REVIEWS.¹

*The Nineteenth Century Token Coinage*, by W. J. Davis. 328 pages, quarto, half Roxburgh. Dryden Press: Spink and Son, Simmons and Waters, etc. £2 2s. od.

We welcome this handsome and well illustrated volume from the pen of the author of *The Token Coinage of Warwickshire* as likely to be accepted as the standard work for years to come on the subject matter treated. The contents are thoroughly comprehensive, for, as the advertisement tells us, they are the token coinage of Great Britain, Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man issued during the nineteenth century, in gold, silver, copper, lead and other metals. There is also a record of the tokens exceeding the value of a penny of any period, and a full account is given of the Irish tokens issued from 1728 to 1760. Finally there are historical and descriptive notes of the coinages and their issuers.

The Introduction, extending as it does through some forty pages, is worthy of the close attention, not only of those specially interested in our traders' issues, but also of all who study the cause and effect of the currency in relation to the necessities of commerce, for it contains much that is new, and more that is looked upon from a fresh standpoint. We are told that like siege-pieces, tokens were money of necessity, namely, for the purposes of small change, but many of us will be surprised to hear that some traders made as much as thirty per cent. profit from their issue. In this relation the author's account of the 'Bank tokens' is of special interest.

The origin of a token-coinage dates back to the times of Elizabeth when its abuse became the subject of frequent complaints.

¹ Publishers and others forwarding works for review will oblige by stating price.
Since then it has come and gone amongst us, at one time flourishing in its millions, at another, suppressed and dormant, to be finally prohibited by an Act of Parliament in 1817.

Mr. Davis has arranged his work in the following order:—The various issues of the Banks of England and Ireland. Countermarked tokens. The like of private bankers and others arranged under the various counties in Great Britain and Ireland. The general class of tokens, similarly arranged, which forms the bulk of the volume. Finally, three Indices, namely, topographical, personal and general.

We cannot attempt to follow Mr. Davis critically throughout a book of reference such as this undoubtedly is, but his biographical notices are both readable and valuable, as also are his cuttings from contemporary newspapers, which are often entertaining yet always to the point. In our opinion he has steered a happy medium course between the enthusiast who too often seeks for fresh dies in but worn or "jumped" pieces, and the collector who is content to limit his varieties to the clearly defined changes of legend or device. A work of this magnitude must have its faults of both commission and omission. For example, of the former we do not like the term "a modern copy of good workmanship" on page 129, to describe a clever forgery, nor the same word "copy" applied to similar imitations of the Birmingham sixpence, one of which, we remember, realized twenty guineas at a sale by auction, which would scarcely be expected of a "copy."

Nor do we quite agree with Mr. Davis's use of the much discussed term "Private token," a term by the way not indexed. In our view a private token was much in the nature of a private medal, though in the form of a token, and its essential distinction was that it was not intended to pass current as change. Mr. Davis however for example on p. 74, includes the token of Robert Orchard of "No. 34, Greek Street," London, as currency, and explains that he does so on the authority of the issuer's own advertisement, namely, "A list of the cabinets who have in their possession the penny token issued by me, Robert Orchard," etc. Surely this alone is presumptive evidence that
The token was never intended as a circulating medium of commerce; indeed the "cabinets," with Shakespeare, might well say

"Whence came this?
This is some token from a newer friend."

The edition is limited to two hundred and fifty-eight copies. It contains thirty-three excellent plates, and altogether is better value for its money than even the tokens were that it so carefully describes.

The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Numismatic Society, 1903. Quaritch, London, 20s. (issued in four quarterly numbers at 5s. each, 8vo, paper covers).

Amongst the papers contributed to this time-honoured Journal are four relating to British Numismatics and several miscellaneous notes. These we will treat in their order.

The Coinage of William Wood, 1722-1733, by Philip Nelson, M.D. In this paper of twenty-three pages Dr. Nelson commences the story of William Wood and his coinage in Ireland and the American Colonies, which he has since so carefully revised and extended in The Coinage of Ireland in Copper, Tin and Pewter, and in The Coinage of William Wood for the American Colonies within these pages. The paper now in review therefore forms the nucleus of a work which we believe will for a long time to come be accepted as the standard authority on those two sections of the copper coinage.

