composition to the work of the painter, relief-sculptor and gem-engraver than to that of the coin die-sinker, and inspired by monuments of all periods and of all kinds. Here the expert and the art-collector would recognize reproductions of the old masters, others would make their acquaintance with them for the first time. Medallions must, in fact, have played a very considerable part in spreading knowledge of art and in arousing interest in *Kunstgeschichte* among the educated and intelligent persons who owned them through gift or inheritance. The bronze medallions proper were thus ideal media for the Emperors' archaeological and antiquarian propaganda; and it is from among them that most of the illustrations of this paper will be drawn.

The medallions of the second category may be described as 'money medallions'. They are gold and silver pieces which exceed in size and weight the unitary standard of contemporary currency. Unlike the bronze medallions they were struck on fixed standards of weight as true multiples of gold and silver coins; and they could, therefore, legally be used as money. But they are not mere multiple coins. In the first place, they are rare as a class in general and as individual examples in particular; nor do they occur numerically in the same proportions as the gold and silver coins in successive periods of imperial history. Until the first half of the third century silver multiples are rare: gold medallions do not become plentiful until the end of that century, when large multiples of the *aureus* were struck under Diocletian. After Constantine the Great's introduction, in about 310, of the *solidus* as the unitary standard, gold medallions range in size and weight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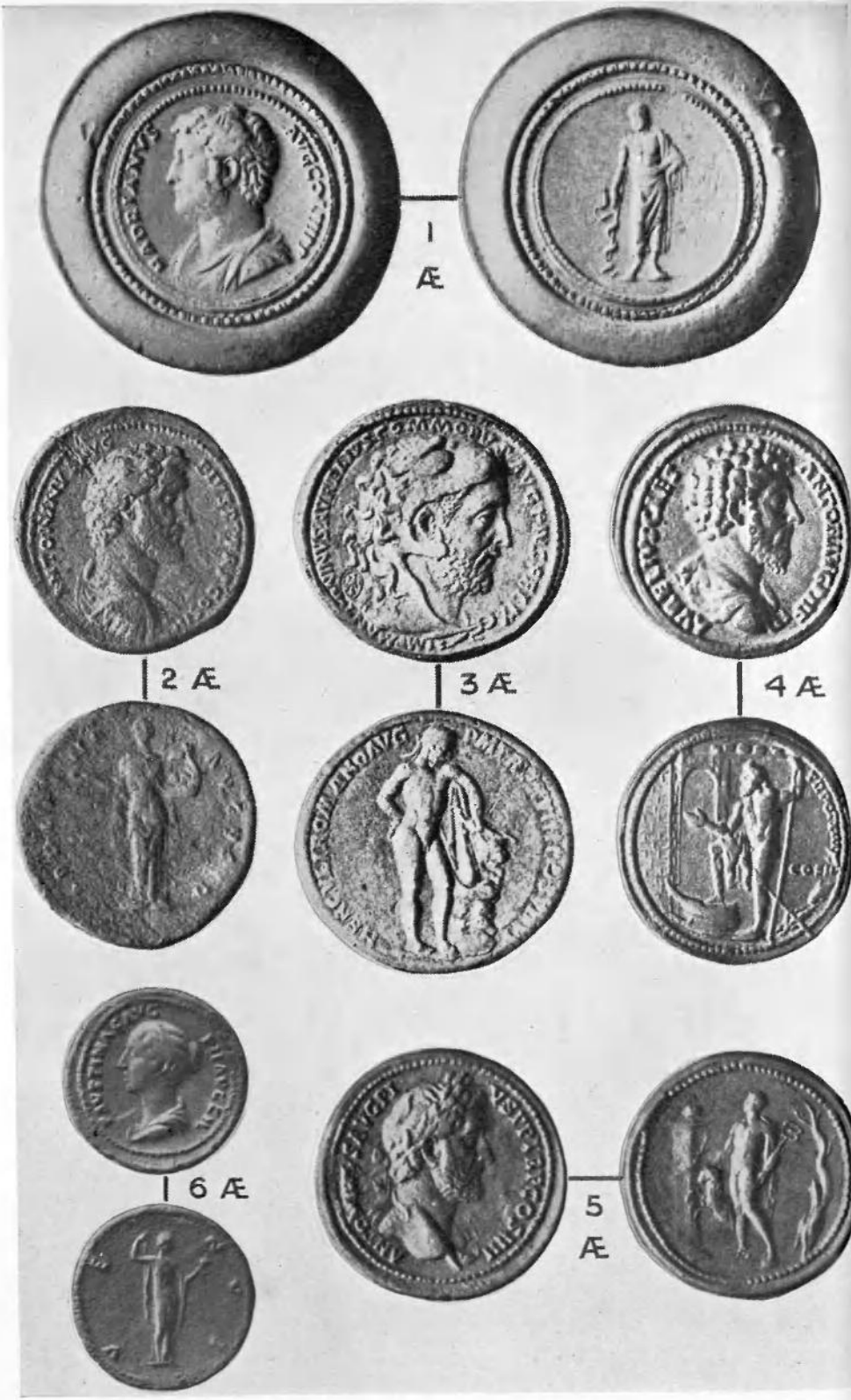


from pieces worth one-and-a-half *solidi* to pieces worth seventy-two. In the second place, the mere multiple coin theory is surely excluded by the rarity of the great gold pieces, which are so highly individualized that it is hard to imagine them ever having actually served as legal tender; while the lesser, as well as the larger, gold medallions stand distinctly apart from the regular gold coins in style and content. They are, in fact, rare and special presentation pieces, struck primarily for this purpose; potentially money, but actually preserved and treasured by their recipients as tokens of honour or pledges of imperial favour. Money medallions belong essentially to the late third and fourth centuries of imperial history, when, owing to pressure from without and to social and economic disintegration within, neither rulers nor ruled had the same leisure for literary and antiquarian pursuits; and the Emperors' gift pieces had to satisfy a taste for outward display and a demand for objects ratable in monetary terms. But in what one might call the experimental period of Roman medallic history, from the days of the first Princeps to the early years of Hadrian's principate, money medallions, both of gold and silver, were among the earliest medallic essays of imperial Rome; some of them served, along with the bronze, to form our Imperial Institute of Archaeology.

