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THE PLANTAGENET PENNY IN DAILY LIFE

*By* DR. H. BARRACLOUGH FELL (read May 31, 1954).

(continued from previous issue)

From the thirteenth century and later we have much richer sources of information on the household economy of our ancestors. Over the interval between the Norman Conquest and the reigns of the early Plantagenets, down to Edward II, there had been apparently a gradual increase in prices. Taking the sheep as our key index, we find that over the two centuries and a half between 1066 and 1300 its price had risen from fivepence to about sixteen pence—that is, one shilling and fourpence at the new Norman rate of 12 pence to the shilling. An ox was now fetching 12 shillings. This rate of increase, spread over 250 years, was relatively trivial in comparison with the skyrocketing of values within the lifetimes of most people living today. Apart from some short-lived experiments by Henry III and Edward I, the silver penny was still the principal coin of the realm; the groat had still to win favour, and gold was not yet being coined. By the end of the thirteenth century England's population did not exceed three million. The largest city, London, numbered about 30,000 inhabitants. Five other towns had a population of 5,000 or more, but in general the economy was that of an agricultural and pastoral community.

WAGES.

The towns were the home of the artizans—carpenters, stone-masons, sawyers and others—who worked for an average of eight hours a day on six days of the week. The hours worked were longer in summer, the reverse in winter. There were a few holidays at holy seasons, without pay. To judge by the records of the wages paid during the construction of the great English cathedrals, these skilled and semi-skilled workers earned between 3d and 5d a day, that is from one-and-sixpence to two-and-sixpence per week. It is doubtful whether they were fully employed throughout the year; if they were, their annual incomes would lie between £3-15-0 and £4-7-6. In the country, agricultural

labourers were earning 2d a day. Hinds (single men) were paid 32/- per annum, mainly in corn; this, together with harvest overtime, amounted to 35/8 a year. A married farm labourer, after allowing for harvest overtime, and loss of pay on holy days, would earn about £2-15-0. His wife could earn 5/- at harvest, and if two of the children were old enough to work on the manor, the family income would lie around £4 per annum. These estimates are due mainly to the researches of Rogers (1).

#### RENTS.

The annual rent for a cottage was now between one-shilling-and-twopence and two shillings, plus one day's haymaking. In 1379 during the reign of Richard II shop-rents in Cheapside were 1 mark (13/4) per annum. Stalls at the north door of St. Paul's were let at 10/- and 6/8 per annum (2).

#### LAND VALUES.

Arable land changed hands at prices ranging from 6/- to 8/- an acre. It could be rented at 6d per acre per annum. A landowner could pay seasonal labourers at contract rates if the parties were agreeable; thus, ploughing, 6d per acre; hoeing, 1d per acre; second hoeing, ½d per acre; reaping, 5d per acre; carriage, 1d per acre; threshing was paid for with the straw. Seed-corn would normally cost 6d a bushel, but fluctuated according to the previous harvest.

#### FOOD.

Fish was plentiful for those who lived near the coast. Edward I issued price-control orders from time to time, listing the following among others: best soles, 3d a dozen; best mackerel in Lent, 1d each; best pickled herrings, 20 a penny; best eels, 25 for twopence; best whiting, 3d a dozen; oysters, 2d a gallon; for those with money to spare, lampreys (a mediæval delicacy) could be had for 4d each, salmon for 1/3 each, and porpoises for 6d to 8d each. No fish, unless salted, was to be kept in London beyond the second day. Shopkeeper's profits were limited to 1d in the shilling (2).

All meats sold at about one farthing a pound, including mutton, beef and bacon (for winter).

Ten dozen eggs cost 4d. Butter was three farthings a pound, and cheese a halfpenny a pound (though actually sold by tale in three sizes). A four-pound loaf cost a halfpenny, but most housewives would bake their own (1).

Corn (wheat) averaged 5/10d for a quarter (of 480 lbs.). A quarter of oats (304 lbs.) cost 2/5, and malt (barley) for brewing beer would normally cost around 3/- for a quarter of 356 lbs. In famine years (e.g. 1316) wheat could rise to 16/-, whereas in a year of glut (e.g. 1287) it could fall to 2/10½d. Normally the price would lie between 4/6d and 6/6d. Excessive rain was the cause of bad harvests (1).

Other factors conspired with the weather to cause high prices during the reign of Henry I; these were the illegal practices of

the moneyers, who clipped and debased the coin. The famous passage in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 1125, where Henry's drastic punishment of the moneyers is recorded, has been quoted in numismatic works (suitably toned down). Not so well known is this passage in the Chronicle for the previous year, where a clear picture is given of the distress then abroad in England:—"A.D. 1124—These years were famine times in Engle land, on both corn-land and pasture. So that between Christ's mass and Candle mass men sold seed-wheat enough for one acre, that is, two bushels of seed, for six shillings; and barley for an acre, that is, three bushels of seed, for six shillings; and oats enough for one acre, that is, four bushels of seed, for four shillings. That was because there was so little corn, and the penny was so evil that if a man took one pound to market he could scarcely pass twelve pence of it" (3).

#### CLOTHING.

Wool cost about 4d a pound. The labourer and his family would wear homespun. Ordinary boots and shoes cost up to two shillings a pair (1). For the wealthy, dearer wares were to be had. In 1321 a Fleet Street bootmaker supplied Edward II with six pairs of boots, with tassels of silk and drops of silver-gilt, the price of each pair being five shillings (2).

#### FINES.

Fines do not seem to have increased much since Saxon times. The poet Chaucer is recorded to have "beaten a saucy Franciscan friar" one day in Fleet Street. For this liberty he was fined 2/- by the Inner Temple (2). In 1382 (Richard II) a cook of Bread Street, for selling stale slices of cooked conger-eel, was put in the pillory in Cheapside for one hour whilst the said slices were burned under his nose.

#### TAXES AND TOLLS.

William the Conqueror revived Danegeld in 1068 to pay the Norman army. The Chronicle for 1083 records that "after mid-winter the king caused much tax to be levied over all Engla land, that was for each hide two hundred and seventy pence" (3). This means probably a rate of about a penny an acre.

William Rufus in 1094 invented a lucrative form of taxation. He impressed 20,000 well-to-do men as soldiers, and then offered them their immediate discharge upon payment of 10/-. He raised £10,000.

In 1281 four arches of London Bridge were destroyed by floods. To finance the repairs Edward I levied the following bridge-tolls: a man on foot carrying merchandise, a farthing; every horseman, one penny; every pack carried by a horse, a halfpenny (4). Richard II's parliament imposed a poll-tax whereby "all persons above 15 years old were obliged to pay 12d per head". This was the occasion of Wat Tyler's rebellion.

The mediæval institution of ransom involved the English tax-payer in some outlay, as also the Scots. In 1194 Cœur de Lion

occasioned an expenditure of 150,000 marks of silver (£100,000). When Edward I died on July 7 1307 his last instructions concerned the forwarding of his heart to the Holy Land, together with £32,000 for the maintenance of the Holy Sepulchre. In 1357 David of Scotland was ransomed by his people for 100,000 marks English, to be paid in ten annual instalments of 10,000 marks (to Edward III). When Henry V returned from Agincourt in 1415 he was met by the citizens of London and given two golden basins containing £1,000.

A recent attempt to estimate how a smaller proprietor or artizan in 13th century England might spend his £4 annual income was as follows (5):—

|   |       |             |     |
|---|-------|-------------|-----|
| Bread for 12 months .....                   | £1    | 3           | 6   |
| Malt to yield 4 gallons of ale weekly ..... |       | 7           | 7   |
| 800 lbs meat .....                          |       | 16          | 8   |
| Clothing, wool, boots .....                 |       | 12          | 3   |
|   |       | <hr/>       |     |
|   | Total | £3          | 0 0 |
|   |       | <hr/> <hr/> |     |

leaving £1, a quarter of his income, for incidental expenses, increasing his holding of land, portioning his daughters and such like.

On the whole, then, we may conclude that the life of the peasant or artizan in Plantagenet England was simple, but by no means straightened or unhappy. He had enough spare cash to buy more than mere necessities. If he had a wedding in the family, it would cost him from 2/- to 5/3, according to the scale he chose. Burials ran from three farthings to 9/3.

#### THE LATER MIDDLE AGES.

For those who survived the Black Death of 1349, better times still were on hand. One third of the population was wiped out, and a labour shortage created. Wages doubled almost immediately and remained at the new high level for the next two hundred years. Food prices, on the other hand, remained the same, and wool declined from 4d to 3d a lb. In a good harvest year it was now possible for an artizan to earn a bushel of wheat by a day's labour, and an ordinary labourer could earn three quarters of a bushel. In fifteen weeks a labourer could provision his family for a year with three quarters of wheat, three of malt and two of oatmeal. An artizan achieved the same result in ten weeks (1).

Rogers (1) believes that the fifteenth century and the first quarter of the sixteenth were the golden age for the English labourer. At no time were wages higher relative to the cost of living. Attempts by Parliament to reduce wages were always unsuccessful. Agricultural labourers were now earning 4d a day, carpenters, joiners and masons 6d, plumbers 6½d. The labourer was often fed, the cost of maintenance being reckoned at 6d a week or even thrown in free (as at Oxford) since food was so

cheap. By 1467 board was set at 1/- a week, and in the same year hired girls were earning 2d a day, plus free board reckoned at the same amount.

In 1473 (12 Edward IV) the Company of Goldsmiths had a dinner, the bills for which happen still to be extant. We find that pigeons cost 1½d, geese 7d, capons 8d, 4 barrels of good ale 17/4, spice-bread 16/8, two barrels of cheaper ale 6/-, two hogsheads of wine £2-10-0, dinners for the eight minstrels 3/4, and bonnets for the said minstrels 6/8 (2, p. 358). By 1483 a master-mason working on York Minster was earning £10 a year. Wheat, which had cost on the average 5/10 a quarter over the period 1260 to 1400, cost only a penny per quarter more over the interval 1400 to 1540.

It is interesting to note that we are now on the threshold of another series of changes in the monetary system. With the rise in wages after the Black Death, the basic wage became 4d a day, and continued thus until Henry VIII's debasement of the coinage. It was just precisely this interval that saw the rise of that splendid mediæval coin, the groat. Thus, when we admire a tray of groats of Edward III and the Lancastrian and Yorkist kings, it is worth remembering that each piece—with its gothic embellishments and religious inscriptions—was once the daily earnings of an English countryman during those prosperous centuries before Tudor despotism wrecked his economy.

#### SOME ILLUSTRATIONS.

We may select a few common coins from the English mediæval series to illustrate the facts given in the foregoing two articles.

