DISCOVERY OF A HOARD OF ROMAN COINS ON THE WALL OF HADRIAN, IN NORTHUMBERLAND.

Read 28 th December, 1879, by John Clayton, Esq.
In the month of September last, at a point where the military road from Newcastle to Carlisle* has been made on the ruins of the Wall

of Hadrian, and nearly midway between the Roman station of Condercum (Benwell) on the east, and that of Vindobala (Rudchester)

* The military road was made by the Government soon after the Rebellion of 1745 for military purposes, and its name is derived from this circumstance. It was made in many places for miles on the line of the $W$ all of Hadrian, where stones of the Wall may be traced in the bed of the road. It is now maintained as a turnpike road.
on the west, was found an earthenware vessel full of Roman coins. The discovery was made by an Irish labourer employed in digging for the purpose of laying water-pipes in the bed of the road. He met with the vase at a depth of four feet beneath the surface of the road, and in close proximity to the southern face of the Wall of Hadrian, and at a spot where three or four courses of stones of that wall remain in sitû buried in the road. The lucky "Patlander" proceeded to realize the fruits of his discovery, and in doing so has shown much commercial ability.

At our monthly meeting in October the subject of this discovery was mentioned, and the coins which were the objects of it were described as the small copper coins of the Lower Empire, very many of them bearing traces of having been washed with silver, together with some coins of the base metal, which (after the French) we call "billon;" and at that meeting an expectation was expressed "that, by means of the courtesy of the purchasers of the coins, a full description of them would be laid before a future meeting."

This expectation, through the instrumentality of our colleague, Mr. Blair (an accomplished numismatist), is about to be realized.

The vessel in which the coins were contained is represented in the engraving on the previous page; it is of dark-coloured earthenware, and measures in height one foot two inches, and in girth or circumference at the widest part thirty-six inches.

The coins contained in it appear to have somewhat exceeded 5,000 in number. They are all of the same character, and all of the small brass of the Lower Empire, with the exception of a few which are of "billon." A very large proportion of the copper coins bear traces of having been washed with silver, and there is no doubt the whole have been intended to pass as Denarii, so that each of these copper coins, the metallic worth of which was less than half a farthing, was intended to represent a silver, coin worth ten asses or pennies. Mr. Blair has prepared, as an appendix to this paper, a tabular description of the coins, with the legends on the reverse of such coins as he has had the means of fully describing.

The total number of coins which have been inspected is 5,024 , of which 4,597 are fully described in Mr. Blair's tabular statement. There remain in the hands of the finder 416 , all of which have been
examined so far as to ascertain that they contain no new type. Without doubt some of the coins have been sold in small parcels and cannot be traced, but the number of them must be very trifling; and it may be fairly assumed that the effect of an examination of them would only produce a proportionate increase of the number of each type of coin specified in the tabular statement.

Some specimens of the coins, represented by the truthful process of autotype, are appended.
-At our meeting in October, an expectation was also expressed that these coins would be found of some. historic interest, as illustrating a dark and disastrous period in the history of the Roman Empire, from the defeat and capture of the Emperor Valerian by Sapor, King of Persia, a.D. 260, to the accession of Aurelian, A.D. 270. In considering how far this expectation was well founded, it will be useful briefly to refer to the historic events of that period; at least such a reference will be useful to those whose memories have been impaired by lapse of time.

Of this hoard of coins there are only five anterior to the accession of Valerian. The first in date of these five coins is one of Otacilia, who was the wife of the Emperor Philip, who succeeded Gordian III., A.D. 244 ; and the remaining four are coins of Hostilianus, Trebonianus Gallus, Volusianus, and Æmilianus, each of whom enjoyed the title of Emperor for a brief period between the years 249 and 253.*

Valerian (P. Licinius Valerianus), by the voice of the army, accepted by the Senate, was declared Emperor a.D. 253; and as the troops had been in the habit of unmaking, by murdering them, Emperors whom they had made, Valerian seems to have immediately provided for such an occurrence in his own case, by simultaneously. with his own elevation, taking his son Gallienus as his colleague, and giving him the title of Augustus.