Famous statues of Greek deities are foremost among the archaeological monuments reflected by Roman medallions. The earliest example is that of the 4-*aurei* gold medallion, of Augustus at Naples, struck in A.D. 2 and found at Pompeii in 1759 (pl. I, 1).[1] Its reverse shows an archaising type of Artemis advancing with bow and quiver, similar to, though not identical with, that of the well-known statue at Naples, also from Pompeii (pl. VIII, 1).[2] Silver multiples, four worth 8, and one worth $7\frac{1}{2}$, *denarii*, struck in 119/120 by Hadrian, the greatest of imperial Hellenists, the most devoted student and admirer of Greek art, reflect the Olympian Zeus of Pheidias (pl. I, 2).[3] Of the main features of the Olympian Zeus, as we know him from Pausanias' description[4] and from the Greek Hadrianic bronze pieces struck at Elis with the bust of Hadrian on the obverse and Pheidias' masterpiece on the reverse, the Zeus of the Roman medallions displays the following: he holds a Nike on his extended right hand, he grasps a sceptre in his left hand and the *himation* in which he is draped covers the left upper arm and hangs down the back. On the other hand,

[1] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, I, tav. 1, no. 1.
[2] A. Ruesch, *Guida illustrata del Museo Nazionale di Napoli* (1911), p. 32. fig. 8.
[3] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, I, tav. 21, no. 11.
[4] V, 10, 11.

his Nike faces away from him, instead of being turned towards him, his throne has no high back and his left arm, with the sceptre, is bent back behind his head, instead of projecting in front of him. The silver medallion type is thus not a direct copy of the Pheidiac Zeus, but a reflection of it, retaining its chief characteristics, but reproducing a definite variation on the original theme—a variation which had already, indeed, appeared in the work of the imperial mint on coins of Vitellius, Domitian and Trajan.[1] Was the silver medallion of Hadrian struck in 119/120 as a 'programme' piece, with the Emperor's projected first visit to Greece in mind? Had he already planned to complete the Olympieion at Athens and to consecrate therein a gold and ivory statue of the Olympian Zeus?[2] At Athens, presumably as a record of this plan's accomplishment, Hadrian issued a bronze coin with this very reverse type, but showing a high-backed throne and no footstool (pl. I, 3).[3]

We must now digress for a moment to consider the Greek pieces struck for Hadrian at Elis with fine medallic busts of the Emperor on the obverse and on the reverse types of the Pheidiac Zeus at Olympia and of other famous statues at Olympia and Elis.[4] For these, though struck in a Greek city and bearing Greek legends, are true imperial medallions. Mr. C. T. Seltman's study of this group of pieces, read as a paper to the Hellenic Society on May 5th, 1942, is to be published in the near future. But we cannot omit a reference to them here, since they certainly rank among the products of Hadrian's Imperial Institute of Archaeology. For the artist who designed them was no mere provincial die-sinker, but an imperial or 'court' medallist from Rome, specially commissioned by the Emperor to work for him in the Peloponnese. The types of the Pheidiac Zeus show either the complete statue, seated to left, right, or front, or the majestic head of the god (pl. I, 4-7).[5] A second specimen of the latter type, struck from the same reverse, but from a different obverse, die, was discovered recently in the Leake Collection in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (pl. I, 8).[6] Other types portray the Dionysos of Praxiteles at Elis (pl. I, 9),[7]

[1] *Catalogue of Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*: I, pl. 60, nos. 20, 27; II, pll. 72, no. 10; 75, no. 2; 77, no. 3; 79, no. 8; III, pl. 14, no. 2. A *sestertius* of Hadrian, contemporary with the medallion, bears the same type, but without the footstool (*ibid.*, III, pl. 72, no. 6).

[2] Pausanias, i, 18, 6.

[3] *British Museum Catalogue of Greek Coins: Attica*, pl. 18, no. 4.

[4] Imhoof-Blumer and P. Gardner, *A Numismatic Commentary on Pausanias*, pp. 70-4; Head, *Historia Numorum*, col. 2, p. 426.

[5] A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, III, pl. 69.

[6] *Illustrated London News*, Sept. 27th, 1941, p. 392.

[7] *Zeitschrift für Numismatik*, 1886, S.384.

and the Aphrodite Pandemos, riding on a goat, by Skopas, also at Elis.[1] Another type shows the river god Alpheios reclining with reeds and wreath, another the river gods Alpheios and Kladeos reclining on either side of the nymph Olympia (pl. I, 10).[2] These river gods may be copies of the sculptured figures of Alpheios and Kladeos in the east pediment of the temple of Zeus ; or the Alpheios may be based upon a separate statue of that river at Olympia, described by Pausanias. The obverse die of the Olympia-with-river-gods piece, which is shared by several of the pieces portraying the complete statue of the Pheidiac Zeus, shows the Emperor facing to the left, instead of to the right, and ΔIC in the legend. The word ΔIC dates the pieces which bear it to the summer or autumn of 135, when Hadrian was acclaimed *imperator* for the second time at the end of the Jewish war. Hadrian, we know, visited the 'front' in Palestine. Were these medallions struck for the occasion of imperial visits to the Peloponnese when the Emperor was *en route* from and to Rome, the pieces without ΔIC being struck for a visit on the outward journey in 134, those with ΔIC for a visit on the homeward journey in 135? Did Hadrian take his medallist out with him from Rome, or send him on ahead, to find inspiration among the art treasures of Greece? Mr. Seltman has shown that the same artist also designed the finest of the Peloponnesian Antinoos medallions and he suggests that all the Peloponnesian pieces by that artist's hand, apart from those marked ΔIC, are to be connected with the first celebration of the Antinoos festival at Mantineia in the autumn of 134. It is indeed remarkable how eagerly the artist turned to account what were primarily occasions for honouring the Emperor and his favourite as affording an unique opportunity for first-hand archaeological study. In fact the artistic and antiquarian interest of the series quite overshadows its immediate historical context.

To return to the Roman medallions, a type of Juppiter standing to the front with sceptre, *fulmen* and *himation* draped on the left shoulder, labelled IOVI TONANTI, appears on small bronze medallions of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius (pl. I, 11).[3] This may possibly be a copy of the famous statue of Zeus the Thunderer by the fourth-century Attic sculptor Leochares, which stood, so Pliny tells us,[4] on the Capitol. The Hadrianic bronze medallion type of the elderly, bearded Aesculapius, half-draped, leaning on his serpent-staff, with his left hand resting on

[1] *British Museum Catalogue of Greek Coins : Peloponnesus*, pl. 16, no. 4.