Æthelred II, silver penny circulating between 979 and 1017. This coin was no doubt struck as Danegeld and carried off to Scandinavia, and there used as a model for the first native issues of Sven Forkbeard and his successors. In England it would have paid the rent for a month or more. Pence of Cnut, Edward the Confessor and the Norman kings would have had about the same purchasing power, slowly waning in value.

A penny of Henry III (1216-1272) would be a labourer's wage for half a day. With it he could buy 4 lbs. of meat or bacon, or two quarts of oysters, or a dozen eels, or four soles, or two pounds of cheese, or 8 pounds of bread, or a combination of these. He could pay the rent for three weeks, or bury his mother-in-law (and still have a farthing change). The same purchasing power holds for pence of Edward I, Edward II and the first part of Edward III's reign (till 1349).

After 1349, Edward III's penny would represent only 2 hours' labour, but it would still buy all the commodities that Henry III's penny bought.

A groat of Henry V (1413-1422) would be a common man's daily wage. Bread, beer, butter, meat and cheese were still the same price. With his groat he could feed his family for two days, or put by a sixteen pound ham for winter. He could still do the same in the days of Henry VI, Edward IV and Richard III.

The reign of Henry VII, beginning in 1485, is conventionally regarded as marking the close of the middle ages in England, and the coinage of this king is transitional to the modern style. Though the economic upheaval did not come till the reign of his son, we may conveniently conclude these notes at the year of the Tudor succession.

#### AUTHORITIES.

- (1) Rogers *History of Agriculture and Prices* passim.
- (2) Walford (1875) *Old and New London* (4 vols, passim).
- (3) Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Laud Manuscript, printed and edited by Earle and Plummer (1892) in *Two Saxon Chronicles Parallel*.
- (4) Walford, *ibid.*, vol 2, p. 10.
- (5) W. R., "The Sinews of Inflation" in *N.Z. Listener*, March 9 1951.

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### HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS OF COINS. ENGLISH SERIES.

*By* R. SELLARS.

(Read before Auckland Branch.)

In very early times the English, or more correctly, Anglo-Saxon coinage, consisted mainly of tiny silver sceattas and copper stycas, of crude design and indifferent workmanship. It was not until the eighth century that the first silver penny made its appearance; then, for a period of over 500 years this was the basic—almost the sole—coinage of England. That is why, when viewing an old collection, we find ourselves confronted by monotonous rows of coins, all of similar size and with no great variety in style. However, such as they are, they once played their part in the pursuit of trade and provide mute testimony of those who influenced the course of events in the making of England's history.

Amongst the earliest of these pieces is the silver penny of Alfred the Great. On the obverse is a caricature of a bust, bearing no actual resemblance whatsoever to the King. Indeed, in the English coinage, no serious attempt at genuine portraiture was made until the reign of Henry VII, six hundred years later. Nevertheless, despite its obvious shortcomings this modest little penny serves to remind us of Alfred the Great, and we may well pause to consider what kind of a monarch he was.

Alfred was King of the West Saxons, from 871 until 900 and was probably the greatest and most celebrated of all the Saxon rulers. Although not a lover of war he found it necessary to engage the marauding Danes in battle on about a dozen different occasions over a period of years, finally emerging victorious. Thereupon, he entered into a peace treaty with the Danish king, Guthrum, and, freed from the shackles of war, devoted the rest

of his life to legislation, administration of Government and the encouragement of learning. It was, in fact, less as a warrior than as a statesman that he gained for himself the title "Great." All this notwithstanding, he earned the gratitude of British posterity by creating a fleet, thus laying the foundation of Britain's future greatness as supreme maritime power.

Next in historical importance among these sixpenny-sized silver pennies is one which reveals a grinning countenance, most unregal in appearance. This represents another "great" king, Cnut, or Canute, as we prefer to call him. In his initial effort to invade England, Canute achieved a certain measure of success and even had himself proclaimed King by his own fleet. This claim, however, was vigorously contested by the English monarch, Aethelred, the Unready. On this occasion Aethelred was definitely ready, and the outcome of the resultant clash was that Canute had to depart hurriedly from Albion's inhospitable shore. Undaunted, however, he returned in 1015 and, during the ensuing year or so, fought a number of pitched battles in which he was victorious. During the period of this second invasion, Aethelred died, and his son and heir, Edmund, was murdered. Thus it came about that Canute succeeded to the English throne, by right of arms, in 1016. He ruled wisely and well. As, however, he was also King of both Denmark and Norway, the cares and responsibilities of guiding the destinies of three countries—simultaneously, at one time—must have lain heavily upon him.

He died in England in the year 1035 and was buried in Winchester Minster. His chief ambition had been the establishment of a great Northern Empire, to include England and Scandinavia and he was working towards the completion of his grand scheme when death intervened. His brain-child perished with him.

A penny which shows some improvement on its precursors, with bust to the left and head surmounted by what appears to be a spiked helmet, is an issue of Edward the Confessor, the last of the royal Saxon line. Edward was the antithesis of a warrior, being a feeble monarch of ascetic proclivities. He occupied the throne of England from 1042 to 1066 and his main claim to historical recognition was his nomination of his cousin, William of Normandy, as his successor.

The English coinage of William the Conqueror consisted, as usual, of silver pennies, only. There are different types, such as "Profile left," "Canopy" type, "Two Star" type, "Profile right," "Two Sceptre," "Sword" and "Pax's" types, etc., most of which terms are more or less self-explanatory. In most cases the reverse features the "cross" motif in various forms. These pennies are always in popular demand as the period of their issues marks an important milestone in English history and, in viewing them, we automatically direct our thoughts to the warrior-king whose edicts so largely shaped England's future mode of life.

Born at Falaise, in Normandy, William was an illegitimate son of Robert III, Duke of Normandy, and succeeded him on his decease. On receiving news of the death of Edward the Con-

fessor, together with that of Harold the Second's assumption of the regal title, William invaded England forthwith, defeated Harold and was duly crowned King. All this happened in 1066, but it was not until 1071 that his authority became fully established throughout the whole country. He rewarded his followers with grants of land and lordships over them, subject to the Crown. The celebrated Domesday Book was compiled by his order and the Kingdom brought into closer relation with the Roman Church.

In the year 1087, while suppressing a rebellion in Normandy, William died as a result of a fall from his horse. He was buried at Caen. He goes down in history as a strong and wise ruler and there is no doubt whatever that as a result of the Norman Conquest the English language became considerably enriched by the introduction of many Norman words and phrases.

Many pennies are to be seen, bearing the title "Henri Rex" or "Henricus Rex" or variants thereof. To the uninitiated these may be somewhat misleading for, while most of them are issues of the first three monarchs of that name, some of them did service for Richard I (Coeur de Lion) and some for his brother, John. It is a curious fact that although several new dies were used for the coinage of both Richard and John, the English issues continued to carry the title of Henry. Coins bearing the name of Richard were, however, struck in France and Ireland, while John's name appeared on some Irish pennies, halfpennies and farthings. A glance at the records of these two monarchs will leave one with the impression that neither of them deserved to have his name engraved on the coinage of England.

Richard, the Lion-hearted, was the second son of Henry II, with whom he was continually bickering. He succeeded to the throne of England in 1189. His consuming interest lay in the Crusade movement which held alluring promises of freedom and adventure, of travels in strange places and battles to be won on foreign fields. And so, in 1190, he joined forces with Philip Augustus of France, in the third crusade. He fought successfully in Sicily, captured Cyprus and won great renown in the Holy Land, particularly by his defeat of Saladin. While returning from his conquests, however, he had the misfortune to be shipwrecked and was later captured by the Archduke of Austria and handed over to the Emperor, Henry VI. This was in 1193. He was subsequently ransomed by his subjects for an enormous sum of money and landed in England during the following year. After a brief sojourn there he retired to his French possessions where he spent the remainder of his life, warring against Philip. In 1199, ten years after his accession to the English throne, he died of an arrow-wound received at the siege of Chaluz. Of his entire lifetime, not more than one year was spent in England, his total residence as king aggregating no more than three months!

By Richard's death England lost little but gained less, for the unworthy John then came to the throne. John was mean and contemptible in every way. As an instance of his untrustworthiness it is recorded that during Richard's absence abroad he

(John) attempted to usurp the English throne. His ambition was realised in 1199, when, on the death of Richard, he supplanted his nephew, Prince Arthur, who was held in some quarters to be Richard's legitimate heir. In the year 1203 Arthur was mysteriously murdered and John was suspected of having engineered the foul deed and even of personally having committed it. His reign was fraught with undignified squabbles, first with the Pope, then with his subjects and we are told in our school history books that at Runnymede, in 1215, he was compelled to sign Magna Carta. If the truth must be told, however, John was incapable of signing anything for, like the great majority of his people, he was quite illiterate. All he was able to do was to affix the Royal Seal to this famous document. He died in the following year.

And now, as we progress through the centuries we find that the coinage becomes more varied. Occasional issues of rare gold pennies had already been made and, during the reign of Edward III (1327-1377) several types of gold coins came into circulation, such as the half-florin, or leopard, as it was called, the quarter-florin, also the noble and the half- and quarter-noble. Silver groats, halfpennies and farthings had already made their appearance during the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) so from that time the coinage of the Realm began to acquire an added interest.

(To be continued.)

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## COINS AND COMMODITIES IN ANCIENT GREECE.

By PROFESSOR H. A. MURRAY, M.A., F.R.N.S., N.Z.

In the opening paragraph of his *King Penguin* book entitled *A Book of Greek Coins*, C. Seltman says: "Plants, birds, beasts and heraldic symbols, portraits and personifications are present upon the coins in our pockets and hand-bags today because the Greeks first thought of such things." I shall consider here only plants, birds and beasts and one or two inanimate objects used in trade and commerce, or related to these activities, which are found as types on Greek coins. I can of course select for description only a very few examples, which seem to me to be of interest.

There are several difficulties to be noted. The choice of symbols and designs, as well as the artistic traditions in rendering them tend to be conservative. Types in their general form may persist, but the feelings and notions which they evoke may be different at different times. One can hardly be at all confident that the types to be considered were put on coins because of their importance essentially as commodities and not for other reasons. A bunch of grapes or an ear of corn (Seltman, Pl. 5, No. 34, Pl. 6, No. 37) may seem to us obvious examples of commodities, the noted produce of the district, but sometimes they may be chosen by cities which were not specially distinguished for their wine or

their corn. Possibly the wine is chosen as a type because the city was a well-known centre for the worship of Dionysus; or the corn may be chosen essentially because the city was a centre of the worship of the goddess Demeter. If both notions are present it would be difficult to tell which is to receive the greater emphasis. The relationship between the divinity and the attribute is often a very long and intricate story, and it hardly concerns us here. So too, the question whether the city is a centre of some cult which it desires to commemorate by clearly understood symbols or attributes. But for our purpose it may be sufficient to omit such details and bear in mind that if a commodity becomes a traditional coin type, it may not be for its own sake. Most probably few of them are represented simply for that reason. A type such as the bee may probably emphasise a celebrated product—honey—in one state, and may celebrate a well-known myth, or a cult, or have some such religious significance in another. Again, the city of Marseilles produced a beautiful coin with the head of Artemis adorned with sprigs of olive. It is said that the first branch of olive was brought to Marseilles with the statue of Artemis from Ephesus. One of the principal temples at Marseilles was dedicated to Ephesian Artemis. At the same time the cultivation of the olive was a great source of wealth to the town.