[^0]At this period the frontiers of the Roman Empire in Europe and Asia were disturbed by the aggressions of barbarian neighbours, and conflicts with these aggressors gave to Valerian the opportunity of inscribing on the reverses of his coinage the legend of "Restitutor Orbis" and "Victoria Aug.;" and in the year 260 Valerian placed himself at the head of the Roman army in the East, for the purpose of chastising the Persians. It would seem that he anticipated success as a certainty, as we find inscribed on the coins of his last coinage the legend of "Restitutor Orientis." He advanced with his army, and, crossing the Euphrates, encountered Sapor, King of Persia, and a formidable army. The result of the encounter was the capture and permanent captivity of the Emperor Valerian, and the surrender of the shattered remnant of the Roman army. Thus terminated the joint reign of Valerian and his son Gallienus, which had lasted for seven years.

Gallienus, it was believed, was not much grieved by the events which made him sole Emperor.

The effect of those events on the Roman Empire will be best described by an extract from the historian Gibbon's great work "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire:"-
"At a time when the reins of Government were held with so loose a hand it is not surprising that a crowd of usurpers should start up in every province of the Empire against the son of Valerian. It was probably some ingenious fancy of comparing the thirty tyrants of Rome with the thirty tyrants of Athens that induced the writers of the Augustan history to select that celebrated number which has been gradually received into a popular appellation. But in every light the parallel is idle and defective.
"What resemblance can we discover between a council of thirty persons, the united oppressors of a single city, and an uncertain list of independent rivals, who rose and fell in irregular succession through the extent of a vast Empire? Nor can the number of thirty be completed, unless we include in the account the women and children who were honoured with the imperial title. The reign of Gallienus, distracted as it was, produced only nineteen pretenders to the throne; Oyriades, Macrianus, Baliste, Odenatus, and Zenobia, in the east; in Gaul and the Western Provinces, Posthumus, Lollianus, Victorinus, and his mother Victoria, Marius, and Tetricus. In Illyricum and the confines of the Danube, Ingenuus, Regilianus, and Aureolus; in Pontus Saturninus; in Isauria, Trebellianus; Piso in Thessaly; Valeres in Achaia; 灰milianus in Egypt; and Celsus in Africa. To illustrate the obscure memorials of the life and death of each
individual would prove a laborious task, alike barren of instruction and amusement.
"We may content ourselves with investigating some general characters that most strongly mark the condition of the times, and the manners of the men, their pretentions, their motives, their fate, and the destructive consequences of their usurpation.
"It is sufficiently known that the odious appellation of tyrant was employed by the ancients to express the illegal seizure of supreme power, without any reference to the abuse of it. Several of the pretenders who raised the standard of rebellion against the Emperor Gallienus were shining models of virtue, and almost all possessed a considerable share of vigour and ability. Their merit had recommended them to the favour of Valerian, and gradually promoted them to the most important commands of the Empire. The generals who assumed the title of Augustus were either respected by their troops for their able conduct and severe discipline or admired for valour, and success in war, or beloved for frankness and generosity. The field of victory was often the scene of their election; and even the armourer Marius, the most contemptible of all the candidates for the purple, was distinguished, however, by intrepid courage, matchless strength, and blunt honesty. His mean and recent trade cast indeed an air of ridicule on his election; but his birth could not be more obscure than was that of the greater part of his rivals, who were born of peasants, and enilisted in the army as private soldiers."

The information given us by Gibbon as to these usurpers, the "Tyranni triginta," is scanty, and we must for further information as to those potentates refer to the work of the Latin Historian Trebellius Pollio "Vitæ Diversorum Principum et Tyrannorum," from which Gibbon judiciously extracts whatever information he gives us on the subject.