A Find of Silver Coins at Colchester, by H. A. Grueber, F.S.A. This is the detailed account of the famous find of "short cross" pennies at Colchester in July, 1902, and the sixty-six pages occupied by it could scarcely be better filled. We need not here repeat the general particulars of the hoard and its discovery, as these have already appeared in this volume, but may pass on to the more salient points. In the marshalling of the facts and materials furnished by a great find of early coins Mr. Grueber appears at his best, and his account of the Colchester hoard is almost everything we could desire. We say "almost" because of the total omission to record the weight either of the whole, or of a section, or even of a single

1 See pp. 32-47, 58 and 113-122.
piece throughout; an omission which has already caused one of our contributors considerable trouble and uncertainty. Curiously enough this is a fault by no means confined to Mr. Grueber, but which equally applies to all those who have written upon the hoards of these coins, with the solitary exception of one who, with an ingenious ambiguity, speaks of "about 21 lbs. avoirdupois."

After describing the actual discovery Mr. Grueber compares the 10,926 silver pennies of the reigns of Henry II., Richard I., John and Henry III., including some Scottish, Irish, foreign and three of an early period, examined by him, with our previous great hoards, and points to the fact that only in one instance, namely, by the Tutbury find of Edwardian pennies in 1831, have the numbers been exceeded. He then takes a leaf from the paper in the 1897 volume of the same Chronicle by Mr. Lawrence on the French find of short-cross pennies, a leaf by the way which he should have acknowledged, and carefully compares the numbers of coins of each mint with those of the same mints in the Eccles find of 1864 which comprised 6,217 pieces. "The Colchester hoard," he tells us, "practically adds but little to what is already known of English Numismatics during the period over which the short-cross series extended." Adopting the arrangement of Sir John Evans in 1865, in which the latter divided the series into five classes, Mr. Grueber very sensibly repeats the distinctions which we may shortly summarize as follows:—

Class I (1180-1189).—Large, well spread coins, workmanship good in slight relief. Head slightly inclined to left, five pearls in the crown, usually two curves to the left and five to the right of the head. Dots often between the words. The letter A is rarely barred except at the apex, the central uprights of the W usually cross each other, and in the earlier examples the square E and E appear.

Class II (1189-1208).—Rather reduced in size and in less relief, workmanship coarse. Row of more than five pearls in the crown. Head full-faced, eyes sometimes represented by annulets or pellets and the beard by pellets or small

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1 See p. 46.  
2 Num. Chron., 1897, pp. 235-244.
crescents, curls from one to five, but generally equal in number, on either side of the head. The A as Class I.

Class III (1208-1216).—Smaller, of neat workmanship and good relief. Face long and narrowing to the chin where the beard is always pointed and formed of straight strokes. The curls are always two on either side the head, each enclosing a pellet. The letters are sometimes in monogram, and sometimes terminate in ornamental curves. Stops often occur, and on some examples the cross-pommée mint mark appears; on these the letter S is often reversed.

Class IV (1216-1222).—Bust similar but more than two curls on one or both sides of the head though rarely exceeding three. Letters and the cross-pommée mint mark as in Class III.

Class V (1222-1248).—Still smaller, though neat the workmanship is inferior and the striking careless. The bust is lower in the inner circle. In the later examples the chin disappears and the beard and face broaden. The curls are usually three, though sometimes only two, on either side the head and formed of crescents enclosing pellets. Stops are interspersed, even occasionally in the midst of a word.

It will be noticed that to each class we have added the dates as given by Mr. Grueber, in which "with a slight modification" he has also followed Sir John Evans. But one of these dates, namely 1208, for the commencement of Class III, comprising what are usually known as King John's coins, should we think have been corrected ere this, for in 1887 and again in 1901 we had called attention in the pages of the same Chronicle to a conclusive passage in the contemporary history of John de Taxter, a monk of Bury St. Edmonds, viz., "1205 . . . . The money issued long before, in the year 1158, was this year re-coined." In fact, in this one sentence lies the key to the whole short-cross question.

