

Mystic Art in Medals

A CABINET OF RARE DESIGNS AND CURIOUS LEGENDS IN METAL.

Mr. William Poillon, of New York, a prominent member of the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society of New York, has a collection of medals which excites the admiration alike of numismatists and Freemasons. It is the largest collection of Masonic medals in the world. At one time the medallion collection of the now obsolete Pythagoras Lodge was supposed to be the largest in existence. But when it became accessible to numismatists it was found to contain many casts. Mr. Poillon's attention was first called to this branch of numismatics as a specialty by William T. R. Marvin, now the leading authority on Masonic medals. When Mr. Marvin was collecting data for his work on the subject he wrote to Mr. Poillon, who then had a general numismatic collection, for descriptions of such Masonic pieces as were in his cabinet. Mr. Poillon found these pieces more numerous than he had supposed. In fact, their number was sufficiently large to form a nucleus for a collection. He began adding to them, and afterward purchased Marvin's fine cabinet. An idea of the comprehensiveness of Mr. Poillon's collection may be conveyed by the statement that it contains about 1,000 pieces, or some 200 more than are enumerated in Marvin's book, which is the most complete record on the subject. The cabinet contains struck pieces of all metals, wood and rubber. In it are a number of interesting Washington Masonic pieces. The oldest of these, and one of the oldest American Masonic medals struck, is dated 1797. The obverse shows a bust of Washington in uniform. Prominent in the design on the reverse are two pillars surmounted by globes. Over the pillar on the right is the sun; over that on the left the moon and stars. Over all these are the square and compasses and three lighted tapers; still higher the letter G, and, above all, the all-seeing eye. The pillars stand on a mosaic pavement, upon which lies a trowel. A level and open book, a plumb and gavel are respectively to the right and left of the pillars. The Latin legend is: Love, Honour, and Justice. The letters G. W. G. M. also on the reverse, are supposed to stand for George Washington, General Grand Master. This medal is believed to be of English origin. A Washington funeral medal is classed among Masonics, though the only emblem on it is a skull and cross-bones at the base of the reverse, because it is supposed to have been struck for and generally worn in the Masonic funeral procession,

attended by 1,600 Freemasons in Boston, February 11, 1800. One of the most interesting Washington pieces gives his record as a Mason, as follows:

Entered Apprentice November 4, 5, 1752.

Fellow craft, March 8, 5, 1753.

Raised to Master Mason's degree August 4, 5, 1753

The Masonic years in this record correspond to 1752 and 1753. It is interesting to note that in those days it took nine months to reach a degree which now can be reached in six weeks. On the obverse of this medal is a head of Washington, with an all-seeing eye and diverging rays above it, and beneath it a square and compass and the legend: He was a Brother of the Mystic Tie. The piece is two inches in diameter. A recent Washington Masonic medal has on its reverse a view of George with his hatchet, the wounded tree and old man Washington. In the background are trees and a fence. On December 27, 1782, Washington visited Solomon's Lodge, at Poughkeepsie, which was founded April 18, 1771, James Livingstone being first Master. One of the Washington pieces in Mr. Poillon's cabinet commemorates Washington's visit to the lodge. Franklin has been honoured on several Masonic medals. Two of these are French pieces and very rare. On the obverse of one is a bust of Benjamin Franklin and the legend: "Benj. Franklin, Minist. Plent. Des Etats Unis De L'Ameriq. Sept., MDCLXXXIII." On the reverse is a circular temple on a rocky hill. In the temple are the nine muses, apparently at work. The French legend reads in translation: Their glory springs from their labors. The other French Franklin medal shows on the obverse a bust of Franklin. On the reverse is a serpent coiled so as to form a circle in which is a radiant triangle, and Jehovah, in Hebrew characters. The square and compass, entwined by olive branches, are under the serpent. To the right is a trowel, to the left a gavel. Franklin was a member of a lodge in Philadelphia when he went abroad as ambassador and is variously supposed to have become, while he was in Paris, a member or even a master of the *Loge des Neuf Sœurs*. An interesting Franklin medal has on its reverse a view of the Boston temple. This reverse is the same as the obverse of a medal struck off to commemorate the dedication of the Masonic Temple in Boston.

