BRIEF MUSINGS ON THE EXURGAT MONEY.

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It is, probably, trite to observe that, of all the legends that have adorned the moneys of our own or any other nation, there is none with a history so illustrious, or with associations so varied and deeply interesting as,

EXURGAT DEVS DISSIPENTVR INIMICI.

It is the exordium of the 68th Psalm, that great Pentecostal hymn which from time immemorial has been accepted by the entire Western Church as especially appropriate to Whit Sunday. But ages before the Christian era it was the national anthem of the Jews when they were fighting their way to the Promised Land; for we read in the Book of Numbers (10 ch., v. 35), “And it came to pass when the Ark set forward that Moses said, ‘Rise up, Lord! and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee!’” “I cannot doubt,” says Calvin, “that Moses dictated this form of prayer for all ages, in order that the faithful, relying on the Ark of the Covenant as the visible symbol of God’s presence, might rest sure that they would be safe.”

For centuries it has been, as it still is, a war-cry. Thus on one occasion good St. Anthony for hours wrestled in his ruined tower with his spiritual foes, physically real to him though unseen by anyone else, and when at last he felt he had achieved the victory, his sonorous voice was heard exclaiming with exultation, “Exurgat Deus dissipentur inimici.” So, as the morning sun arose on the 3rd September, 1650, on
the stricken field of Dunbar where, over greatly superior numbers, Cromwell defeated Leslie and accomplished the subjugation of the Scotch Royalists, the rout was urged by Cromwell's cry of triumph, "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered." So, when Napoleon was driven from Moscow by the flames and commenced that retreat which proved so disastrous, a service of thanksgiving was held in the cathedral of the Kremlin, when the Metropolitan of Moscow gave as the text of his sermon to the vast congregation of Russians there assembled, "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered."

The history of the use of the Exurgat legend on our money associates itself with the great conflict between Protestantism and the Papacy in the sixteenth century, and with our modern (as distinguished from the early) English psalter. Thomas Sternhold, groom of the robes to Henry VIII., was, probably, inspired to what we now call the Old Metrical English version of the Psalms (Sternhold and Hopkins) by the success of Clement Marot, valet of the bed-chamber to Francis I., who originated the French metrical psalter. The use of these metrical versions became in those days a symbol of Protestantism, whilst Beza's version of the 68th Psalm, and especially its opening stanza,

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\begin{align*}
&\text{Que Dieu se monstre seulement,} \\
&\text{Et on verra soudainement} \\
&\text{Abandonner la place} \\
&\text{Le camp des ennemis espars,} \\
&\text{Et ses haïneux, de toutes pars,} \\
&\text{Fuir devant sa face,}
\end{align*}
\]

became the war-cry of the Huguenots. Many a successful battle was fought by those sturdy French Protestants to the animating strains of "Let God arise!"

It was a vitalizing cry when James I. ascended the English throne, and in that sense, I suggest, he adopted it as a legend on his first issue of gold and silver money (1603-4); but, so far as I know, and hereon I invite correction, he only used it for the coinage on that one occasion. Nor (so far as I can find) was it adopted by Charles I. until his conflict with his Parliament became acute. Then the need for a popular war-cry arose. At the Privy Council at Wellington on
The Declaration of 1642.

the 19th September, 1642, Charles had made a declaration that he would support the Protestant religion, the Laws of England, and the just Privileges of Parliament. Shortly after that Council came the issue of the Exurgat money.

As I look on this representation of the £3 piece (1643) of the early days of the Oxford Mint, I muse on it with varied emotions. To me it conjures up our beloved England in a tragic crisis such as it has never since known, a country torn and distracted, brother against brother, the Parliament men in possession of London, and the King exercising his great prerogative of coining money away from his capital from which he had fled. Like modern political chieftains in search of a "cry," the King and his Council, with anxious brain and heart, determined to embody the royal appeal to the people in the money which the people would handle. Hence arose "The Declaration," technically so called,

RELIG · PROT : LEG · ANG : LIBER · PAR.

Thus the new money, which on its obverse represented the King in royal vesture with the Sword of Royal Rule in his extended right hand and the Olive Branch of Peace in his reserved left hand, expressed on its reverse the kingly principles enunciated at Wellington, and round all these ran the Huguenot war-cry, "Exurgat Deus, dissipetur inimici!"

So men have ever thought or claimed, that the God of Battles is
Brief Musings on the Exurgat Money.

there's. But how can even Almighty God give victory to both sides when these two are closed in a death struggle? I leave that question to your musings.

Certainly Charles's claim to the Divine favour did in no way diminish the ardour of the Parliament men, and conspicuously Cromwell claimed, almost as vehemently as did Joan of Arc, that God was on the side of the Parliament in general and of himself in particular. And here let me illustrate a Commonwealth crown of 1649. The execution of Charles at Whitehall had just been accomplished, and new money impressed with a new authorization had to be issued. On this the country had the Parliamentary counter-blast to Charles's

Exurgat; for the legend on the reverse of the Commonwealth money is, in plain English, GOD WITH VS—the divine favour for Cromwell and the Parliament being claimed in the most absolute way, "God has been, is, and will be, with us."

"God with us" of the Commonwealth was, and hereon I again invite correction, the last time that our money claimed the peculiar friendship of God. It got weakened down to the PAX QUÆRITUR BELLO of the (probably unissued) money of Cromwell, and to the FLORENT CONCORDIA REGNA and CHRISTO AUSPICE REGNO of the Restoration. Then our money gradually ceased to be legendary, till, on one of the florins of Queen Victoria, even the "D.G." was discontinued, an omission so distasteful to the public

**SILVER CROWN OF THE COMMONWEALTH.**
as to earn for it the sobriquet of "the Godless Florin" to this day.

But though we no longer use the Exurgat legend on our money, we still keep up the Mosaic rule and retain it in our National Anthem, one stanza of which runs,

Oh Lord! our God arise!
Scatter his enemies,
And make them fall!

Yet I have observed that that stanza is frequently omitted when popular assemblies are called on to join in "God save the King." England, though still young and lusty and strongly developing her great Empire, has grown old in experience, and has laid and is laying to heart the old saying, "God helps those who help themselves"; and whilst we claim that our navy and army must lack nothing, still, as a nation and as men, it is permissible for us, in the spirit of Him whose Exurgat Triumphal Hymn we sing at Pentecost, to pray, "O God, arise! May we have no enemies except those that are Thine."
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Pl. I.