Sometimes the type may be no more than a kind of pun on the name of the state to which it belongs. Unless the commodity and the state are in their names connected etymologically, the origin of the type is a pure coincidence in sound, or an idea or quality common to both state and commodity; for example the sickle of Zankle, which is the shape of its harbour. (Seltman, Pl. 7, No. 43.) This device is perhaps more widespread on Greek coinage than is usually imagined. In the index to the second edition of the *Historia Numorum*, under the heading *types parlants*, Head cites no fewer than forty-one examples, and Seltman would see even more. (cf., *Book of Greek Coins*, p. 11.) We may therefore eliminate the following coin types: (those who find a series of puns tedious should go on at once to the next paragraph). The anchor (ankyra) of Ancyra, both in Galatia and in Phrygia (but at Galatian Ancyra there was in the temple of Zeus an anchor which King Midas had found); the bee (melitta) so far as the town of Melitaea is concerned; the bull (Tauros) of Tauromenium; the cock of Carystus (karusso—"to crow") if it is not a symbol of sun-worship, or the celebration of competitive games or an attribute of the god of healing; the corn-grain (krithe) of Crithote; perhaps the cray-fish (astakos) of Astacus; the goat (aix) of divers places whose name contains the syllable AIG; the greave (knemis) of the Locri Epicnemidii; the hook (harpage) of Arpi; the stalk of a plant (kaulos) of Caulonia (Head, p. 92, fig. 50); the pomegranate (side) of Side; the quince (melon) of Melos; the wild celery or parsley (selinon) which grew on the banks of the river Selinus in Sicily, at the mouth of which stood a city of the same name (Seltman, Pl. 20, Nos. 59 and 60; Head, p. 167, fig. 88); the seal (phoke) of

Phocaea (Seltman, Pl. 1, No. 5); and the table (trapeza) of Trapezus (Seltman, Pl. 47, No. 113).

Of the "owls" of Athens (Seltman, Pl. 8 and 9) with the head of Athena, the owl and the sprig of olive Seltman says (p. 19): "The appearance of Athene on all these coins had a propaganda value for Athens. It will not escape our notice that in an age without news-print the only 'printed,' that is stamped, objects with a wide circulation were coins, and these carried ideas to remote lands." Perhaps, then, the adoption of a local commodity as a coin type, whether or not it was adopted purely as representing the commodity and no more, may have good "advertising value." In *Geographical History in Greek Lands*, p. 28, Sir J. L. Myres gives as an example the hams on the coins of Nemausus (modern Nîmes). At the same time the type could have been a grateful and honourable recognition of an important source of trade and wealth; it would have kept this feeling alive in the minds of the citizens. Perhaps too, although one cannot be at all certain of this, there may be an unconscious memory of primitive magic, the feeling that if you have a picture or image of a thing you have control over the thing represented. But in almost every instance it is probably true to say that the primary significance of a coin type that depicts a commodity, belongs to religion and mythology. Other associations are, of course, not necessarily ruled out and emphasis may probably shift for various reasons.

The variety of commodities represented on coins is at first sight very large—live-stock, game, fruits and crops, fishes and other water animals and plants. Most of them are in fact "primary produce." Then there are manufactured articles like ploughs and rudders, which are self-explanatory (as indeed they are on modern currencies like the Italian), cups and wine-jars. It will be more convenient to look at some of these "manufactures" first, because they are few. Perhaps they are not so common because they are a novelty. Types of plants and animals may have been preferred because they were in the main tradition of attributes of divinities and heraldic symbols. So too the artistic tradition may sometimes have preferred to depict the divinity rather than the instrument with which he is connected. Exceptions would be the wine-cup for Dionysus, and the bread-basket for Demeter.

It is only fitting to begin with one of the finest "products" of ancient Greece, still in use and enjoyed as first introduced, and in comparatively undamaged condition. The obverse of an issue of the city of Colophon in the 2nd century B.C. shows a portrait of Homer seated with his chin resting on his hand and with a scroll upon his knees. This is probably a piece of propaganda. Colophon was only one of several Greek cities which claimed the honour of being the birth-place of Homer. It seems to be the only city of the group which has made its claim public and permanent in this way. The story behind the issue might no doubt be very interesting if it could be reconstructed. Similar to this issue is the obverse of a coin of the island of Paros which shows the poet

Archilochus, who was born there, seated and playing the cithara. Most remarkable is the late series of coins issued by the city of Mytilene with representations of famous men, heroes, and benefactors. It includes the poetess Sappho, a politician, an historian and a philosopher. The island of Amorgos shows on some of its coins Asclepius, the patron of medicine, and on others a cupping vessel. The reference here, however, may be religious.

The early coins of Athens show an amphora, a large wine-jar. (Seltman, Pl. 2, Nos. 20-21.) We are told that even before 600 B.C. much of the early export trade of Athens was in finely painted vases. The amphora type may commemorate this fact. Perhaps in 566 B.C. the Athenian tyrant Peisistratus introduced the coin-type of Athens which is best known—the head of the goddess Athena on the obverse; and the owl and the twig of olive on the reverse. Seltman says of these coins (p. 7): "Since astuteness is perfectly compatible with piety, the remarkable man may have had a sincere faith in his patron goddess, Athene, whose head he caused to be placed on the large fat silver coins of his city. The reverse was occupied by the coat of arms of Athens, an owl—the 'little owl,' still common there—and a twig of olive and part of the city's name." The olive was the gift of the goddess Athena to Athens; its oil supplied the ancient world with the equivalent of butter, soap and artificial light. Further, about the time of Peisistratus the Athenians had given up the unequal task of trying to live off the land. Olives grew well there, and the export of olive oil became an important part of Athenian economy which helped her to import the cereals which she could not economically grow in sufficient quantity for her own needs.

The amphora appears in an unusual form about 210 B.C. on the coins of Assorus, a small Sicilian town. The type shows the figure of the river god Chrysaos holding an amphora and a horn of plenty. Hence is indicated that thanks to the river the land is fertile. The unusual design is said by Head to represent a famous marble statue mentioned by Cicero. But here we have passed beyond the commodity to its religious significance. The amphora and other wine vessels are also common attributes of Dionysus, god of the vine.

Of wild game that can be regarded as having "commodity" value there is not very much. Even if the intention may be to signify the commodity, it is usually overlaid by a rich and old significance from religion or mythology. Perhaps mention should be made here of the magnificent four-drachma silver piece engraved by Theodotus of Clazomenae. (Seltman, Pl. 42-43, Nos. 105a and 105b. See also *Masterpieces of Greek Coinage*, by the same author, pp. 120-121.) The obverse has a fine, powerful, frontal head of Apollo, and the reverse a wild swan. Of this Seltman says (p. 24): "The reverse is a perfect foil to the head: a swan, a bird of Apollo, and blazon of the city walks, wings up, bold and wild." Here then we have other ideas than those merely of commodity value: but there is more precise significance to be found for the choice of the swan. Head (p. 568) says: "The

swan, which is the characteristic reverse-type of the finest coins of Clazomenae, is one of the many symbols of Apollo, and it has been suggested that the name of Clazomenae may have been derived from the plaintive notes of these birds (klazo, cf. Homer *Iliad*, X 276) which are said to abound in the Delta of the Hermus."

The same city, particularly in its very early issues, had the type of the winged boar. The tradition was that a monster of this sort had once infested the district. So, too, there is an interesting story about the boar which appears on the coins of Agrigentum during the tyranny of Phintós, c. 287-279 B.C. The tyrant had a dream in which he was fatally wounded in the side by a wild boar while hunting; he therefore chose this type to propitiate Artemis, the goddess of hunting. In Sicilian Abacaenum, where a sow and a pig are found as reverse types and in Phocis, the animal is almost certainly connected with the worship of Artemis.

The hare is likewise a religious type. It is found in Etruria, at Croton, at Rhegium and at Messene. According to Aristotle it appears on the coins of these last two cities because the tyrant Anaxilas introduced the hare into Sicily. Here there may be an instance of the type signifying wild game as a commodity. But as the type persisted after the tyrant's death, it may have taken on a religious significance. One coin of Messene shows Pan, god of the wilderness caressing a hare. Is the emphasis on the new honour to Pan in this district, or on the new object here committed to his care?

The "commodity" significance of the deer and of the dove, if it ever existed, has been absorbed into other meanings. The deer is a *type-parlant* (Procon-nesus—Deer Island) or a symbol of the goddess Artemis, or otherwise connected with mythology. The dove is connected with the worship of Aphrodite. The gazelle which appears on the coins of Cyrene in North Africa may, however, have a purely "commodity" significance, or at least the significance of a little-known animal which is characteristic of its district. Then perhaps mention should be made of the little field mouse which appears on some coins. The type points indirectly to an important commodity. It may be the symbol of Apollo Smintheus, and may therefore refer to some plague or blight upon the crops. The type appears upon the coins of Italian Cumae. cf. 1st Samuel, 6, 4. "Then said they, What shall be the trespass offering which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods and five golden mice according to the number of the lords of the Philistines, for one plague was on you all and on your lords. Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods and images of your mice that mar the land."