Gallienus having thus assumed the position as sole Emperor, was content to see the Roman Empire dismembered, stripped of her provinces, and confined to the limits of Italy, and to spend his life at Rome in indolence, luxury, and vice. In his reign the fine bronze coin (first brass) of the earlier Empire ceased to be issued from the Roman mint, and the imperial coinage was shamefully debased. There was poured into the world an inundation of small copper coins which were washed with silver, or of the base metal styled " billon," all of which were passed as Denarii. During his repose at Rome we find him issuing coins with legends of "Felicitas Aug," " Pax Aug," "Laetitia Aug," and "Pax Æterna," not the " Peace with Honour" of our modern politician, but peace with disgrace.

The invasion of the north of Italy by Aureolus, one of the tyrants of Illyrium, A.D. 268, disturbed the repose and enjoyments of the Roman Emperor. Gallienus, who was not deficient in personal courage, put himself at the head of his legions, defeated the invader, and besieged him and the remnant of his army in Milan. During the siege Gallienus was slain, it'is said, by his own troops, and thus ended his reign of eight years after the capture of his father, Valerian.

The coins of Valerian in this hoard number only 49, whilst those of Gallienus number upwards of 900 . We find two coins of Mariniana, the wife of Valerian, and 136 of Salonina, the wife of Gallienus, and 21 coins of Saloninus, the son of Gallienus, who received from his father the title of Cæsar immediately after the capture of Valerian.

Saloninus seems to have lost no time in exercising the privilege of coining money, as he was then with the Roman Army of the Rhine, and was murdered by the troops on the formation of the Gallic Empire by Postumus.

It will now be convenient to turn to the tyrants or usurpers, who during the reign of Gallienus held in succession the Gallic Empire, conssisting of Gaul, Britain, and Spain.
M. Cassius Latienus Postumus, a brave soldier and a wise and prudent man, in the languge of Pollio, "Vir in bello fortissimus, in pace constantissimus," was a tried and trusted general and friend of the Emperor Valerian, and was at the time of the capture of that Emperor in command of the Roman army stationed on the Rhenish frontier of Gaul. The fate of Valerian and the weakness of his son Gallienus led to anarchy and confusion throughout the Roman Empire. Postumus applied himself to the restoration of order and security in Gaul, Britain, and Spain, and assumed the title of Emperor. To him was imputed by some, complicity in the murder of Saloninus, the son of Gallienus, who had been confided to his care; but, be that as it may, he governed his new empire wisely and well, and successfully repelled the aggressions of his German neighbours.

Postumus vied with his contemporaneous Emperor at Rome in the quality, if not in the quantity, of his coinage. The coins of Postumus bear traces of exceptionally strong washings of silver. He conferred on his son Postumus the title of dugustus; and the number of the coins of father and son in this hoard amounts to more than 450.

After a reign of seven years, Postumus and his son were slain at the instigation of Laelianus, who headed a rebellion against Postumus, and after his murder assumed the title of Emperor. His reign was very short, but he effected an issue of coins, which are scarce.

In the Hampshire hoard of coins above referred to there are only eight of Laelianus. In this Northumbrian hoard there are only six. Some doubts have been entertained as to the orthography of the name of this usurper, to whom is ascribed the name of Lollianus, originating without question in an error in the transmission of the work of Pollio by manuscript for a thousand years before the invention of printing. In the printed editions of the work of Pollio, the name has been printed "Lollianus." Gibbon follows the printed edition of Pollio, and continues the error, which has since been corrected by numismatists, who find no coin, or record of a coin, of Lollianus in existence, while there are several of Laelianus.
M. Aurelius Victorinus, a brave soldier, who had been the companion in arms of Postumus, resisted the usurpation of Laelianus, which was in a few days determined by the death of the usurper, who was slain by the soldiers. Victorinus was declared Emperor by the army. He gave to his son the title of Augustus; and in this hoard are no less than 1,678 of his coins. No coins of his son are found in it ; and Victorinus, after a brief reign, was, with his son, murdered by the soldiers.

On the death of Victorinus, Marius, a blacksmith-in the language of Pollio, "faber ferrarius"-a brave and blunt soldier, assumed the title of Emperor ; but his imperial career lasted only three days"una die factus est imperator, alia die visus est imperare, tertia interemptus est." He was slain with a sword manufactured by himself.

