

ANCIENT GREEK COINS

VOLUME II

PARTS V-X. SYRACUSE



BY

FRANK SHERMAN BENSON



PRIVATELY PRINTED

1901-2

A CABINET OF GREEK COINS.

BEHOLD portrayed in miniature, yet clear,
The changing seasons of Hellenic art;
Fair spring-time, when dim, haunting visions start
Forth into life, and forms divine appear;
Full, radiant summer, when a heaven-born skill
Achieves such height as man ne'ermore can gain;
Drear autumn of decay, wherein remain
Mere phantoms which a glimmering twilight fill.
Here too the Olympic pantheon displays
Pure, grand ideals of each dreaded god,
Or cherished goddess, or loved nymph enshrined.
With likeness too of many a king whose nod
Could empires shake. Thus various-hued we find
A rich emblazonry of ancient days.

ANCIENT GREEK COINS

V
SYRACUSE, SICILY

BY
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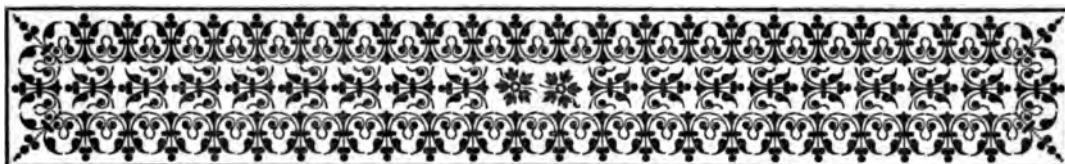


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ANCIENT GREEK COINS.

V. SYRACUSE, SICILY.



TRIANGULAR Sicily, lying midway in the great inland sea, and stretching across from Europe well-nigh to Africa, by reason of its size, its situation, and its varied historical associations, far surpasses in interest and importance all other Mediterranean islands. Mountainous throughout its entire extent, peak rising beyond peak to culminate at last in the mighty height of snow-capped Ætna, it was yet of such fertility in countless plains and valleys as to have been called in later days the granary of Rome and the garden of the Mediterranean. Inhabited for the vague centuries before the eighth by Sikans, Sikels¹ and Elymians of fabled Trojan origin, Trinakria (the three-promontoried) was earlier sung by Homer as the mysterious land which witnessed the sufferings of wandering Odysseus, beset by Skylla and Charybdis, by Polyphemos and the giants. Hither from Crete, in yet more distant times, Daidalos soaring on cunningly devised wings had fled before the wrath of King Minos, who followed in swift pursuit to meet his death, leaving the skilled artificer to build for his Sikan host strong cities, massive treasures, and above all, the holy temple on the Elymian mount.

¹ Whence came successive names, *Σικαρία*, *Σικελία*, Sicilia, Sicily.

Here had come Herakles driving homeward the unruly oxen of Geryones, here had he wrestled with gigantic Eryx, and after victory had refreshed his weariness in the springs of Himera. While here, too, in the dim twilight of still more ancient myth and legend, Pallas Athene and Artemis had each her chosen spot; and here, "where ocean breezes blow round the island of the blessed, and golden flowers blaze, some on the ground, some on resplendent trees, while others on soft-shimmering waters float; with necklaces of which the happy ones intertwine their hands and heads", fair Persephone — Kore the maiden — innocently gathering violets near her favorite Henna, had been seized by fierce Aidoneus and borne off, from the midst of her companions, to his kingdom, the nether world; and along these same unresponsive shores had she been sought with bitter lamentations by the bereaved mother Demeter; Ætna's fires flaming for her torch.

The eastern coast, rising up as a barrier across the path of the Greek mariner purposely westward bound, or driven in the same direction before unfavorable gales, naturally became the scene of the earliest Greek settlements, in that eighth century B. C. when there sprang into renewed life and activity the old restless spirit of adventure and colonial enterprise which was soon to make the Mediterranean in large part a Greek sea. Thus Dorians and Ionians, taking small heed of the aboriginal Sikans and Sikels who had hitherto peacefully held this land, vied in founding coast cities; and we find Naxos, Syracuse, Leontinoi and Katane firmly established several years before any signs of Greek settlement appear on the Magna Graecian mainland, where in fact towns such as Sybaris and Kroton were to attain the height of their glory and prosperity at a much earlier period than their island neighbors.

The first two centuries of Sicilian history, however,—the art of coinage being yet unknown—do not demand our attention as students of numismatics; and when we meet with the earliest coin issues (about the middle of the sixth century) one city had already begun to show in Sikeliot affairs evidences of the wide influence which was later to expand into a general and overwhelming predominance. In fact for about three centuries the story of

Syracuse seems to embrace, more or less fully, the history of all Sicily; where no city was so great or so insignificant as to feel secure from the savage cruelty of the Syracusan tyrants; and where, equally, all could rejoice at the approach, or at the success of the Syracusan "deliverers."

And if we seek historical pictures, what Sicilian city can show such variety in government and dominion as Syracuse in the fourth century? To the cruel, faithless, but brilliant and powerful Dionysios the Elder succeeds his unstable and vicious son, first the willing, docile pupil of Plato, then with weak self-assertion rushing to every excess of tyrannical vice, and, when at last forced to flee before the wrath of his outraged subjects, retiring to Corinth to end his days peacefully as a schoolmaster. Meanwhile, and in large part instrumental in this event, have come in turn the deliverers; able, haughty, unfortunate Dion; and Timoleon, pure, true-hearted, courageous hero and patriot, the noblest figure of Sikeliot story. And then, with startling suddenness, in less than two decades we see the rise of another tyrant, more savage, more energetic in ill-doing than even Dionysios; and the century closes with the power and magnificence, the treachery and blood-rage of Agathokles.

The variety and splendor of Syracusan coinage, reflecting for three centuries the changes of civic fortune, give to successive issues an overwhelming interest, historical and artistic. The most skillful coin-engravers celebrated the city's victorious achievements by beautiful and appropriate designs, which excited the admiration no less of contemporaries, than of art-lovers in all succeeding ages; and whose wide-spread influence appears in coinages as far removed as Gallia and Asiatic Kilikia. In copiousness no autonomous coinage equals, and few royal series surpass that of this city:—an abundance attested by the number of my own Syracusan specimens, which comprise above one-eighth of the entire collection; not an unusual proportion in cabinets formed to give a comprehensive view of this subject. Such a marked pre-eminence, historical, artistic, geographical, and numismatic, must surely justify my choice of this city's coinage for these opening papers on Sicilian issues.

A word must be added on the subject of one peculiarity in the coinages of Sicily; namely, the uniformity of their weight-standard, which,—with the exception of some early issues of the Chalkidic colonies, such as Naxos, Zankle and Himera, where the Aiginetic standard prevailed,—was Attic; the full tetradrachm weighing 270 grains, and the didrachm 135, with its subdivisions in the same ratio.

For two hundred years after 734 B. C., when Corinthian Archias, with his followers, founded Syracuse—destined to become the mightiest of the Doric colonies—the energy of its inhabitants was confined to a gradual and natural extension in the neighboring unoccupied portions of Sicily, until the entire southeastern corner of the island had come under Syracusan dominion. A gradual evolution in civic government, common to all Sikeliot towns, where the supreme power, retained in the hands of descendants of original settlers, tended as a consequence more and more towards a close oligarchy, had meanwhile been taking place at Syracuse; and in the latter part of the sixth century we find a ruling aristocratic class, the Gamoroi, or Landowners, to whose period should be assigned the earliest Syracusan coinage.

GAMOROI.

60. Tetradrachm, wt. 263 grs. Sixth century B. C. (Pl. V: 1.) Obv. Σ YPA (archaic forms). Quadriga to right, horses walking. Rev. Female head to left, of archaic style, in incuse circle; around which, quadripartite incuse square, granulated. (From the Montagu sale.)

Had we commenced our study of coinage with the still more ancient issues of Hellas, prototypes of this reverse would have been examined among those archaic Corinthian coins which, as already mentioned, circulated widely in the western Greek world before the art of coining money had penetrated thither; and which naturally would be almost exclusively used in this daughter city of the Isthmic metropolis. It is easy to trace in the peculiar shape of the incuse square,—especially when the specimen is somewhat worn,—a reflection of the swastika, which was the reverse type of Corinth

for this sixth century; but the included head was doubtless that of the local nymph Arethousa, whose spring bubbling up—as it still does—on the sea-margin of Ortygia, was the inspiration of one of the most charming of Sicilian legends. This relates how in Elis of old Greece, the nymph pursued by the river-god Alpheios, was changed by Artemis (quickly responsive to her maiden's prayer) into a fountain, which flowing under the sea, welled up again in Ortygia. Not even thus, however, could she wholly escape her ardent lover, whose stream, likewise disappearing and taking the long under-sea journey, in similar strange fashion poured—and yet pours—forth its fresh and copious waters amid the salt waves of the harbor near by.

Sicily was celebrated for the beauty and speed of its horses,—the “unwearied steeds” of Pindar,—and perhaps this obverse type is descriptive of some especial pride on the part of the Syracusans. The quadriga is represented in the conventional method so common for the first century of Sicilian coinage, the engraver depicting two horses clearly and the other two simply by outlines; an artifice also employed for the pair of horses on No. 6 of this plate. No Nike, proffering victorious wreath, hovers over these steeds, so that we cannot here, as we shall shortly, trace any reference in this type to a victory in one of the great Hellenic games.

Like all oligarchies, the Gamoroi became in time overbearing and oppressive in their rule of the common people, who by immigration and natural increase were gradually growing more numerous and ungovernable. Finally, in the early years of the fifth century B. C., they rose in successful revolt, and driving the Landowners from the city established in their stead a pure democracy.

Meanwhile a new ruler, destined to become one of the most celebrated of Sicilian tyrants, had by fair or foul means established himself over neighboring Gela; and Gelon, son of Deinomenes, was prayed by the banished Gamoroi to restore them to their government of Syracuse. His mercenary forces found in the capture of this city, now weakened by its internal dissensions, an easy and congenial task; but the result was far different from that anticipated by his allies. The victorious general made himself absolute ruler

of them and of the people, transferred from Gela to Syracuse his seat of government, and to increase the population of this new capital transplanted thither one half of the citizens of his native Gela, as well as all the inhabitants of smaller adjacent towns, which he then destroyed. Gelon further strengthened his position by alliance with other Sicilian tyrants, notably Theron of Akragas; whose daughter Damareta, taken in marriage to cement this powerful friendship, was destined, as we shall find, to exercise a distinguishing influence on Syracusan coinage. These events took place in 485 B. C., with which year the Syracusan issues enter upon a fresh period, illustrated by the following coins:

GELON.

61. Tetradrachm, wt. 263 grs. B. C. 485-478. (Pl. V : 2.) Obv. Σ YPA ρ O Σ ION Head of nymph to right, diademed, of archaic style; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to right, horses walking and crowned by Nike running with outspread wings: border of dots.

(From the Bunbury sale.)

This rare coin, which probably initiated the coinage of Gelon, is of double interest, emphasizing as it does in art and treatment a marked departure from the preceding issue, and presenting the prototype after which were fashioned a large proportion of Syracusan silver coins.

We find that the types have changed sides; the head of the nymph Arethousa as worthy of the highest dignity now distinguishing the more honorable obverse, while the quadriga-scheme, representing earthly associations as contrasted with divine, marks the less important reverse. The process of evolution further appears in the transformation of the four swastika-like corners into an equal number of dolphins, which swimming around the head of the nymph always henceforth symbolize the island nature of Ortygia, the sea-encircled foundation of earliest Syracuse.

This head from its greater size displays more clearly than in the case of our Italiot *incuse* specimens the characteristic archaic method of representing hair by minute dots arranged in rows. The features stiff and severe, yet

display a serene dignity, while the inscriptional letters lack sharpness and regularity. Around the head faint traces may be seen of a linear circle, considered by Mr. Evans a survival of the circular incuse which frames the head found on our earlier reverse, and which was doubtless retained to aid the die-cutter in securing a correct proportion between the head, the inscription, and the surrounding dolphins.

Turning to the reverse we find the first appearance of the purely agonistic type,—a Nike-crowned quadriga,—which was to persist for the three centuries of Syracusan coinage. The explanation of this design we must seek in an achievement of Gelon while still tyrant only of Gela. It seems clear that having in 488 B. C., won the chariot race at Olympia, he had gratefully dedicated to Zeus an offering of a chariot¹; and had established a less perishable memorial of his victory by placing on the Gelan coinage the type of his victorious quadriga. When three years later the tyrant, now become undisputed master of Syracuse, was issuing a new civic coinage, he doubtless thought it as politic, as it was flattering to his self-esteem, to again display this composition, not only a variety of the early Gamoroi type, but also a constant reminder to his present subjects of their new ruler's great triumph.

While, compared with its Syracusan prototype, this quadriga-design shows a decided advance in technical skill, we see that the horses are still stiff and angular, and the Nike absurd in posture and movement. There are in fact few indications of the grace, vigor, and harmony of action which will so grandly distinguish this group before the lapse of a century.

GELON.

62, 63 & 64. Tetradrachms, wts. 267–265 grs. B. C. 485–478. (Pl. V: 3–5.)
Ob. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟ Σ ΙΟΝ Head of nymph to right or to left, wearing diadem of beads; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to right, horses walking and crowned by flying Nike.

(From the Hobart Smith and Evans sales.)

¹ Portions of the pedestal of this chariot, identified by the inscription, were discovered at Olympia in 1878 and 1884.

In these three heads now become smaller than that of the earlier Gelon issue, we see gradual improvement in hair representation; the archaic dots growing more and more minute, to be changed at last into simple continuous lines, which are however still arranged with strict formalism. The plain diadem is replaced by a more ornate one of beads, while the dolphins have assumed more symmetrical proportions and curves. In the inscriptions archaic φ has finally disappeared; and the later κ henceforth prevails.

The reverse of No. 5 shows on the part of the engraver an effort to distinguish the various legs of the four horses; while the idea of speed is conveyed by the charioteer's robe, which is blown backward by the rapidity of his course. Nike having here resumed her natural pose, flies horizontally, but still with stiff angularity, as she holds forth a crown of victory to the horses. The issue represented by this coin was — if one can judge from the number of extant pieces — most copious, and probably supplied the major part of the coinage of Gelon's reign.

GELON.

65. Didrachm, wt. 134 grs. B. C. 485-478. (Pl. V : 6.) Rev. Horseman to right, naked, leading a second horse; both horses walking : border of dots.

66. Drachm, wt. 66 grs. B. C. 485-478. (Pl. V : 7.) Rev. Horseman to right, naked, horse walking : border of dots.

The peculiar interest of these two reverses consists in their distinguishing each denomination by means of a corresponding type. Thus they complete a group in which the tetradrachm is designated by a quadriga; its half, the didrachm, by a pair of horses — the second horse represented only in outline, as in the case of the quadriga — and its fourth, the drachm, by a single horse. There are to be found in the entire range of Greek coinage but one or two instances of a similar descriptive scheme of values.

GELON.

67. Litra, wt. 12 grs. B. C. 485-478. (Pl. V : 8.) Obv. ξYPA Head of nymph to right, wearing diadem of beads : border of dots. Rev. Cuttlefish.

The old Latin weight-standard, a pound (*libra*, *λίτρα*) of bronze, had been brought to Sicily in the immigration of that Sikel race which Greek energy and valor had later dispossessed of the valuable coast lands. It so chanced that the silver-equivalent of this weight of bronze was exactly one-fifth of the Attic drachm; and the new silver *litra* thus obtained, common to both nationalities, would be found most useful in bringing the Sikeliot coinage into harmony with that of the aboriginal inhabitants. Readily adopted for this reason by the Greek cities, the *litra* was carefully distinguished from their own *obol* — or sixth of a drachm, consequently of slightly lighter weight — by a marked difference in the reverse type. This of Syracuse, the *sepia* or cuttlefish, probably had reference to the cult of Poseidon, peculiarly appropriate to our sea-girt city.

These (Nos. 61–67) and similar pieces composed the regular coinage of this important reign; but we find in addition one remarkable issue commemorative of the great event which elevated Gelon — tyrant though he was, and thus naturally an object of hatred in the eyes of the liberty-loving Greeks — to the lofty level of the heroic victors at Marathon and Salamis.

The colonists on their advent into Sicily had found, in addition to the native towns, certain Phoenician trading-posts established at favorable spots on the coast. Driven from these, the Tyrian merchant-settlers had concentrated all their interests at the western end of the island, where their three cities — Panormos at the head — having attained importance, had in the course of two centuries come under the influence and dominion of Carthage. This mighty Semitic power, which from its African stronghold was for three hundred years to wage bitter war against men of the Aryan race, had thus become a close and jealous neighbor of the Greek; and but a slight excuse was needed, such as the appeal of a banished tyrant of Himera, to precipitate a collision. In 480 B. C., Hamilkar with a great host sailed from Africa to regain his ally's city; near which "by the well-watered shore of the river Himera," and on the same day as was fought the battle of Salamis, he encountered and was utterly routed by Gelon at the head of a picked force of Syracusans and Akragantines, who had hastened across the island by forced

marches to succor the beleaguered sister city. So crushing was this defeat that for three quarters of a century the Sikeliot towns were unmolested by even a threat from their African rival; and Gelon was everywhere hailed and remembered as the savior of Hellenic freedom in the west, in like manner as the victors of Salamis were revered in the eastern Greek world.