[2] *Zeitschrift für Numismatik*, 1904, Taf. 3, Nr. 1.

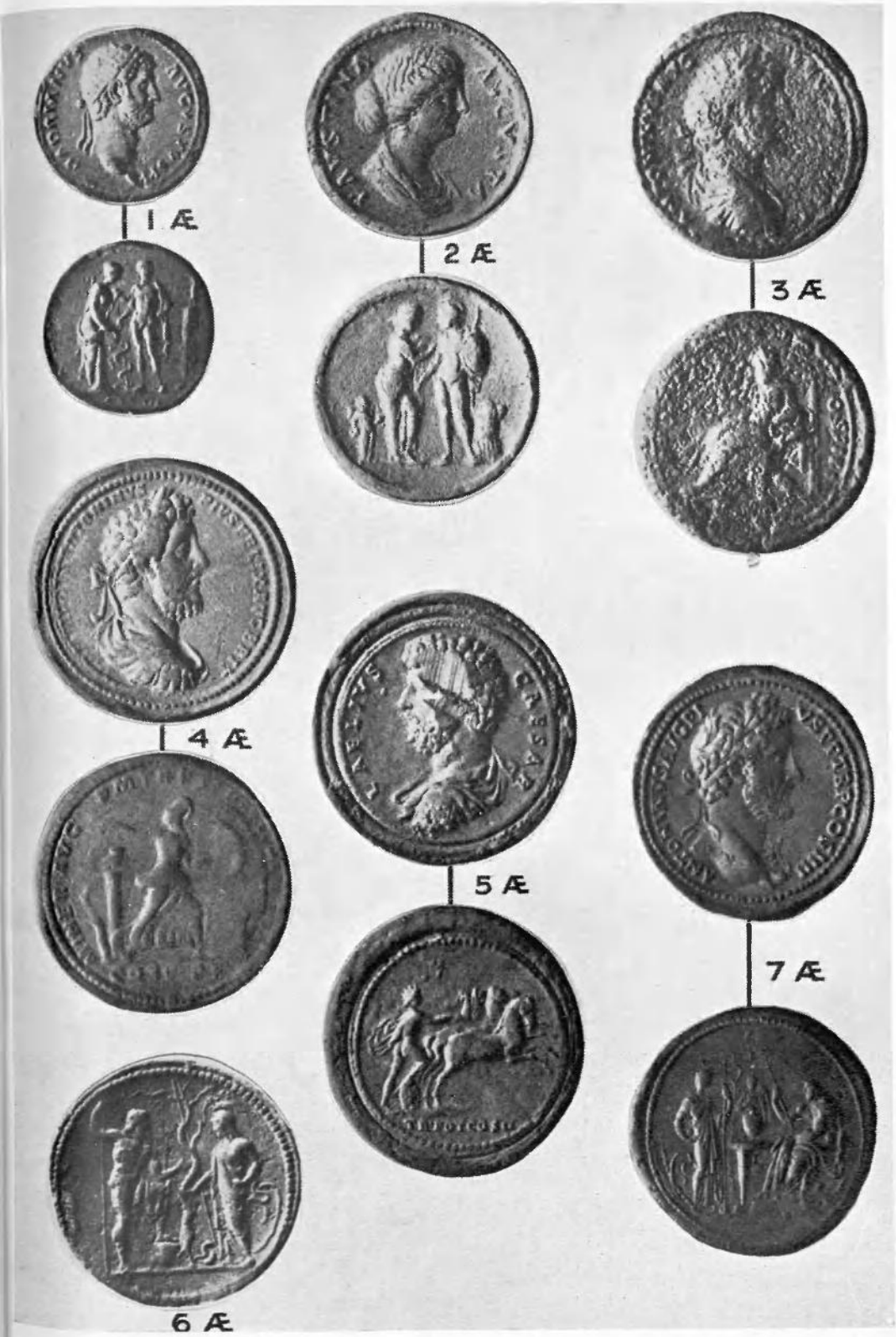
[3] P. L. Strack, *Untersuchungen zur romischen Reichsprägung des Zweiten Jahrhunderts*, II, Taf. 16, Nr. 497.

[4] *HN*, 34, 79.

his hip (pl. II, 1),[1] is, of course, very common in sculpture (pl. VIII, 2)[2] Antoninus Pius' (pl. VIII, 2) type of Apollo standing to the front with long *chiton*, *patera* and lyre (pl. II, 2)[3] reflects another well-known statuary type (pl. VIII, 3).[4] The Lysippan Herakles, best known from the 'Farnese Hercules' at Naples, signed by Glaukon of Athens (pl. VIII, 4),[5] is the prototype of several bronze medallion Hercules types of Commodus (pl. II, 3).[6] A bronze type struck by Antoninus Pius for Marcus Aurelius as Caesar shows the familiar Lysippan Poseidon before the walls of Troy (pl. II, 4; pl. VIII, 5).[7] Another bronze medallion struck by Pius in his own name displays the Skopaic Hermes type reproduced on the sculptured column drum from Ephesus (pl. VIII, 6):[8] on the medallion this Hermes type appears in the centre of a pictorial scene (pl. II, 5)[9] which is obviously derived from the same original as the Berthouville *patera* (pl. VIII, 7).[10] Finally, a bronze type struck for Faustina II of Venus lifting her veil with her right hand and holding an apple in her left hand (pl. II, 6)[11] is clearly based on the prototype of the well-known statue in the Louvre (pl. IX, 1),[12] commonly associated with Arkesilaos' cult statue of Venus Genetrix.