Notwithstanding the shortness of his reign, Marius seems to have effected a moderate issue of coins. We find in this hoard twentyfour of them. Mionnet, the French numismatist, expresses an opinion that there must have been some mistake on the part of the historian; but as Pollio wrote within fifty years of the occurrence of the event which he recorded, it is probable that. he was right. The coins might have been struck in anticipation of the assumption of the title of Emperor.

Two coins from a distance belonging to this period are found in this collection, one of them of Macrianus, one of the Eastern usurpers (Orientis tyranni), and the other a coin of Quietus, his son. These two coins, like the monument erected by a Palmyrene at the important Roman station at South Shields, evidence the fact that the Romans in Britain, through the noble harbour of the Tyne, maintained commercial intercourse with all parts of the world.

There followed, on the death of Victorinus, a brief interregnum, during which his mother, Victorina (or, as some write, Victoria), placed herself at the head of the army, and assumed the reins of (Government, which she very soon afterwards handed over to Tetricus, a man of senatorial rank, a.d. 268. In the meantime, at Rome, Claudius, one of the bravest and ablest of the generals of Valerian and Gallienus, had been, by the unanimous voice of the army and the senate, declared the successor of the feeble Gallienus. Claudius accepted the imperial purple, with the studied purpose of restoring the Roman Empire to its meridian power and glory. To drive back the Goths was the first step in his victorious career, from which he received the addition to his name of the epithet of Gothicus, by which he was distinguished from the Claudius of the first century. His efforts were then directed to the recovery of the Eastern Provinces of the Roman Empire; but his life was unhappily terminated by an infectious fever, A.D. 270. With his dying breath he expressed his earnest desire that Aurelian (a brave and experienced general of Valerian and Gallienus) should be selected as his successor, to complete the work of the restoration of the Empire, which he had begun. We have, in this hoard of coins, nearly 700 of this great man.

The dying wishes of Claudius were fulfilled, and Aurelian (L. Domitius Aurelianus) became his successor. The elevation of Aurelian was not acquiesced in by Quintillus, the brother of Claudius, who took upon himself the title of emperor, and provided himself with money by a copious coinage, of which we have 95 specimens. Within a month, however, he gave up the enterprise and poisoned himself. We have only eight coins of Aurelian, on one of which is the head of his predecessor Claudius Gothicus, with the superscription of Aurelian, indicating a hasty coinage before the image of the new emperor had been prepared.

Tetricus (P. Pivesus Tetricus) at this time reigned over the Gallic Empire (comprising Gaul, Britain, and Spain), which he had held for about two years; he had previously given to his son first the title of Cæsar, and afterwards of Augustus; and we find in this hoard of coins, coins of himself and his son, numbering in the aggregate 516.*

Thus ends the story told by these coins. The day drew nigh when the reconstruction of the Roman Empire was completed, and it was the fate of Tetricus and his son from the West, and Zenobia from the East, to appear as captives at Rome. and to swell the triumph of Aurelian.

We arrive with tolerable certainty at the conclusion that this vase with its contents was placed in the earth in the early part of the reign of Aurelian, A.D. 270.

The occasion and circumstances of the deposit remain to be considered. At the time referred to the frontier line between the Romans and the Caledonians was, and for many years had been, the Wall of Hadrian. The Roman garrison and the Caledonians were and had been in the habit of reciprocal incursion into the countries of each other for the purposes of foraging and of fighting.
"Egit amor dapis atque pugnae."
We have been in the habit of ascribing to the dread of these incursions the concealment of coins on or about the Wall of Hadrian. In the present case, however, guided by the knowledge and experience of our, distinguished colleague, Mr. Charles Roach Smith, we take a wider view of the subject. In the fifth volume of his "Collectanea Antiqua, we find an account of a discovery of a hoard of coins at Nunburnholme, in Yorkshire, beginning with Valerian and ending with four coins of Aurelian, numbering in the whole 3,095 .