There are many types which depict fresh-water and marine life. The crab, the dolphin, the mussel, marine plants, the crayfish, the octopus, the sepia, the tunny, the cuttle-fish, the scallop and the cockle-shell, the star-fish, the turtle (Seltman, Pl. 2, Nos. 13, 14, 15); *Masterpieces of Greek Coinage*, p. 29). Here also it would be difficult to distinguish the purely symbolic or

attributive religious significance from the representation of the thing in itself as an important commodity. Dolphins may simply represent the sea, crustaceans and scallop-shells water, as in corresponding conventions of vase-painting. A dolphin with a trident or a rudder may indicate the cult of Poseidon or a sea-faring community, or both. (Seltman, Pl. 46, No. 112.) A crab or a cray-fish may stand for Poseidon or the local river god (Seltman, Pl. 7, No. 44; Pl. 27, No. 87; see also Pl. 35, No. 94; Head, pp. 36-37, Figs. 12 and 13 where a sea-serpent is also shown). But some types do seem to have been chosen because they represented important local commodities. The coinage of Cumae shows not only mussel-shells, but also marine plants and fish. Head remarks that the shallow salt lakes Avernus and Lucrinus were peculiarly adapted to the cultivation of shell-fish, and he quotes the Greek adjective for "nourished by the waves" in this connection, and two lines of Horace to show how famous were the shell-fish of the Lucrine Lake (p. 39). The symbols of Messene have frequent reference to Pan and Poseidon. Here there is distinct, if indirect, reference to commodities. Head says: "The long sandy spit called Peloris or Pelorias, with its three lakes of volcanic origin abounded both with game and fish, and was a fitting home for the worship of the two divinities to the cult of which the coins bear witness." (p. 155). The same may be said of the marine types which occur on the coins of Tarentum. There was a rich supply of food in its little land-locked sea; Head tells us that the *mare piccolo* abounds in innumerable kinds of shell-fish, many of which are not found elsewhere, and that the fishing of the lake provides a lucrative occupation for the inhabitants of modern Taranto (p. 35). The tunny-fish on the coins of Cyzicus was a familiar type which gave the name "tunnies" to the coins themselves (Seltman, *Masterpieces of Greek Coinage*, p. 36). One remarkable omission seems to be the purple-fish (murex), which was "processed" to produce a famous and expensive purple dye. Head cites only one doubtful instance from Melos (p. 892). One type depicted a famous curiosity, and may therefore have attracted an "invisible asset" in the tourist trade. The little town of Psophis in Arcadia was the scene of the contest between Hercules and the Erymanthian boar and the Hercynian stag. We should not therefore be surprised to see the boar, the stag and the club of Hercules all appearing on its coins. But fish are also one of the types. Head comments: "The river Aroanius (by which the town stands) was famed for its wonderful fish, which were said to sing like thrushes, a fable which is believed by the peasants of the neighbourhood at the present day. (Frazer, *Pausanias*, iv, 265). Pausanias, who half-credited the story, tells us how he saw the fish, but did not hear them utter a sound, though he tarried on the river bank till sunset, when they were said to sing most."

The types of live-stock and the fruits of the earth are very frequent indeed. Fruits are rare except for the acorn and the vine, but the main staffs of life, corn, olive-oil, and honey are

very frequent and wide-spread in their representation. But these commodities, or most of them, had been important from very ancient times and a representation of them in art would no doubt evoke a blend of associations and not merely the importance of the commodity in itself. There would be, for example, associations of religion and even of magic. The type of the cow and the calf is a good illustration of this kind of problem. It appears on the coinage of Euboea, Corcyra (Head, p. 326, fig. 186) and elsewhere. The design is of very great antiquity, for it is found on the gems of the Mycenaen period, and in Egypt, Assyria and Persia, long before the origin of coinage. The connection of the bull with the minotaur and Crete is obvious, and there is the story of Europa and the bull represented almost like a painter's work on the coins of Gortyna in Crete. (Seltman, *Masterpieces of Greek Coinage*, 47b, who speaks of "the fragment of a strange sacred record now become a fairy-tale.") On the earliest coins of Macedonia there are true scenes from work on the land; "Big muscular men herded the cattle, or drove oxen harnessed to massive creaking carts, while the cattle themselves often fell victims to the lions, then common in south-east Europe" (Seltman in Pl. 3, Nos. 27, 29, and 31, and text p. 7). Cattle on the coins of Euboea, her colonies and elsewhere may be connected primarily with the worship of Hera. And there are innumerable bulls, symbols of strength and vitality which simply represent river gods, who give the water that produces fertility and sustains life. (Seltman, Pl. 17, No. 57; Pl. 20, Nos. 59 and 60 and perhaps Pl. 23, Nos. 73, 74, 75 and 79.) Here it may not be inappropriate to mention two types fully described by Head, pp. 293 and 439. The town of Crannon in Thessaly was situated near the source of the large river Onchestus, which received its name from Onchestus, son of Poseidon, who was not merely god of the sea, but also of springs and rivers and the waters under the earth. It is not therefore surprising to find the bull, and even the trident, as a Crannon type: we learn also of bull fights here celebrated at the festival of Poseidon. But there is also a type which shows a large water-jar on wheels accompanied by two crows—ominous birds in time of drought? The tradition is that in times of great drought it was customary to agitate or drive about this machine whilst petitioning Zeus for rain. Thus the early agriculturalists had their professional rain-makers.

The silver stater of Argos sometimes has, as a reverse type, two dolphins with a column between them. Head believes this to be a "columnar pump or drinking fountain, in connection with the sacred 'water of freedom' . . . used by the priestesses in the Heraeum (temple of Hera), which, after flowing down a rock-hewn aqueduct, supplied the holy well called *Kynadra* at Argos. A minute examination of this object on a specimen in the British Museum reveals on one side of the column a pump-handle and on the other side a projection (basin?) supporting a vase thus placed to receive the water seen dripping from the cone-shaped

top of the pillar." On one coin the pump is shown with two handles, one on each side of the shaft.

Animals other than the ox which form part of the agricultural economy are not over-frequent—the horse—often a cult symbol, and mainly of Poseidon—the goat, already mentioned, and the pig, the cock, the sheep. The last, for some reason which I do not know, is not common at all. All of these can usually be explained as attributes or symbols with no primary or isolated reference to importance as commodities. Some of the finest Greek coins in existence were minted in Sicily, and show horses in slow-moving chariots, depicting triumph in war or in the expensive sport of chariot racing about which Sicilian despots were keen. (Seltman, Pl. 7, Nos. 45-46; Pl. 12, No. 52a; Pl. 20, No. 59; Pl. 21, Nos. 61 and 62; and Pls. 26-32, Nos. 84-91a; Pl. 37, No. 96b.) A fine horseman with two spears and his steed are illustrated on a Macedonian coin (Seltman, Pl. 11, No. 51). The bee is frequent in certain districts, but it is a common symbol of prophecy (and therefore of poetry) and is connected with Artemis (especially "Diana of the Ephesians") (Head, p. 573, fig. 295), Apollo and Aristaeus, who instructed the nymphs of the island of Ceos in the art of bee-keeping, and about whom Virgil tells a wonderful story in the fourth book of the *Georgics*. Aristaeus also protected the crops and herds, and may be referred to as an averter of pests in a coin-type of the island of Melos which depicts a wasp on a bunch of grapes. The honey of Hybla near Mount Etna in Sicily was proverbial, and we may perhaps see in the bee which appears on its coins more than a cult symbol.

By far the commonest of the vegetable products are the vine, ears of corn, with the olive and the acorn as less frequent types. These vine and corn types are very widespread, but again can be hardly separated from the religious rituals for which they are symbols or attributes, especially the worship of Demeter and Dionysus. But sometimes incidental information may show that the types have also significance as a reference to the special value of the commodity. Mende was celebrated for its wine, and the grapes appear on its coinage (Head, p. 211). But it is a Macedonian town, and in that country the worship of Dionysus was popular. Other Dionysiac symbols including the ass, a dog and a Silenus appear on its coins, and point to some Dionysiac myth perhaps connected with the district. The same is true of nearby Maroneia, which had famous vines. Its wine was said to be capable of mixture with twenty times its quantity in water. A flask of it drunk neat intoxicated the monster Polyphemus in the *Odyssey*. The town had a celebrated cult of Dionysus, and the primary significance of the types may relate to him. Of the types showing corn we may select the wheat ears of Eresus in the isle of Lesbos. It was famous for its wheat, and there was a saying that if the gods eat bread, they send Hermes to buy it at Eresus.

The rose (Seltman, Pl. 39, No. 99) and the poppy both have cult significance. The fig-leaf may be the sign of a commodity,

but is much more likely to be a religious symbol of Zeus and Dionysus, just as the acorn is usually a symbol of Zeus or of an oak forest surrounding a shrine. But the Mantineans, who depict the acorn on their coins used it as an item of diet.

It remains to mention the silphium plant which is depicted on the coins of Cyrene in North Africa (Seltman, Pl. 39, No. 100; Head, pp. 868-872). Without the drug obtained from this plant we are told that for long no Greek household was complete. It was apparently used as a spice, as a perfume and as a medicine, and as an export it brought great wealth to Cyrene. At one time one stalk of it was worth a Roman silver denarius, and one pound of it had to be sent as tribute every year to the Roman treasury. When Julius Caesar took charge of the treasury after his march on Rome in 49 B.C., his inventory of its contents included one room with 1,500 pounds of silphium. This plant is a mystery. It thrived apparently only in the wild state at Cyrene. As it proved good for sheep and cattle it was in the end destroyed by them. In the time of the emperor Nero, one stalk was found and sent to him as a rarity. Despite the several descriptions of the plant in ancient authors, and its appearance on the coins of Cyrene, it has never been identified, and the tradition that it died out may therefore be true. Here, it might be thought we have a real example of a city representing on its coinage a commodity which was unique and famous and a substantial source of wealth. But an ancient commentator on the plays of Aristophanes says that Aristaeus, son of Apollo and Cyrene was the first to discover the use of silphium and of honey. Here, too, then, a religious idea may be prominent.

It seems then very difficult to decide whether a commodity represented on a Greek coin is there simply because of its importance to some state as a commodity. From the earliest times the powers believed to control the world were closely linked with the essential commodities on which human life depends for its existence. This attitude appears on the coinage, and we find perhaps the most frequent and widespread to be corn and wine, whilst the ox, in itself, or symbolic of other features of nature, and the products of the sea are very frequent. Perhaps in all this religious and artistic tradition is very strong. But behind all the variety in detail and similarity in general type in these coin designs, we may perhaps see how like ourselves the users of those coins were in their needs and their commercial activities, and yet how different in the close relationship which they felt between so many aspects of life and the gods in whom they believed, and in the imagination which produced such symbols—often a kind of traditional heraldry—to give pleasing visible form to these relationships.

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## ROMAN COINS IN THE OTAGO MUSEUM.

By J. R. HAMILTON.

The Roman coins in the Otago Museum at present number just over a thousand. The majority of these formed part of the coin collection of the late Willi Fels. A second collection, mainly of coins of the Roman Empire, was presented by Archdeacon Gavin. There have been other smaller acquisitions during recent years. The whole collection has been re-arranged during 1954 under the direction of Mr. Harold Mattingly.

This article and a second article, on the coins of the early Empire, to be published in a later issue, deal with a selection of over 80 coins, all of which will be found illustrated on the accompanying plates. The writer wishes to express his thanks to Mr. Mattingly for placing at his disposal his intimate knowledge of the Roman coinage and for throwing light on many dark places. Among modern works consulted the most important for the present article is Sydenham *Roman Republican Coinage* (1952), which contains a select bibliography of earlier work.