Continuing, Mr. Grueber gives us a complete list of the reverse readings, with the number of specimens to each variation of the coins in the hoard, the result, no doubt, of close and laborious study. He then tabulates the names of the moneyers of the various mints under
the five classes above mentioned, adding those known to Sir John Evans in 1865, but which were not present in the Colchester find, and also the names which he states are new. In this respect, however, it is unfortunate that he has again forgotten to refer to Mr. Lawrence's paper in the 1897 Chronicle, for on the one hand Mr. Grueber's list is, therefore, far from complete, and on the other many of the names of the moneyers which he marks as new, have already appeared in the very similar lists of nearly six hundred coins given by Mr. Lawrence.

Mr. Grueber then contributes a very interesting and lucid account of the history of the coinage, and of the mints disclosed on the coins of the find. In this section, whilst agreeing with the accepted attribution of the Rhuddlan coins, he astonishes us with the remarks, "The attribution of coins to this mint has always been considered uncertain as there are no records on which to rely," and, "Taking these points into consideration I think these coins with RVLA and RVLAN may with every probability be attributed to Rhuddlan; and the absence of any record of a grant of a mint to the place is due to the exigencies under which the coins were struck." The italics are ours, for in that great record of records, Domesday, unusually full details of the mint at Rhuddlan and its firma are clearly set forth. Under Worcester he makes a similar mistake, namely, that "no mention is made of the mint in the survey of 1086;" yet in the reference to Henry I., Num. Chron. 1901, p. 474, which he quotes at the close of the paragraph, we devoted more than a page to what the survey tells us about the mint of Worcester.

Finally he has a suggestion for the cause of the hiding of this treasure which, however, has already been discussed in these pages, and to which we think he really attaches no more than passing importance.

We have reviewed this paper at some length because of its sterling value to early English numismatics. It is true that we have pointed out some few corrections which appear to us to be required lest serious errors should be perpetuated by frequent repetition; but these only have we criticised, for amongst so much that is good what matters it if here and there a slip occur?
The Gold Coinage of the reign of Henry VI., by Frederick A. Walters, F.S.A., pp. 286-310. In this we have a paper of much interest to students of British numismatics. The writer's method of treating the mint accounts and comparing with them the abundance or rarity of the various issues is an original step towards bringing the coins and the documents referring to them into line. Perhaps, as Mr. Lawrence reminds us, the really most important feature of the paper is the recognition of the true annulet coinage which was previously confused with that of the trefoil, because of its trefoil stops. Mr. Walters also attempts to differentiate in the various coinages the pieces struck at Calais. This he does by reference to the flag at the stern of the ship, and he attributes all nobles and half nobles bearing it to Calais. The suggestion had been made before, but he may at least claim priority for its publication. The obvious objection to the idea is that no flag appears on the quarter nobles, which do not, therefore, fall into line with the other two denominations of gold coins. Mr. Walters, himself, remarks on the want of any explanation which might account for the absence of the initial a for Calais on the reverse of the coins and the retention of ð for Henry. In the same way that he attributes the flag-marked coins to Calais he brings forward the theory that the fleur-de-lys at the stern of the ship on the nobles and half-nobles, and the lys at the sides of the shield on the quarter nobles, probably mark coins struck at the York mint by Bartholomew Goldbeter. There is here merely the analogy of Calais coupled with the use of the lys on certain silver coins of the same city to support this view, as no gold coins of this time have ever been assigned to York. He perhaps rather weakens his case both for Calais and York, by supposing that the lys when appearing in duplicate above the shield represents the Calais coinage of quarter nobles, and when single in the same position the London mint. The subsequent coinages are all carefully and historically treated. The writer is to be congratulated on the result as still another step forward in the elucidation of the Plantagenet series.