Among medallions reproducing statuary groups, as opposed to single statues, of deities we may note an exquisite little bronze piece of Hadrian, which shows the young, beardless Aesculapius standing on the right, with serpent-staff and hand on hip, while Salus, standing on the left, feeds the snake twined round Aesculapius' staff and rests her hand on his shoulder (pl. III, 1).[13] This pair may well be descended from the group of the beardless Asklepios and Hygieia made by Skopas for Gortys in Arcadia and described by Pausanias.[14] Statuary groups of Mars and Venus portraying a figure of Mars derived from the Ares Borghese type and of Venus based on that of the Melian Aphrodite are reproduced on a bronze medallion of Faustina II (pl. III, 2).[15] Mars stands on the right, with helmet, *chlamys*, shield and spear, facing Venus, who stands on the left and places both hands on her consort's shoulder. Just such a group is to be seen in the Capitoline Museum (pl. IX, 2).[16] The heads in this group are portraits; and Venus' hair is arranged

[1] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 41, no. 2.
[2] Neugebauer, *Asklepios*, Taf. 2, Nrr. 1, 2.
[3] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 43, no. 3.
[4] Overbeck, *Kunstmythologie*, Atlas, Taf. 21, Nrr. 30 (Munich), 31 (Vatican).
[5] F. P. Johnson, *Lysippus*, pl. 37.
[6] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 80, no. 3.
[7] *Ibid.*, II, tav. 62, no. 6; F. P. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pl. 24.
[8] E. Gardner, *Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, p. 420, fig. 102.
[9] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 52, no. 6.
[10] *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1882, pl. 22.
[11] *Trau Collection Sale Catalogue* (1909), Taf. 23, Nr. 1778.
[12] E. Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 506, fig. 147.
[13] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, III, tav. 147, no. 6.
[14] viii, 28, 1.
[15] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 67, no. 8.
[16] Ed. Stuart Jones, *Catalogue of Sculptures in the Museo Capitolino*, pl. 73, no. 34.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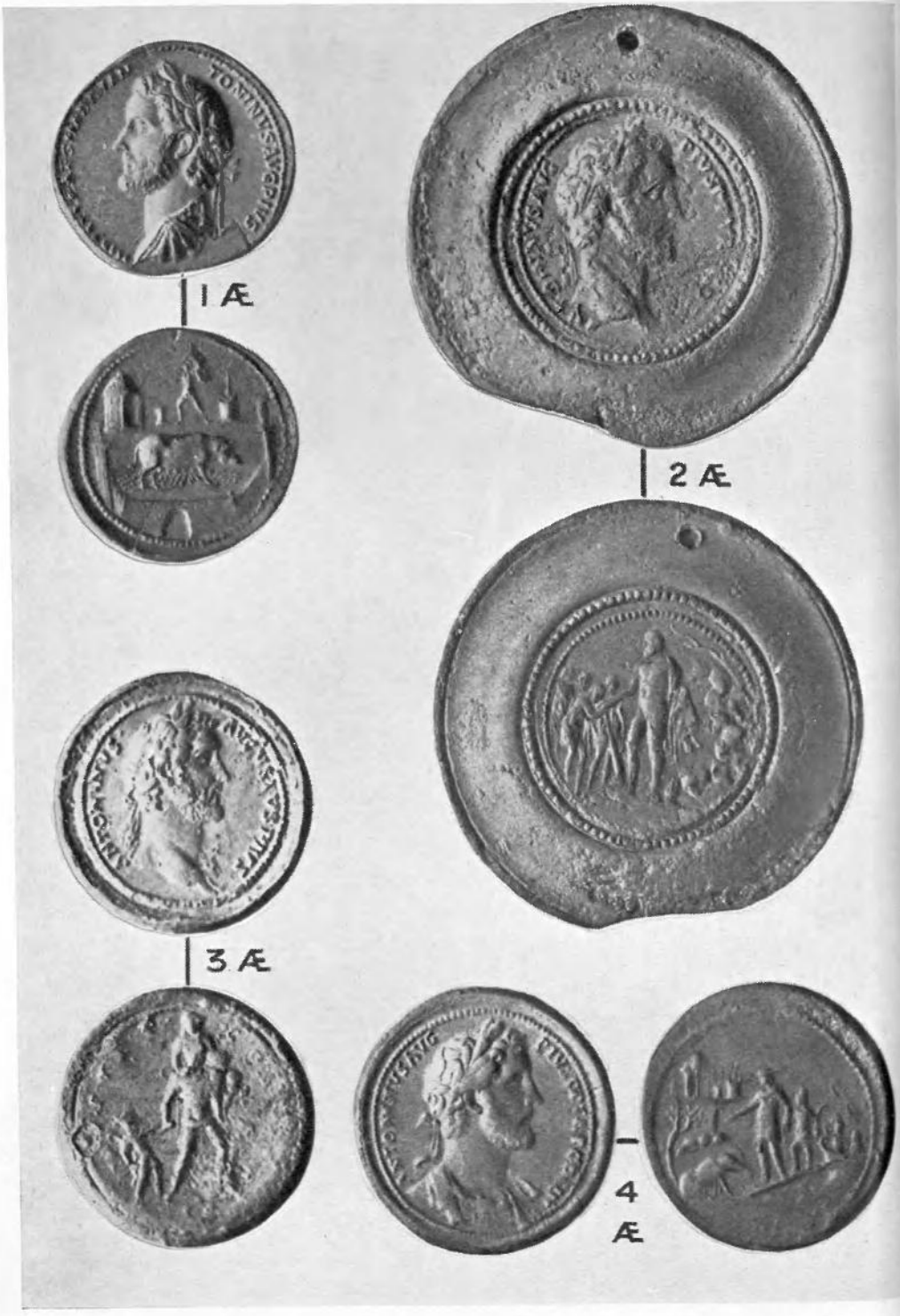
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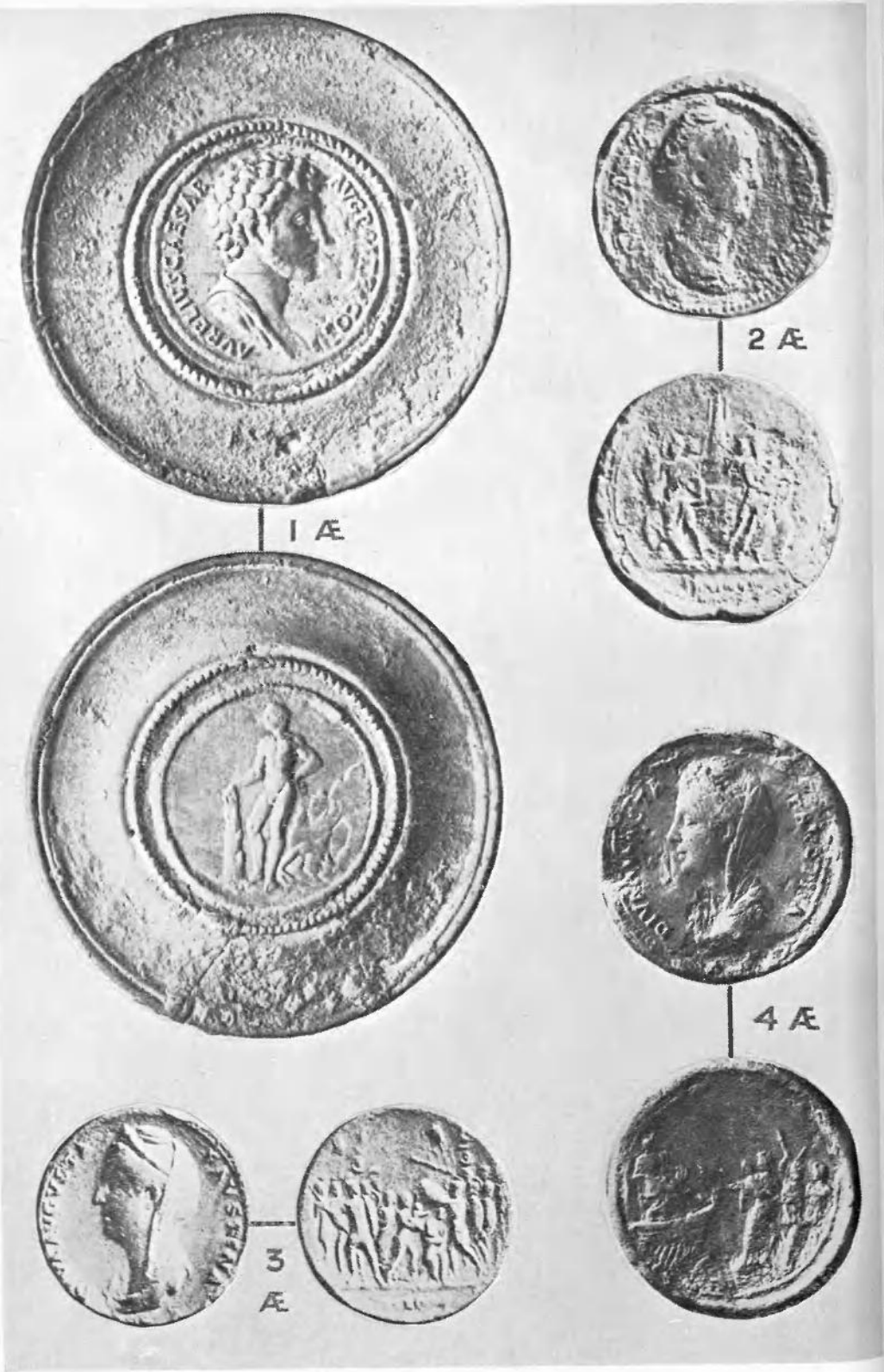