## I.—THE REPUBLIC.

Roman writers were often led by the subsequent greatness of Rome to date events to a period much earlier than that in which they actually occurred, and the institution of the coinage affords a good example of this tendency. Roman tradition assigned this to the period of the kings or to the very beginning of the Republic but it is clear today that until the time of the *Decemviri* (c. 450 B.C.) sheep and oxen constituted the sole medium of exchange. Hence the word for money, *pecunia*, is derived from *pecus*, cattle. The first step towards a coinage was taken with the introduction of *aes rude*, rough lumps of bronze valued by weight, which along with barter, seems, in Central Italy at least, to have satisfied the needs of the Roman economy until the third century. After she came into contact with the cities of Campania and South Italy, Rome in her dealings with them seems to have relied for coinage on Naples with whom she had made an alliance in 326 B.C. This, at any rate, seems a fair inference from the existence of bronze coins of the standard Neapolitan types bearing the legend ROMAION. Of silver struck in the name of Rome there is no trace, and the ordinary issues of Naples presumably sufficed. The statement of Pomponius that mint officials, the *triumviri monetales*, were first appointed in 289 B.C. should be accepted, although the issue of coinage did not follow immediately. For the next twenty years or so the mint at Rome sends out what is generally called *aes signatum*, bars of bronze of about 6 lbs. in weight stamped with types, such as a bull on obverse and reverse, or an eagle on the obverse and Pegasus on the reverse. These bars, however, bore no marks of value and cannot properly be considered coinage.

Before we turn to the introduction of the coinage it may be helpful to deal briefly with the organisation and operation of the mint itself. This was situated in the temple of Juno Moneta on

the Capitol and was under the supervision of the *triumviri* (or *tresviri*) *monetales*, or to give them their full title *triumviri A(ere) A(rgento) A(uro) F(lando) F(eriundo)*—"triumvirs for the casting and striking of bronze, silver, and gold." But the office was a minor one, held by young nobles at the outset of their career, and while the operations of the mint itself—the preparation of blanks of the required weight and quality and the striking of appropriate types—were in the hands of the *triumviri*, questions of general economic policy, such as the total quantity of coins to be struck in any one year, were settled by the Senate and the financial experts, the quaestors. In general where a coin bears a signature it is that of a moneyer, but quaestors (Q) and curule aediles also sign, and towards the end of the Republic an *imperator* (or his subordinate) may issue coins and place his name upon them.

The actual production of coins, though laborious, was comparatively simple. Until almost the end of the third century bronze coins were *cast* in clay moulds and left untrimmed, but from then on they were *struck*, as silver and gold coins had been from the beginning. In this process the metal was melted and run into clay moulds, forming circular blanks or "flans," which were then trimmed and weighed. The next step was to heat the "flans" until the metal was malleable and to place them on an anvil in which the obverse die was set. Finally they were struck with a punch containing the reverse die to produce the finished coin.

Roman sovereignty in Italy, won in the long, hard-fought struggles with the Samnites, had been confirmed and extended by the defeat of Pyrrhus and Tarentum. Rome now entered the circle of the Mediterranean powers and was recognised by Egypt in the treaty of 273 B.C. The introduction of a coinage could not be much longer delayed, and in 269 Rome strikes a magnificent issue of silver and bronze, but not of gold. This metal was struck only sporadically until the time of Julius Caesar.

We can distinguish four separate mints, one in Rome, one in North Italy, and two in the south of the peninsula, which we may call for convenience A, B, C and D. These mints all coin in silver and bronze and in every case the silver bears the legend ROMANO (= Romanorum). It is highly probable that the issues of the three non-Roman mints should be connected with the appointment of *quaestores classici* for administrative purposes in 267, and should therefore be dated a little later than the Roman.

The silver consists of didrachms of from  $6\frac{1}{2}$  to 6 scruples in weight. Pl. II, No. 1, illustrates the issue of the Roman mint with a head of Hercules on the obverse and on the reverse the she-wolf and twins, Romulus and Remus. In Hercules as the founder of the Fabian *gens* we can detect a reference to C. Fabius, one of the consuls of 269, while his colleague, Q. Ogulnius, had while curule aedile in 296 placed likenesses of the twins under the she-wolf (Livy 10.23). The types on the didrachms of mint B (*obv.* helmeted head of Mars; behind, an oakleaf and *rev.* horse's head; corn-ear) (Pl. II, No. 2), and mint C (*obv.* head of Apollo and

*rev.* horse galloping; star) were probably suggested by the horse on coins of Carthage with whom Rome had allied herself in 279. The issue of mint D (perhaps situated at Tarentum) bears a head of Diana on the obverse and on the reverse Victory standing right, holding palm-branch and wreath; in the field a variable Greek letter or letters (see Cary, *History of Rome*, p. 132). The letters represent numbers and run from Alpha to Omega (1-24) and from double Alpha (AA) to double Omega (OO) (25-48). A third series begins with AB (49). Similar letters (equivalent to numbers up to 50) are found on an Egyptian issue commemorating the death of Arsinoe II in 270 B.C., and this suggests strongly that the treaty of 273 was more than a mere recognition of Rome, that these countries agreed to issue these parallel coinages. If the letters refer to the year—the most natural division of time—the Roman didrachms in this series will have been issued until 218 B.C.

The bronze is made up of round *asses* of (nominally) one Roman pound weight, six of which were worth a didrachm, and their sub-divisions from *semis* (half an *as*) to *uncia* (a twelfth), each bearing its own mark of value. Each mint again had its individual types. The Roman mint issues an *as* with obverse head of Diana and on the reverse of all denominations a wheel, which would seem to refer to Roman road-making. We show the half-piece of the series with a bull prancing left and below, the mark of value S (= *semis*) on the obverse (Pl. I, No. 2).

Shortly after the First Punic War (264-242 B.C.), which seemingly did not affect the coinage, the issues of silver at all mints (except D) give place to others bearing the legend ROMA, and the types of the bronze also change. The Roman mint shows the greatest change in both metals and the types of its silver enable us to date the new issues to c. 235 B.C. This is the famous *quadrigatus* didrachm with obverse head of Fontus, the son of Janus (note his appearance on *denarii* of the *gens Fonteia*) and on the reverse Jupiter and Victory in a *quadriga* (Pl. II, No. 3). The reverse obviously refers to Rome's victory in the war while the obverse can hardly be dissociated from the closing of the temple of Janus in 235 B.C. The bronze of the three non-Roman mints is distinguished from the previous issue merely by the addition of a symbol but at Rome the Diana/Wheel issue gives way to the *as* with *obv.* head of Janus and *rev.* a Prow (Pl. I, No. 1). Again the reference is to the victory over Carthage but in this case the reverse alludes specifically to the Roman successes at sea. This Janus/Prow type was to remain standard throughout the Republic.

The invasion of Hannibal brought great changes in the coinage. Rome assumes complete responsibility, the other three mints are closed, and the *quadrigatus* spreads to new mints in Italy and Sicily. Together with this didrachm its half-piece, the *victoriatus*, with *obv.* head of Jupiter and *rev.* Victory standing right, crowning trophy (Pl. II, No. 4) has a wide circulation. Pliny the Elder writes that the *victoriatus* was brought from Illyria "*mercis*

*loco*," and he may perhaps preserve a confused reference to its origin as a coin struck to commemorate the Roman victories in the Second Illyrian War (219-218 B.C.). The Janus/Prow series supersedes all other bronze but under the pressure of war is reduced from the Libral (10 oz.) standard, first in 217 to 6 oz. by a *Lex Flaminia minus solvendi*, and later (? c. 209) to 3 oz. (the "triental" standard). As representatives of the bronze of the "first reduction" we illustrate the *quadrans* and *sextans* of an interesting series struck in S. Italy or Sicily. The former (Pl. I, No. 3) shows a head of Hercules wearing a boarskin and on the reverse a bull charging; below, a snake. The mark of value, three dots (= three-twelfths of an *as*) occurs on both sides. The *sextans* (with two dots = two-twelfths) has the she-wolf and twins on the obverse and on the reverse an eagle holding a flower in its beak (Pl. I, No. 4). The remaining types are equally varied and interesting but the series as a whole has so far defied analysis.

The final victory over Carthage at Zama (202) was followed almost immediately by fresh wars against Macedon and Antiochus of Syria, and not until 187 was Rome able to make a comprehensive financial settlement. Arrears of *tributum* were repaid, the emergency war-coinage ceased, and a new and truly "imperial" coinage took its place. The most famous Roman silver coin, the *denarius* (= 10 *asses*) is struck, probably at first in S. Italy, together with its short-lived sub-divisions, the *quinarius* (Pl. II, No. 6) valued at five *asses* and the *sestertius* (Pl. II, No. 7) at two and a half. The *as* undergoes a further reduction, this time to 2 ozs. (sextantal), and some time afterwards is reduced still further to 1 oz. (uncial).

Pl. II, No. 5, shows the earliest types of the *denarius* with the obverse head of Bellona and mark of value X, and on the reverse the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, with conical caps and stars above their heads, riding right with lances at rest; in the exergue, ROMA. This reverse is "an expression in type of the philhellenic policy in Rome" and probably owes much to the influence of Flamininus (best known for his part in "freeing" the Greeks in 197) who had made a special dedication to the Dioscuri after the battle of Cynoscephalae. Moreover, Castor and Pollux were the "deliverers," and thus provided a suitable type for the role which Rome claimed to play on her entry into Greece. During the earliest period *denarii* are not signed by the moneyers but may be distinguished by the addition of a symbol or symbols, e.g. sceptre and feather, to the reverse, then by monograms denoting the issuer's name. For some thirty years the types are unchanged and the dating of the early issues depends on minor details of style. Then from about 155 B.C. the Dioscuri on the reverse are occasionally replaced by Diana in a *biga* (Pl. II, No. 11) and somewhat later by Victory also in a *biga* (Pl. II, No. 12). The destruction of Carthage (146) or the conquest of Greece in the same year would both supply a reason for the latter type. L.SAVF and PVR on the reverses are shortened forms of the moneyers' names, L. Saufeius and Purpureo. Reverse types gradually become more

varied; Hercules appears in a *biga* of centaurs, Diana is drawn by two stags, and Juno by two goats (Pl. II, No. 13). Later, though overlapping with the *biga* reverses are *quadriga* types with Victory (Pl. II, No. 14), and Jupiter, holding sceptre and hurling thunderbolt (Pl. II, No. 15). Nevertheless the Dioscuri are still frequently found, and the obverse remains unchanged with the head of Bellona.

From the Gracchan period onwards the changed political situation with the growth of party politics and the struggles of *optimates* and *populares* is reflected in the coinage. The moneyers, as cadets of the noble families, recall the deeds of their ancestors and even allude to recent historical events. The coinage, in fact, bears a message, partly concealed from us owing to our ignorance in many cases of the events portrayed, but quite certainly intelligible to contemporaries.