Such an overwhelming triumph,—the Punic general slain, his thrice one hundred thousand followers either victims of the same fate or reduced to slavery, the terror of the Semitic name destroyed,—was celebrated at Syracuse with stately and gorgeous ceremonies, and was commemorated by a distinctive issue of coins. Damareta, Gelon's queen, touched with a womanly pity for these hordes of enslaved warriors, and for the cruel abasement of their proud city, had interceded with her husband for easy terms of peace; and the conquered nation, surprised and grateful, bestowed upon her a golden crown or wreath. So valuable a gift — one hundred talents of gold — was speedily transferred to the city, and from its equivalent in silver was struck a coinage of dekadrachms — called *Damareteia* from this origin — and tetradrachms; which, in addition to their regular purposes of exchange, would seem to have been presented as prizes in the triumphal games of Apollo, established to recall the victory.

DAMARETEION CLASS.

68. Tetradrachm, wt. 263 grs. B. C. 479. (Pl. V: 9.) Obv. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟ Ξ ΙΟΝ Head of Nike to right, laureate, in linear circle; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to right, horses walking and crowned by Nike; in exergue, lion running to right.

(From the Bunbury sale.)

Of all the *Damareteia* but ten are now to be found, which as they are illustrative of the most beautiful phase of contemporary numismatic art, and commemorate as well an eventful crisis in Sikeliot history, have always been considered the peculiar treasures of a few fortunate museums and private collections. Thus it is with no feeling of hesitation that I present the tetra-

drachm — this too of the highest rarity, and an exact copy of the dekadrachm — as my representative of the so-called Damareteion class. Mr. Arthur J. Evans in one of his many brilliant papers on Sicilian coinages, concludes that in addition to the value of the wreath, there was devoted to this issue the share set apart for Gelon and his brothers from the Carthaginian spoil,— with the exception of a dedicatory tenth; and on this basis he proceeds to estimate at 20,070 the total number of Damareteia struck. Such a computation, which seems reasonable, would lead to the inference that out of every two thousand coins from an ancient issue one only had survived the perils and evil chances of over twenty centuries. This ratio can however hardly be considered constant, in the absence of verification by similar well-established instances.

The triumphal and commemorative nature of this coin is displayed in the substitution, for Arethousa, of the head of Nike wearing the laurel of victory; while on the reverse the appearance of a fleeing African lion under the victorious quadriga symbolizes the abasement of Carthage beneath the feet of Syracuse.

The power and dignity of this head, the increasing grace of the curves in the dolphin scheme, the care and skill displayed in the treatment of the inscription letters, show that Gelon must have entrusted the production of this memorial issue to the die-sinker of greatest ability and reputation in the island; who indeed proved himself not unworthy of the honor. The linear circle is evidently modelled on that of No. 2 of the plate, which however in clearness and precision it far surpasses.

This issue forms the culmination of Gelon's coinage, as he did not long survive to enjoy his glorious honors, dying in the following year, 478 B. C., to be succeeded by his brother Hieron.

Gelon's had been the task to establish his dynasty firmly and to raise Syracuse to the leadership of Sicilian cities; his successor could devote himself to the arts of peace. Generous, cultivated and dignified, the patron of art and letters, Hieron attracted to his splendid court the lyric and tragic

poets of his day, not only the native-born of Sicily, as Epicharmos, the inventor of comedy, but also those of Old Greece, rugged, powerful Aeschylus, sweet-voiced, copious Simonides, and proud, sublime Pindar, laurel-crowned, whose odes have preserved the memory of at least one Olympic victory of "the Syracusan monarch rejoicing in his steed," and of that other triumph when "in the race-course of the Pythian festival the herald announcing uttered proclamation in behalf of Hieron, victorious in the chariot-race." That he might with dignity and fitness entertain such illustrious guests, the ruler rebuilt and beautified his capital, commencing that process of architectural adornment which, continued by successive rulers, was to make Syracuse even in the world-worn eyes of Cicero "the greatest of Greek cities, and the fairest of all cities."

While thus in learning and refinement Hieron surpassed to the highest degree his simple, unlettered predecessor, no less wide was the divergence in their natural traits of character; and unfortunately the brother of the frank, magnanimous Gelon was crafty, cruel and suspicious. Like the ideal Greek tyrant he lived in perpetual dread, employing numberless spies of both sexes to discover or, if need be, to invent plots and crimes which were then ruthlessly punished. His rule was indeed, in spite of all its splendors, a true reign of terror for the Syracusans.

The deed which in Hieron's own eyes was destined to shed undying lustre upon his name seems to us but a typical and heartless exhibition of arbitrary power,—the banishment from Katane of all its inhabitants, and the re-peopling, from various sources, of the empty city, new-christened by the name of Ætna. In no way could flattering Pindar give his patron higher or more welcome praise than by entitling him, in an invocation to Mount Ætna, "the illustrious founder of the neighboring city, named after it."

But in Greek minds another event, of heroic quality indeed and worthy to rank with his stand by Gelon's side at Himera, nobly distinguished Hieron's career: the complete and final destruction, off Kyme, in 474 B. C., of the Etruscan pirates who had long ravaged the western coasts of Italy;

and had in fact rendered so insecure the neighboring part of the Mediterranean that its natural designation among the Greeks was the Tyrrhenian (or Etruscan) sea.

HIERON.

69-77. Tetradrachms, wts. 270-260 grs. B. C. 478-466. (Pl. V: 10-18.)
Obv. ΞΥΡΑΚΟΞΙΟΝ Head of nymph to right, with varied arrangement of hair, wearing round ear-ring and plain or beaded necklace; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to right, horses walking; charioteer crowned by Nike; in exergue, sea-monster: border of dots.

(From the Montagu and other sales.)

In No. 10 we see a direct adaptation of the Damareteion tetradrachm; the nymph Arethousa again resuming her place as the protectress of the city. While the remaining coins, of similar character, display increasing size in the heads, and a gradual approach to realism in the treatment of features and the various methods of arranging hair.

The reverses too in their principal type remain unchanged,—distant but imperishable echoes of Hieron's chariot victories in the Olympic and Pythian games; while in the exergue, beneath the triumphant quadriga, we find, substituted for Gelon's vanquished African lion, a similar allusive figure, the pistrix or sea-monster, symbolizing the barbaric, mysterious, and dreaded sea-power of the Etruscans — *θαλαττοκρατούντες*, supreme upon the sea —, whom as well as the Carthaginians, Syracuse had now overthrown. Lyric Pindar's cry "Such sufferings they endured, overpowered by the leader of the Syracusans, who from their swift-sailing galleys cast the Etruscan youth into the sea, freeing Greece from bitter slavery," sounded the most heroic chord of Hieron's many-sided nature; and we must confess it a proper and pardonable pride which wished to perpetuate the remembrance of this, the noblest achievement of his reign.





ANCIENT GREEK SILVER COINS FROM THE BENSON COLLECTION.

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ANCIENT GREEK COINS

VI
SYRACUSE, 2

BY
FRANK SHERMAN BENSON



PRIVATELY PRINTED
1901



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ANCIENT GREEK COINS.

VI. SYRACUSE, 2.



THE period of Syracusan story illustrated by the coins depicted on plate VI, begins with 466 B. C., in which year the expulsion of Hieron's successor, his brother Thrasyboulos, after a brief but cruelly despotic reign, terminated at once the Deinomenid dynasty and every form of tyranny in this city for over half a century. A fresh phase of civic life was entered upon. The old tyrants with their mercenaries and forced levies had indeed made Syracuse a mighty power, but at the expense of its oppressed or neglected citizens. Now could those eager aspirations after the freedom and individualism so dear to the Greek and so long under harsh restraint, again find realization; Zeus Eleutherios (the Deliverer) was proclaimed the supreme deity not only of Syracuse but of all Sicily—throughout which island similar notable changes were taking place—and a Feast of Freedom was decreed, whose elaborate celebration, with hecatombs of slaughtered bulls, was annually observed so long as Syracuse remained an independent commonwealth. The great altar of Zeus, erected by the second Hieron for this tremendous ceremony, still stands, one of the most impressive and inexplicable monuments of ancient Sicily.

The impulse given to wealth, luxury, and all the refinements of living the proud consciousness of freedom and self-government, the rapid but steady development of the artistic spirit, as evidenced by the coins of this half century, and the continuance of those magnificent architectural works which, begun in gratitude for the Himeraian victory, gradually approached or attained completion under the ceaseless labors of hordes of Carthaginian slaves, were among the powerful influences which combined to produce what has been well called the "Golden Age" of free and independent Sicily.

Not that even this happy time was without its divisions and conflicts, aroused and kept alive by the restlessness and discontent with which Sicilian influences seemed to inspire all who trod Sicilian soil. Since, however, these occurrences were unproductive of important changes, they impressed no mark upon the Syracusan coinage, and we need not dwell upon them in detail, merely noting the fresh struggles, both internal and against adjacent towns; the fears inspired by certain demagogues aiming at tyrannical power; the war of extermination waged against the Etruscan pirates, once more lawless and defiant; and the contest with Ducetius, the great Sikel leader, whose aim it was to found a strong native state which should restore his fellow-countrymen to their ancient position of supremacy in the island; events which, succeeded by a period of comparative tranquility, bring us down to about the year 425 B. C.

The chronological arrangement followed on plates VI and VII is that proposed by Mr. Arthur J. Evans in a series of articles in the *Numismatic Chronicle*. The author's brilliant and careful scholarship, his familiarity with all branches of Sicilian archaeology, and his devotion to our special subject, clearly determine his position as the leading authority on the varied coinages of Sicily. His chain of reasoning—a recognized starting point being afforded by the destruction, in the great Carthaginian invasions of 409 and 406 B. C., of four leading Sicilian cities, with a consequent and immediate cessation of their mint activity—although somewhat startling in its radical changes, seems so clear and conclusive as to warrant our departure from the logical and elsewhere accepted arrangement adopted by Dr. Head in his

History of the Coinage of Syracuse. In this he assigns the coins of these two plates in large part to the Dionysian Dynasty, a period from fifteen to thirty years later than the dates accorded by our present arrangement.

DEMOCRACY.

78-85. Tetradrachm, wts. 269-263 grs. B. C. 466-425. (Pl. VI: 1-8.) Obv. $\Sigma\text{ΥΡΑΚΟ}\Sigma\text{ΙΟΝ}$ Head of nymph to right, with varied arrangement of hair, wearing ear-ring and plain necklace; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to right, horses walking; charioteer or horses crowned by flying Nike: plain or dotted border.

(From the Bunbury, Hobart Smith, May, 1900, and other sales.)

A comparison of these obverses with those already examined (Plate V) shows a decided increase in the size of the later heads, which have now clearly reached the limits possible for so small a field. In fact tetradrachm heads of the succeeding periods depart little from the standard here established,—occasional examples which transgress this canon, as it may be termed, of numismatic art, displaying a marked loss of power and dignity. The irregular but rhythmic curves of the sportive dolphins form a graceful and appropriate frame or setting, which seems to accentuate the harmonious proportions of these Syracusan portrait heads. For that such they have now become—idealized perhaps, but still portraits—is evident from their variety and realism. Just as the masters of the Renaissance, employing oftentimes unworthy models, yet glorified canvas and panel with the purest types of divine beauty, so these Syracusan artist-engravers must have found their true ideal of the beloved city's protecting goddess in some noble or perchance lowly maid or matron of the day, whose charming refined features and gracious presence would form an abiding inspiration for a race ever constant to its cult of physical beauty.

The hair is now either confined by a single cord passed several times around the head, or enclosed in a net, or in a sakkos often peculiar in shape and ornamented with the graceful meander pattern; while in place of a simple round earring we find the double coil, a transitional form prevailing until the time of the Athenian siege.

The reverses show little change, their exergue, however, being distinguished by the absence of any emblem; Hieron's vanquished sea-monster recalling far too painfully the days of tyranny to find favor in the eyes of this new Democracy. The quadriga, still represented by two horses fully drawn and two in outline, displays the same stiff dignity as in the earlier examples,—a feature which is the strongest argument for our attribution of this series to the so-called Transitional Period, since many of the heads show a dignity and a fineness of modelling which are unsurpassed save by the best examples of the succeeding age of highest artistic attainment. Nike, who still proffers her wreath—not now, nor indeed ever again, in symbolism of Olympic victory, but always of the increased power and grandeur of Syracuse—begins to float with an airy grace hitherto unknown, and suggestive, if but faintly, of her future perfection.

The decade following the year 425 B. C. was throughout all Sicily a period of restless uncertainty and anxious anticipation, since about this time the affairs of our turbulent island began to assume a fresh importance from the increased attention and threatened interference on the part of those great States of Hellas, which the Peloponnesian War had already divided into two irreconcilably hostile parties. Certain smaller Sicilian cities, such as Leontinoi and Segesta, hopeless of recovering their rights or retaining their liberties by the power of their unaided arm, bethought them of long forgotten but now gladly revived ties of consanguinity or of simple alliance with the mother country; so that the Leontine cry for aid to Athens, now in the full tide of her imperial greatness, and both ready and willing to extend her dominion in the West as she had already so gloriously done in the Aegean Sea, was met by an immediate response. First a small, then a larger fleet was sent to aid the allied Chalkidic cities, at that time fiercely attacked by the Syracusan league; but no result was accomplished, and the wise influence of the great Hermokrates at length obtained a peace, of short duration indeed, as it was soon broken by the Leontines. Thus, with alternations of uncertain peace and petty warfare, passed a few unimportant years, until the

quarrel regarding boundaries arose between Segesta and Selinous, which was to have such lasting results on the future of Sicily, of Hellas, and indeed of the entire Greek world. The alliance then concluded with Segesta, owing to the more than Greek craft of the Segestians, and the brilliant, deceitful diplomacy of Alkibiades, swept the Athenians along in a wild wave of enthusiasm which found expression in the dispatch of their first great armament against Syracuse in the spring of 415 B. C.

DEMOCRACY.

86. Tetradrachm, wt. 264 grs. B. C. 425-415. (Pl. VI : 9.) Obv. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟ Ξ ΙΟΝ Head of nymph to left, wearing earring and plain necklace ; hair bound with cord, a few tresses flying loose ; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to left, horses galloping in step ; charioteer crowned by flying Nike ; in exergue, dolphin pursuing fish.

(From the Evans sale.)

87. Tetradrachm, wt. 263 grs. B. C. 425-415. (Pl. VI : 10.) Obv. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟ Ξ ΙΟΝ Similar to last but with hair rolled ; engraver's signature EY. Rev. Similar to last, but engraver's signature EY ; in exergue, two dolphins : border of dots.

These tetradrachms are the handiwork of Eumenes, the earliest of that group of great artist-engravers, who were for half a century to beautify the coinage of Syracuse and Sicily, and whose position of accepted prominence is attested, as already mentioned, by the custom of placing, on noble and characteristic productions, their signatures either in full or in recognized abbreviation.

It has often been shown that all forms of art, besides being creations of the purely inventive faculty, are to a certain extent imitative and eclectic. The truth of this axiom is displayed with especial clearness in such a series as this — coins being considered as miniature bas-reliefs — where we may trace in successive examples the gradual changes toward higher development, and see how the truly artistic elements of a composition were preserved and emphasized and sublimated until their most perfect expression was attained. Each engraver of merit had however his mannerisms of design and treatment, which produced a style peculiar to himself and now easily recognized with a

little study and practice. Thus the heads of Eumenes show a distinct departure from those of the period immediately preceding. In size slightly smaller, without elaborate head covering, the hair being rolled and flat on the top of the head, or, as in the rarer first instance, No. 9, a few tresses flying loose from beneath a confining cord, they continue the realism already introduced and show evidences of the marked individualism of a master, an originator, the founder of a school—literally as well as figuratively, for in the ἀργυροκοτεῖον of Eumenes it seems probable that his great successors Euainetos and Eukleidas were apprenticed to their art.

But it is on the reverse side that Eumenes' inventive powers really exhibit their full strength. The conventional artifice hitherto employed for the representation of a quadriga is cast aside, and we see four distinct steeds, still advancing in step but at a gallop, and with their legs carefully distinguished, even to stiffness; a notable departure, which was to lead the way in the skillful hands of Eumenes' greater pupils to a varied, animated and yet well-balanced group. The charioteer too has ceased to be a mere automaton, and seems to take a lifelike interest in urging on his steeds with whip and gesture. The initials EY give us the earliest form used by this engraver for his signature.

