

Our limited collection of coins and medals, some of which are exhibited in the reading room, has no doubt been examined by many members. That collection has not been made for the mere purpose of gratifying or amusing antiquarian curiosity, but with a higher and more important object. No doubt public acts, official papers, journals and private memoirs are the sources from which the historian must draw his facts, but he frequently has recourse to cabinets of coins and medals for information. Old coins and medals may therefore be classed with historical documents, for they are of acknowledged value and service in the elucidation of history, especially of ancient history. Princes and corporations consecrate the memory of great events by striking medals, the materials of which are so durable that many historical facts unnoticed in manuscripts and inscriptions, stand recorded upon medals. The national collections of Great Britain have recently been enriched by valuable trovers or finds. We read in Ruding that : "Some years ago, as four boys, under ten years of age, were playing at marbles, on a Sunday afternoon, on a small piece of pasture land, at Beaworth, in Hampshire, one of them discovered in the track of a wagon-wheel, a piece of lead sticking up above the surface ; upon stooping down to take hold of it he perceived a small hole, into which he thrust his hand, and brought out a number of coins, his companions immediately following his example. Though they did not consider their treasure to be more than old buttons, they concealed part of them in an adjoining potato field, and others they took to the village of Beaworth, but treating them as of no value, some they jerked into the pond, and others they flung about the road. Half a dozen villagers who were, as usual upon a Sunday afternoon, congregated in the street, were attracted by the circumstance, and being more aware of the value of the pieces thus discovered, hastened to the spot and commenced a regular scramble for the booty. As some of the parties