

OLD CAMPAIGN MEDALS.

INTERESTING PRECURSORS OF THE BADGE AND THE BUTTON.

THEIR VALUE AS ILLUSTRATING PHASES OF POLITICAL HISTORY—MR. ZABRISKIE'S COLLECTION.

"United States History as Illustrated by Its Political Medals" was the subject of a paper which Andrew C. Zabriskie read last week before the American Numismatic and Archaeological Society, of which he is president. Mr. Zabriskie has given special attention to the political medals of this country and has a remarkably full collection of them. They date back to the year 1828, when Andrew Jackson was elected President, the first candidate for whom campaign medals were struck. Mr. Zabriskie has tried in his collecting to get together all the old medals which were used in former campaigns to arouse enthusiasm for the candidates. Most of these are rare, the dies having been lost or destroyed, and in the devices and inscriptions which they bear are preserved many of the old-time campaign slogans which are now almost forgotten.

The medals were the predecessors of the present rosettes and buttons with which the market is flooded. It must be admitted that the change is not an improvement so far as either artistic merit or interest is concerned, for the scenes pictured in the old medals and the "catchy" phrases which accompanied them were usually extremely clever. The medals have had periods of popularity and other periods of neglect. When political excitement in a campaign ran high the output of medals was correspondingly large. The devices at such times were also more vigorous and pointed.

The Jackson medal, one of the oldest in Mr. Zabriskie's collection, is no bigger than a nickel five-cent piece, and is made of brass. It has a queer-looking bust of Jackson on the obverse, and on the reverse the words, "The Nation's Pride."

A large medal struck for Martin Van Buren in 1836 is made of lead. It has a bust of Van Buren on the obverse, over which is inscribed, "M. Van Buren." On the reverse is a temple of Liberty, with the words "Democracy and Our Country."

Van Buren figures again in one of the Whig medals for General Harrison in 1840, for it was quite as much the fashion for a party to satirize the opposing candidate as to praise its own. The medal referred to is a small one of brass. It has a military bust of Harrison on the obverse, with the inscription, "Maj.-Gen. W. H. Harrison, Born Feb. 9, 1773." The reverse bears a picture of a steamboat, flying a flag marked "1841." This scene is entitled "Steamboat Van Buren, Loco Foco Line for Salt River Direct." The title of the line is the nickname bestowed at that time by their opponents upon the equal rights or radical section of the Democratic party. There were various other Harrison medals, some of copper and some of brass, the former metal being the rarer. One of these has the usual bust on the obverse, and on the reverse a spread-eagle, with a scroll in its mouth, which reads: "Go it, Tip." Another scroll below has the motto, "Come it, Tyler." "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too!" the melodious cry of the Whigs at this time, is perpetuated on another medal, and so, likewise, is the fact that this was a "log cabin and hard cider campaign." The latter truth is set forth by means of a picture showing the traditional cabin, with an assortment of small cider barrels lying on the ground near by.

MANY MEDALS FOR CLAY.

The medals made for Henry Clay were perhaps more numerous than those for any successful candidate. One of them is included in the list of "lying medals"—those which were struck before-hand to commemorate an event which never took place. It is of brass, and bears an extremely cheerful-looking head of Clay, with this confident inscription: "Henry Clay, Elected President, A. D. 1841." The reverse has a picture of Clay as a youth on horseback near an old mill. Above it is this legend: "The Mill Boy of the Slashes, Inaugurated March 4, 1815." A lead medal has a bust of Clay on the obverse, and on the reverse a scene of factories and a ship. The picture is labelled "The wealth of a nation is indicated by its industry." Another very small lead medal has the bust and "For President" on the obverse, and on the reverse the poetical prophecy, "Henry Clay will carry the Day." Still another Clay medal has on the reverse a popular Whig expression of the time, "That Same Old Coon." All these medals belong to 1844, the last of the campaigns which Clay made, and in which he was defeated by James K. Polk.

