

in a position of equality with his neighbor, even though that neighbor were possessed of goods which he never had or made or cultivated.

Amongst some people this medium—or we will call it money, as that is the expression best known in our day—was formed of sea shells more or less adorned and curved according to the value each shell was supposed to represent. In other lands, as amongst the Indians in the primeval forests of the New World, the money consisted in pieces of wood cut into divers fantastic shapes or little stones of different colors. Each and all of these kinds of money may serve as illustrations and guides in the history of those people. But many years before the founding of the great Roman Empire, far off in the East a new method was discovered whereby the money and its value could be rendered more positive. And we then find coins. Metal of different species cut into a multitude of rude forms and, at times, bearing some letters of hieroglyphics, was the origin of our present almost perfect system of coinage.

No sooner was this novel means devised than it was adopted by each of the nations of antiquity. Some of their coins being more rude than others—some of them being formed of more precious metals or of more beautiful ore than others, soon led to distinctions between the coins of the divers nations or tribes, and even to the distinctions in the values of the many species of coins in each particular country.

Later on we find the names of the kings and rulers of the people stamped upon the money. And still later we see the heads of monarchs, of emperors, of generals, adorned with helmets or crowns or laurels, carved or stamped upon the coinage of the countries. Soon after we meet with dates and emblems, and a few words in the language of the people to whom the money belonged. Thus as years rolled past and as times changed this mode of unity and this powerful support of commerce became more and more indispensable. And in our day it has reached such a degree of universality that "without money man is of little consequence in the world."

This being a subject that can scarcely be properly treated in the space of one

short essay, we will merely confine ourselves to a few remarks upon the utility of coins as an auxiliary of history, and leave for another essay the consideration of the union between the monuments and coins of different nations of antiquity and of modern times.

The study of coins might be considered a life study, yet it is much more easy to place one's self in a position to study coins than it is to study monuments. So much travelling, so much labor, so much exertion, is not required. But to study coins with a real profit they must be connected with the history—the true history—of the people to whom they belonged.

You find on the face of an old silver or copper coin the head of an emperor with figures or letters or other marks surrounding it—take up the history of the nation and you will therein find by whom and when and how such a token was struck. You learn under what circumstances it came into existence, what battle it commemorates, what city it was made for. To illustrate more clearly our idea of the union between coins and history in general—not yet to speak of the history of any nation in particular—we will cite the following extract from the *Episcopal Recorder* :—

"In citing the historical information derivable from coins, the geographical facts we acquire from them are of equal importance. A case was stated some time ago how an island of the Ægean, which had been lost, was discovered by means of a coin (the piece not bigger than a half-dime), and how recent soundings proved the existence of this isle. There was a lost city which owes its place to a coin. For over a thousand years no one knew where Pandosia was. History told us that at Pandosia King Pyrrhus collected those forces with which he over-ran Italy, and that he established a mint there; but no one could put their finger upon Pandosia. Eight years ago a coin came under the sharp eyes of a numismatist. There were the letters, Pandosia, inscribed on it, but what was better, there was an emblem, indicative of a well-known river, the Crathis. Then everything was revealed with the same certainty as if the piece of money had been an atlas, and Pandosia, the mythical city, was at once given its proper position in Bruttium. Now, a coin may be valuable for artistic merit, but when it elucidates a doubtful point in history or geography, its worth is very much enhanced. This silver coin, which did not weigh more than a quarter of a dollar, because it cleared up the mystery of Pandosia,