On August 25th, 1902, during excavations for the borough
drainage near Cornstall Buildings, St. Leonard’s Street, Stamford, a
vessel containing a small hoard of silver coins of the time of Alfred
the Great was unearthed. The police secured as many of the coins
as possible, and after the coroner had declared the coins to be
treasure-trove they were forwarded to the Treasury and thence to
the British Museum. This is the substance of the story Mr. Grueber
has to tell us. Like Rob Roy, a writer is not always at his best,
and Mr. Grueber by no means shows the same mastery of his subject
which ran through his review of the Colchester hoard. This is one
of the most important finds of the coins of the time of Alfred the
Great; it discloses an entirely new type, nearly every coin is a study
in itself, and yet the paltry eight or nine pages devoted to its
exposition are so casually worded that few who read them will realise
that it contained anything but what was to be expected in a find of
the period. On the principle that much would have more, he seems
to attach an exaggerated importance to the fact that the Museum did
not get all the hoard, but believes that “three or four halfpennies” and
“six or seven pennies” passed into private hands. Then he tells us
that “the shilling of George III., though found during the course of
digging the trenches for the drainage, was probably not part of the
hoard. It was of the ordinary type of 1817”; also “a Roman coin
and a sixpence of Elizabeth, like the shilling of George III., may
have been dug up elsewhere.” To this we might add that the
workman who discovered them also “may” not have been, and as Mr.
Grueber tells us that his name was John Brown, we may even say he
“probably” was not contemporary with King Alfred.

Mr. Grueber then describes the fourteen coins which passed into
the Museum. Of these one is a half-denier of Charles the Bald,
A.D. 840-877, and the remainder comprise nine pennies and four
halfpennies of King Alfred the Great, or Danish imitations of his
coinage. We are pleased to note that on this occasion he is careful to
record the weight of every coin to a decimal. The following is a
summary of his descriptions:—

1 We assume that the jury determined the facts.
ALFRED THE GREAT.

Penny.

1. Obverse.—EL FR ED RE small cross pattée.
   Reverse.—ERE REE monogram (Herebert?); above LIII; below E-O II A
   (Lincoln) Lincoln, 18'5 grs.

2. Obverse.—ÆLF REDR. Bust to right.
   Reverse.—Monogram (Londonia); above and below four pellets.
   London, 21'6 grs.

3. Obverse.—ÆÆÆÆÆR EDRE. Bust rude.
   Reverse.—Similar to No. 2 but six pellets in the O of the monogram.
   21'6 grs.

4. Obverse.—ÆÆÆÆÆER ED RE. Bust rude.
   Reverse.—Similar to No. 2 but three pellets in the D of the monogram.
   and no pellets below. 17'5 grs.

5. Obverse.—TEL VVIN. Bust to right, rude work, head bound with diadem.
   Reverse.—Similar to No. 2, but a pyramid of six pellets below. 12'4 grs.

6. Obverse.—EL FR ED REX, small cross pattée.
   Reverse.—A NNEG (uncertain) 13'5 grs.

7. Obverse.—XE FR ED RY, similar.
   Reverse.—LIERL (uncertain) 17'7 grs.

8. Obverse.—EL FR ED REX, similar.
   Reverse.—LVDIG 19'8 grs.

9. Obverse.—As No. 8.
   Reverse.—+ 16'8 grs.

Halfpennies.

10. Obverse.—EL FR ED RE, small cross pattée.
    Reverse.—ÆÆÆÆÆÆ; above, TIL; below, VVN. 7'7 grs.¹

11. Similar 6'8 grs.

12. Obverse.—EL FR ED RE, small cross pattée.
    Reverse.—TILE 8'6 grs.

13. Obverse.—ÆÆÆÆÆÆÆÆLE, similar.
    Reverse.—ÆÆÆÆÆÆ£ 8'8 grs.
    ÆHÆH

In the above list, however, we have redescribed the reverse of
¹ This is our own description from the woodcut.
No. 10 because, in our opinion, Mr. Grueber has viewed the coin sideways in his reading, with the result that the three last letters of the moneyer's name read outwardly, i.e., from the coin; whereas by our method the coin follows the invariable rule of the class, namely, half of the moneyer's name above and half below the device.

