

CHAPTER V
MEDICAL MAGIC II

FEVER

WHEN one remembers the wide prevalence of malarial and other fevers in the Mediterranean countries it is surprising that these maladies receive little attention from the makers of amulets. It is probable that amulets of the generally protective kind were thought to be an adequate safeguard against the common fevers. Preisendanz has published several fever amulets that were written on papyrus, but I have seen only one stone amulet that may belong to this class, and even that is somewhat uncertainly placed here (D. 111). This stone, apparently a green steatite or jasper, belongs to the Pelizaeus Museum in Hildesheim, and I owe my knowledge of it to the courtesy of the director, Dr. Günther Roeder, who gave me a cast of the stone and permission to publish it.¹

The stone is rectangular, $26 \times 21 \times 5$ mm., with an unusually broad bevel (6-7 mm.). On the obverse are seven birds arranged in two columns, four in the first (left), three in the second. Not all can be identified; the following is a very hesitating attempt. Counting from the top of the first column, ibis, another ibis or a heron (the only real difference is in the position of the feet), vulture (?), eagle or hawk. In the second column, pheasant; a very uncertain bird, possibly meant for a cock; a waterfowl, perhaps a spoonbill. The right side of the field is occupied by the inscription IBI|ABI|BI|O|BH. Round the bevel, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and making the circuit almost twice, is the legend *ἄλεθρον καὶ πύρηθρον φύγε ἀπὸ τοῦ φοροῦντος τὸ φυλακτήριον τοῦτο.*

The words *ἄλεθρον* and *πύρηθρον* require attention first. Ordinarily the first of these words is masculine, *ἄλεθρος*, and we have here a vulgar form of it. Its normal meaning is "destruction," "ruin." Some classical writers use it figuratively as a term of abuse, like plague, pest, and this doubtless reflects a popular application of the word to dangerous infectious diseases. Here it might refer to any sort of wasting, prostrating illness. *πύρηθρον* is only an orthographic error for *πύρεθρον*, but that word is listed in Liddell and Scott only as a name for a plant. Sophocles' lexicon, however, cites it, as a name for a morbid condition, from a work which has much to teach us of the language and the manners of Egypt in its time — Sophronius' book on the miracles of St. Cyrus and St. John, probably written during the first quarter of the seventh century; Sophronius died in 638. In that passage Sophronius tells how the two saints cured a man whose foot was affected by

¹ See *Denkmäler des Pelizaeus-Museum zu Hildesheim*, p. 163, 285. The material is described simply as "green stone." For fever amulets on papyrus see PGM XXXIII, XLIII, XLVII.

an ἀκατάσβεστον πύρεθρον.² In the course of the narrative he uses the words πύρωμα and φλόγωσις to describe the condition; hence there is no doubt that he means "inflammation." But fever and inflammation were closely related in the minds of the ancients, as in ours; πύρ occasionally, and πυρετός regularly, mean "fever." On our amulet the combination of ὄλεθρον, suggesting a wasting illness, with πύρηθρον seems to point to fever as the condition that the writer of the charm had in mind.

Despite the chance resemblance of ιβι to the name of the ibis, the inscription that accompanies the birds probably does not refer to them in any way; it is simply an example of childish, babbling repetition of similar syllables which were felt to have some magical value. This seems to be proved beyond question by the occurrence of the same sounds in a magical charm carved on a figurine in the Louvre representing a hawk. The text, which has been published by Dain, is too long to quote in full.³ It is carved on the back and wings of the hawk, which bears on its breast a representation of Horus-Harpocrates on the lotus flower. The charm begins ἐγὼ ἰμι ὁ ἐπὶ τοῦ λωτοῦ τὴν δύναμιν ἔχων, ὁ ἅγιος θεὸς ἐξείς ιβει αβει σελτι βελτι. Two of the words on our amulet occur here. ἐξείς is for ἐξῆς, which in this connection seems to mean "in order, as follows." After several other magical words we find (l. 5) αβι ειβι βι ο βη, like the Hildesheim gem except for a difference in the order of the first two words. As other examples of these "babbling charms" I may cite two that are most conveniently accessible in Preisigke's *Sammelbuch*, 2021 and 3573; one has βους βοαι βουα βους, the other βος βοαι βοα, and in each case there are additional elements. In a London magical papyrus we find Μελιβου Μελιβαν Μελιβαυβαν as a sacred name associated with Hephaistos.⁴ Several others could be gathered together.

The reverse side of the Hildesheim stone is completely covered with an inscription of seven lines; several letters are indistinct and doubtful. It is without meaning to us, but the last line, σαλβαναχαμβρη, is well known as a divine or demonic name, occurring on a number of amulets of various types, and often in the papyri. There is some reason to think that it is a secret name of Harpocrates; but magical names are not always consistently applied. The whole inscription, which I cite for the encouragement of those who believe that a meaning can be found in all such jargon, is as follows:

βαρβαροσανχελου
 βραμρουχιανξ
 αβωβαλχαμηνο
 σενφενζαζηω
 ωωωελενοραο
 χλοσαζαραχωειει
 σαλβαναχαμβρη

² A. Mai, *Spicilegium Romanum*, III, 578 (miracle 60); also in *PG* 87, 3, 3636 A, where some words of the text have been carelessly omitted.