DEMOCRACY.

88. Tetradrachm, wt. 265 grs. B. C. 425-415 (Pl. VI: 11.) Obv. ΞΥΡΑΚΟΞΙΟΝ Similar to last; but engraver's signature EYMENΟΥ. Rev. Quadriga to right, horses galloping, flying Nike bearing tablet, on which EYAINETO; in exergue, two dolphins: border of dots.

89. Tetradrachm, wt. 267 grs. B. C. 425-415 (Pl. VI: 12.) Obv. Similar to last, but signature EY. Rev. Similar to last, but flying Nike crowning charioteer; and in exergue, chariot-wheel.

These obverses continue to show all the characteristics of Eumenes' finer work, while the former of the two is signed with the full genitive form which determines the correct spelling of his name, at one time a matter of doubt.

But, as before, it is in the reverses of these two coins that we are struck by the great advance made in coin art, and realize how immeasurably superior to the master was the pupil; for this is our first meeting with the work of Euainetos, admittedly the greatest coin engraver of the world's history.

The freedom, boldness and yet delicacy of design displayed by these two quadrigas make us at once feel that the Transitional Period has closed and that we have entered finally upon the Period of Finest Art. Each horse, exquisitely modelled, dashes forward with independent and yet harmonious action, exerting such vigor and power as to need the restraining hand of a skilled charioteer to prevent mishap; which indeed could not, it would seem, always be avoided, as is shown by a minute but interesting detail, which, appearing on both designs, gives them an element of genuine sensationalism. This is the broken and entangled rein, clearly visible beneath the feet of each farthest horse, while in the exergue of No. 12 a prostrate chariot-wheel shows the nature of the impending accident, one which must often have been witnessed in the hippodrome, when in a final mad rush the contestants were nearing the goal.

The horses' legs have now assumed their natural independence of position, and Nike hovers with truly refined delicacy and grace. It must be confessed, however, that the tablet device here adopted by Euainetos for displaying his name produces a theatrical effect, unworthy of so great an artist, and that the use of the exergual line for his signature, as on some examples of No. 12, is in far better taste and more in consonance with artistic dignity.

DEMOCRACY.

90. Tetradrachm, wt. 267 grs. B. C. 420-415. (Pl. VI: 13.) Obv. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟΞΙΟΝ Head of Persephone to left, wearing earring and plain necklace, hair bound with wreath of barley and poppy; around, four dolphins; engraver's signature ΦΡΥΓΙΑΛΟΞ. Rev. Quadriga to right, horses galloping and driven by winged youth whom flying Nike crowns; in exergue, Skylla to right, bearing trident and pursuing fish; engraver's signature ΕΥΘ: border of dots.

(From the Bunbury sale.)

In this head, the earliest example of the engraver Phrygillos, we find increased artistic excellence, and recognize a distinct advance in comparison with the work of his predecessor, or, as he may have been for a certain period, his contemporary Eumenes. Phrygillos, according to Mr. R. S. Poole, is the only coin engraver whose signature is found also on a gem, and evidences of his familiarity with this sister branch of the glyptic art are found in the sharpness and delicacy of finish so apparent in his heads; these therefore display a peculiar character, lying it is true in the farthest remove from the domain of sculpture and yet possessing a strong individual charm.

His creative genius gives us as well a new personage for a Syracusan type. Hitherto the nymph Arethousa has had undisputed sway in the coinage of this city, but Phrygillos here first presents a head of Persephone, the true and abiding tutelary goddess of Syracuse and of all Sicily; whether she figures as innocent Kore the maiden, a fresh, sensitive, light-hearted girl, loving to sport with her comrades on the violet-carpeted meadows of Henna; or as the dread queen of the Shades, after that fatal day on which, ruthlessly torn away by savage Aidoneus, in spite of bitter tears and lamentations, she was forced to become his consort, and gravely to pass sentence of reward or punishment upon departed souls. In this instance she is distinguished by her wreath, in which are intertwined the seed of a poppy — the baleful flower of sleep and death — and an ear of barley, which, hidden half the year in the bosom of mother earth and shooting forth for the same length of time in the free air of heaven, always, to the allegory-loving Greek, symbolized Persephone's two-fold life, equally divided between the gloomy abode of her husband, the ruler of Hades, and those clear splendors where dwelt the Olympic gods.

The reverse introduces still another artist-engraver, Euth—, represented by this type alone, and whose full name is therefore only a matter of conjecture. His treatment, exemplifying the transition from the stiffness of Eumenes to the bold freedom of Euainetos already discussed, imparts to his steeds a shade of their old-time conventional aspect; while the introduction

of a winged youth or daimon, Nike-crowned, as charioteer, should symbolize supposed supernatural aid in some great victory. We can, of course, make no positive assertion in this respect, or with regard to the new accessory type in the exergue, which may be only an elaboration of the foregoing simpler exergual designs, and may, like them, symbolize the maritime situation of Syracuse. Yet we must recollect that this coin was minted soon after the attempts—wholly unsuccessful both in diplomacy and arms—of Athens to destroy Syracusan supremacy in Sicilian affairs; and it may be thought no fanciful interpretation which would consider this coin an echo of the civic rejoicing over such discomfiture of their enemy.

The special nature of our subject does not permit us to examine in detail the celebrated siege of Syracuse, which, entered upon by Athens in 415 B. C., ostensibly for the sole purpose of succoring her ally, distant Segesta, became as it were a turning point in the life of two great States; for with the final defeat of the Athenians commences the gradual but steady downfall of the imperial greatness of Athens, and with the final victory of the Syracusans commences that rapid and continuous development of Syracuse which was to culminate in the far-reaching power and dominion of Dionysios.

For the first year fortune smiled upon the invaders, who maintained so close a blockade that the great city was really on the point of capitulating, and the war seemed finished. But such easy success engendered scorn and carelessness in the hearts of the besiegers, and they now allowed, as a matter of slight importance, a single ally of Syracuse with a small relieving force to slip past them into the city. But this new and almost solitary leader was Gylippos the Spartan, an able, skillful general, whose energetic, aggressive measures at once gave a different aspect to affairs. On the Athenian side, meanwhile, Alkibiades had been banished and another general slain, leaving only Nikias, a tried commander indeed, but no longer young, in poor health, and of a despondent nature; so that now the result of successive skirmishes and battles was always an advantage for the Syracusans, where before the Athenians had easily kept the upper hand. Nor was this the case on land

alone ; for in the sea fights, in which Athenian supremacy had up to that time been universally acknowledged, the Syracusan sailors, taught by captains from the mother city of Corinth, with their vessels rebuilt and specially armored for contests in the narrow waters of the harbor, and themselves inspired by the continued success of their comrades on land, first held their own, and then in several general engagements either carried off the victory or so crippled the enemy as to prevent his giving any assistance to his land forces, also engaged and suffering for want of such support. Thus fight after fight on land and sea resulted only in defeat for the invaders, whom Tyche, their ever fortunate goddess, seemed to have deserted.

The arrival of a fresh armament under a new general, although temporarily encouraging for the Athenians, produced no permanent advantage, and at last nothing was left for the forty thousand besiegers but to confess with shame their utter failure, to leave their camp, their unburied dead, their wounded comrades, and to retreat into the interior, whence some friendly city could be reached. But everything fought against them, even heaven itself—a total eclipse of the moon, always considered an evil portent in those days of scientific ignorance, preventing their departure while yet possible. One way of escape after another was tried and found impracticable, and at last seven thousand men, the sole survivors of a pitiless eight days' slaughter, surrendered, to be driven like cattle, with blows and bonds and curses, into the stone quarries of Syracuse, the surest and most cruel of prisons.

DEMOCRACY.

91. Tetradrachm, wt. 262 grs. B. C. 413. (Pl. VI : 14.) Obv. $\Xi\text{Υ}\text{Ρ}\text{Α}\text{Κ}\text{Ω}\text{Ξ}\text{Ι}\text{Ο}\text{Ν}$ Head of nymph Arethousa to left, wearing earring and plain necklace ; hair confined by sphendone ornamented with stars, and on ampyx engraver's signature $\Phi\text{Π}\text{Υ}$; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to left, horses galloping and driven by Persephone bearing torch and crowned by flying Nike ; in exergue, ear of barley.

(From the Bunbury sale.)

Another example of Phrygillos, and we find that he has now chosen for his theme the type so familiar to the Syracusan engraver, and has in his turn given us a head of Arethousa, the nymph of the fountain.

Comparing this latest production of our coin-artist with his preceding example, we at once recognize the full-blown flower as opposed to the simple bud; the work of his years of ripe maturity and power as distinguished from efforts of earlier days, when his style had not yet acquired firmness and confidence. A masterpiece such as this, displaying both boldness of design and delicacy of treatment in its perfect proportion, its clear-cut, high-bred features and its tender, winning charm of expression, should surely place Phrygillos by the side of those great masters, Euainetos and Kimon.

Phrygillos worked during the period of epigraphic transition, when the new Ionic letter Ω was being introduced to represent long O, and it is an amusing misappreciation of its true value which makes him in the inscription substitute Ω for the short instead of the long O, and write $\Sigma\text{YPAK}\Omega\Xi\text{ION}$ instead of $\Sigma\text{YPAKO}\Xi\text{ION}$.

The reverse presents yet another of the rich list of Syracusan die-engravers—although this particular example is not signed—being a production from the hand of Euarchidas, evidently, from the marked variety and freedom in the action of his horses, a leading member of this coterie of truly great coin-artists. Persephone bears a torch, one of her symbols as goddess of the realms of night, while another of her distinguishing signs, an ear of barley, appears in the exergue.

But the great interest of this coin lies in its symbolical and commemorative character, which was first pointed out by Professor Salinas, the distinguished and learned director of the Palermo Museum. In our brief sketch of the Athenian siege of Syracuse we found that from a condition of accepted inferiority the Syracusans, having gradually acquired, by drill and various devices, a superiority over the Athenians in naval evolution, had been victorious in several severe sea engagements. The culminating point of success may be said to have been reached in the last and fiercest naval battle of the war, that of September 9, B. C. 413, when the Athenian seamen, taking on board their ships as many of the heavy-armed soldiers as could well be carried, made a last determined effort to break through the chains, the pointed piles and the solid line of vessels with which the Syracusans had

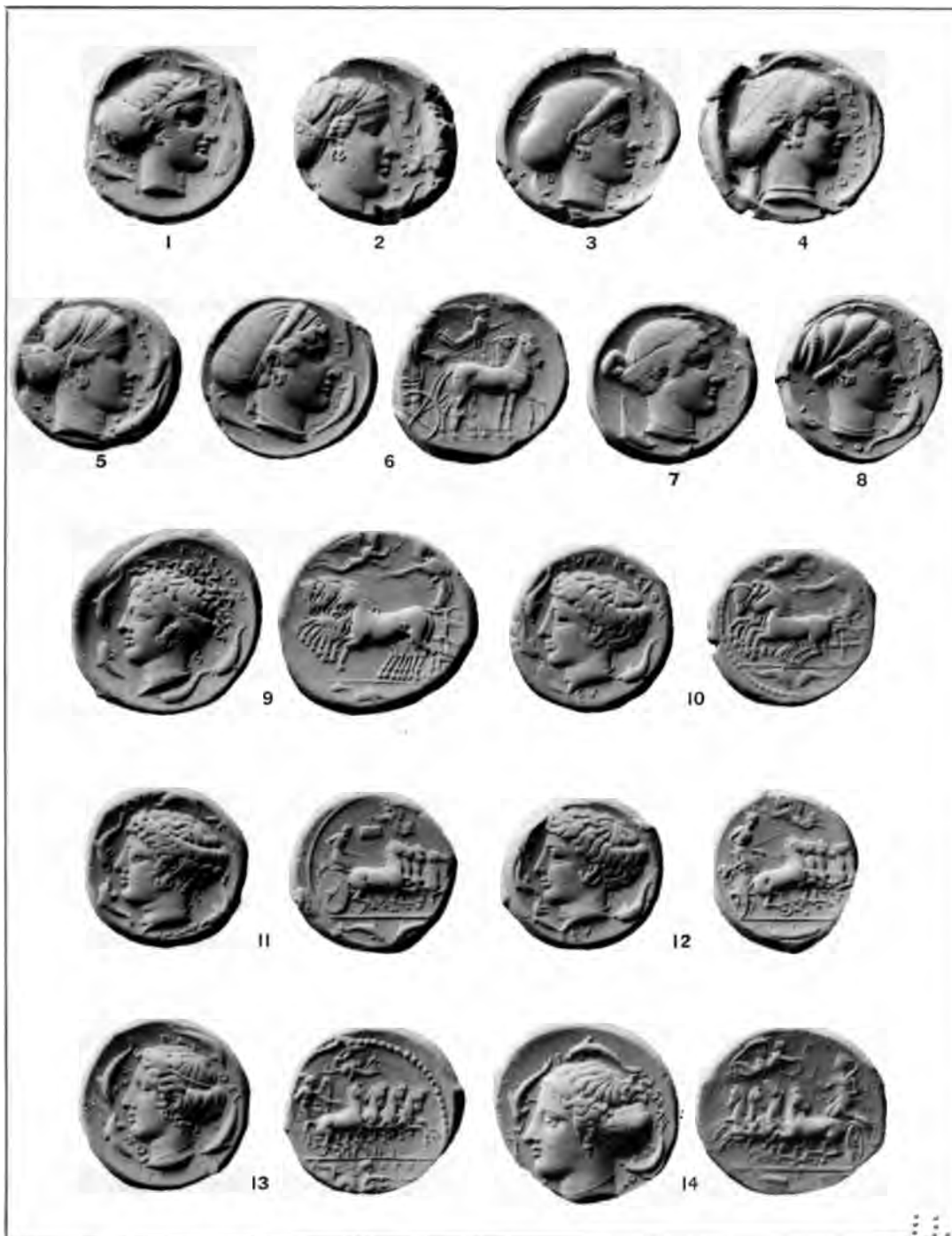
closed their harbor-mouth. This attempt was as manfully resisted by the latter, inspired by the thirst for vengeance against the hated invaders of their native land, while the Athenians were animated by the realization that by victory alone could they hope to escape death or slavery.

A truly mortal contest it was in this confined space where trireme crashed into trireme, each perchance with heavy beak disabling or sinking its opponent; where the javelins of the darters, the arrows of the bowmen, the missiles of the slingers, wrought carnage on either side; where a hand-to-hand struggle on galleys locked together by special grappling irons would surge first into one and then into the other; and where every manœuvre of success or failure, easily discernible in this clear air, unclouded by the smoke of a modern engagement, was applauded or mourned by the Athenian land forces and the women, children, and old men of Syracuse, all anxious spectators of the event. At last, after hours of conflict, enthusiasm and confidence prevailed over discouragement and despair, such Athenian ships as had escaped destruction were hurriedly rowed ashore that their surviving crews might escape, and on this day sacred to Herakles, the city's peculiar deity, victory again rested with the Syracusans, a victory so final and overwhelming that it may be said to have ended the war; for there could no longer be, on the part of the disheartened Athenians, any thought of escape by sea, while the fatal results of their attempt to withdraw by land we have already seen.

It is, then, this victorious achievement which is commemorated by the onward rush of the goddess of Henna and Syracuse, as she guides her speeding chariot and bears aloft her flaming torch to symbolize the complete destruction of the hostile fleet. Nike, floating lightly towards the divine charioteer, presents with her right hand a crown of victory, and with her left another emblem — an unusual but yet unmistakable one — which should be carefully noted, as having inspired the happy conjecture of Professor Salinas. It is without doubt an *aplustre*, the graceful ornament which, as a kind of naval standard, curved upward and forward from a vessel's stern, and was usually removed by captors, to be borne off in token of triumph. So that its presence here naturally symbolizes a great sea victory.

This explanation being accepted, as seems reasonable, the date of our coin is thus positively established, and the importance of its evidence as to the exact period when this style of numismatic art prevailed cannot be overestimated. It forms with another valuable and magnificent specimen, shortly to be examined, a definite point from which to make an accurate chronological classification of the wide artistic variations displayed on coins.





ANCIENT GREEK SILVER COINS FROM THE BENSON COLLECTION.

11

ANCIENT GREEK COINS

VII
SYRACUSE, 3

BY
FRANK SHERMAN BENSON

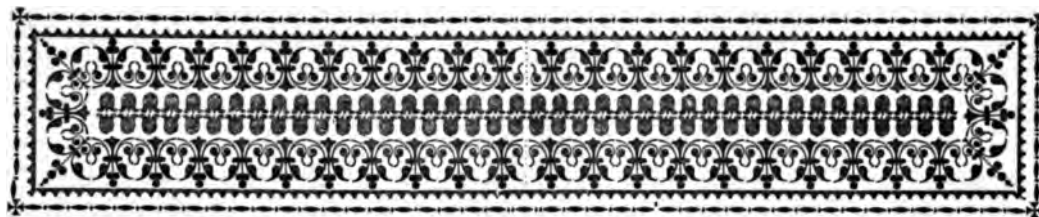


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ANCIENT GREEK COINS.