Of this coin and No. 11 he says:

Perhaps the most interesting pieces in the hoard are the two halfpennies which have for reverse type the monogram \( \alpha \) and \( \omega \) (\textit{alpha} and \textit{omega}). We meet with these letters as types of coins in more than one form on English coins of the tenth (sic) century. On coins of Aethelstan I. of East Anglia we have the \( \alpha \) for the obverse type and the \( \omega \) for the reverse; on others of Ceolwulf I. and Berhtulf of Mercia these letters are placed in monogram \( \alpha \omega \) the \( \omega \) being below the \( \alpha \). This type was copied by Ecgberht. The new type of Alfred varies from them in having the \( \omega \) placed above the \( \alpha \), and thus forming what in Merovingian coinage would be called a \textit{croix ancrée fourchée}. It is not impossible that the Merovingian \textit{croix ancrée} suggested the design to Alfred's moneyer, but this precise combination does not occur on the Merovingian money.

Nor should we expect it to so occur. Mr. Grueber, probably because in much later times the \textit{alpha} and \textit{omega} appeared in conjunction with the Hand of Providence on a type of Aethelred II., takes it for granted that the device under discussion also represents those symbols, and therefore he assumes that the \( \omega [M] \) is \( \omega [\text{omega}] \). But we would suggest a much simpler explanation, and thus avoid entering into so abstruse a problem as the particular heraldic combination of the \textit{croix ancrée fourchée} borne on the Merovingian shields in the ninth century. Taking his own instances in their order, Aethelstan I. was king of East Anglia, and uses the title REX AN on some of his coins. Therefore the \( \pi \) in the central device no doubt also stands for Anglia. But the particular coin bearing both letters, viz., \( \pi \) and \( \omega \), is by Hawkins, and we think rightly, assigned to Aethelstan II. of East Anglia, the Danish Guthrum and contemporary of Alfred, whose kingdom extended over the whole of Mercia north and east of the Watling Street. Hence the Anglian \( \pi \) on the obverse and the \( \omega \) for
Mercia on the reverse of his coins. Ceolwulf I. and Berhtulf were Kings of Mercia and East Anglia, and therefore they used the device of χ.σ. in monogram. When Ecgberht acquired the crowns of Mercia and East Anglia he too copied the type.

Finally when, at the close of the ninth century, the Danes were so firmly established in East Anglia and Mercia north and east of the Watling Street as to have a coinage of their own, they issued this new type in imitation of Alfred’s money so that it would pass current, not only in their own dominion but throughout all Saxon England, and reproduced upon it the symbol of the joint kingdom of Mercia and East Anglia, and at the same time that of their own King Guthrum-Athelstan, viz. χ.τ.

The rest also of Mr. Grueber’s paper we cannot accept, but it has already been analysed under “Buried Treasure” in these pages,¹ and this is not the place for us to rewrite the account of the remarkable Stamford Find.

Of the miscellaneous papers, perhaps the most curious is the Errata by G. C. Crump and C. Johnson, p. 99, of five corrections to their paper of five pages in the previous volume of the same Chronicle, which commenced,

The relation of numismatics to other branches of historical study has always been a peculiar one. Trained historians have rarely found time or energy to master its details; and trained numismatists have been prone to content themselves with a slender historical equipment.

The above has, however, escaped the Errata and is allowed to remain. The situation is not without its humour. Whether it is true or it is not true it can only refer to the Numismatic Chronicle which published it; for that periodical then alone held the field. If it is true, why publish it? If it is not true, why publish it? Why not “errat” it with the rest, for the sad picture of our grave contemporary still doing penance at the Gates of Albemarle clad in five white sheets of its own pages, suggests a very “slender equipment” indeed?

¹ See pp. 19–21.
Reviews.


This is a useful handbook to the coins of Oxford from the reign of Athelstan to that of Henry III. when the local mint was discontinued. The author has spared neither labour nor travel in his search for readings and descriptions of the many coins of this mint which he has described and, to quote the words of his Preface, “the result shows the mint to have had a very much larger issue than was thought.” He has given us a really comprehensive list of the many varieties of the pennies struck at Oxford during the period mentioned. This is the principal and useful part of the book and he deserves every credit for it.

