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ROMAN COINS FROM THE H. P. HALL COLLECTION

At the recent dispersal of the H. P. Hall Collection, one of the last great collections of Roman coins in this country, the British Museum acquired a number of extremely fine and rare coins. Outstanding amongst them are twelve gold pieces of the third and fourth centuries A.D.

They comprise *aurei* (Nos 4 and 5) of Severus Alexander, A.D. 222–35, the last of the Syrian dynasty, with the oriental sun-god, and of Gordian III, A.D. 238–44, with a conventional seated Apollo, indicating a temporary turning away from the new gods introduced under the Syrians.



A group of eight gold solidi forming a portrait gallery of the Constantinian dynasty: Constantius Chlorus (No. 6), A.D. 92–305, with a brilliantly executed reverse showing the emperor in triumph in a facing quadriga; two pieces of Constantine the Great, AD. 307–37 (Nos. 7 and 8), the first showing the Senates of Constantinople and Rome renewing vows for the Emperors well-being; three of the sons of Constantine the Great, Constantine II (No. 9), Crispus (No. 10), and Constantius II (Nos. 11 and 12) represented in the magnificent robes of the *Princeps Inventutis*, the last two with interesting innovations in the portrait bust anticipating Byzantine usage; Julian the Apostate, AD. 355–63 (No. 13), nephew of Constantine the Great and last of the Constantinian dynasty, before he sported the beard of the Pagan philosopher, from the mint of Arelate, under the name of Constantina.

Other pieces are the excessively rare and brilliant *argenteus* of Maxentius, A.D. 306–12 (No. 14) with its reverse, the wolf and twins and a legend proclaiming a Golden Age, propaganda for a hoped-for rather than an actual state of affairs, for it was struck at Rome between 309 and 312, when Maxentius's limited rule was being threatened on all sides; and, among the bronzes, a notable as in superb condition with a fine portrait of Severus Alexander (No. 15) beautifully patinated and in exceptionally high relief.

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