VII. SYRACUSE, 3.



THE total destruction of the Athenian armament as just described produced two important results on the Syracusan policy; namely, an even more pronounced ascendancy of the democratic party, under whose rule this glorious triumph had been achieved, and a determination to continue the war against Athens, as a partial return to the Peloponnesian allies for their timely and powerful aid. To this end reinforcements were dispatched to the fleet which, under leadership of Sparta, was cruising around the Aegean sea, and was attacking or rousing to rebellion the richest dependencies of the wide-spread Athenian empire.

The ill success of this expedition produced an ebullition of popular rage, which found expression in the banishment of all the aristocratic party-leaders, the chief of whom, Hermokrates, occupied the next few years in futile efforts to regain admission into his beloved native city, employing first persuasion and then force; a last desperate attempt resulting in his death, in 407 B. C. Meanwhile, in 409, had come the first great Carthaginian invasion, which being concentrated on the destruction of distant Selinous and Himera, did not directly affect Syracuse, where the next three years passed uneventfully.

But a glance at example No. 1 of the accompanying plate will show that before entering upon this period, B. C. 413-405, we must retrace our steps even beyond the date of the Athenian defeat, and must again turn our attention to those earlier days when coin-art was making a first determined effort to free itself from the bonds of archaism and convention, and to fulfill the promise conveyed by the term Transitional Period.

DEMOCRACY.

92. Tetradrachm, wt. 267 grs. B. C. 425-415. (Pl. VII: 1.) Obv. Σ ΥΡΑ—Head of nymph Arethousa to left, wearing earring, necklace, and hair confined by sphendone ornamented with stars; on ampyx a swan, and on band beneath sphendone, engraver's signature EYKAEI; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to left, horses galloping in step; charioteer crowned by flying Nike; in exergue, two dolphins.

Another well-known Syracusan coin-artist, Eukleidas, is now first represented in this obverse; and the coupling of his work with a reverse displaying all the mannerisms which distinguish Nos. 86 and 87 proves (as in the case of Euainetos in Nos. 88 and 89), that Eukleidas also was a pupil of Eumenes, whom, again like the brother craftsman, he was destined to surpass both in technique and expression.

This design gives us a charming and gracious head of Arethousa, the lady of the fountain, an identification established by the swan which is seen swimming upon the ampyx; while the gem-like delicacy of Eukleidas' work is shown in the minuteness and perfection of the signature lettering EYKAEI, naturally illegible in the deep shadow of this reproduction, and decipherable indeed in the original only by the use of a lens. We have Pliny's authority for the statement that the ancients were well acquainted with lenses, in the form either of a spherical glass shell filled with water, or of a ball of rock-crystal. But even without any such contemporaneous record, the microscopic fineness displayed here and in other less extreme examples would be a convincing proof that to these die and gem-engravers the use of some form of magnifier must have been familiar; since the production of so minute a device

would have been impossible for an unaided eye, even although peculiarly adapted to this pursuit by nature and training.

Comparing this reverse with Nos. 86 and 87 one sees so clearly all of Eumenes' peculiarities — the horses wooden in aspect and advancing in perfect step, the disproportionately large charioteer, and the carefully arranged wheel of four spokes — that no signature is necessary to determine the name of the engraver. At the same time we are impressed by the distinct advance in design and execution compared with those examples of Eumenes, already examined; a sure sign that this must be one of his latest works, bordering indeed closely upon the time of the siege.

DEMOCRACY.

93. Tetradrachm, wt. 268 grs. *c.* B. C. 415. (Pl. VII: 2.) Obv. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟ Σ ΙΩΝ Head of Arethousa to left, wearing double earring, plain necklace, and hair arranged in flowing locks confined in sphendone; around, four dolphins; on scroll beneath neck, engraver's signature EYKAEI. Rev. Quadriga to left, horses galloping; charioteer crowned by flying Nike; in exergue, dolphin.

(From the Bunbury sale.)

A new and entirely original conception of Arethousa, who is here represented as diving down into her pool with upward-streaming tresses. This second obverse of Eukleidas compared with the preceding specimen shows the astonishing development possible when natural talents were stimulated by incessant practice and study. While this artist's earlier head of the nymph is characterized by delicacy and youthful prettiness, his later portrayal shows such strength, power and dignity as are found in few examples of coin-art. Even the surrounding dolphins seem to possess the most vigorous and perfectly developed physique. This is apparent also in the reverse, where the dolphin of the exergue is an ideal type of activity and vigor; while the extension of its upper fin across the exergual line imparts to the figure a touch of charming originality, and displays the engraver's assured command of tool and material. The quadriga-scheme exhibits no especial character-

istic — except in likewise emphasizing the admirable mannerisms of Eukleidas — and indeed its similarity of arrangement to certain other schemes determines our approximate date.

In one of those charming essays on Hellenic and Renaissance subjects, which seem the spontaneous outpourings of a nature wherein were so rarely and happily combined a poetic temperament, brilliant scholarship, and a sympathetic admiration for the beauty and grandeur of ancient Greek civilization, John Addington Symonds, musing over the strange and fascinating life of the cultured Athenian, his active, varied occupations, his constant, stimulating intellectual pursuits, and his impassioned pride in the fair city of Pallas Athene, presents a vivid picture of the departure from Piraeus of that powerful armament which was confidently expected to overwhelm Syracuse and raise the greatness of imperial Athens to unimagined heights. He calls up "the pomp which went forth to Sicily that solemn morning, when the whole host prayed together and made libations at the signal of the herald's trumpet," while as though in mockery of the cruel destiny preparing for this triumphant array "the sun shone, and the waves laughed, smitten by the oars of galleys racing to Aegina." And then in sharp contrast to this dazzling spectacle he describes the sufferings of the Athenian captives in "those great glaring pits (the Latomie of Syracuse), where nine thousand freemen of the proudest city of Greece were brought by an unexampled stroke of fortune to slavery, shame and a miserable end. Here they dwindled away, worn out by wounds, disease, thirst, hunger, heat by day and cold by night, heartsickness and the insufferable stench of putrefying corpses. The pupils of Socrates, the admirers of Euripides, the orators of the Pnyx, the athletes of the Lyceum, lovers and comrades and philosophers, died here like dogs."

"Turn Fortune, turn thy wheel, and lower the proud,
Turn thy wild wheel in sunshine, storm and cloud."

Surely never could the fateful invocation of that gentle princess of Arthurian legend find a more perfect fulfillment than in the tragic chances

of this ill-starred expedition. Sunshine in the pageant of the start and in the tranquil voyage, enlivened by hopeful anticipations, across the calm Ionian sea ; storm in the two years of continuous strife, first confident, then desponding ; and cloud in the deep humiliation of all in that great host whom death had passed by, cruel most in thus sparing. From loftiest heights to lowest depths indeed did "their own Rhamnusian Nemesis" lower the proud.

Complete as was the abasement of the wretched conquered, no less overwhelming was the triumph of the victorious Syracusans. They had, as Plutarch tells us, "hung up the arms and spoils on the finest and largest trees along the river (Assinaros), and the conquerors, with garlands on their heads, with their own horses splendidly adorned, and cropping short the manes and tails of those of their enemies, entered the city, having, in the most signal conflict ever waged by Greeks against Greeks, and with the greatest strength and the utmost effort of valor and manhood, won a most entire victory." It would indeed be strange if many a happy day of the new peace and tranquillity after those years of conflict, were not given up to rejoicing and self-congratulation at such incredible and unexampled success.

But the final and crowning commemoration was fitly reserved for the anniversary of the surrender of Nikias, and on September 18, 412 B. C., there was held the first celebration of the Assinarian Games, which rivalled in splendor and religious veneration the Feast of Zeus Eleutherios established a half century earlier. As a portion of the prizes for these games a special issue of magnificent silver pentekontalitra — of which the Damareteia of Gelon (described under 68) would be the prototypes — was determined upon, to be engraved by that now acknowledged master in the art of die-sinking, Euainetos.

We have already seen this artist's work at Syracuse in the charming reverses Nos. 88 and 89, produced probably about 420 B. C., but shortly after this date he seems to have severed his connection with the Syracusan mint, while examples of his unsurpassed technique appear at Katane, as we shall see, and also at Kamarina and perhaps Segesta. Be this as it may, his

supremacy in the world of die-engraving was universally admitted, as is shown by his choice for the production of these commemorative dekadrachms.

DEMOCRACY.

94. Dekadrachm, wt. 665 grs. B. C. 412. (Pl. VII: 3.) Obv. .ΞΥΡΑΚΟΞΙΩΝ Head of Persephone to left, wearing wreath of barley-leaves, earring of three pendants, and necklace of pearls; beneath, engraver's signature EYΑΙΝΕ; around, four dolphins. Rev. Quadriga to left, horses in high action; charioteer crowned by flying Nike; in exergue, panoply consisting of helmet, cuirass, shield and greaves.

From the very earliest days in which the artistic beauty and value of coins were recognized, this so-called "medallion" has excited such enthusiastic praise and unbounded admiration as have been accorded to no other product of the die-engraver's skill. Winckelmann, that devoted worshiper of the classic in art, asserts that "it transcends all imagining," and that "beyond these coins human comprehension cannot go." Dr. Head calls it "*the chef d'oeuvre* of the art of coin-engraving." Lenormant writes "Euainetos is the greatest of all artists in the branch that he has cultivated." In fact all archaeologists who have attained eminence in the special field of numismatics, Von Sallet, Poole, Payne-Knight, Gardner, Evans, have with one accord upheld the supremacy of this matchless portrait of Kore, the pure, gentle winning maiden-goddess, with hair arranged in luxuriant, yet symmetrical tresses, and intertwined with the green barley-spray which symbolizes her divine youth and freshness as contrasted with the tranquil maturity of her middle life, typified in certain issues by the full ripe ear.

We see how Euainetos, taking for a model his own and the other earlier representations of Persephone, and retaining the conventional dolphin-scheme and pose of the head, has, by refining the features, glorifying the expression, and elaborating the accessories — waving locks, triple-pendent earring, and graduated pearl necklace — given us a vision of surpassing loveliness, which must always remain the true ideal of Demeter's daughter, the Kore, sought far and wide, bewailed with ceaseless lamentations.

Nor is the reverse type less notably grand and striking, the element of sensationalism, so apparent in Euainetos' early work, being still a marked characteristic. The horses, perfectly modelled and harmoniously grouped, rush onward in free and diversified action, their course guided rather than stimulated by the goad of a charioteer whose forward-leaning pose betrays his anxiety to deserve the palm of victory which a gracefully floating Nike presents with rhythmic dignity.

While this perfection of numismatic design and technique exalts these coins above all others of any age, it is their exergue which marks them as a peculiar issue. If our view that they were intended primarily for prizes in games be a correct one, we should naturally expect them to bear some distinctive mark of such purpose; and this evidence is furnished by an inscription, ΑΘΛΑ (prizes), which was engraved beneath the arms. Unfortunately from its position this device in a large majority of cases — over ninety per cent — is missing, the module being usually of insufficient size to receive the impression of both the flying Nike at the top and these letters at the bottom of the coin, and preference being properly given to the goddess. It was a custom of the Greeks after victory to erect on the battle-field a panoply consisting of the finest suit of armor belonging to the vanquished, which should thus as it were dedicate the scene of conflict to the deities who had protected and aided the victors. Plutarch, five centuries later, tells us that "to this day in a temple at Syracuse is shown a shield said to have been Nikias's, curiously wrought and embroidered with gold and purple intermixed;" and this resplendent armor of the Athenian general, having been stripped from him as he prostrated himself a wretched suppliant at the feet of Gylippos, was doubtless raised on high among the other victorious memorials, which were erected on the banks of the Assinaros before being borne in triumph to the city. Thus as a secondary and explanatory type on coins intended for prizes in the commemorative games, no more peculiarly appropriate design could have been devised than this special panoply, rich in association of unsurpassed success.

A proof that the transcendent charm and artistic value of this Persephone were as fully appreciated by the ancients as by ourselves is found in the wide-

spread influence which Euainetos' lovely conception exerted upon contemporaneous and subsequent coinages. It was only to be expected that later Syracusan issues, of Agathokles and Hiketas, as well as the camp-pieces struck by the Carthaginians during their Sicilian wars, should follow this type; but we find that even distant states having no sympathy or affiliations with the great Doric city did not hesitate to appropriate the Sicilian goddess for their tutelary divinity. Examples of this have appeared under Neapolis and Arpi (Nos. 34, 35), and we shall see the same head slightly modified decorating the coinages of Lokroi Opountioi, Pheneos and Messene in Hellas, of two leading cities in Crete, and of Metapontion in Magna Graecia, as well as the copious Siculo-Punic issues; while in the rude grotesques of later Gaulish and Iberian towns can still be dimly traced the curving barley-sprays and sportive dolphins whose native home was Sicilian Ortygia.

More than this, Mr. Evans has discovered a reduced copy in the central relief of a certain series of *kylikes*, broad shallow drinking-cups of thin black-colored pottery, which were abundantly produced throughout Sicily and Magna Graecia, in imitation of silverware. The original silver vases, probably of elaborate workmanship, must have formed a special class of interior decoration, and we may infer that in the most valuable and highly wrought examples actual dekadrachms were inserted.

The date assigned above for our especial coin is 412 B. C., but this must be understood as applying rather in general terms to the first issue of dekadrachms. There is such a variety of these dies from the hand of Euainetos, with different devices — his signature, a star, a cockle-shell, or a Δ — that it is impossible to distinguish the exact order of time. The probabilities are, however, that these issues extended well into the fourth century, perhaps nearly to the end of Dionysios' reign. At the same time there is so little divergence in treatment of all the varieties that, as before mentioned — under No. 91 — this determination of the exact date of the first issue, whichever it may have been, establishes a fixed epoch in the changing phases of artistic style, and furnishes a most valuable "point of departure" for Sicilian coin-chronology.

DEMOCRACY.

95. Hemidrachm, wt. 33 grs. B. C. 412-405. (Pl. VII: 4.) Obv. ΣY Head of Pallas, three-quarter face to left, wearing necklace and Phrygian helmet with triple crest; around, four dolphins: plain border. Rev. Quadriga to left, horses galloping; charioteer crowned by flying Nike; in exergue, two dolphins: plain border.

(From the Hobart Smith sale.)

While this obverse type is in direct imitation of the grand facing head of Pallas Athene on a contemporaneous tetradrachm signed by Eukleidas, the quadriga-scheme — comparing it with the dekadrachm and with No. 11 of plate VI — is so wholly in the manner of Euainetos that the coin may well be considered an example of this artist's skill in the more minute and delicate intricacies of his art. That Euainetos was an engraver of gems as well as of dies seems undoubted from certain peculiar touches visible even in the bold, strong treatment of his "medallions;" and the same delicacy of touch, which has been thought to give perhaps a shade of hardness to the Persephone head, produces, when devoted to such a small design as this, the perfection of microscopic sharpness and detail.

Although in Sicily, Himera and not Syracuse was the peculiar abiding place of Athene, yet this goddess was held in high esteem in the latter city, and the stately remains of a spacious temple raised by the Syracusans in her honor form one of the few surviving memorials of ancient Ortygia. This worship, inherited probably from the mother-city Corinth, whose coinage was for centuries distinguished by the head of Pallas Athene, may account for her presence, rare indeed at Syracuse until later days, upon our coin.

DEMOCRACY.

96. Gold fifty-litra piece, wt. 44 grs. B. C. 409. (Pl. VII: 5.) Obv. $\Sigma Y P A K O - \Sigma \Omega N$ Head of river-god to left: border of dots. Rev. $\Sigma Y P A K O \Sigma \Omega N$ on double base, above which, free horse prancing to right.

The first of the few gold coins in my collection, and worthy of careful attention owing to its charming style and unusual types. The head, evidently that of a river-god (whether Anapos or Assinaros seems uncertain) is modelled directly after similar examples of perhaps even greater beauty signed E, denoting the hand of Euainetos, whose activity did not confine itself to silver.

The bridleless horse of the reverse, always the symbol of democratic freedom, here probably distinguishes that entire predominance of the people, which, as already explained, had in 409 B. C. culminated in the complete discomfiture of the aristocratic party. The strong influence of this type on the Siculo-Punic coinages will appear later.

It is the misfortune of a series of articles dedicated to any special subject that all matters of general interest, even if kindred and explanatory, must be presented in as abbreviated a form as possible. Thus, coins being now under discussion, we cannot indulge in detailed historical sketches, and, much to our regret, the life and adventures of "one of the most extraordinary men of any age" must here be condensed into a few lines.