But he affixes a preface of forty-four pages in which he advances views of his own which are so remarkable, and so unsupported by even the semblance of reasoning, that we trust in the interests of numismatics they will remain solely his own. No numismatologist either before or after reading the book could for one moment doubt that the coins of Alfred the Great bearing ὈＶ Ｓ Ｎ Ａ Ｆ Ｏ Ｒ Ｄ Ａ and ὈＲ Ｓ Ｎ Ａ Ｆ Ｏ Ｒ Ｄ Ａ as their place of mintage were money of Oxford, yet Mr. Stainer takes these coins away, and with them our breath, to drop them down somewhere, for he knows not where, but suggests Salford, in Northumbria. Before we have recovered from our amazement we find that he has also stolen the London and Canterbury coins of the same king, and given them away to Northumbria in so orthodox a manner that his pen does not know to what mint he has given them. Mr. Carlyon-Britton, in a paper read to this Society and which will be published in our next volume, has, however, destroyed this flight of fancy in Mr. Stainer’s preface. After that we shall hope to hear no more of it.

The bulk of his Preface is equally wild so far as it is original. For instance, he calls the “tales of moneyers being summoned to Winchester and horribly mutilated” “mere tales,” although they are the detailed reports of contemporary historians, perhaps eye-witnesses,

1 It was revived in the seventeenth century.
including even the continuator of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle himself, upon whose word all men rely. The writer also does not hesitate to contradict the entire evidence of our charters by a mere dictum against the accepted theory of the “chartered mints,” and solemnly tells us that:—

Henry I. placed one of his moneyers in London regularly at the service of the Abbot of Reading. Ordgar, this London moneyer, struck type xiv., Hawkins 262, both with and without the scallop shell on the reverse, showing that he still remained a royal moneyer, only executing provincial work as required. In the same way a king might place one of his moneyers at Stamford at the service of the Abbot of Peterborough. Abbots or earls who received these privileges had no responsibility for the coinage or influence over it; the moneyer and his work remained royal and subject to the State.

Fortunately, King Henry I.’s charter is still on record and in it the moneyer referred to is not Ordgar at all but one Edgar, and so far from the Abbot having “no responsibility for the coinage or influence over it,” and “the moneyer and his work” remaining “royal and subject to the State,” we read:—

Edgarum scilicet, qui concedente rege ita liber et quietus et absolutus cum domo et familia sua ab omni placito et omnibus causis et consuetudinibus manebit in manu abbatis et monachorum Rading, ac si maneret Radingis. Quicunque etiam post Edgarum, vel loco ejus, in moneta positus apud London per manum abbatis et monachorum Rading fuerit, eodem modo liber, et quietus, et absolutus cum domo et familia sua apud Lond. manebit in manu abbatis et monachorum Rading, ac si maneret Rading.

If there ever was a case of a king granting a “moneyer with his house and his family,” lock, stock and barrel “free and quit and discharged” to an Abbot and his monks this is it, and a most unfortunate instance for Mr. Stainer to have selected; for the charter even provides that the moneyer should be freed in toto from the king’s pleas service and customs.

Having referred to the charter we examine the coin as to which he says the scallop shell on the reverse shows that Ordgar still remained a royal moneyer. Of course he did, for he never in the world had anything to do with Reading, and the wonderful scallop
shell turns out to be nothing more than a die-flaw. Yes, Mr. Stainer must forgive us if we agree with him in saying "Here the chartered mint idea runs wild."