ROYAL PAGES ON MEDALS.

Many nobilities of royal and many more of noble blood figure on Masonic medals. One of the most famous medals of this class has a history. It was struck in honor of the care taken by the Princess Albertina Sophia, of Sweden, of certain poor children made homeless by a fire in Stockholm, December 24, 1784. The obverse shows a nude bust of the Princess. A string of pearls is in her loose hair. The point of interest is on the reverse, where, within a closed wreath of oak, is the inscription *Vasorum Sorori*. This may mean, To the Sister of the *Vasas*, or, as *Vasa* is the Latin for a lewd woman, may have an equivocal significance. The

legend was suggested by the royal librarian, John Simmingskold, probably in malice, as he soon afterward fled the country. The medal was suppressed, and is, therefore, rare. Another royal Swedish medal is that with the draped bust of King Gustavus III., upon a cubic stone, the front of which is adorned with a blazing star formed by two triangles interlaced. A naked figure of Time, from whose hands both scythes and hour-glasses have fallen, and various Masonic tools, are conspicuous in the design. The Swedish inscription on the reverse reads, translated: "Rebellious weapons surrounded the Grand Master at Midnight. Gustavus III. lived, wounded, thirteen days. He died lamented at high noon, on the 30th March."

(To be Continued.)

IMMENSE BARGAIN!

25c. PACKET,

containing 100 varieties, including
St. Christopher, Costa Rica (Green), Venezuela,
Hong Kong, Dutch Indies, West Australia,
Bonia, Mexico, Portugal, Romania,
Tasmania, &c., &c.,

ADDRESS:

A. I. HAMILTON,
Box 824,
MONTREAL, Canada.

J. G. BINGHAM,

Dealer in U. S. and Foreign Coins and Curiosities,
McCrawville, N. Y.

Your choice in the following for a dime, or any size for fifty cents: 1 copy *New England Patriotism*, a scarce old newspaper, printed in Boston over 75 years ago; 2 *Brazilian Beetles*: 1 *Amirée Johnson Impairment Ticket* with coupon; 5 clean *War Envelopes* in color; 1 Washington Medal and 1 Independence Hall Medal, each 2 1/2 inches in diameter; 3 Chinese, Siamese and Japanese coins; 1 *Colonial Bill*, 1793; 1 ancient *Roman Bronze Coin*, classified, and none less than 1000 years old; 1 200.00 Confederate Bill; 4 400.00 Confederate Bills; 1 Japan "Tempo," a large oblong bronze coin; 1 Shark's Tooth; 100 varieties of Foreign Stamps; 15 varieties of U. S. Document Stamps; 1 \$1.00 and 1 \$2.00 U. S. Document Stamps; 1 \$1.00 and 1 \$2.00 U. S. Document Stamps; 1 pair of Chinese "Chop Sticks" All above, 25 c.

ELECTROTYPING & ENGRAVING.



EDUCATE YOUR BOYS

Give Them a
FIRST-CLASS
Printing Press

PRICE
Only
\$2

With Complete Outfit all ready for work, which includes One Engraving Press, One Case, Ink, Ink Roller, One FONT TYPE, and Type Case, Quads & Spacers, Rubber Stamps, Stencils, Gals. Novelties, &c.

CONLEY CO.

Cor. Main & St. Paul Sts., ROCHESTER, N. Y.

The Oldest British Stamp Journal is
THE STAMP COLLECTOR'S JOURNAL.
Coin Collector's News and Antiquarian Gazette.

A large monthly devoted to Philately, Numismatics and Brics-a-lincs. Subscription, 36c. per annum, post-free. Advertisements, whole column, \$2.00; half-column, \$1.50; 1 column, 72c.; 2 inch, 3c. Specimen copy free. Address everything to C. H. NUNN, Pub., Bury Saint Edmunds, England.

(Stamp papers please insert above once and send equivalent for insertion in B. J. C.)