Dionysios the scribe,—of low origin as his calling then implied,—by the exercise of unequalled talents, by an unswerving strength of character, and by a complete indifference to the laws of gods and men, rose to be the undisputed and arbitrary despot of Syracuse, whose dominion, continually enlarged by his military genius and skillful diplomacy, embraced at the end of twenty-five years (about 379 B. C.) all Sicily—except the extreme western corner, Carthaginian as always—the greater part of Magna Graecia, Korkyra, and even the western half of Epeiros; a more widely extended sovereignty than had ever before been known in the entire Hellenic world. All this at the cost of constant warfare in Sicily, Italy and Hellas, by the exercise of ceaseless activity, deceit, fraud, violence and cruelty, when each in turn suited his purpose; of mild persuasion when a heaven-born oratory sufficed for swaying to his will the fickle Syracusan people; and of stern, relentless slaughter

when mercenary troops were let loose to "chastise with scorpions" his rebellious subjects.

The bulwark of Hellenism against barbarian encroachment, he withstood four Carthaginian expeditions, which capturing and devoting to fire and sword one by one the other great Sikeliot cities, next swept overwhelmingly down upon Syracuse, only to waste away before the defences which Dionysios' valor, foresight, and untiring energy interposed: while after every fresh success, the victorious commander would lead forth his Syracusans far into the Carthaginian end of the island, destroying their cities and allies, until again forced to fall back before another Punic invasion.

His military talents were indeed far in advance of his age, for not only did he fortify Syracuse so as to set at nought the barbarians, but he was also the first to build ships of greater size than triremes; he invented long-range catapults, and his soldiers were carefully drilled in the most difficult evolutions.

Ambitious, like all true Greeks, of distinction in the great sacred contests of Hellas, he sent gorgeously equipped "theories" to Olympia; but so hated was the name of Dionysios, and so bitter was the indignation roused by his unblushing contempt for all freedom and virtue, that furious mobs tore down his tents, ill-treated his servants, and prevented his chariots from competing. Nor did better fortune attend the poetical efforts on which this fierce tyrant prided himself; for when after many attempts one of his tragedies was at last awarded the coveted prize at Athens, the unexpected success was celebrated by so unrestrained a debauch of triumph as to result in his death. This was in 367 B. C. after a reign of nearly forty years.

It might be expected that the coinage of so mighty a sovereign would have been commensurate in dignity and copiousness with his power and widespread dominion; but Mr. Evans has shown why the reverse was the case: and that while the dekadrachms continued to appear during the greater part of his reign, the tetradrachm issues hitherto so copious seem to have ceased about the end of the fifth century.

The continual wars of Dionysios, entailing vast expense in mercenaries and native troops, his great schemes of public building, of fortification and

of naval increase, together with the ruin and desolation of all other Sicilian cities of the first rank, now subject to Syracuse, kept the tyrant in constant financial straits, so that it is not, after all, surprising to find that his principal issues consisted of coins either debased, or so countermarked as legally to pass for twice their actual value. Such unworthy pieces together with the old tetradrachms, the Punic camp-coins and the imported "pegasi" of the mother-city Corinth, which were always in circulation throughout the western colonies, seem to have composed the medium of exchange during the reign of Dionysios.

I have however attributed to this period the following group of coins, which although first issued doubtless about 409 B. C., must have continued to appear during the early part of the succeeding century, and perhaps even saw the downfall of Dionysios' power.

DIONYSIOS.

97. Dekadrachm, wt. 669 grs. B. C. 405-367. (Pl. VII : 6.) Obv. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟ- ϵ ΙΩΝ Head of Arethousa to left, wearing plain earring, necklace of pearls, and hair confined in beaded net and band, on which, K ; around, four dolphins ; on that beneath neck, engraver's signature KIMΩN. Rev. Quadriga to left, horses in high action, charioteer crowned by flying Nike ; in exergue, panoply consisting of helmet, cuirass, shield and greaves ; on exergual line, engraver's signature KIMΩN.

(From the Bunbury sale.)

Aetna matures e'en now the golden purple wine,
Of which, in days long gone, Theocritus drank deep ;
Yet vainly would the poet now his vigil keep
For those of whom his verses sang the grace divine.
Fair Arethousa, by quick turns an honored bride
Or slave despised and spurned, losing her clear-cut face,
Finds mingled in her veins, of Greek blood scarce a trace,
But Saracenic fire, with lordly Angevin pride.
Time ruins all. O'er shattered tower and shrine we muse.
Bright Akragas lies shadow-like, while Syracuse
Sleeps 'neath the azure shroud of her indulgent sky.
Alone the metal, which love's skill could glorify,
Has kept, in full perfection on a coin displayed,
The deathless beauty of a pure Sicilian maid.

Although my translation of de Heredia's sonnet "Sur une Médaille Antique" has already appeared in the *Journal*, I venture to repeat it here, since clearly the author's inspiration can have been found only in some charming, refined, delicately modelled head such as this, whose haughty queenly profile must indeed reproduce for us the features of a daughter of the highest and purest Syracusan aristocracy. A hundred years before this, in the days of the ruling Gamoroi, her ancestors doubtless governed the city with iron hand; and were perhaps even then, in 500 B. C., proud and strong in their claim of direct descent from the original settlers of Ortygia, two and a half centuries earlier.

Kimón, a contemporary of Euainetos (although probably younger) and as a designer and engraver of coin-dies second only to the master, in these four finest examples of his handiwork (Nos. 6-9) shows a decided preference for the lady of the fountain; and certainly his conception of Arethousa, whether in profile or with full face, is of unsurpassed beauty, delicacy and strength. The presence of ΑΘΛΑ on the earliest medallion reverses has led Mr. Evans to consider these coins as designed for the same purpose as that of Euainetos' first dekadrachms; namely, for presentation as prizes in the Assinarian games, inaugurated in 412 B. C. The present specimen, however, is distinctly in the latest of Kimón's three styles, and we may assume that its special issue commenced about the year of Dionysios' usurpation, 405 B. C., and continued, together with our three other examples of this artist's skill, throughout the reign of that tyrant.

Being intended then for the same purpose, these two types of dekadrachm naturally had many points of similarity, Kimón being undoubtedly indebted to Euainetos for his scheme of composition. At the same time his powerful inventive genius, second only to that of his great rival, is displayed in the peculiar charm and distinctive personality of this Arethousa, a composition presenting indeed the ideal embodiment of our tutelary goddess of the sacred fount.

Like Euainetos, Kimón did not confine his practice of the graver's art to the coinage of Syracuse, although as was also the case with his great rival,

the task of tracing his artistic journeyings seems well-nigh an impossible one. Mr. Evans would not only recognize evidences of his peculiar and unsurpassed technique in several Sicilian cities, but would also transport him across the straits, finding him employed in Neapolis and kindred centres of Magna Graecian coin-art. Be this as it may, certainly his highest manifestations of artistic beauty are reserved for these Syracusan issues which now attain a glorious perfection.

DIONYSIOS.

98. Tetradrachm, wt. 258 grs. B. C. 405-367. (Pl. VII: 7.) Obv. Head of Arethousa, three-quarter-face to left, wearing plain earring, necklace of pearls, and hair in loose tresses; on ampyx, engraver's signature KIMQN; around, three dolphins swimming among the locks of hair: plain border, above which, AΠΕΘΟΞΑ. Rev. ΞΥΠΑΚΟΞΙΩΝ Quadriga to left, horses galloping; charioteer crowned by Nike, who advances on heads of horses; beneath their feet, prostrate meta; in exergue, ear of barley: plain border.

(From the Montagu sale.)

99. Tetradrachm, wt. 265 grs. B. C. 405-367. (Pl. VII: 8.) Rev. ΞΥΠΑΚΟΞΙΩΝ in exergue. Quadriga to left, horses in high action; charioteer crowned by flying Nike; on double exergual line, engraver's signature KIMQN.

Kimon's dekadrachm obverse gave us the perfect head of Arethousa in profile, and now the same hand has traced for our delight an equally ideal representation of this goddess, almost in full face. We have not before (except on the hemidrachm No. 95) met with this pose, for the rarity of which on coins two reasons may be given. First, the difficulty of its design as compared with a profile,—a technical peculiarity which would discourage from such an attempt all but the most skillful engravers; and second, the recognized fact that a side face was more suitable, or practical as one may say, the head-dress or locks of hair owing to their higher relief protecting from injury the delicate features—thus happily preserved in all their sharpness save under intentional ill-treatment;—while in the case of a facing head these con-

ditions would be reversed, the nose, eyebrows and chin receiving the full and disfiguring effects of such careless usage as is incident to ordinary circulation.

This tetradrachm is rightly considered Kimon's masterpiece, since in his medallion as just seen he was forced to follow to a certain degree the lead of Euainetos, and to adhere closely to Syracusan traditions. But this facing head, while recalling, it seems to Mr. Evans, the features of the profile rendering, shows a freedom and an originality of design in which Kimon's now assured position enabled him to indulge. "These coins represent the supreme development of Kimon's style, and the individuality of features and expression clearly indicate that they are both of them taken from the same living model, whose beautiful but distinctly haughty face haunts all Kimon's later presentations of the tutelary Nymph."

Like the Euainetos head of Persephone, though to a far less extent, for the technical reasons above given, Kimon's facing Arethousa exerted a widespread influence over contemporary engravers. Certain coinages of Sicily and Thessaly evidently owe their inspiration to this head, while two successive satraps of Kilikia about 380 B. C., utterly regardless of local harmony, transported to the extreme east of the Mediterranean the gracious fountain-nymph of Syracuse, who now however amid the uncongenial surroundings of Tarsos has lost all that soft, gentle radiance, which is one of her distinguishing charms in Ortygia.

There is but one fresh feature on these two quadriga schemes. On the first reverse we see a prostrate meta (turning-point or goal), which like the detached chariot-wheel of No. 89 is doubtless a reminiscence of the possible accidents to which contestants were exposed, in those fierce, passionate, crowded races, wherein each charioteer, unhampered by the restrictions of modern racing, strove to upset his rivals as one of the easiest means of securing victory.

DIONYSIOS.

100. Drachm, wt. 67 grs. B. C. 405-367. (Pl. VII: 9.) Obv. Head of Arethousa, three-quarter-face to left, wearing earring, necklace of pearls, and hair in loose tresses; around, two dolphins: dotted border. Rev. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟ Ξ ΙΩ $\tilde{\Nu}$ Leukaspis

naked, but wearing crested Athenian helmet and armed with spear and shield, advancing to right in fighting attitude ; on ground, Phrygian helmet ; in exergue ΑΕΥΚΑΞΠΙΞ.
(From the Hoffman sale, 1898.)

In this extremely rare, if not unique piece, Kimon presents the same head as on his tetradrachms ; but for the reverse he has chosen an unusual but peculiarly Syracusan type, the hero Leukaspis. The legend ran that when Herakles in the fulfillment of his tenth labor — to fetch the oxen of Geryones from the isles of the farthest west to King Eurystheus at Mykenai — had come to South Italy, one of the unruly herd escaping, swam the straits and fled across Sicily. In his pursuit the demi-god was opposed, at or near the site of Syracuse, by large armies of the native Sikans, whom as always in his heroic wanderings he speedily vanquished and destroyed. The leader of these conquered hosts was Leukaspis, who as a national hero was apparently dignified by some form of worship at Syracuse ; in symbolism, doubtless, of a mortal resistance on the part of its citizens against any attempt of foreigners—Greek or barbarian—to encroach upon the civic independence. The prostrate Phrygian head-piece may be considered emblematic of such foreign interference and its destined fate.

After the reign of Dionysios we no longer find on coins the signatures of their engravers, and must feel regret at this cessation of an interesting custom which had prevailed to a certain extent for half a century in Sicily, where alone it was at all general. This continued omission while implying a decrease in skill on the part of the artist, as well as a consequent loss of pride and self-confidence, would show also that die-sinking no longer occupied the dignified position accorded it in the days when all that was capable of artistic treatment was considered of the highest value to the state.

The death of Dionysios (B. C. 367) placed in supreme and unrestrained command of this vast dominion his eldest son, of the same name, but distinguished as Dionysios the younger, a weak, vicious youth, whom the father's jealousy had kept in strict retirement—a manual trade being his principal occupation—and in careful exclusion from all problems of government.

It is then hardly a matter of surprise to find that the new tyrant's reign, lasting intermittently for twenty-four years, presents, in incongruous succession, mild and gentle measures patterned after his teacher Plato's doctrines, vicious and debauched practices, all the more unbridled for this temporary restraint of his passions, and cruel and despotic excesses rivalling his father's worst enormities.

Intermingled with this extravagant career appears the life of Dion, the first "deliverer," a sad, visionary mystic, brave and skillful in battle, but unfortunate as a ruler, and whose noble aims in early manhood were overwhelmed and blotted out in a savage despotism engendered by the continuous trials and disappointments of his later years. This period, however, need not further occupy our attention, as it furnished probably no fresh coin-issues.

In 344 B. C. when it seemed that this hopeless condition of constant turmoil and savage oppression had reduced well-nigh all Sicily to a desert, when grass grew in the streets of Syracuse, and wild beasts roamed under her walls, there came, again from Corinth, a fresh deliverer, the ideal patriot, one worthy of the name in every act, public and private, from his youth of unselfish devotion in the cause of liberty to an old age of tranquil wisdom and universal respect.

Destroyer of tyrants, conqueror of the Carthaginians, demolisher of frowning citadels, framer of beneficent laws, the hope of all helpless victims of oppression, brave, gentle, noble-hearted, stainless, now a general commanding victorious armies, and yet under changed conditions insistent on retiring into private life while still the idol of soldiery and people, now a statesman governing with military severity when of such there was need, and with equal mildness when the rule of iron could be laid aside, Timoleon was indeed the true liberator of all that Sicily which he saw arise from its ashes of desolation to enter upon a new era of peace and prosperity, destined to continue almost unbroken for a quarter of a century.

DEMOCRACY.

101. Stater, wt. 132 grs. B. C. 344-317. (Pl. VII: 10.) Obv. $\Sigma\text{Υ}\text{Π}\text{Α}\text{Κ}\text{Ο}\Sigma\text{Ι}\text{Ω}\text{Ν}$ Head of Pallas Athene to right, wearing plain Corinthian helmet. Rev. $\text{Π}\text{Ε}\text{Γ}\text{Α}\text{Σ}\text{Ο}\text{Σ}$ Pegasus flying to left.

Of this stater there are several varieties, which while differing but slightly in detail, yet clearly belong to distinct periods, the determination of whose exact dates is still an open question. Certain authorities, among them Mr. Evans, would connect this issue with the successful expedition of Dion in 357 B. C., when there was a temporary revival of free institutions. Dr. Head, however, with others, considers that it was the complete rehabilitation of Syracuse under Timoleon, together with the permanent renewal of civic and commercial well-being, which would properly be celebrated by a fresh issue of coins; and that the lively gratitude of the Syracusans for the Corinthian leaders and Corinthian support found a natural expression in this closest possible approximation to types of the mother-city.

The latter is the view here adopted, although not without hesitation, since it must be confessed that the arguments of those who support Dion's claims are all but convincing.

As both obverse and reverse types are exact copies of contemporaneous issues of Corinth, our consideration of the charming legend which preserves the myth of Athene Chalinitis (the Bridler), Bellerophon and Pegasus, so intimately associated with the city of the Peirenaian fount, seems properly deferred until in the course of our studies we arrive at the coinage of this wealthy and flourishing metropolis.



Plate VII.



ANCIENT GREEK SILVER COINS FROM THE BENSON COLLECTION.



ANCIENT GREEK COINS

VIII
SYRACUSE, 4

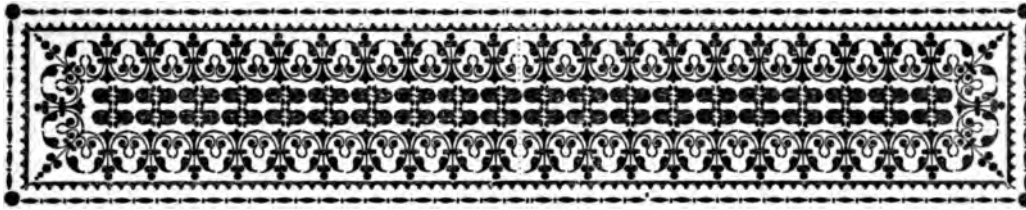
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ANCIENT GREEK COINS.

VIII. SYRACUSE, 4.



WE have seen that in the ancient Greek democracies—those early prototypes of our own great republic—it was possible for one born in the lowest rank of life to attain, by force of natural talents, the highest position in his state. So had risen Gelon and Dionysios; so was to rise Agathokles, now chief actor on the Syracusan stage, a man even more astonishing in his rapid elevation from humble beginnings, in the startling alternation of his brilliant successes and all but crushing failures.