in a manner not far removed from that of the Empress on the obverse of our medallion.

It is highly probable that the famous groups of the Parthenon pediments were among those temple sculptures of the classical period which suggested *motifs* to the Roman medallists. The seated Zeus, for example, with sceptre, *fulmen* and eagle, 'canonized' by the masterpiece of the eastern pediment, gave birth to a vast progeny of copies and adaptations in the form of marble and bronze statuettes, paintings, gem-engravings and coin types dating from imperial times.[1] The oldest medallic member of the family is the bronze piece of Antoninus Pius showing Zeus enthroned towards the left, with his eagle at his side (pl. III, 3).[2] Our sole surviving specimen of this type (Hunterian Collection, Glasgow) is, unfortunately, so badly worn that the god's other attributes have practically vanished. But his general pose closely resembles that of the Parthenon type, with the direction reversed: the position of the right arm is certainly suggestive of a sceptre as its original attribute; while the object held in the left hand may well have been a *fulmen*. Other bronze medallion types, that of the running Minerva, struck by Commodus (pl. III, 4),[3] and that of Sol, struck by Hadrian in his own name and in that of Aelius Verus (pl. III, 5),[4] suggest the new-born Athena and mounting Helios of the eastern pediment.

The group in the western pediment of the Parthenon was not the only representation on the Acropolis of the contest of Athena and Poseidon. 'A group', says Pausanias,[5] 'representing Procne and Itys, at the time when Procne had taken her resolution against the boy, was dedicated by Alkamenes; and Athena is represented exhibiting the olive-plant and Poseidon exhibiting the wave'; and an account follows of statues of Zeus by Leochares and of Zeus Polieus. The mention of representations of olive-plant and wave in this contest scene suggests relief work, or figures in the round against a background of accessories in high relief; while the word 'exhibiting (*ἀναφαίνων*) seems to hint at some dignified, well-ordered composition, as contrasted with the violent conflict portrayed in the Parthenon version of the myth. A peaceful contest scene, originally executed in relief, or in the round against a relief background, is precisely what two bronze medallions struck for Hadrian and for Marcus Aurelius as Caesar respectively depict (pl. III, 6).[6] On the left is Poseidon, facing

[1] A. B. Cook, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 753-7, figs. 693-9; cf. pll. 33, 34.
[2] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 48, no. 8.
[3] *Ibid.*, II, tav. 81, no. 6.
[4] *Ibid.*, II, tav. 42, no. 8.
[5] i, 24, 3.
[6] Imhoof-Blumer and P. Gardner, *op. cit.*, pl. Z, no. 15.

towards the right, his left foot on a rock (from which water gushes ?), his *himation* draped over his left knee, on which his left elbow rests, a trident in his right hand. Behind him is a rock, with a long-necked bird perched upon it. In the centre is an olive-tree with a serpent at its foot; and to the right of the tree stands Athena towards the left, her left hand on her hip, while she touches with her right hand the stem of the tree, against which she has leant her spear. Behind Athena is her shield with a second serpent rearing against it. Poseidon extends his left hand towards the goddess, as though engaging her in conversation, while Athena, serene and dignified, gazes quietly at him. The rivals have shown their tokens and calmly await the issue of the voting. According to Hesychius,[1] Athena promised Zeus that, if he gave his vote for her, a victim should be sacrificed on an altar on the Acropolis to him under the title of Zeus Polieus—a story which gives special point to the proximity of the statue of Zeus Polieus to the representation of the contest. Another bronze medallion type, struck for Antoninus Pius and for Marcus Aurelius as Caesar (pl. III, 7),[2] brings out the peaceful aspect of this version of the myth still more clearly. Athena stands on the left, facing towards the right, her spear in her left hand, her right hand on her hip, while her shield and snake are behind her. On the right is Poseidon, seated at his ease, facing Athena and grasping his trident. Between the two are an olive-tree and a table supporting a voting-urn, from which Nike draws out the votes. The correctness of this interpretation as against P. L. Strack's theory of an agonistic table with a prize-vase,[3] is proved by a marble relief found at Aphrodisias in Caria and now at Smyrna (pl. IX, 3).[4] This shows Poseidon and Athena, each with an olive-tree behind them, standing on either side of a table, behind which stands Nike, extracting the votes from an urn. A snake is twined round the table legs and an anchor and a dolphin are seen below. Svoronos suggests[5] that these variants of the peaceful contest scene represent Alkamenes' version of the theme, originally submitted, in competition, for the western pediment of the Parthenon, rejected by the judges in favour of the more violent version, but accorded a place of honour on the Acropolis. The fact that Pausanias mentions this representation of the conflict in juxtaposition to a group by Alkamenes may, perhaps, offer a clue as to the authorship of the former work. Did it catch Hadrian's fancy, when he visited the Acropolis, as an

[1] *S.v.* Διὸς θᾶκοι καὶ πεσσοί.