The campaign medals issued for Zachary Taylor in 1848 were chiefly commemorative of his military services. One of them has on its face a bust of Taylor, with the inscription, "Major-General Zachary Taylor, born 1796." On the back are the words: "In Honor of the Hero of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey and Buena Vista." Another brass medal, similar in style, has practically the same obverse, and on the reverse is this sentence: "Genl. Taylor Never Surrenders." The words are in a circle, inclosing the names of the battles mentioned on the other medal.

When Scott was running as the Whig candidate for President in 1852 a brass medal was struck for him. It bore on the obverse: "Major-General Winfield Scott, U. S. A." on a military bust. The reverse showed a battle scene, with a warrior prostrate and others bending over him.

Above it were the words "Scott Wounded," and below it "Lundy's Lane."

Many interesting medals were issued in 1860, when Lincoln was the Republican candidate. A handsome one of bronze has on its face a bust of Lincoln, surrounded by small stars. Below are the words: "Abraham Lincoln, Republican Candidate for President, 1860." On the other side is an octagon, formed of intersecting portions of a rail fence, with the inscription in the centre: "The Great Rail-Splitter of the West Must and Shall Be Our Next President."

The same idea is shown in another larger, thick brass medal of Lincoln, which has on the reverse a picture of the young man engaged in splitting a log of wood near a rail fence. Above it is inscribed, "The Rail-Splitter of 1830."

THE VALUE OF MEDALS.

All these medals and many others of the same style are valuable now only in proportion to their rarity, but even with this consideration the price which they will bring at any given time is uncertain. This is well illustrated by an experience which Mr. Zabriskie had in trying to buy one of the "Wide-Awake" badges which were worn in the hats in 1860. The badge was offered at a certain sale, and Mr. Zabriskie's agent was authorized to pay \$2 for it. To his utter astonishment, the price was bid up by two

HISTORIC JEWELS.

RAREST AND MOST WONDERFUL GEMS IN THE WORLD IN ENGLAND.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.

The South Kensington Museum, in London, contains what is probably the most remarkable collection of historic rings in the world. In this most exquisite and perfectly arranged of all treasure-houses, the troth of kings, the romance and tragedy of famous lives, gives a keen personal interest to the cases filled with gems that are both royal in themselves and have been made royal by the touch of royalty.

Amid the clasped hands and true-lovers knots we find one lined with the Scottish arms, having on the seal the letters M. H.—Mary and Henry—the wedding ring of Mary, Queen of Scots and Henry Darnley. The name of Mary Stuart always thrills, but her loveliness we cannot gather from any of her authentic portraits in the national galleries. We must conclude that some grace of expression that could not be caught on canvas was her charm.

In black and white enamels on gold, with hexagonal bezel, we find the mournful token given by Charles I on the day of his execution to Bishop Juxon. A hideous, monkeylike skull grins in the centre, surrounded by the inscription, "Behold the End—!" and around the outside, "Rather Deth Than Fals Fayth."

The silver wedding ring of Rienzi brings to mind a strange and glorious conjunction I once saw at a loan exhibition for some charity in

"Bonnie Prince Charlie" smiles from a beautiful miniature, and near by is the ideal of a lovers' ring, an enamelled figure of cupid with spread wings carrying off a ruby heart, and the legend: "Stop Thief!"

The great Merovingian and Saxon rings are among the rarest in the world. Seven hundred dollars was paid by the Museum for the bent and broken one of Arhstan, Bishop of Sherburne.

"Iconographic" rings hold figures or portraits of saints in the Russian style. Others are reliquaries for bits of the true cross or fragments of saintly toe-bones, while one represents Mary Magdalene being carried to heaven by four angels. One, formed to fifteen small crosses, was found on the fingers of a skeleton; it had no power to stay the hand of death.

Of great antiquity are the Roman keyrings, used to keep the keys of precious chests or casks ever at hand, and which in Middle Ages secured the cumbrous iron "virtue lock" that husbands fastened on their wives before going to battle.

Of mystic rings there are many—the mediæval circlet of "incantation," the charmed "toad-stone," and the South German silver set with wolf's teeth.