In support of his objections to the existence of the chartered mints, which phrase he says "results from a great deal of loose writing and guesswork that has been allowed to pass in recent years," he quotes the proclamation of Æthelred II:—"And let no man have a moneyer except the King." But, in this, he naively admits that there were such mints and that Æthelred II endeavoured to suppress them, with what result is proved by his Reading instance. Then he brings forward evidence from the time of King John to show that they could not have existed. If he had studied the case at all he would know that no one has even suggested that except in the case of certain ecclesiastical privileges, they did then exist, for half a dozen authorities tell us that they were suppressed by Henry II. The chartered mint question has nothing to do with Oxford, which was a royal mint, and therefore Mr. Stainer's work would have been the better if he had kept to his subject, for if "loose writing and guesswork " were never "allowed to pass" the censor, we are afraid "a great deal" of the Preface to Oxford Silver Pennies would have appeared in deep mourning.

Mr. Stainer is, however, to be commended for his interesting identification of several of the moneyers of Oxford with names recorded in various historical documents. This is a subject of considerable importance, for the new evidence he brings to bear upon it fully confirms the theory that they were men of prominence and position, for the Oxford moneyers were public officials of a royal mint, whereas those of the chartered mints were, as Eadmer tells us, "men in the power of their lord."

In his lists of the coins he has adopted the system of copying the legends, so far as his printers' fount would allow him, exactly as they appear upon the coins. This means that unless separated by colons, the whole legend is continued as if it were one word. Technically he may be right, but in the transcript of archaic documents we are fortunately not so precise, or some books would
be printed as one long string of letters from alpha to omega. Nevertheless something can be said in favour of this departure from custom, but it is trying to read, and therefore its advantages are merged in its disadvantages.

It is curious to notice so near home, that the rarest coin in the Bodleian Library at Oxford of the series treated by the author is of the Oxford mint, and yet it is entirely omitted from his book.

The Preservation of Antiquities, translated from the German of Dr. Friedrich Rathgen by George A. Auden, M.A., M.D., and Harold A. Auden, M.Sc., D.Sc., 48 illustrations, 190 pages, crown 8vo, cloth. Cambridge University Press, 4s. 6d. net.

Although termed a handbook for curators, there are few books more useful and necessary to all who are either the possessors, or the custodians of, objects of antiquity in any form. The translators have not been content to offer a mere transcript, but have themselves made numerous experiments in proof of the efficiency of the various recipes, the results of some of which are evidenced by ten of the illustrations, and they have contributed many explanatory notes and additions. Thus we have presented to us in a simple and readable form the best processes and recipes yet known to science for the preservation of every kind of material, the success of which is demonstrated by a series of photographic illustrations upon the “before and after” principle. The character of the book throughout is its usefulness, and whatever the objects be that require attention, the remedy is there.

The chapter which specially appeals to us is that treating of the restoration and preservation of ancient coins. A feature of the work is that minute directions are everywhere given in plain language so that no technical knowledge is requisite to enable anyone to follow them. We are told that from 40,000 to 50,000 coins have already been successfully treated under these recipes. In Fig. 46 we are shown a photograph of three Roman coins as found, save that they have been cleaned in the ordinary way. That they are Roman and third brass is apparent, but even to the expert neither letter nor device is discernible. In Fig. 47 the transformation is complete; they have gone through the treat-
ment and become cabinet specimens with types and legends quite distinct. Silver coins which are friable and brittle or discoloured by chemical action, or gold, which so often are disfigured by a layer of red ferric oxide, are to be treated with the several remedies provided for these defects and if ordinary care is used success is guaranteed. That coins which are brittle and untrustworthy to handle can be rendered pliable and safe, was demonstrated to us many years ago when we saw a small find of silver pennies of Aethelred II. which were in a most fragile condition, but after being treated by some then secret process we were enabled to bend the coins without risk.

It must not be thought that we are encouraging general experiments to improve coins; far from it, for none are more anxious that all antiquities should be carefully preserved than are we. But in most cabinets are rare pieces which, owing to their condition, are worthless in their present state and, as can be and is done in the case of valuable china, there seems no reason why they should not be restored to something approaching their original quality. Hence this useful work is brought to the notice of numismatologists in the hope that thereby something, at least, may be saved which would otherwise perish; for it is easier to preserve than to create.

W. J. A.
PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

BRITISH NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

From its inauguration upon November 30th, 1903,
to November 29th, 1904.

SESSION 1903—1904.