And in the third volume of the "Collectanea Antiqua" will be found a very interesting description of Roman remains at Jublains, in Normandy; and of the coins found there, ending with more than 300 coins of Tetricus and his son, and a single coin of Aurelian.

[^1]Sereral similar hoards of coins have been found in other places, both in England and in France.

On these facts Mr. Roach Smith makes remarks as follows :-" All these particular hoards of coins ending with a few of Aurelian point to the immediate prelude to the great conflict which wrested Gaul and Britain from Tetricus, and restored these provinces to the Empire through Aurelian. The numerous deposits of coins similar to this under consideration, discovered in various parts of the country, reveal a widespread apprehension of some imminent danger early in the reign of Aurelian. Troops were drawn by Tetricus from various stations to serve in Gaul, and they hid their money to be recovered should they return. It was the most certain way of preserving it when they had no relations or friends to entrust it to."

We arrive at the conclusion that the expectation that Aurelian would complete the task undertaken by Claudius of re-uniting the "disjecta membra" of the Roman Empire ; and the dread pervading all classes, both civil and military, that scenes of anarchy and confusion like those which preceded the formation of the Gallic Empire by Postumus would precede or accompany its dissolution by Aurelian, induced the deposit in the soil of Northumberland of these coins, where they have rested for one thousand six hundred and nine years.


SUMMARY OR NUMERICAL LIST OF THE COINS.

| Names. |  |  |  |  |  | of Coins of |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Otacilia ... | $\ldots$ | ... | $\cdots$ | ... | $\ldots$ | 1 |
| Hostilianus... | ... | $\cdots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 1 |
| Trebonianus Gallus |  | ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 1 |
| Volusianus ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 2 |
| Emilianus ... | ... | ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\cdots$ | 1 |
| Valerian | ... | ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 49 |
| Mariniana ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 2 |
| Gallienus | $\ldots$ | $\cdots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 915 |
| Salonina | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 136 |
| Saloninus | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | ... | $\ldots$ | $\cdots$ | 21 |
| Postumus ... | $\ldots$ | ... | ... | $\cdots$ | $\ldots$ | 454 |
| Laelianus | ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\cdots$ | 6 |
| Victorinus ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | ... | $\ldots$ | ... | 1,678 |
| Marius | $\ldots$ | $\cdots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | ... | 24 |
| Tetricus, Sen, | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | ... | ... | ... | 424 |
| Tetricus, Jun. | ... | $\ldots$ | ... | ... | $\ldots$ | 92 |
| Macrianus ... | ... | $\ldots$ | ... | $\cdots$ | $\ldots$ | 1 |
| Quietus ... | ... | $\ldots$ | ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 1 |
| Claudius Gothicus |  | ... | ... | ... | $\ldots$ | 696 |
| Quintillus ... | ... | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | $\ldots$ | 95 |
| Aurelian ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 4,608 |
| Coins remaining in the hands of the finder, which have been inspected, but not particularly de- |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| scribed | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 416 |
|  | Total | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5,024 |

## DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE COINS.



[^2]

* See Plate I., No. 5.


* See Plate I., No. 7.


* One of these coins is exactly the same in every respect as the coin of Claudius II. with the same reverse, the profile being like that of Claudius II., but with the letters galilienvs avg round it.
$\dagger$ See Plate I., No. 8.

* See Plate I., No. 6. † See Plate I., No. 9. $\ddagger$ See Plate I., No. 10.

* See Plate I., No. 11.

* See Plate II., No. $15 . \quad \dagger$ See Plate II., No. $14 . \quad \ddagger$ See Plate II., No. 13. || See Plate II., No. 16. Ascribed by some numismatists to Postumus, jun.

* See Plate II., No. 17.
$\dagger$ Some of the profiles on coins with this reverse are unlike Victorinus and very like his predecessor Postumus. For an instance of this, see the coin No. 18, Plate II.
$\ddagger$ See Plate II., No. 20. \| See Plate II., No. 21. § See Plate II., No. 22.
** See Plate II., No. 19.