A long coffin-shaped ring with three cameos, the centre one representing Cleopatra holding the asp to her heart, is almost identical with one always worn by Cheiro, of palmist fame.

An ancient Venetian of three chains, holding a revolving turquoise, brown with age, is engraved on one side with a Venus Anadyomene and on the other with a Gnostic cypher. Amid more costly gems the turquoise holds its own with strange persistence. One great tur-



A GROUP OF AMERICAN POLITICAL MEDALS. (From the collection of Andrew C. Zabriskie.)

other men who were after the badge until it finally went to one of them for \$12. A couple of years later the same badge was again offered for sale, and this time Mr. Zabriskie got it for \$120! So far as he knows, it is the only one in the market, and he considers that he got a bargain.

The science of numismatics has been injured by the recent striking from old dies of medals which are absurd and impossible combinations. For instance, a medal has been made, the obverse of which supports Van Buren and the reverse Harrison. It was done by mixing up the two dies. Similarly, a medal with a bust of Lincoln on one side has a picture of the old Dutch Church in Nassau-st., New-York, on the other. The idea of the makers in producing these meaningless combinations was to create rare medals, and in some cases, where only a few were struck, this has been accomplished. But the practice is deplored by all collectors, since it tends to make the subject ridiculous.

THE SECRET OUT.

From The Cincinnati Enquirer

He—I am astonished, not to say shocked, that you should uphold so brutal a sport as football. She—You horrid men won't allow us to go to prizelights.

Rome, when Vatican and Quirinal and many a noble house had for the moment yielded their treasures. Around a small space in the centre, where the King and Queen received their guests, were grouped the coronation robes of Napoleon, the torn blanket of Garibaldi and the wonderful dalmatic of Charlemagne, which proud Rienzi wore when he entered Rome.

But to return to our gems: One ring says, "Never to be forgotten 2d of January, 1777." Does any one still remember?

With us the hair-ring period of mourning has given way to the still more dangerous jetted Mercury-winged window, and we have no use for the rings hollowed out like little bottles, to contain the tears which were a coquetry of ancient times. Certainly filling these was not as difficult a task as that prescribed in the savage country Grant Allen tells us of, where the bereaved are obliged to weep until they fill a bottle of certain size, and if they cannot are beaten until they do.

The inscription, "God Help Maria" makes us wonder who the donor could have been.

Among the wedding rings is a type that should become fashionable in America, for it binds a heart and a coronet.

Simpler folk say: "As God Deceared, So we agreed";

or, "God hathe wrought this choice in thee, So frame thyself to comfourth me."

Chaste and simple is this: "A Faithful Wife Preserveth Life"; more abrupt and brutal was the admonition, "Observe Wedlock."

A Jewish wedding ring, with great bezels, lifts from the hand in full relief the model of the holy tabernacle of the Ark of the Covenant.

quoise cameo of the Rape of Proserpine in this collection is almost large enough to cover the back of the hand, and there are some beautiful examples of those inlaid with Persian inscriptions.

In thumb rings the most splendid are those given by the Popes to cardinals—though they did not always accompany the scarlet hat, and Wolsey's great anxiety lest a ring should not be sent with his precious head-covering stands recorded. Of heroic size, they stand up several inches from the hand, and, of course, would be good in effect only when worn with massive vesture. Usually they are set in brass or bronze, with great cabochons, or uncut stones. One with the lion of St. Mark in alto is crested with greenish chalcidony; those most prized hold a rough emerald or cabochon ruby. Thumb rings of a more useful sort are the "thumbkins," or thumb-stones, paid to hold the thumbs of prisoners while their clothes were being cut from them. The example of South Kensington was found behind the panelling of an old sixteenth century house.

The "puzzle" rings Lord Lytton used to characterize as "ingenious stupidity." The baroque pearls of the Virgin del Pilar and the grotesques of little jewelled men and animals are uningenious stupidity.

The collection is in superb cameo heads of those whom art has immortalized—in Greek and Roman intagli, that in finest lines picture the loves and the woes of the gods; but before the wealth of precious stones the pen falls helpless, as we have no adequate words for these dazzling harmonies.