The most important single event was the re-tariffing of the *denarius*. Instead of being worth 10 *asses* it is now valued at 16, and *denarii* in consequence bear the mark of value XVI (later shown in monograph form), although X continues occasionally to appear. Statius, in one of his poems, mentions an *as Gaianus* which can hardly mean anything else in the context but the new *as* of 16 to the *denarius*, named after Caius Gracchus. We may, therefore, connect the change with the economic measures of Caius Gracchus and date it to c. 123 B.C.

Particularly noticeable in this period is the increasing freedom of obverse types. The Roman mint adheres to the traditional head of Bellona but at the other mints, which sprang up as a consequence of the expansion in Gaul and the wars against Jugurtha and the Germans, change was much more rapid. Gods, especially Apollo, Mars, Hercules and Diana invade the obverse and the appearance of Pietas begins a further development, the personification of the "virtues." A mint in S. Italy strikes coins showing a marked Greek influence and is with much probability assigned to Rhegium on the strength of the *denarius* of L. Caesius (Pl. II, No. 8). The reverse pictures two *Lares* sitting on a rock with the head of Vulcan above, and two monograms LA and RE which are interpreted as *LA(res)* and *RE(gienses)*. The obverse features a head of Vejovis, a combination of Jupiter and Apollo, and not a single issue in this series has the traditional Bellona head. From the same mint comes the famous *denarius* of Cn. Blasio (Pl. II, No. 9) with a helmeted male head on the obverse and on the reverse the Capitoline triad, Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. The head has generally been taken to be Scipio Africanus but it is more probably an ancestor of the moneyer, Cn. Cornelius Blasio, consul in 270 and 257, or even, in view of the helmet which is unusual in a man, the god Mars. Contemporary history is reflected in the serrated *denarius* of L. Pomponius (Pl. II, No. 10), struck at Narbo shortly after its foundation in 118 B.C. It is part of a remarkable issue struck by five separate moneyers and signed in every case by L. LIC(inius) and CN. DOM(itius), the commissioners for the colony. The reverse

shows a warrior in a *biga*, the Gaulish king Bituitus whose defeat by Cn. Domitius enabled the colony to be founded. The serration may be due in part to the preference of the Gauls for coins of this type, but must also be designed to defeat the forger and to guarantee the purity of the silver. The *denarius* of L. Calpurnius Piso and Q. Servilius Caepio (Pl. II, No. 16) with obverse head of Saturn and on the reverse a distribution of corn with the legend AD FRV(mentum) EMV(ndum) EX S.C. again alludes to contemporary politics. Piso and Caepio were urban quaestors in 100 (or 103) B.C. (hence Q on the obverse) and as such were empowered by the Senate to purchase corn, presumably under the provisions of the *Lex Frumentaria* of Saturninus, the popular leader. The *quinarius* which had been discontinued about 172 B.C. was revived by a *Lex Clodia*, traditionally dated to c. 104 B.C., and was now valued at 8 *asses*. C. Egnatuleius strikes at Rome with *obv.* head of Apollo; below, Q and *rev.* Victory standing and inscribing a shield which she attaches to a trophy surmounted by a horned helmet; below, a Celtic war-trumpet, and, in the field, Q (Pl. II, No. 17). The reverse type evidently points to a victory over the northern barbarians and in view of the date (shortly after 100) we think naturally of the victories of Marius at Aquae Sextiae and Vercellae. Probably the Q on the reverse stands not for *quaestor* but for *quinarius* which could no longer bear its old mark of value, V.

The coinage of the Social War and the Civil Wars between the factions of Marius and Sulla continues the trend of the previous period. The head of Bellona disappears almost entirely from the obverse and complete freedom of types is apparent. The issue of bronze had been resumed c. 108 B.C. after a lapse of over twenty years, and now under the stress of war the *as* undergoes a further reduction to  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. by the *Lex Plautia Papiria* of 90 B.C. A few years later (c. 86 B.C.) bronze ceases to be struck until Julius Caesar tentatively revived its issue. Even in this conservative medium some variety may be seen. Pl. I, No. 5, shows a reduced *as* of Vibius Pansa with a triple prow, palm-branch, and on right the caps of the Dioscuri instead of the normal "prow" type. The same moneyer issues *denarii* with a mask of Pan alluding to his name just as Junius Silanus strikes with a mask of Silenus.

The rare coinage of the Italian confederates is not represented in the Otago collection. Most of the types were copied from the Roman coinage with but slight alteration, e.g. head of Italia (for Bellona)/Dioscuri on horseback. However a few original types were issued and Cary (p. 320) illustrates one of the most striking with *obv.* head of Liber and *rev.* Sabellian bull goring the Roman she-wolf; (in Oscan characters) VITELLIU=Italia. On the Roman side L. Calpurnius Piso, whose family according to Cicero were accustomed to undertake state contracts, seems to have run a private mint. His enormous war-coinage illustrates the success with which moneyers combined family references with allusion to current events. The obverse head of Apollo and reverse

horseman galloping and holding a torch (or palm-branch) (Pl. II, No. 18) recalls the institution of the *Ludi Apollinares*. Moreover, the games were founded in 212 to invoke Apollo's aid at a time of dire peril to Rome so that the reference is particularly apposite in 90 B.C., while the "messenger" type fits well in a war-issue.

The next two coins illustrate the use of the coinage by the Marian and Sullan parties. The *denarius* of M. Caecilius Metellus (Pl. II, No. 19) is a "restored" issue. The original (with head of Bellona) had been struck by the anti-Gracchan party in 121 B.C.; now the supporters of Sulla revive this issue with a head of Apollo for propaganda purposes. C. Mamilius Limetanus combines mythology with a topical reference on his *denarius* (Pl. II, No. 20) with *obv.* bust of Mercury and *rev.* Ulysses extending his hand to his dog Argus. Mercury appears as the ancestor of Ulysses from whom the moneyer claimed descent through Mamilia, the grand-daughter of Ulysses. But in addition the "returned wanderer" type suggests the return of the Marian exiles.

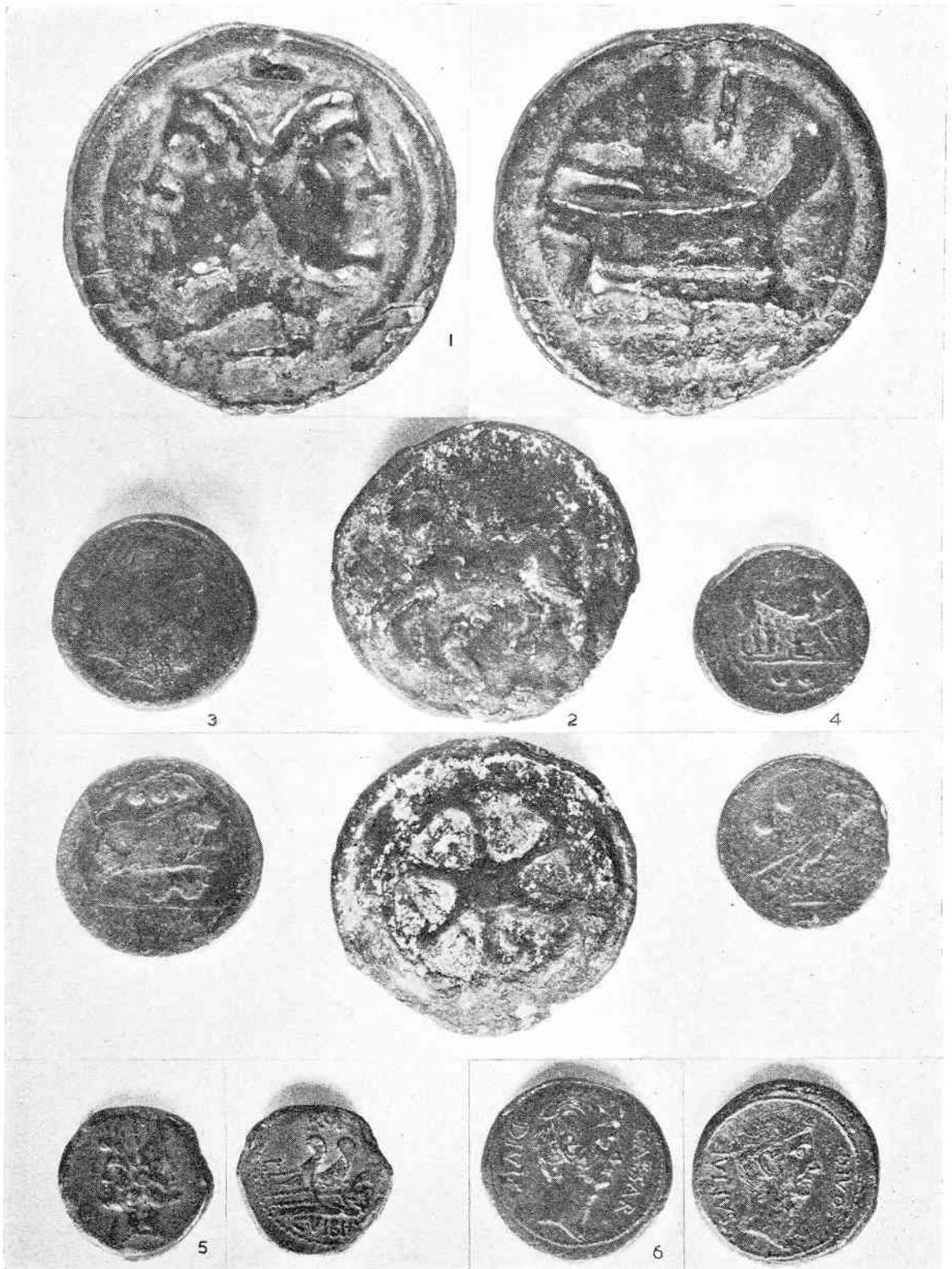
About 79 B.C. A. Postumius Albinus issues two interesting *denarii*. One has a head of Diana and a figure in a toga sacrificing (Pl. III, No. 1), the other a head of Hispania and a togate figure raising his hand over a standard; behind, the *fasces* with axe. As Diana was the patron goddess of Sertorius it is tempting to assign this coinage to the great leader who claimed to hold Spain not as a rebel but as a Roman magistrate. But Diana occurs elsewhere on *denarii* of the *gens Postumia* and must have a family reference. Although there is undoubtedly a topical allusion it seems most probable that the coins were struck (in N. Italy, perhaps at Pisa) on behalf of the Roman government for the Spanish war. A reference by the moneyer to the triumph of his ancestor over the Spaniards in 178 B.C. is not unlikely.