[^3]

* Some coins with this reverse have " $S$ " in field. $\dagger$ See Plate III., No. 30. $\ddagger$ See Plate III., No. 31.

* See Plate III., No. 29.


| Legend of Reverse |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Broug | forward | .. ... | $\ldots$ | $\cdots$ | 27 | 4,505 |
| 10. laetitia ava ... | ... | .. ... | XII | 2 |  |  |
| 11. D0. $\ldots$ | ... | .. ... | $\cdots$ | 7 |  |  |
| 12. Do.* ... | ... | .. XII | ... | 3 | 12 |  |
| 13. MARTI Pacif ... | $\cdots$ | .. x | $\cdots$ | $\ldots$ | 4 |  |
| 14. PAX AVGVSTI ... | ... |  | $\ldots$ |  | 6 |  |
| 16. PROVIDENT AVG | $\cdots$ | .. | $\cdots$ | 6 8 8 |  |  |
| 16. DO. $\dagger$ | ... |  |  | 8 | 14 |  |
| 17. sectrit avg ... | $\ldots$ | xI | $\cdots$ |  | 9 |  |
| 18. victoria ava ... | $\ldots$ | $\cdots$ | т | $\ldots$ | 9 |  |
| 19. virtvs avg ... | ... | .. в | ... | ... | 7 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| In possession of finder; | examin | .. ... | $\cdots$ | ... | 7 |  |
| avrelian- |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. CONCORDIA AVG... | $\cdots$ | $\cdots$ | xT | $\ldots$ | 1 |  |
| 2. GENIVS ILLXR ... | ... | ... | P | $\cdots$ | 2 |  |
| 4. PRovident ava |  |  | $\cdots$ | $\ldots$ | 1 |  |
| 5. ROMAE AETERNAE\\| | $\ldots$ |  | $\cdots$ | $\cdots$ | 1 |  |
| 6. victoria ava $\ddagger$ | $\ldots$ | .. | P | $\cdots$ | 1 |  |
| 7. virtvs avg ... | ... |  |  |  | 1 |  |
| In possession of finder, but not allocated, about |  |  |  |  |  | 416 |
| Grand Total |  | ... | .. |  | $\ldots$ | 5,024 |

* See Plate III., No. 33.
$\dagger$ Same reverse as coin of Claudius, see Plate III., Nos. $29 \& 32$.
$\ddagger$ The profile on obverse of these coins is like that of Claudius II., see Plate III., Nos. 34 and 35.
$\|$ See Plate III., No. 36. § See Plate III., No. 34.


[^0]:    * In the month of October, 1873, were dug up on the estate of Blackmoor, in Hampshire, belonging to Lord Selborne, two earthenware vessels, containing 29,802 Roman coins, extending over a period commencing about half a dozen years before, and ending about a quarter of a century after, this Northumbrian hoard. In the two hoards there is this singular coincidence, that each of them has five coins prior to Valerian. In the Hampshire hoard those five coins are of Gordianus, Philippus, Otacilia, Gallus, and Volusianus; in the Northumbrian hoard those five coins are as in the text. In each of the hoards one of the five coins is in duplicate, viz., in the Hampshire hoard that of Gordianus, in the Northumbrian hoard that of Volusianus.

[^1]:    * The issue of coins by Tetricus and his son would seem to have been very copious. Of the Hampshire hoard of 29,802 coins, comprising those of thirty-three imperial persons, very nearly one-half-viz., 14,028-are coins of Tetricus and his son. The Hampshire hoard extends over the whole rengn of Tetricus and his son, whilst the Northumbrian hoard extends over one-third of their reign.

[^2]:    * See Plate I., No. 1. $\ddagger$ See Plate I., No. 2. $\ddagger$ See Plate I., No. 12. || See Plate I., No. 3. § See Plate I., No. 4.

[^3]:    * See Plate III., No. 25. $\quad \dagger$ See Plate II., No. $24 . \quad \ddagger$ See Plate II., No. 23. || See Plate III., No. 27. § See Plate III., No. 26. ** See Plate III., No. 28.