In many respects differing widely from his great predecessor, in a foreign birth, a jovial demeanor, an ostentatious confidence towards the common people whose support was the foundation of his power, in a total absence of pose as the champion of Greater Hellas against the barbarian, and in a deliberate wantonness of cruelty unsurpassed in the history of despots, Agathokles yet closely resembled Dionysios in his low origin, his gradual but resistless rise, his personal courage, his skill as general and statesman, and in the extreme development of that inseparable attribute of genius, the power to seize and improve each passing opportunity, and to convert apparently unavoidable defeat into victory.

Thus the handsome young potter rose from a youth which later legend filled with miraculous portents, to become in turn chiliarch, general, tyrant and king; to ally himself by marriage with the most powerful Greek monarchs of his day, and to rule despotically with varying fortunes for nearly thirty years the Syracusan dominion, which was extended by his matchless energy and military skill until it included all of Greek Sicily, several Carthaginian provinces, much of Magna Graecia, and many Hellenic lands.

The twenty-eight years of Agathokles' reign fall into three natural divisions, each of which is represented by some distinctive peculiarity in the Syracusan issues. Period I, extending from the year 317 B. C., the actual commencement of his tyranny, embraces the seven years of consolidation and expansion throughout Sicily. Period II, opening in 310 with the Punic invasion of the island, shows Agathokles, in no wise disheartened by apparently overwhelming defeat at home, undergoing the adventures of his novel and perilous African expedition; while Period III finds the tyrant either again in his own land — its complete re-enslavement follows as a natural sequence — or later engaged in those foreign conquests on the coasts of Italy and Hellas, which filled the closing years of his active and adventurous life.

AGATHOKLES.

102. Tetradrachm, wt. 262 grs. Period I, B. C. 317-310. (Pl. VIII: 1.) Obv. Head of Persephone to left, wearing wreath of barley-leaves, ear-ring of three pendants, and necklace of pearls; around, three dolphins; beneath, NK; border of dots. Rev. $\Sigma\text{YPAKO}\Sigma\text{ION}$ in exergue. Quadriga to left, horses galloping; above, triskelis; monogram AN.

We recognize in this obverse one of the many direct copies of the Euainetos dekadrachm head, while the quadriga likewise is an imitation, in its conventional scheme resembling perhaps most closely Kimon's medallion design.

That this issue appeared towards the end of the first division of Agathokles' reign, after his subjugation of the greater part of Greek Sicily, is evident

from the presence over the quadriga of a symbol new to Syracusan coinage, the triskelis or triquetra.

This figure, of eastern origin, undoubtedly in its beginning symbolized some form of solar worship. The ancient conception of the sun as a flaming chariot, in which Phoibos Apollo, the radiant god of light, was rapidly borne across the sky, would naturally become typified by a single wheel, first with four, and then, still more simply, with three spokes. A bend in each of these spokes, and corresponding gaps in the circumference, give us a form which an imaginative mind would easily convert into legs and feet, without any sacrifice of the original idea of rotary motion. We have in fact a pronounced example of the constant artistic struggle to produce some familiar shape from a conventional figure.

Certain early coins of Asia Minor bear the triskelis as type or adjunct, and Agathokles doubtless placed it on Syracusan coins in triumphant symbolism of his extended dominion over the three-cornered island. The peculiar appropriateness of this choice is shone by the continued use of the triquetra, even up to the present time, as the distinctive badge or arms of Sicily.¹

The monogram AN has, by what may seem a fanciful interpretation, been considered to contain a reference to Antandros, the trusted brother, whom Agathokles on the eve of his departure for Africa appointed governor of Syracuse.

This coin though openly imitative, displays great beauty of execution, and presents most pleasingly all the well-known charms of feature and expression. That we are, however, approaching the days of decadence appears from one slight peculiarity, the clearly defined dots in which the inscription letters end; a style of treatment which although dormant for yet half a century, becomes a distinguishing mark of the latest Syracusan issues. These dots are of course evidences of the use of a wheel for die-cutting, and as was

¹ In an interesting and exhaustive paper on the "Coinage of the Isle of Man" (*Numismatic Chronicle*, 1899), Mr. Philip Nelson discusses at length the origin and history of this emblem, which in the thirteenth

century was transported across the seas by a Sicilian princess-bride, to form thenceforth the recognized armorial bearings of the little Manx kingdom.

shown in a former article (III Magna Graecia) they result from omitting the final elaboration with the graving-tool; an omission due not so much to haste or carelessness as to a perverted idea that such a want of finish increased the artistic effect of inscriptions.

AGATHOKLES.

103. Stater, wt. 133 grs. Period I, B. C. 317-310. (Pl. VIII: 2.) Obv. Head of Pallas Athene to right, wearing crested Corinthian helmet, ornamented with griffin. Rev. ΣΥΡΑΚΟΞΙΩΝ Pegasos flying to left; above, triskelis; beneath, ear of barley.

Again, as in Timoleon's time, an imitation of current Corinthian staters, so influential in perpetuating the type of the Pallas head, which we shall now find appearing at intervals during the continuance of Syracusan coinage.

On the reverse are seen as symbols the significant triskelis and Persephone's barley-ear, which latter implies that the Maiden's worship, so pre-eminent in Syracuse, is to suffer no neglect in spite of the manifest dedication of this issue to her rival goddess.

It appears from this and the preceding coin that Agathokles, whose early pose was that of a "simple citizen," did not yet feel sufficiently well established in his position of despot to make any change in coin-inscriptions, which, remaining as always, still proclaim the issues as "of the Syracusan people."

AGATHOKLES.

104. Tetradrachm, wt. 264 grs. Period II, B. C. 310-306. (Pl. VIII: 3.) Obv. Head of Persephone to right with flowing locks, wearing wreath of barley-leaves, single pendant ear-ring and necklace of pearls; behind, ΚΟΡΑΞ. Rev. ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΙΟΞ Nike half draped, standing to right, erecting trophy; on right, triskelis.

Although as a rule, for illustration, preference is given to coins acquired from well-known collections, yet this example from a private source is so superlative in excellence of style, technique and preservation that the charming Bunbury specimen (No. 477), also in my cabinet had to be passed by.

We see that the head of Persephone has assumed a new aspect ; a softer and more youthful representation with long gracefully flowing locks now depicting the Maiden goddess, whose inscription ΚΟΡΑΞ shows the devotion of this issue to her special cult.

First of all Greeks, and indeed Europeans, to lead a hostile force against Carthage, Agathokles had in 310 B. C. landed on the African coast, in pursuance of an original and hazardous scheme ; no less a one than to find in the actual subjugation of the great Punic city the most effective method of diverting from Syracuse the persistent Carthaginian attacks, and of terminating if possible the frequent invasions of Sicilian lands. To inspire his soldiery with the courage of despair, he conceived the daring resolution of burning all his ships, in which lay their only hope of escape if defeated ; and omitting no incident of religious pomp and ceremonial, Agathokles and all his captains applied their consecrated torches, each to his own vessel, invoking by this solemn fiery dedication the divine aid and guidance of those tutelary goddesses of Sicily and of the lower world, Demeter the Mother, and Persephone the Maiden.

That this appeal seemed not made to unresponsive ears is shown by the reverse type, which portrays victory completing the erection of her trophy by affixing a Punic helmet to the upright support of the panoply ; in symbolism of those early astonishing successes of the Syracusans, when at one time it seemed as though the aim of the expedition was near accomplishment, and that Agathokles might become lord paramount of Africa as he was of Sicily.

That in his new pride the tyrant now began to assume the royal title appears from the reverse inscription, wherein for the first time since the beginning of Syracusan coinage, the name of an individual takes the place of ΞΥΡΑΚΟΞΙΩΝ. The omission of ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΞ, however, and the use of the adjectival form ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΙΩΞ (probably with *distater* understood) show this change to be merely tentative, and that even the hardened despot felt a certain dread of possible accusations of disrespect towards the State and impiety towards the gods ; the latter being doubtless in his eyes the far less serious charge of the two.

Mr. Percy Gardiner suggests a close and interesting parallel between this Nike and the contemporaneous Aphrodite of Melos; and certainly these two figures show great similarity in motive and treatment of drapery; probably however a resemblance only accidental, or due perhaps to the same influences. The superiority of this Victory over that on its imitative coin from contemporaneous issues of Seleukos I, will appear when, in the study of Asiatic coinage, we arrive at our consideration of the series minted by the Seleukid kings of Syria. Such triumphal types must have been inspired by those continuous and stupendous struggles with alternating victory and defeat, which were, in the east and in the west, the natural consequence of the dismemberment of Alexander's vast dominions among the Diadochoi.

AGATHOKLES.

105. Tetradrachm, wt. 263 grs. Period II, B. C. 310-306. (Pl. VIII: 4.) Obv. Similar to last (No. 104), ΚΟΡΑΞ. Rev. ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΙΟΞ Similar to last.

This coin, intended to copy the preceding as closely as possible, and yet, in marked contrast, presenting every quality to be shunned by coin-art, in its barbarous style, weak execution, wretched fabric and most debased metal, is here introduced as throwing an interesting light upon the vicissitudes of a tyrant's career.

The early promise of Agathokles' triumphs in Africa, far from actual fulfillment, had suffered a complete blight. Defeats and disappointments, with the consequent sullen discontent of the army, had made more and more precarious his position in a distant, hostile land; and it was probably in an effort to allay the mutinous spirit of his soldiery that this issue was struck, and payments of long-deferred arrears were made. The straits of Agathokles compelled the debasement of his available silver bullion to the utmost possible degree consistent with circulation, as appears from a glance at the brassy appearance of the original of this illustration. "Camp pieces" are always the result of unavoidable emergency; but coins such as these, especially when contrasted with his beautiful issues of only a few years earlier, almost the

finest productions of Greek dies of the day, show the depths of poverty, bitterness and discouragement to which the tyrant's bright prospects had sunk.

AGATHOKLES.

106. Gold Stater, wt. 88 grs. Period III, B. C. 306-289. (Pl. VIII: 5.) Obv. Head of Pallas to right, wearing crested Corinthian helmet, ornamented with griffin. Rev. ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΞ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΞ Winged thunderbolt; T

We now arrive at the third period of Agathokles' reign when, the African expedition having ended in total failure, the tyrant was once more in Sicily, smarting under the miscarriage of all his plans, and burning to compensate for a succession of disappointments. Here his comparatively defenceless island enemies lay ready for the exercise of those methods so dear to his savage nature,—fire, sword, torture, slavery; and the unprovoked destruction of Segesta, with the pitiless, wanton massacre of all its inhabitants, the even more cruel and cowardly slaughter of the unfortunate Syracusan relatives of his soldiers in Africa,—a quick revenge for their having, on his desertion, revolted and slain his sons left in command,—together with the gradual but complete destruction of the exiled Syracusans who were so continually plotting and warring against him, re-established Agathokles' power on a broader and firmer basis than ever. That his assumption of the regal title was now an established fact, and as such was recognized far and wide, is shown by this coin.

The course of eastern events for the latter half of the fourth century, embracing the conquest of Hellas by Philip of Macedon, the wonderful victories and dominion of Alexander the Great, the dismemberment of this empire among his generals, and their establishment of distinct kingdoms and dynasties, must have been followed in the west with the deepest interest. Agathokles, considering himself the peer of Ptolemy (his father-in-law), of Seleukos, Antigonos and Lysimachos, whose heads or those of the deified Alexander, directly contrary to accepted Hellenic usage, adorned their several coinages, and whose title ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΞ lately assumed, formed part of the

inscriptions, doubtless gladly followed examples so congenial, and ΑΓΑΘΟΚ-ΑΕΟΞ ΒΑΣΙΛΑΕΟΞ, the first instance in Syracusan coinage of the full royal title, celebrates his triumphant spirit.

The thunderbolt, which has already appeared as a type in connection with the head of Zeus Eleutherios (the Deliverer), if of any special significance here, can have been adopted by Agathokles only in ironical allusion to the former freedom of the Syracusans, and may show the established strength of a tyranny which feared not any ill effects from irritated popular passion.

AGATHOKLES.

107. Stater, wt. 105 grs. Period III, B. C. 306-289. (Pl. VIII: 6.) Obv. Head of Pallas to left, wearing plain Corinthian helmet. Rev. Pegasos flying to left; beneath, triskelis.

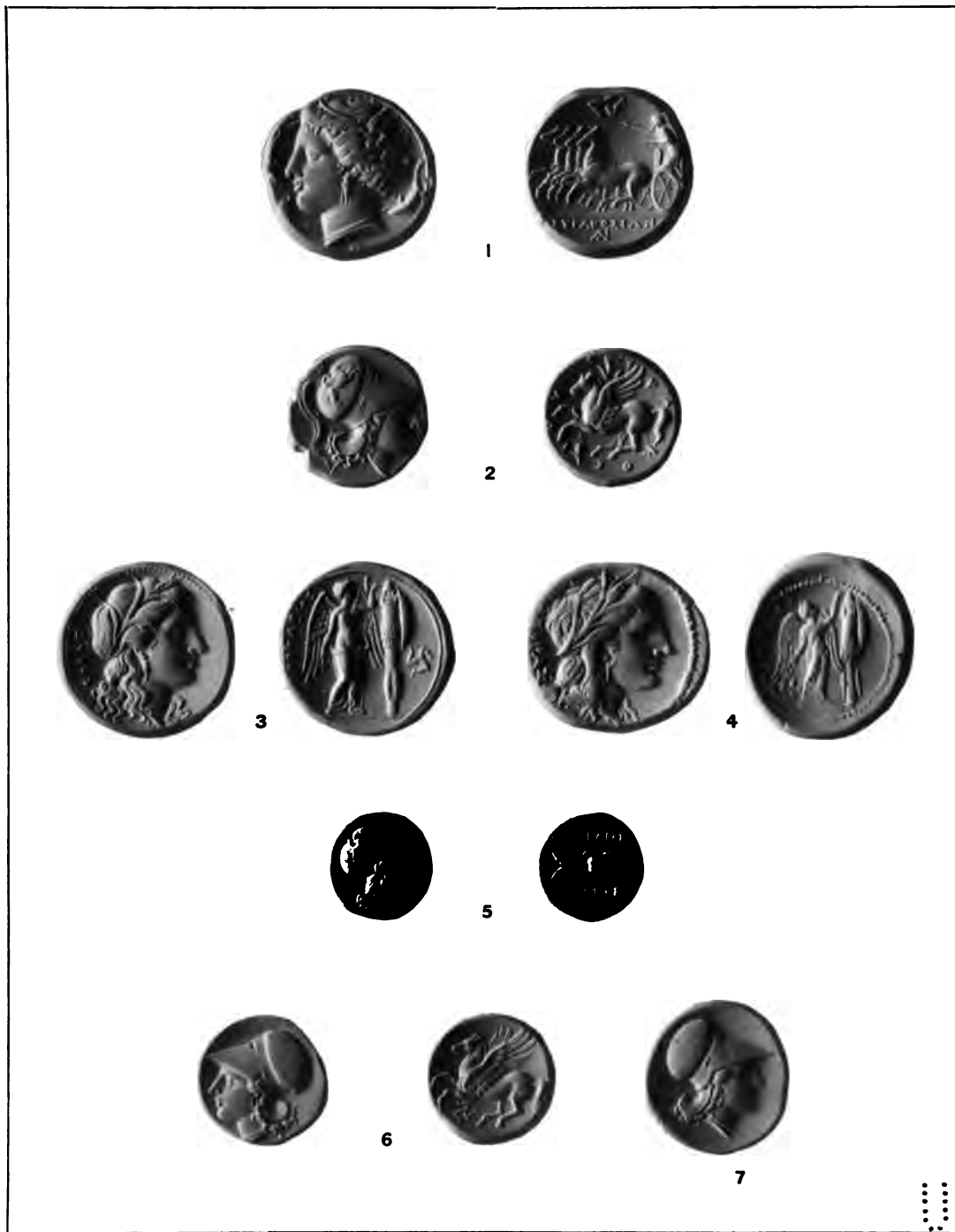
108. Stater, wt. 104 grs. Period III, B. C. 306-289. (Pl. VIII: 7.) Obv. Similar head, but to right.

(From the Montagu sale.)

Similarity of style and fabric, as well as a marked reduction in weight from like examples of an earlier date, have caused these coins to be assigned to the same final period of Agathokles' reign as the gold stater just examined. The absence of any inscription is also a sign that the Syracusans as a people no longer enjoyed the right of coinage.

Agathokles' end formed no exception to the almost universal rule regarding tyrants, and his awful and unlamented death in 289 B. C. by poison at the hands of a favorite and trusted slave, left Syracuse without a recognized successor to his supreme command.