[2] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 52, no. 5.

[3] *op. cit.*, III, S. 109. But see A. B. Cook, *op. cit.*, III, p. 758.

[4] *Athenische Mitteilungen*, 1882, Taf. 1.

[5] *Journal international d'Archeologie Numismatique*, 1912, p. 293 ff.

interesting antiquarian discovery to be ventilated on medallions ? Hadrian's suite during the Greek tours may well have included court artists, who made sketches or models of Greek masterpieces for reproduction in the work of the medallic department of the Roman mint.

In addition to archaeological medallions reflecting well-known masterpieces of Greek art, such as those which we have just described, Hadrian and Antoninus Pius both issued a whole array of types designed to stimulate and foster interest in Greek myths generally. These include stories of the infancy of Zeus—the she-goat Amalthea suckling the god or carrying him upon her back, the divine child seated on a peacock between two dancing Curetes ; the story of Triptolemus ; of Athena and Prometheus ; of Athena and the Argo ; and of Dionysus and Ariadne. Myths from the Herakles cycle include Herakles and Nessos, Herakles and Telephos and Herakles in the garden of the Hesperides. None of these scenes occur as ordinary coin types. We cannot do more than list them here, observing that Pius was no less zealous than the philhellenic Hadrian in proclaiming the gospel of Rome's Hellenic heritage. This is noteworthy, in view of the notion commonly entertained that Pius' numismatic activities represent a deliberate ' counter-blast ' to those of his predecessor. As is clear both from his ' province ' coin series of 139 and from his mythological medallion types, Pius' aim was not to reverse Hadrian's cosmopolitan and philhellenic tendencies, but to follow them, while balancing them by a new emphasis on Italy and Rome. His criticism of Hadrian's tendency to reduce Italy to the level of the provinces does not preclude us from interpreting his ' province ' coin types as an appreciation of his predecessor's work for the provincials themselves. Similarly, Pius' medallions combine a genuinely Hadrianic devotion to Greek art and Greek mythology with the expression of his personal predilection for the ' national ' religion and for the legends and history of early Rome.

Pius' enthusiasm for things Roman and Italian found a natural outlet in the splendour of his celebrations for the nine-hundredth ' Birthday of Rome ' in 147.[1] With these celebrations in view Pius issued a magnificent series of bronze medallions with Roman legendary and historical types, which should be studied together as a whole. As the writer of this paper has pointed out in another place,[2] these medallions were

[1] Sexti Aurelii Victoris *Liber de Caesaribus*, 15, 4 : " celebrato magnifice urbis nongentesimo."

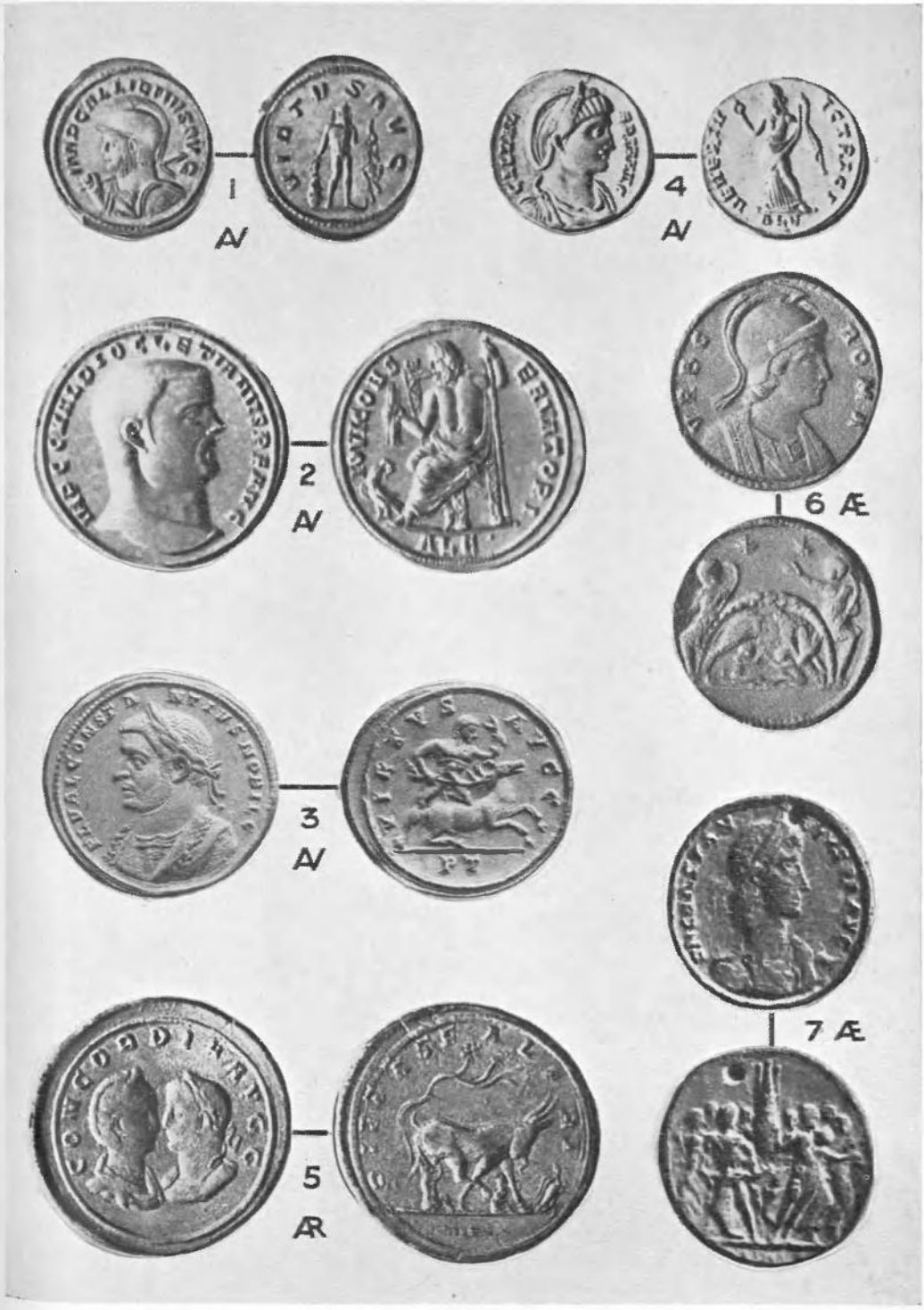
[2] *Classical Review*, 1925, p. 170 ff.