Finally in this period we have an interesting representation of an actual monument. Mn. Fonteius strikes with *obv.* youthful head and thunderbolt and *rev.* infant *genius* seated on a goat (Pl. III, No. 2), and we know that near the temple of Vejovis in Rome stood just such a statue.

In the Ciceronian age the *denarii* show the art of the Republican coinage at its best, and allusion to mythology and history becomes still more common. The most striking development, however, is the portraiture of *men* of quite recent memory, a development which was to lead on to the representation of living men on the coinage. Cary (p. 342) shows a *denarius* of c. 59 B.C. with the head of Sulla and the legend SVLLA COS.

M. Plaetorius, curule aedile in 68 or 67, issues a beautiful but rather mysterious series of which Pl. III, No. 3, shows *obv.* head of Ceres and *rev.* jug and torch. The improvement in the art of this period can be seen clearly by comparing the Apollo/horseman issues of C. Calpurnius Piso (Pl. III, No. 4) with those of his father (Pl. II, No. 18). The high relief on the obverse of the later coins is enhanced by the "cupping" of the reverse. The types of Scribonius Libo (Pl. III, No. 5) with *obv.* head of Bonus

PLATE I.



5/6ths of actual size.

Photo by Cameron, Dunedin.

PLATE II.



Photo by Cameron, Dunedin.

PLATE III.



Photo by Cameron, Dunedin.

Eventus and *rev.* Puteal (well-head) refer to the erection of a *puteal* by an ancestor while Bonus Eventus appears as the god of good fortune in trade. Paullus Lepidus, too, refers to his ancestor L. Aemilius Paullus (Pl. III, No. 6). The reverse shows Perseus of Macedon and his two sons who appeared in Paullus' triumph in 167 B.C. following the Macedonian defeat at Pydna, while TER commemorates Paullus' victories in Spain, Liguria, and Macedonia. The obverse with head of Concordia has, surely, a topical allusion—the meeting of Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus at Luca in 56 B.C. A Plautius, curule aedile in 54, also combines “ancient” and “modern” history (Pl. III, No. 7); while the turreted head of Cybele on the obverse refers to the Megalesian games the reverse comments on the surrender of “Bacchius” (? Aristobulus the Jew) to Pompey during his Eastern campaigns. On another *denarius* (Pl. III, No. 8) his colleague, Cn. Plancius, defended by Cicero in that very year on a charge of bribery, alludes to his own career in Macedonia and Crete with an obverse Diana in Macedonian head-dress and reverse Cretan goat.

The first of a famous group of *denarii*, struck by Julius Caesar in his capacity of pro-consul, refers picturesquely to his career in Gaul (Pl. III, No. 9). On the obverse the elephant of Caesar tramples down the Gallic serpent while the priestly emblems of the reverse show Caesar as *pontifex maximus*. The head of Venus Genetrix as mother of the *gens Iulia* appears on the next coin (Pl. III, No. 10) while the reverse pictures a Gallic trophy with axe surmounted by an animal's head—again an allusion to Caesar's victories in Gaul. The figures LII (= 52) on the obverse may refer to Caesar's age but as the year of his birth is uncertain we cannot date the coin precisely. Venus again makes her appearance on the third coin (Pl. III, No. 11) and the remarkable reverse type—Aeneas carrying the *palladium* with Anchises on his shoulders—again points to the descent of the *gens Iulia*. It is not, perhaps, without significance that an *aureus* struck at Rome in 42 B.C. with the head of Octavian has a similar reverse type.

The Pompeian faction is represented in the Otago collection by a *denarius* (Pl. III, No. 12) of M. Porcius Cato (Uticensis) struck in Africa while Cato was pro-praetor (47-46 B.C.). He revives the types of his ancestor of 93 B.C. with *obv.* bust of Libertas (particularly suitable with its suggestion of Caesar's tyranny) and *rev.* Victory holding patera and palm-branch with the legend VICTRIX (an unfortunate choice).

The coinage of the dying years of the Republic, with its portraits of contemporary leaders, approximates even more closely to the Imperial. The mint of Rome closed soon after the death of Caesar, and the rival *principes* strike at mints in Italy or in the provinces and even in camp, not as triumvirs of the mint but in virtue of their *imperium* and not infrequently through their subordinate officers.

From the mint of Rome during its brief existence come our next three coins. P. Sepullius Macer (Pl. III, No. 13) shows a

head of Caesar, veiled and laureate, with the legend CAESAR DICT(ator) PERPETVO and on the reverse Venus Victrix holding a Victory and leaning on a sceptre. The assumption of a "perpetual" dictatorship by Caesar on Feb. 14th, 44 B.C., undoubtedly hastened his end; the right of depicting his head on his coins, as Hellenistic kings had done, which was granted by a decree of the Senate and certainly exercised by Caesar, was no less offensive to Republican sentiment. Two *denarii* of C. Vibius Varus, struck in 43, show the same reverse type. Fortuna holding a Victory and *cornucopiae* (the sign of plenty)—an anticipation of Philippi—but are distinguished by their obverses; the former (Pl. III, No. 14) bears the head of Antony (with beard), the latter that of Octavian.

The "liberators" are represented by the issue of Casca Longus (Pl. III, No. 15) with *obv.* head of Neptune and *rev.* Victory bearing palm-branch and holding a broken diadem; at her feet rests a broken sceptre. Like the triumvirs they anticipate victory while claiming to have rid Rome of a tyrant. Nevertheless Brutus asserts the right of placing his portrait on the coinage (see Cary, p. 417).

The accord of the triumvirs is emphasised on a *denarius* struck in Italy, perhaps at Praeneste, in 41 B.C. in the names of Antony, Octavian, and M. Barbatius Philippus (Pl. III, No. 16). It bears on the obverse a head of Antony as the dominant partner while Octavian occupies the reverse; both are designated III VIR R(ei) P(ublicae) C(onstituendae) and in addition Antony is *augur* and Octavian *pontifex*. Harmony is still the keynote on the famous "Cistophoric" *tetradrachm* (= 3 *denarii*) of 39 B.C. (Pl. III, No. 17). Antony appears on the obverse wearing an ivy-wreath; below, an augur's *lituus*, while the reverse shows the *cista mystica* surmounted by a bust of the noble Octavia (wife of Antony and sister of Octavian) with a serpent erect on either side. The legend on the obverse ANTONIVS CO(n)S(ul) DESIG(natus) ITER(um) ET TERT(ium) refers to the arrangements for the consulship made by the triumvirs.

The issue of bronze, resumed by Caesar, was continued by the triumvirs. Even this conservative coinage is not immune from the developments of the period and (Pl. I, No. 6) shows an *as* issued by Octavian in Italy in 37 B.C. on which is featured the bare head of Octavian and legend CAESAR DIVI F. On the reverse is the head of the deified Julius Caesar with a laurel wreath, and the legend DIVOS IVLIVS.

Sextus Pompeius, younger son of the great Pompey, had a chequered career on which his coinage offers an interesting commentary. Perhaps the most informative is a *denarius* (Pl. III, No. 18) struck in 37 or 36 B.C. with *obv.* war-galley and the Pharos (light-house) of Messana surmounted by a statue of Neptune, and the legend MAG(nus) PIVS IMP(erator) IT(erum); and *rev.* Scylla wielding a rubber, and the legend PRAEF(ectus) CLAS(sis) ET ORAE MARIT(imae) EX S.C. In 43 Sextus had been appointed to guard the coasts of Italy and after being

declared an outlaw had forced the triumvirs to recognise him and to grant him Sicily as a province. The galley here represents his war-fleet, the light-house stands for Messina as the seat of his power, and the statue of Neptune is most appropriate to Sextus who called himself "Son of Neptune" after his naval successes. His devotion to his father is stressed by PIVS while another of his coins shows the brothers of Catania who saved their parents during an eruption of Mt. Etna. Scylla not only symbolises the straits of Messina but recalls Sextus' victory at Scyllaeum.

Finally we have the issues of Antony and Octavian before Actium. Pl. III, No. 19 illustrates the "legionary" coinage of Antony with *obv.* Galley; ANT(onium) AVG(ur) and IIIVIR R.P.C. and *rev.* three standards; between, LEG(io) VIII. The numbers of the legions in this series reach as high as XXX although XXV to XXX may possibly be forgeries. Owing to their very baseness these *denarii*, struck for the army and navy, survived while purer specimens went into the melting-pot. Octavian's great series of *denarii* with the reverse legend CAESAR DIVI F began about 31 B.C. and Pl. III, No. 20 shows a head of Pax with an olive-branch and *cornucopiae* and on the reverse Octavian (as *imperator*) standing right and raising his hand in salute. Like the issues of the triumvirs before Philippi it anticipates victory and stresses its blessings. The coinage no longer merely alludes to past events; it has become a powerful means of influencing opinion and Octavian was to make good use of this new instrument.

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### TOKENS OF TASMANIA.

When New Zealanders think of Hobart they usually think of the former discreet notices in windows of tobacconist shops, "We write to Hobart," which meant that the tobacconist was almost a furtive agent of "George Adams (Tattersall)," in Hobart, a gambling or sweepstake organisation in which thousands of New Zealanders invest, in the hope of winning a small fortune.

"Tattersalls, Hobart" was a prohibited postal address for years, but many New Zealanders overcame that difficulty by sending to other addresses in Tasmania, sub-agents of Tattersalls.

On one occasion mail bags on an Australian-bound ship in the Wellington Harbour were rifled, and among the contents thrown into the harbour were hundreds of letters addressed to Hobart agents of Tattersalls, asking for sweepstake tickets, but the New Zealand postal notes were missing.

Tattersalls has now been placed in a more favoured classification here, owing to a generous interpretation of the law relating to overseas lotteries, and also to discussions and agreements at Premier level, giving the blessing of a new tax on tickets. Notices in shop windows are now boldly proclaiming agency

arrangements with Tattersalls (which has shifted to Melbourne) and with Hobart, the home of a new sweepstake.

So much for modern links with Hobart. When numismatists see "Hobart Town" and "Van Dieman's Land" on copper tokens issued in Tasmania one hundred years ago, or when they hear an early settler refer to "Hobart Town," they think of contacts when Hobart was on one of our main shipping lanes, and the last port of call from England to New Zealand. The name "Tasmania" was adopted in 1853.

Over one hundred years ago Hobart was a base or supply depot for British Regiments fighting in the Maori War. Few New Zealanders realise that in Hobart there is a monument to officers and men of British Regiments who fell in the Maori Wars.

