

Mr. Lysons (*Romans in Gloucestershire*, p. 54) reads and explains the words thus :

"*Divo Nodenti Silvianus annulum perdidit dimidiam partem donavit Nodenti : Inter quibus nomen Seneciani nullis permittas sanitatem donec perferant usque templum Nodentis.* It is, in short, nothing more or less than a hand-bill,* issued by a certain Silvianus, for the recovery of a ring which he had lost. He promises to give half its value, on recovery, to the god Nodens, and seems rather to insinuate that a certain Senecianus must know something about it, and threatens him with the loss of health until he shall bring it back to the temple of Nodens ; thus identifying that deity with power over the diseases of the body."

To the reading of Mr. Lysons I see no objection, but his explanation does not at all satisfy me ; nor can I understand what construction or translation he proposes for the words *inter quibus nomen Seneciani*. I am inclined to think that the circumstances under which this tablet was placed were these : Silvianus made a bet with Senecianus—whether it was a law-wager or not does not appear—he put down his ring, as was usual, as his stake, in lieu of the amount that he had bet, and vowed to the deity one-half of the sum that he expected to win, or one-half of the value of the ring. Senecianus won the bet, and, refusing to be bound by the vow of Silvianus, left the performance of it to him. Silvianus, to avert the anger of the god, erected this tablet in performance of his vow.

Let us now examine the inscription in detail.

DIVO NODONTI. *Divus* instead of *Deus* is unusual, but not unprecedented. ANVLVM PERDEDIT. The orthography of these words is not rare. Both *annulus* and *axulus* are written, and the use of E for I is common. As to the meaning, there can, I think, be but little doubt that the sense, which would at once suggest itself, is, *threw away a ring*, i.e., lost it, not accidentally but through his own fault. I do not mean to say that *perdo* is not sometimes used with the signification of *amitto*, but merely that that is not the sense which would first present itself on reading the words. If then the meaning be *threw away a ring*, the question is—in what way ? The probable answer seems to be, by making a foolish bet. The ancient custom of using the ring in bets or wagers may be illustrated

* The only example which I have seen of a Latin advertisement of this kind is amongst the *graffiti* of Pompeii, and it does not at all resemble this inscription. Vide Wordsworth's *Inscr. Pomp.*, p. 23.