ANCIENT GREEK SILVER COINS FROM THE BENSON COLLECTION.

nd

ANCIENT GREEK COINS

IX
SYRACUSE, 5

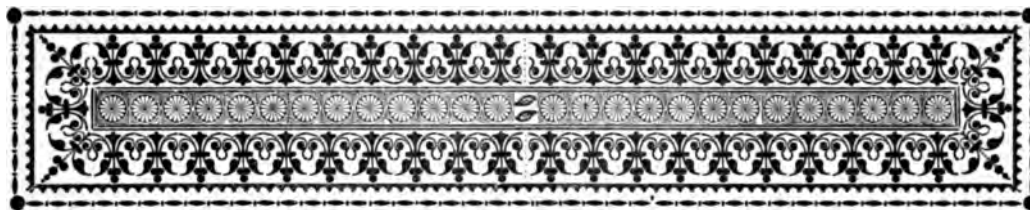
BY
FRANK SHERMAN BENSON



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ANCIENT GREEK COINS.

IX. SYRACUSE, 5.



ESPIE cruel oppressions, compulsory military services, endless confiscations, banishments and massacres, Agathokles' reign had formed a period of general and continued prosperity for the Syracusans, whom his death left to the uncertainties and dissensions of popular government. Less than two years, however, sufficed for this fresh experiment at free democracy, and in 288 B. C. one Hiketas, then commander of the forces, usurped the supreme power, which he continued to exercise despotically for an uneventful decade.

HIKETAS.

109. Tridrachm, wt. 192 grs. B. C. 288-279. (Pl. IX: 1.) Obv. Head of Persephone to left with flowing locks, wearing wreath of barley-leaves and single pendant ear-ring; behind, bee. Rev. Σ YPAKO Σ ION in exergue. Quadriga to left, horses galloping; above, star.

This obverse is a careful but far inferior copy of the issues of Agathokles' second period, just as the quadriga imitates, with similar decadence of style, that old tyrant's first reverse. While Hiketas ventures to place his name upon

gold coins only, the unusual symbol of a bee is common to both metals. The depressed condition of Syracusan affairs is shown by a new and lower standard of value, the tridrachm now supplanting the conventional tetradrachm, which does not reappear at Syracuse.

The overthrow of Hiketas brought no peace to the distracted city, but instead only worse confusion. One self-styled ruler having seized the fortified island, and another the main city, civil war in its most aggravated form reproduced those scenes of cruelty, suffering and misery, which would seem to have formed a natural sequence to the firm if harsh rule of a tyrant. Once again did Syracuse turn longing eyes toward the east, whence so often from Doric kindred had come a ready response to her bitter cry for help. She did not indeed now as of old look for a deliverer of the same race, but cast herself a suppliant before the most powerful and successful monarch of the day, a figure far different from any that had yet appeared in Sicily.

Among the wild mountain tribes on the extreme northern boundaries of Hellas, an ambitious high-minded stripling had after long battling in defence of his hereditary kingly title, attained such final success in the lapse of years that a wide dominion now acknowledged his firm and energetic rule. On one side the descendant of Achilles, on the other a near kinsman of Alexander the Great, brilliant and dashing as a general, possessed of a chivalrous nature, and of such resistless courage and martial impetuosity as to win the name of "Eagle," a pitiless conqueror, yet withal free from any taint of wanton cruelty, and exciting the admiration alike of friends, followers and foes, Pyrrhos, King of Epeiros, knight-errant and warrior-chief, stands forth as one of the most striking and picturesque characters of antiquity.

Already dreaming of universal conquest, and burning to measure his own against a foreign power, this king, besought by the Tarentines to help them in the long struggle with Latin encroachment, had in 280 B. C. brought his soldiers, ships and elephants into southern Italy. Here the Syracusan envoys now found him, disheartened by two years of undecisive warfare with Rome, and eager for any fresh enterprise. So that their appeal, all the more power-

ful as coming from natural allies—Pyrrhos had married Lanassa, daughter of King Agathokles—at once received a favorable response from the Epeiriot leader. Unfortunately we cannot here linger over the thrilling story of his triumphant advance into Sicily, his certain conquest of town after town by treaty, siege or storm, and his signal victories over the allied Carthaginians and Mamertines. But we must rather turn at once to a series of coins bearing the name of Pyrrhos, and found for the most part in Italy and Sicily, which are attributed to his military expeditions in those countries.

PYRRHOS.

110. Oktobol, wt. 88 grs. B. C. 278–276. (Pl. IX : 2.) Obv. Head of Persephone to right, with flowing locks, wearing wreath of barley-leaves and single pendant ear-ring ; behind, rose. Rev. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΠΥΡΡΟΥ Pallas advancing to left in fighting attitude, holding spear and shield ; on left, thunderbolt ; on right, E.

This coin, bearing every impress of Sicilian workmanship, was undoubtedly struck during the period of Pyrrhos' stay at Syracuse. The obverse head follows closely the Agathokles-Hiketas type, while the reverse is also an imitative design, the tracing of whose prototype should now occupy our attention.

After the death of the great Alexander, Ptolemy one of his most far-sighted generals seized upon Egypt as his share of the vast disuniting dominion, and proceeded to exercise supreme power in this distant kingdom ; not openly by might of the strongest, but as governor for the conqueror's youthful sons, Philip Aridaïos and Alexander Aigos, who were successively proclaimed rulers of the empire. It affords a good example of the value of coins as illustrations of history, to find that the issues of Ptolemy for his first twelve years of power bear the inscriptions ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ and ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

This illusion of Ptolemy's dependence was enhanced by his peculiarly Macedonian coin-types, for obverse a head of the now deified Alexander, and for reverse of the most important issues, an archaistic figure of Athene Alkis (the Powerful), "venerated in the royal city of Pella, the capital of Macedon, and the birth-place of Alexander the Great ; and consequently adopted as the

symbol of sovereignty over Macedon" on several Macedonian issues. With chlamys streaming behind her, with threatening spear, and shield raised as if for protection, the goddess seems advancing to the fray in her character of Athene Promachos (in the forefront of the battle); while in the field appears the simple thunderbolt, which on the Ptolemaic coin the war-like goddess hurls:—in symbolism doubtless of Zeus the Thunderer, and hence of Pyrrhos' relationship to Alexander, self-styled son of Zeus.

Sad to say, Pyrrhos' victorious career was marred by a foolish attitude of haughty neglect and indifference towards his allies, a policy which so antagonized the Sicilians as to result in his eventual discomfiture and speedy flight into Italy. But although he left Syracuse in no better plight than before his arrival—only the most gloomy future seeming possible for this great and beautiful city—indirectly his futile expedition may be considered as having introduced the era of peace and prosperity which Syracuse now enjoyed for the unexampled period of over half a century. One of the Epeiros' officers was a certain Hieron, Syracusan by birth, whose distinguished ancestry, superior military talents and pleasing address caused his elevation by fellow citizens to the rank of general. This position he filled so satisfactorily in the fresh struggles against Mamertine, Campanian and Carthaginian, that shortly after, in 275 B. C., he was proclaimed king, and as Hieron II, together with his consort Philistis, reigned in undisputed sovereignty wisely, beneficently and peacefully until his death in 216.

"How brave a field of war do we leave, my friends, for the Romans and Carthaginians to fight in," had been Pyrrhos' parting exclamation as he sailed from Sicily. And during Hieron's reign there began in 264 B. C. those Punic wars, which with intervals of doubtful peace were to rage for an hundred and eighteen years, and to end only with the destruction of Carthage.

It must have been owing to a happy combination of state-craft and good fortune that Hieron was enabled to foresee the ultimate triumph of Latin over Phoenician, and was thus led to conclude with Rome that firm and lasting alliance which kept his corner of Sicily undisturbed while bloodshed and famine

were desolating the remainder of that miserable island. This continued tranquillity, by enabling his subjects to devote wholly to the pursuits of peace those active energies which had been wastefully employed in foreign or civil wars, raised Syracuse to the highest position in commerce and the arts.

Hieron's reign, among the longest in history, is remembered for neither famous battles nor brilliant foreign conquests. Instead we read of a wise, far-sighted diplomacy, a constant care for his subjects' welfare, an impartial justice, and an economical administration, not without acts of munificence at home and generosity abroad. As when he sent to earthquake-shaken Rhodes 100 talents of gold, together with costly temple-vessels and building engines, or when at a time of famine in Egypt his enormous *Alexandrian*,¹ herself a present, bore to Ptolemy a great cargo of wheat, olive oil, and other welcome commodities. Or again when he surprised his Roman allies, hard-pressed in the second Punic war, with a large reinforcement of soldiers and with copious supplies of wheat and barley.

But it is not by his wise or generous or statesmanlike deeds that Hieron will be forever distinguished, but by two names far humbler than his own, and yet of far higher value to mankind. For it was during this reign that his kinsman Archimedes, illustrious mathematician and mechanical engineer, passed the greater part of his useful and honorable career, and that the last and sweetest of the inspired singers of Greece, Theokritos, sang for his patron's honor and delight those earlier lays of patriotic fire or of pastoral life and love, whose scenes are laid on the sun-steeped Sicilian shores.

We find in this reign two distinct periods ; a first, notable for its twelve years of fight and contention with every party alike, Mamertine, Roman, Carthaginian, fellow Greek ; and a second, commencing with 263 B. C., the year

¹ A huge vessel of over 4,000 tons burden, constructed at Syracuse especially for this charitable voyage. The simplest description of her marvellous arrangement and fittings, with ivory temples, baths of polished marble, flower-decked gardens, mosaic walks bordered by shade trees, spacious gymnasiums, and teeming fish tanks, besides the regular masts, yards, sails, turrets, and military engines of a vessel of the day, reads like an extract from the most fanciful of the *Arabian Nights*.

In return Ptolemy sent to Syracuse, among other regal gifts, some of his famous Nile papyrus, which was planted by Hieron in that most charming of Sicilian streams, the Anapos. Along these picturesque banks, which were fabled to have seen the terrified Persephone hurried off in the gloomy chariot of Aidoneus, its graceful, feathery stalks still flourish profusely after more than 2,000 years, although it has long been extinct in Egypt, and indeed grows naturally in no other part of the world.

in which, all uncertainty laid at rest, Hieron decided to embrace firmly and finally the Roman alliance, destined to produce such beneficent results for Syracuse.

HIERON II.

111. Oktobol, wt. 84 grs. Period I, B. C. 275-263. (Pl. IX: 3.) Obv. Head of Pallas to left, wearing crested Corinthian helmet; behind, trident. Rev. $\text{IEP}\Omega\text{NO}\Sigma$ Pegasos flying to right; beneath, B.

(From the Montagu sale.)

We are not tempted to linger over this specimen with its weakly imitative types, poor execution, and rude, careless treatment of the inscription. These very defects, however, so unpleasing from an art-lover's point of view, are interesting as showing how fatal to fine artistic production of every kind were the terrible experiences and the hardly less trying uncertainties of constant warfare. Indeed if we had no historical record of this first decade of Hieron's reign, such a coin would afford conclusive evidence of its being a period of unceasing storm and stress.

We should note moreover the appearance of Hieron's name on this issue; a sign that conditions at home and abroad were probably too unsettled for even his extreme and partly politic modesty to dispense, as he did later, with this now acknowledged sign of royal sovereignty.

HIERON II.

112. Bronze litra, wt. 264 grs. Period II, B. C. 263-216. (Pl. IX: 4.) Obv. Head of Hieron to left, diademed: border of dots. Rev. $\text{IEP}\Omega\text{NO}\Sigma$ Horseman advancing to right and holding spear; beneath, N.

We saw in the Introduction that for the first three centuries of numismatic art, no ruler however powerful, no conqueror however grandly crowned with success, ventured to place his likeness on coins, still dedicated by custom and tradition to the revered Greek deities. Neither mighty Philip, nor all-conquering Alexander, nor wealthy Croesus dared transgress this rule, and their copious issues show us Zeus, or Herakles or the twin-figured sacred emblem of an Asiatic godhead.

But with Alexander's death came a breaking down of all existing barriers, which was to affect even this religious practice, and among the Diadochoi appeared first the head of their now deified ruler and general, as in the issues of Lysimachos, and next the portraits of the kings themselves, as on the coins of Seleukos and Ptolemy. This change, however, did not for half a century influence the west, where even to such fierce tyrants as Agathokles and Hiktas the outward and acknowledged sign of Persephone's worship still remained sacred; and it was Hieron who, influenced doubtless by Roman religious skepticism, first ventured to place upon a Syracusan coin his portrait. For this innovation he selected, probably still from politic motives, his early and rare pieces of 32 litrai—which unfortunately cannot here be reproduced—and the contemporaneous bronze issues, an example of which is before us.

Even with every allowance for courtly idealization of the youthful king, we must recognize at once in this face a wise, gentle, refined, yet strong and noble nature; perforce many-sided in the changing fortunes of a long and varied career, which saw him general, legislator and constitutional king, the patron of artists, poets and builders, the companion and chosen brother of eastern monarchs, the eagerly sought ally of great powers; a firm friend, and in his early days of strife a dangerous foe.¹ Our almost certain, although, as we shall see later, not undisputed identification of this portrait with Hieron is partly determined by the reverse inscription $\text{IEP}\Omega\text{NO}\Sigma$.

HIERON II.

113. Piece of 8 litrai, wt. 107 grs. Period II, B. C. 263–216. (Pl. IX: 5.) Obv. Head of Gelon to left diademed; behind, club: border of dots. Rev. $\Sigma\text{YPAKO}\Sigma\text{IOI}$, $\Gamma\text{EA}\Omega\text{NO}\Sigma$ Biga to right drawn by winged Nike, horses prancing; in front, A and E: plain border.

114. Piece of 8 litrai, wt. 100 grs. Period II, B. C. 263–216. (Pl. IX: 6.) Obv. Similar to last. Rev. $\Sigma\text{YPAKO}\Sigma\text{IOI}$, $\Gamma\text{EA}\Omega\text{NO}\Sigma$ Similar to last, but horses walking, and above, $\text{A}\Phi$; in front, BA.

¹ Does not Theokritos, picturing the dread of the Carthaginians at the approach of the Syracusans, sing; "Among them, Hieron, like the mighty men of old, girds himself for fight, and the horse-hair crest is shading his helmet."

115. Piece of 4 litrai, wt. 51 grs. Period II, B. C. 263-216. (Pl. IX: 7.) Obv. Similar to last. Rev. $\Sigma\text{YPAKO}\Sigma\text{IOI}$, $\Gamma\text{E}\Lambda\Omega\text{NO}\Sigma$ Eagle standing to right on thunderbolt; in front, Φ ; behind, BA.

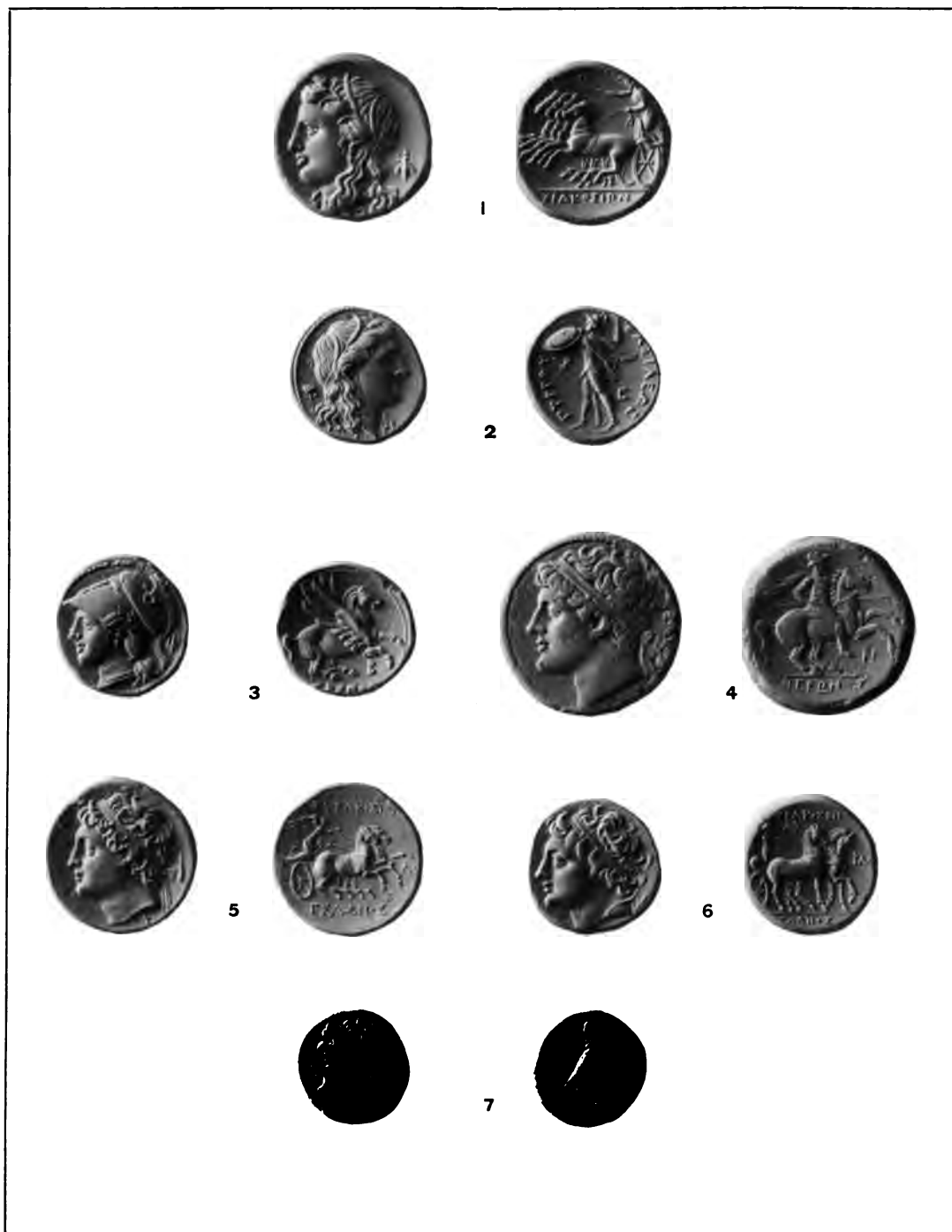
On these three examples of the comparatively copious issues of smaller denomination, Hieron's head and name no longer appear, but instead we find both portrait and inscription perpetuating the memory of an otherwise little-known personage. This was the only son of Hieron, Gelon by name, who, if portraiture can be trusted, was of the same admirable character as his father, and who was closely associated with him in the exercise of sovereignty. Hieron's indifference to the honors of his royal position, and his retiring nature would have prompted this sharing of the throne, and we can picture to ourselves his overwhelming sorrow at the son's premature death, which undoubtedly alone prevented a formal abdication on the part of the aged monarch long before his ninety years had run their course.