not struck *for* the celebrations, but as 'programme' pieces, 'released' at intervals during the eight years which elapsed between Pius' accession and the anniversary, heralding an occasion which did not inspire the medallists, but which the medallists, in a sense, themselves inspired. The campaign was launched in the first year of the reign, in 139, with the issue of a medallion reproducing a Hadrianic type—the sow and her piglets within a walled enclosure, with Aeneas carrying Anchises above (pl. IV, 1).[1] Six medallions bear the legend COS III and must therefore be assigned to the years 140-144. The first portrays the story of Hercules and Cacus (pl. IV, 2) :[2] Hercules stands before the monster's cave and receives the thanks of the Aventine-dwellers for their deliverance. It reminds us of Vergil's lines :

> *nequeunt expleri corda tuendo*
> *terribiles oculos, vultum villosaque saetis*
> *pectora semiferi atque extinctos faucibus ignes.*[3]

The second piece, a 'pseudo medallion', that is to say, a *sestertius* type removed from the sphere of common currency by being struck on a medallion flan, shows Aeneas' flight from Troy with Anchises, the Di Penates and Ascanius (pl. IV, 3).[4] The third medallion depicts Aeneas and Ascanius disembarking on the coast of Latium (pl. IV. 4) :[5] in the foreground are the sow and her litter and in the background are seen the walls and towers of Lanuvium. A small marble relief in the British Museum shows a composition almost identical with that of our medallion type (pl. IX, 4).[6] The fourth type, which bears the legend NAVIVS, portrays the augur Attus Navius cutting the whetstone in the presence of Tarquinius Priscus (pl. V, 1).[7] In the fifth type, labelled COCLES, Horatius swims the Tiber, with three Romans, one demolishing the *Pons Sublicius*, on the left bank and two Etruscans on the right bank (pl. V, 2).[8] The sixth type has the legend AESCVLAPIVS and shows the god of healing in the form of a serpent arriving, in 293 B.C., at the *Insula Tiberina* in a ship, which passes beneath a bridge (pl. V, 3) :[9] on the right is *Tiberis*, greeting the immigrant. All but the pseudo medallion type are peculiar to medallions. Two later types of the series are dated COS IIII and must therefore belong to the years 145-147. One, unknown to the

[1] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 55, no. 8. For the Hadrianic medallion with this type see *Levis Collection Sale Catalogue* (1925), pl. 21, no. 526.
[2] *Ibid.*, II, tav. 53, no. 1.
[3] *Aen.* viii, 265-7.
[4] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, III, tav. 160, no. 1.
[5] *Ibid.*, II, tav. 54, no. 9.
[6] *British Museum Quarterly*, 1928, pl. 52.
[7] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 46, no. 3; Livy i, 36.
[8] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 43, no. 4; Livy ii, 10.
[9] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 43, no. 1.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coinage, shows Hercules seated at table with the Pinarii and Potitii :

primusque Potitius auctor
et domus Herculei custos Pinaria sacri (pl. V, 4).[1]

The other shows the familiar coin type of the wolf and twins.[2]

With these nine medallions struck for Pius we must group two pieces struck for Marcus Aurelius as Caesar and four pieces struck posthumously for Faustina I. Marcus' first type, dated 145/146, shows Aeneas, or, rather, the Emperor as the ' new *pius Aeneas* ', veiled, wearing military dress and accompanied by Ascanius, the prototype of the young Marcus, sacrificing at an altar (pl. V, 5).[3] The type was obviously inspired by the well-known slab from the *Ara Pacis Augustae* depicting Aeneas' sacrifice to the Penates (pl. IX, 5).[4] But on the *Ara Pacis* Aeneas wears a long mantle, veiling the head and reaching to the feet, and in place of the little Ascanius we see the adult figure of the faithful Achates (?). Marcus' second type, a ' framed ' piece in Vienna of doubtful, though possible, antiquity, was, if genuine, struck early in 147, a month or so, at the most, before the actual celebration (pl. VI, 1) :[5] it shows Hercules standing before the cave of Cacus, but without the Aventine-dwellers. There is nothing against the supposition that the four posthumous types of Faustina I were struck soon after her death, between 141 and 144. They portray Mars appearing to Rhea Silvia (pl. V, 6) ;[6] the rape of the Sabine women in the circus, with exergue legend SABINAE (pl. VI, 2) ;[7] the Sabine women intervening in the conflict between their Roman consorts and indignant relatives, also with the exergue legend SABINAE (pl. VI, 3) ;[8] and the story of the Vestal Virgin Claudia Quinta, dragging Cybele's ship to land in 204 B.C. (pl. VI, 4).[9] It has been suggested[10] that the two SABINAE types had a special *Tendenz* of their own : the type of the rape of the women was part of a ' drive ' to revive the ancient custom by which young Romans ' raped ' their *fiancées* from the arms of their mothers on the eve of the marriage[11] ; while the scene of their intervention in the battle was to be an exhortation to conjugal love. The remarkably close correspondence between these Roman history types and the literary texts suggests for the medallions which

[1] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 54, no. 3 ; Vergil, *Aen.* viii, 269-70 ; Livy i, 7.
[2] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, p. 12, no. 27 (Madrid).
[3] *Ibid.*, II, tav. 66, no. 6.
[4] E. Strong, *La scultura romana*, tav. 7.
[5] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 64, no. 2.
[6] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, II, tav. 57, no. 3.
[7] *Vjesnik*, 1928, plate illustrating B. Horvat's article, no. 2 ; Livy i, 9.
[8] *Vjesnik*, 1928, plate illustrating B. Horvat's article, no. 1 ; Livy i, 13.
[9] Strack, *op. cit.*, III, Taf. 21, Nr. 691 ; Ovid, *Fasti* iv, 305-28.
[10] B. Horvat, *Vjesnik*, 1928.
[11] Plutarch, *Vita Romuli*, 15.

bear them well-read recipients familiar with the works of Livy, Vergil and Ovid.