Tasmanian tokens bear more distinctive designs than are to be found on tokens of the mainland. Issuers included Lipscombe, Jarvey, Dease, Waterhouse and Wood. One of Wood's pennies stated "One Penny Token Payable On Demand Here. Montpelier Retreat Inn, Hobart Town. W. D. Wood." Andrews records this penny as No. 641, with a half penny of somewhat similar design, No. 642. On each token there is a representation of the inn with one chimney smoking, and the vestige of another, also two trees and a flagstaff behind the inn, and a bell over the door. There are no dates on these tokens. Andrews records an earlier number, 640, dated 1855, with two chimneys almost exactly as the inn stands today, and without trees and flagstaff.

Rubbings of these tokens, with a photograph of the inn as it stands today, were exhibited in Wellington by Mrs. Ranger on behalf of Mr. E. Hannaker, a member of our Society living at Launceston, Tasmania. The only differences between the design on the 1855 token and the photograph are that the door at the corner of the inn and the window at left appear to have been bricked up, otherwise there has been no material change since the Imperial soldiers and sailors saw it on their way to fight the Maori Wars.

One other link with New Zealand is a mule half-penny token of H. J. Hall, Christchurch, on one side, and E. F. Dease (a draper of Brisbane Street, Launceston) on the other. The normal Dease pennies and halfpennies (A. 99 and A. 100) show a golden fleece, and Mr. Hannaker reports that a representation of the golden fleece that was displayed by Dease some years ago outside his draper's shop, is now in the Launceston Museum.

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**NOTES OF MEETINGS.****AUCKLAND.**

The usual monthly meetings were held on the first Wednesday, at which Mr. R. Sellars presided. In March Mr. J. M. McClew, M.Com. A.P.A., N.Z., gave a paper on the depreciation of English coinage over 1,000 years, and in April Mr. Geary gave an interesting account of "Coins Lost Beyond Recovery."

**WELLINGTON.**

On the last Monday in February a meeting was held at which Professor H. A. Murray presided, and Mr. C. J. Freeman read an article by Mr. Michael Dolley, of the British Museum, on "Peter's Pence"—Anglo-Saxon evidence of devotion to the Holy See. Mr. Freeman also read an extract from *Almeida on Ethiopia* concerning the use of salt currency. In March Mr. H. Mattingly gave a paper on "Mints and Moneyers in the Late Roman Republic."

An anonymous donation of £10 was accepted with pleasure, and Mr. G. Hughan and Mr. M. Hornblow discussed the 1940 New Zealand half-crown, of which no specimens have yet been found.

**CHRISTCHURCH.**

The Canterbury Branch meetings are held at less regular intervals. Mr. L. J. Dale is the Chairman. In April Mr. E. Price is to give a paper on early paper currency and banking history of New Zealand.

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**MR. & MRS. H. MATTINGLY.**

After spending over a year in New Zealand as visiting Professor at the Otago University, Mr. Harold Mattingly, with his wife, will return to the Homeland shortly. They have been touring the Dominion and renewing friendships. The good wishes of all members will go with them.

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**AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR.**

In 1937, a Royal Commission on the Australian Monetary and Banking Systems recommended a decimal coinage based on a £ divided into 1,000 farthing-like parts.

Now, seventeen years afterwards, there is much talk again of decimal coinage. Tycoon Sir John Allison, president of Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, advocates scrapping the pound and the half-penny, giving ten shillings a new name, and having ten pence to a shilling. "We would then have a metric currency roughly in line with the dollar."

Mr. E. G. Wilson, general manager to the E. S. and A. Bank, wants to retain the £, scrap the ten shilling note, introduce 5/- and £2 notes, scrap the halfpenny and have ten pence to the shilling.

Foreseeing an Australian cent worth about 2.4 pence, the *Melbourne Herald* economics editor said half-cent, or penny, reckonings would be no trouble, "as once you are counting in tens, it is merely a matter of shifting the little dot along one place."

—*Auckland Star*, Oct., 1954.

## THE ORIGIN OF OUR PRESENT DAY COINS.

*By* MR. W. E. HORWOOD, F.R.N.S., N.Z., Wellington.

In considering the origin of our coins and the names by which we know them, I intend to deal with the six main units: the farthing, penny, shilling, florin, crown and pound, as the fractions and multiples of these monetary units fall into their rightful place when the principal units have been dealt with, and I consider it better to deal with them in their historical order, rather than that of their value.

Words link money to earlier mediums of exchange, as "pecu" from cattle, and its derivation *peculium*, meaning private property, which in Roman law, was property a father allotted to his child, or a master to his slave, to hold as his own. Likewise the symbol £ s. d. around whose origin arguments can flourish but which are generally accepted as originating from the Roman use of *libra* or pound; *solidus*, later *scylling*; and *denarii* or pennings. The names farthing, shilling, florin and pound go back further than those of the coins referred to, either because the meaning of the word has altered, or as money of account, or borrowed from previous issues.

As the basic coin of our small change the penny has perhaps the longest history. It is first mentioned in Alfred's transcription of the law of Ine—originally written between 688-695 A.D.—but the name may not have been mentioned in the early version, as the silver issue of *sceat* coinage which preceded the penny was still in use, in which case, the first written evidence of the penny is in a will of 833 or 835. The coin introduced by King Offa of Mercia (757-796) during the last quarter of the eighth century is almost certain to be the silver penny, and thus it is known in all following issues. Trade with the continental kingdom of Merovingia, and the Middle East provided the spur for the excellent issues of Offa which are bold in execution, and artistic in design. Apart from this issue the penny lacked artistic appeal, and changed little in appearance down the centuries except for the introduction of a voided cross on reverse by Aethelred II, which later became common practice as this aided the breaking of the coin into halves and quarters for smaller change. The earlier coins were plain and very simple in design, and it was not until Edward the Martyr (975-79) that the king's portrait became a regular feature on coins. This has continued to this day with very few exceptions.

The Norman conquest saw no change in the type of pence which continued to be the only coin struck until 1280, with the exception of the gold penny by Henry III in 1257, as an attempt to create a gold currency, and issued at a value of 20 silver pence, but as it was undervalued it did not find public favour and was discontinued. This beautiful coin is very rare.

The next major change took place in 1489-90 when the design shows the king enthroned, and reverse with shield in place of a cross as formerly, and anticipated improvements in the remainder of silver issues of Henry VII. The penny suffered debasement like

the other silver issues of Henry VIII. The design of James I shows a rose and thistle and the motto—"Rosa sine spina," while omitting the king's portrait. The Commonwealth issue was a most unpleasing one and follows that of the other small silver of that period of joined shields on one side and the shield with cross of St. George on the other, but with the restoration came the old style with royal portrait and kings' titles and the regular issue of milled coins.

During the following century, coinage generally, and small change in particular, suffered considerably from scarcity of issue and from counterfeiting. It was not until 1797, when a contract for a series of copper coins was signed with Boulton & Watt of Birmingham, at the full value of each denomination, that the difficulty of small change was overcome and the first Imperial copper penny appeared, gradually supplanting the unofficial issues of traders' tokens then in circulation. These first issues while making forgery unprofitable, were very clumsy; later they were reduced in size and continued thus at intervals until 1860 in which year the bronze issue of the style we know today commenced.

The farthing as our smallest coin has far wider scope and meaning than is generally known. Although we look upon it simply as one-fourth part of a penny, it was by no means always the case. The early spelling varied as did that of all our coins—ferthing, ferding, feorthing are some in common use. In the original sense the farthing was one-quarter of any specified coin denomination, so that there are instances of gold farthings, and it was also used as a measure of land. As a penny could be broken into halves and quarters for small change, no doubt this began the association between the two coins, but the regular coinage of farthings as a separate coin did not begin until the recoinage ordered in 1279, as did that of the groat, and in the following year the halfpenny. Some previous issues of farthings are probable, from documentary evidence. It is from this time, also, that with the appointment of a mint-master, and his acceptance of authority formerly shared among the moneyers, that moneyers' names ceased to appear on coins of the realm.

Records show that in 1351 a "noble of gold should go for half a mark and XXd for a farthyng of gold, while XII farthynges should weigh an oz." The *Fabyan Chronicle* in 1465 reads—"A new coyne ordered by the King named Royall, in value of X shillynges, the half royall Vs. and the ferthyng II s VI d." In contrast a book on Cornwall in 1602 by Carew states—"Commonly 30 acres make a farthing land, 9 farthings a Cornish acre and 4 Cornish acres a Knight's fee."

Following the necessity for additional small change, which had to some extent been overcome by the unofficial striking of traders' tokens, or pledges in lead and tin, an attempt was made by Elizabeth to prepare a copper currency of halfpennies and farthings, and from 1574 patterns were prepared, but the idea was not proceeded with. In 1613 there finally appeared a copper farthing token, issued under licence as an adjunct to the other regal issues.

The licence first granted to Lord Harrington passed after his demise to the Duke of Lennox, and after him to his widow, the Duchess of Richmond, and lastly to Lord Maltravers. The issue of these small coins was never popular, and the large number of forgeries only aggravated the situation; even so, Charles I continued to license them until the end of his reign. Charles II set the copper issues on a proper footing and  $\frac{1}{2}$ d and  $\frac{1}{4}$ d were struck from 1672, and were legal tender up to sixpence. In 1685 tin was used for the farthing as showing greater profit, with a copper core and the edge stamped "humorum famulus" as an attempt to defeat forgery, but in vain. This was continued until 1693, when copper was reverted to. A notable issue was that of the Queen Anne farthing struck only in 1714, the last year of her reign, a handsome coin and scarce. Lack of regal issues after George II caused resurgence of trade tokens until the recoinage of 1797. As with pennies and their halves, the farthing was changed to bronze in 1860 and in 1937 the traditional figure of Britannia was changed for that of the smallest British bird, the wren.

It is a sign of the times that the farthing in New Zealand is a money of account, and this only in cases where decimal fractions are not used; in early times it was the higher values that were so used.

The £, variously spelt as pund or poonde was first known as libra, a 1-lb. weight of 12 ozs., this was used in the Merovingian kingdom for a proportion of the coins, until the time of Charlemagne. In Norman times the pund was used for reckoning accounts as shown in Domesday Book in conjunction with shillings, marks and gold marks and its value was, as today 20/-. The only time it was issued as a coin was during the Civil War between Charles I and Parliament when the king caused some to be struck in silver, those from the Oxford mint being most noteworthy, handsome and imposing coins, 3 inches in diameter.

The only other pre-conquest money of account now in use as a coin is the shilling. The Teutonic origin, its name refers to the root word "skel," to ring or resound; other spellings are schilling or scyilling. In Anglo-Saxon times its value varied in time and place, being 5d in Wessex and 4d in Mercia. The Aelfric grammar mentions a shilling of twelve pence, but this may refer to the continental solidus. Twelve pence was the accredited value in Norman times, but its first appearance as a coin is between 1504-7, when it had the honour of being the first portrait coin in the English series and of great artistic merit.

(To be continued)



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