Just as Hieron concluded all treaties and alliances in the name of the Syracusan people, so the $\Sigma\text{YPAKO}\Sigma\text{IOI}$ occupy a prominent position on his coins, although by the use of the genitive for the son's name alone the actual kingship of the latter is made evident.

The biga and the eagle of these reverses are of course merely in imitation of earlier Syracusan types, suggesting references to distant agonistic triumphs or to the worship of Zeus, wielder of the thunderbolt.



Plate IX.



ANCIENT GREEK SILVER COINS FROM THE BENSON COLLECTION.



44

ANCIENT GREEK COINS

X
SYRACUSE, 6

BY
FRANK SHERMAN BENSON



PRIVATELY PRINTED
1902



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"THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NUMISMATICS."



ANCIENT GREEK COINS.

X. SYRACUSE, 6.



THE marked decadence, which during the third century before the Christian era was gradually permeating art, literature, religious belief and political institutions throughout the entire Greek world, finds abundant illustration in coin-types of the period. A growing weakness in design and treatment, and a servile yet far from successful imitation of compositions evolved in days of a truer and richer artistic spirit now characterize Syracusan coins; and our consequent disappointment is nowhere more acute than in the series which displays the head of Hieron's charming queen, whose clear-cut, classic profile would have at once animated a Euainetos or a Kimon with fresh inspiration for some immortal and world-delighting masterpiece.

HIERON II.

116. Piece of 16 litrai, wt. 209 grs. Period II, B. C. 263-216. (Pl. X : 1.) Obv. Head of Philistis to left, diademed and veiled; behind, flaming torch. Rev. $\text{BA}\xi\text{I}\Lambda\text{I}\xi\text{A}\xi$
 $\Phi\text{I}\Lambda\text{I}\xi\text{T}\text{I}\Delta\text{O}\xi$ Quadriga to right, driven by winged Nike, horses galloping; beneath, E.
 (From the Bunbury sale.)

117. Piece of 16 litrai, wt. 208 grs. Period II, B. C. 263-216. (Pl. X: 2.) Rev. $\text{BA}\xi\text{I}\Lambda\text{I}\xi\text{A}\xi\ \Phi\text{I}\Lambda\text{I}\xi\text{T}\text{I}\Delta\text{O}\xi$ Similar to last, but above horses, crescent; in front, $\text{KI}\xi$; and beneath, stalk of barley.

118. Piece of 5 litrai, wt. 69 grs. Period II, B. C. 263-216. (Pl. X: 3.) Obv. Similar to 116, but behind, palm-branch. Rev. $\text{BA}\xi\text{I}\Lambda\text{I}\xi\text{A}\xi\ \Phi\text{I}\Lambda\text{I}\xi\text{T}\text{I}\Delta\text{O}\xi$ Similar to 116, but in front, E.

Precisely how many decades of Hieron's long reign were shared by the noble and beautiful Philistis we have no means of knowing, but that he found in this queenly daughter of the royal house of Dionysios a suitable and dignified consort for his stately public ceremonials, as well as a warm-hearted and sympathetic partner for his private joys and sorrows, admits of no doubt in our minds, as we study these calm, serene, lovely features. Greek antiquity has many a tale of the warm friendship and equal companionship and mutual dependence between man and woman; and we may feel sure that both Hieron and the Syracusans owed much of their happiness and prosperity to this gracious presence on the consort throne.

But alas, we must here do more than "put ourselves in the place of the artist and try to gather his thought and intention." We must, as well, imagine him gifted with the skill in design, with the strength and accuracy of touch so peculiarly characteristic of that group of master engravers who flourished in the latter half of the fifth century. Then indeed could we rightly echo the words of one of our most charming writers (not himself a numismatist) on Sicilian affairs: "Of all the beautiful heads which we find upon the gold and silver coins of Sicily, and there are many, none can compare with that of Hieron's queen. One may fancy that Helen of Troy had such a face, or Semiramis, or divine Athene herself, but it is hard to believe that so fair a woman ever lived."

It was my good fortune, when wandering once in the ancient theatre of the Syracusans, where so often for swiftly fleeting hours the rich sonorous lines of their adored Euripides must have entranced a sympathetic audience,

to come upon a stone-hewn seat, unnoted by red-bound guide book. Rising in the place of highest honor, and evidently devoted to the use of some distinguished personage, it bore the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣΑΣ ΦΙΛΙΣΤΙΔΟΣ, so familiar to the coin student. Thus in these two most dissimilar and yet alike least perishable of earthly memorials, chiselled rock and beaten metal, have the love and pride and admiration of good king Hieron been preserved to us.

The queen's style of wearing her veil drawn close around the head appears also on a small terra-cotta bust of about this period, in my possession, and the tenacity with which in remote parts of Europe old customs survive, is shown by the exact reproduction of this fashion among the lower classes of the present day, in Syracuse and adjacent portions of Sicily; a light shawl, however, being now substituted for the veil.

The similarity in coin-design between this head of Philistis and that of Arsinoë, a contemporary queen of the Ptolemaic line, is but another indication of those bonds of kinship and friendship which at that time so closely connected Sicily and Egypt.

The crescent poised over the weak quadriga-scheme probably symbolizes Philistis in her character of divine Artemis, while the abbreviation ΚΙΣ may stand for ΚΑΙ ΙΕΡΩΝΟΣ ΞΥΡΑΚΟΣΙΟΥ, to signify that the issue was not wholly that of Queen Philistis, but belonged as well to "Hieron the Syracusan."

We must now take one more glimpse of this wise and gracious king at the summit of his glory, when his dominion was at its greatest extent, and when the beneficial effects of a peaceful rule were already showing themselves.

After the year 241 B. C., at the conclusion of that first Punic war which resulted in the undisputed conquest of all Sicily by the Romans, Hieron, always their firm ally, was the only independent ruler left by the conquerors in the island. Without interference, yet always under the suzerainty of Rome, he continued to exercise supreme power over the entire east coast, as well as over many of the adjacent inland towns; a territory of such size and importance as to seem deserving of a special coin-issue; a small one, however, to judge from the great rarity of extant examples.

HIERON II.

119. Piece of 8 litrai, wt. 105 grs. Period II, *circa* B. C. 241. (Pl. X: 4.) Obv. Head of Demeter to left, veiled and wearing wreath of barley-leaves; behind, leaf. Rev. Σ IKΕΛΙΩΤΑΝ Quadriga to right driven by winged Nike, horses prancing; above, monogram ΙΞ.

The choice of the mature goddess Demeter, whose worship was general throughout the island, in preference to the maiden Persephone, a type always more distinctively associated with Syracuse, would doubtless propitiate and join as by a common bond Hieron's subjects throughout his entire dominion. So, too, the inscription "Of the Sikeliots" would appeal to the national pride of the Sicilian Greeks, always, as we should remember, distinguished by this title from the aboriginal Sikans and Sikels.

The monogram probably denotes, as before, Hieron the Syracusan, and from the extremely rude and careless workmanship displayed in this issue, we may infer that it was intended for circulation not in the ruling city but among the smaller towns where less attention would be paid to artistic merit.

As has been the case with so many wise and good men, Hieron's closing years were embittered by the death of those dearest to him, and by domestic strife among his surviving relatives. Nor could even fifteen appointed guardians restrain the pride, pretension and arrogance of his grandson Hieronymos who, succeeding in 216 B. C., by an immediate assumption of all the attributes of absolute monarchy disclosed his determined will to rule not as a constitutional king, but as a genuine tyrant. This youth's career of weakness, vacillation, cruelty and excess, his desertion of Rome, alliance with Carthage, and alternate treachery towards both, found a righteous punishment in his assassination after less than two years of sovereignty.

HIERONYMOS.

120 and 121. Pieces of 24 and 10 litrai, wts. 313 and 131 grs. B. C. 216-215. (Pl. X: 5 and 6.) Obv. Head of Hieronymos to left, diademed; border of dots. Rev. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΙΕΡΩΝΥΜΟΥ Thunderbolt; above, ΜΙ and ΞΑ.

(The former from the Montagu sale.)

Not all the skill of a flattering coin-artist can dignify the weak, yet cunning lines of this face ; while Hieronymos' assumption of omnipotence as the wielder of the thunderbolt of mighty Zeus, forms an amusing if pitiable commentary upon the vanity and uncertainty of human power.

There can be no manner of doubt as to this portrait's identification, which is in full accord with the inscription. Such a concurrence, together with the first general appearance, shortly before that time, of royal portrait heads throughout the rest of the Greek world (No. 112), would seem to show the entire fallacy of a rival theory, even when advanced by so great an authority as Dr. Imhoof-Blumer. This scholar sees in the heads of the $\text{IEP}\Omega\text{NO}\Sigma$ and $\text{ΓE}\Lambda\Omega\text{NO}\Sigma$ type (Nos. 112-115) idealized representations of the Hieron and Gelon of the early fifth century, and considers the portrait series of Philistis a similar attempt to imagine and depict the features of Queen Damareta (Nos. 67 and 68).

The violent death of Hieronymos, while at Leontinoi, was followed, immediately on the arrival of his assassins at Syracuse, by a public assembly, the hurried establishment of a democracy, and the commission of one of those atrocious massacres which have so often stained the annals of popular government. Every descendant of good King Hieron,—and all were of the tender sex,—was brutally slain in cold blood ; even the innocent young girls who fled shrieking from the butcher's knife, being remorselessly hunted into corners like dangerous wild beasts.

A government thus horribly inaugurated could possess little stability, and the next three years form a tale of confusion worse confounded, of violent changes, constant uncertainties, and incessant struggles, as yet unequalled even in this city of varying fortunes. It were useless to dwell upon the long-doubtful conflict waged between the Roman and Carthaginian sympathizers to secure supremacy in the civil and military councils. We need only note that the decision, forced to an issue by the gradual approach of Marcellus at the head of his Roman legionaries, was at last given in favor of Carthage, owing to the specious arguments and generous promises of the Punic envoys. And Marcellus, now encamped before the city, at once began the great siege, in

the magnitude and finality of its results the most decisive of the many which Syracuse has undergone at the hand of Carthaginian, Athenian, Sikeliot, Roman and Saracen.

And surely never was city in a more perilous strait. Within the walls doubt, dissension, divided councils and a half-hearted defence; without and around, the ever-watchful, ever-victorious, and world-subduing legions, under the command of one whose brilliant campaigns against Hannibal had gained for him the title "Sword of Rome." The fall of Syracuse must indeed have seemed a question of days, or at most of weeks.

But by the unparalleled genius and patriotic self-devotion of one great man this seemingly feeble defence was prolonged for more than two years, and in the same way that the Spartan Gylippos single-handed really revived and saved Syracuse when sinking beneath Athenian invasion, so we may feel that it was the aged Archimedes alone who by his wonderful mechanical skill thus long baffled the power and craft of Rome. The usual military engines of the besiegers were made powerless and even dangerous to themselves by the great mathematician's wonderful counter-inventions; vast wooden arms which sank the Roman vessels, when near at hand, with huge blocks of stone or lead, and a burning mirror which set them on fire at a distance; ponderous iron hands which, like ominous birds of prey, swooping down upon the soldiers eagerly pressing onward to an assault, would seize a group of the foremost, raise them to a dizzy height and then dash them to the rocks below; powerful, long-range catapults of wonderful precision, and in the walls new and improved loop-holes which protected the defenders and made more easy and secure their aim. Indeed with such terror did these and similar devices inspire even the hardy Roman veterans, that Marcellus was compelled to abandon his plan of speedy capture by assault, and to enter upon a slow and tedious blockade.

We can only touch upon the successive complications of these two years; an attempted relief by the Carthaginian fleet, a destroying pestilence—the usual accompaniment of sieges in those early days,—occasional defeats and apparent discouragement of the besiegers, with a consequent increase of con-

fidence on the part of the besieged. But the end was now near at hand, for while the inhabitants wrapped in a false security, were celebrating one of their numerous religious festivals, suddenly an unguarded part of the wall was stormed and an entire quarter seized. The capture, sack, and desolation of all Syracuse were now natural and unavoidable consequences.

It was during these years of fierce or passive struggle that the following coins were struck.

DEMOCRACY.

122. Piece of 8 litrai, wt. 105 grs. B. C. 215-212. (Pl. X: 7.) Obv. Head of Pallas to left, wearing crested Corinthian helmet. Rev. Σ YPAKO Σ ION Thunderbolt; beneath, YA Σ .

123. Piece of 12 litrai, wt. 153 grs. B. C. 215-212. (Pl. X: 8.) Obv. Head of Pallas to left, wearing crested Corinthian helmet. Rev. Σ YPAKO Σ ION Artemis standing to left, discharging arrow from bow; at her feet, hound running to left; in front, XAP.

The well-known type of a Pallas head has not appeared on Syracusan coinage for more than a century; not in fact since the time of Timoleon (No. 101) a return to whose glorious days of freedom this coin revival was doubtless intended to symbolize and foreshadow. But the second reverse design, as an entirely new and strange one, claims our more extended attention.

We have seen that in the fine, strong periods of coin-art no type ever resulted from an attempted imitation of sculpture, either in the round or in relief. At most his motive may have been suggested to the die-sinker by some contemporaneous work of art; but more commonly the same subtle, artistic influences must have produced the full-size figure in its noble representation of ideal life, and the diminutive but no less perfect coin bas-relief destined to far humbler every-day uses. But with the progress of decadence came a marked change, whose painful loss to the artist finds some compensation in its distinct gain to the archaeologist. For as the productive power weakened, the imitative became stronger, and coins of the centuries now opening display many actual and self-confessed art copies. Weak and dis-



torted as these imitations often seem, they are always more or less helpful in their reproduction or suggestion of many statues, temples and monuments, which have perhaps survived not at all or only in such fragmentary and scattered remains as would have defied any successful attempt at reconstruction without these very coin pictures.

Thus this figure on our second reverse, with its attributes, is evidently a copy of some well-known, though now unidentified Sicilian statue of the war-like goddess of the chase; and one may almost imagine a vainly propitiatory attempt to avert impending doom by thus dedicating the coin to Artemis. For was it not the celebration of this deity's two-day festival which caused such unrestrained indulgence among the Syracusans, and such consequent carelessness of watch and ward as to give the vigilant Romans their first foothold in our heretofore impregnable city?

DEMOCRACY.

124. Piece of 8 litrai, wt. 105 grs. B. C. 215-212. (Pl. X: 9.) Obv. Head of Persephone to left, wearing wreath of barley-leaves, single pendant ear-ring, and necklace of pearls; behind, bee. Rev. Σ ΥΡΑΚΟ Ξ ΙΩΝ Quadriga to left, driven by winged Nike, bearing filleted olive-branch, horses walking; above, ΑΙ, ΑΥ, and in front, uncertain monogram AP.

This most interesting, and as far as the writer has been able to discover, unique specimen evidently models its types closely upon the Hiketas obverse, No. 109, and a Queen Philistis reverse in which the horses are walking.

The filleted branch of laurel borne aloft by Nike clearly marks the issue as symbolical of some especially noteworthy achievement. But whether the coin was struck by the Syracusans in triumphant celebration of the downfall of their youthful tyrant's house, and the establishment of a free government, or later to perpetuate the joyous revulsion of feeling which must have followed the first complete though temporary discomfiture of the Roman besiegers, it is impossible exactly to determine. Had any solution yet been suggested for the various initials and monograms of this brief period, their certain identi-