With the death of Commodus the 'golden age' of Antonine culture passed away, to be succeeded, during the third century, by the age of imperial crisis. As *Principatus* was transformed into *Dominatus*, as peace, the 'tranquillity of order', was replaced by disorder and an almost unremitting state of war, so the medallions begin to 'close in', as it were, round the person of the Emperor and to strike an increasingly military note. The Emperors of the third century had little time to spare for the encouragement of archaeology, nor would Roman society have had the heart or leisure of mind to respond to such stimulus, had it been applied. In the fourth century, when the Empire, as reorganized by Diocletian and Constantine, passed into its final phase as an undisguised and absolute, though necessary, autocracy, entirely dependent for its maintenance and cohesion on the Augustus and his colleagues, a far higher proportion of medallion types than ever before were concerned with the imperial person, or with some member of his family, presented in a hieratic, mystical and 'subjective' setting. The Roman world was too much intent upon the problems of the present and of the future to contemplate the treasures of the past. Only spasmodically do the medallions reveal a survival and revival of the old antiquarian interest—during Gallienus' short-lived 'classical renaissance', in Diocletian's campaign in the cause of Graeco-Roman polytheism and occasionally during the Constantinian age, when the birth of New Rome on the Bosporus had set men dreaming again of the birth of Old Rome on the Tiber many centuries before. The Hercules of Gallienus' small gold medallions, standing to the right, with club, lion-skin and bow (pl. VII, 1),[1] recalls a marble statuette at Boston of a type attributed to Alkamenes (pl. IX, 6).[2] Diocletian's seated Juppiter, with eagle, sceptre and fulmen, on a fine 10-*aurei* gold medallion (pl. VII, 2)[3] reminds us again of the Zeus of the Parthenon pediment. The Hercules kneeling on the back of the Cerynean stag on the gold medallion of Constantius Chlorus from the Arras hoard (pl. VII, 3)[4] must be modelled on the same sculptured original as the bronze at Palermo (pl. IX, 7).[5] Galeria Valeria's gold medallion type of Venus with lifted veil and apple (pl. VII, 4)[6] is another reminiscence of Arkesilaos' cult statue of Venus Genetrix. Three mythological types complete the picture. Gold and 'silver'

[1] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, I, tav. 3, no. 6.
[2] Walston, *Alcamenes*, p. 216, pl. 21.
[3] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, I, tav. 4, no. 12.
[4] *Arethuse*, Jan., 1924, pl. 8, no. 8.
[5] Maviglia, *L'attivita artistica di Lisippo*, fig. 18.
[6] Gnecchi, *op. cit.*, I, tav. 6, no. 3.

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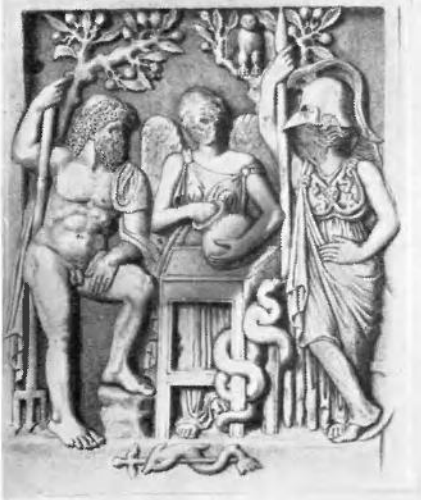

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multiples of Gallienus and Salonina show the legend PIETAS FALERI and the she-goat Amalthea suckling the infant Zeus beneath a tree, while another child, possibly Veiovis, is seated between the foster-mother's forelegs (pl. VII, 5);[1] an eagle stands on the right and a *fulmen* adorns the exergue. The giant Falerius, or Valerius, was claimed by Gallienus as an ancestor; and the type has been explained as an allusion to Salonina's charity in rescuing children abandoned during the plague of 262.[2] Bronze medallions struck by Constantine I with *Roma's* bust on the obverse shows on the reverse the time-honoured group of the *Lupa Romana* in a cave, while shepherds watch and twin stars illumine the sky (pl. VII, 6).[3] Finally, Constantius II borrowed the scene of the rape of the Sabine women (SABINAE) (pl. VII, 7)[4] from Antoninus Pius' famous series of Roman history types. It is possible, indeed, that this SABINAE type as first struck by Pius had more than a merely historical interest. Was it also inspired by some actual show, dramatizing the story, held annually in the Circus, perhaps at the *Consualia*, which are mentioned by Tertullian in his *De Spectaculis*,[5] written at the end of the second century; and did this show survive into the middle of the fourth century of our era? If so, it would be an interesting example of the survival of pagan customs in the capital of a now officially Christian Empire. How deeply Constantius II himself was impressed by the monuments of pagan Rome, when he visited the city for the first time in 357, we know from Ammianus Marcellinus.[6] The historian tells us that the Emperor actually gave orders for the erection of an obelisk in the Circus;[7] and the commemorative verses inscribed on that obelisk have come down to us.[8] Was our medallion struck for that occasion? Obviously, the vitality and fascination of the old tradition were enormous. We need only call to mind the Roman contorniates —those perplexing and intriguing medallion-like pieces issued in the fourth and early fifth centuries A.D., with types which provide a whole panorama of pagan life in the ancient style and include, incidentally, the SABINAE design. There was still, even in Christian times, some scope for imperial patronage of pagan archaeology.

[1] Gnecchi, I, tav. 27, no. 8.

[2] E. Babelon, *Melanges numismatiques*, III, p. 179 ff. The *Ludi Saeculares* celebrated by Gallienus in 262, had originated, according to tradition, in the *Gens Valeria*, of which Valerius was the mythical founder.

[3] *Ibid.*, II, tav. 132, no. 9.

[4] *Ibid.*, II, tav. 136, no. 9; *Vjesnik*, 1928, plate illustrating B. Horvant's article, no. 3.

[5] 5.

[6] xvi, 10, 13 ff.

[7] xvi, 10, 17; xvii, 4.

[8] Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, 736.