³ A. Dain, *Inscr. grecques du Musée du Louvre: les textes inédits*, pp. 178 f., No. 204.

⁴ P. Lond. 121 (*PGM* VII, 379, 384).

DISEASES OF THE EYE

The skill and truth to life of the ancient glyptic art is nowhere shown more strikingly than in its representation of animals. Even after its treatment of the human form had somewhat declined from its earlier vigor, carvings of lions, goats, birds, and reptiles often retained a pleasing directness and vivacity. The gem type to be examined next might pass for a late genre design but for some peculiarities which, along with magical words on the reverse, mark it as an amulet. Several good specimens agree so closely in detail that a description of one would serve for all, except that the materials chosen for the design, though similar, are not the same. A good example in the possession of Mr. Seyrig is an oval of mottled green jasper or bloodstone with several reddish-brown spots and one whitish. On this is carved a thick-bodied lizard, almost certainly a gecko, in the position of climbing up a wall. Above is a crescent with the points turned downward, so that the head of the gecko is within the curve. In the field are the letters $\pi\eta\rho\alpha$, π and η over the left and right forepaws, ρ and α under the left and right hind feet. On the reverse $\kappa\alpha\nu\theta\epsilon\sigma\sigma\upsilon\lambda\epsilon$.

The other gems that present the same design and the same inscription are as follows:

One formerly in private possession in Cyprus, but brought from Egypt, published by Rousopoulos, *Arch. Ephem.*, Per. II, No. 2 (1862), p. 36, and Pl. Z, 47. The material is said (p. 40) to be a red stone, but is not definitely identified.

A green jasper in Berlin, formerly in the Stosch collection (Toelken, Class I, 151; Panofka, *Abh. Berl. Akad.*, 1851, Taf. 3, 11). The reverse inscription is reported as $\kappa\alpha\nu\theta\epsilon\sigma\sigma\upsilon\lambda\epsilon$, the sigma having been omitted or worn off.

A black jasper in the Museo Borgiano; the cataloguer, Zoega, does not mention the presence of the moon in the design, and since his descriptions are very full, it was probably omitted (*Museo Borgiano*, p. 458, No. 33). The obverse has besides $\pi\eta\rho\alpha$ the word $\text{I}\omega$.

A green jasper in Athens (National Museum, Coll. Dimitriou), published by Delatte, *Musée Belge*, 18 (1914), 64-67.

A mottled green and yellow jasper in the Southesk collection (N 82).

To this list some items have been added very recently. Mr. Seyrig informs me that the Petrakidi collection at Larnaka in Cyprus has a green jasper with a lizard on the obverse, $\kappa\alpha\nu\theta\epsilon\sigma\sigma\upsilon\lambda\epsilon$ on the reverse; and at Antioch in private possession there is a green and red jasper with a lizard and $\pi\eta\rho\alpha$ on the obverse, $\theta\upsilon\lambda\omega\rho\upsilon\beta\iota\varsigma$ on the reverse. The Archaeological Museum of the University of Michigan has acquired from Syria a mottled green and yellow jasper showing a lizard with his head in the curve of a large crescent; at left and right are the words $\omega\lambda\omega\rho\beta\iota\varsigma$, $\delta\lambda\upsilon\omega\rho\beta\iota\varsigma$. (D. 113). The reverse is not inscribed. These words look like bad copies of $\theta\upsilon\lambda\omega\rho\beta\iota\varsigma$ or $\theta\upsilon\lambda\omega\rho\beta\iota\varsigma$; the former has been found on the reverse of a Michigan amulet (D. 193) which has Harpocrates as the obverse figure.

Besides these there are several that differ in having a different or an additional inscription on the reverse, or no inscription at all.

British Museum 56230, plasma. My notes, which were made before I was aware of the

definite characteristics of this type, do not mention the moon over the lizard's head; but I think that a broad lambda, placed in that position in my memoranda, must have been a misunderstanding of a badly cut downward-pointing crescent. Reverse *Μιχαηλ Ουριηρ*, i.e. *Μιχαηλ Ουριηλ*, with the common confusion of ρ and λ in the latter word.

Cabinet des Médailles (Chabouillet 2245), mottled jasper. Crescent and two globes above; inscription *Ιαω Σαβαωθ Αδωνε Ελεουε*, the last words for Adonai Elohim. Reverse *Ουριηλ Ουριηλ Σουριηλ κανθε σουλε*.

Berlin, yellow and green jasper. Normal type, but the reverse inscription is *ευλαμω*. Toelken, Class I, 152 (Panofka, *op. cit.*, Pl. 3, 10).

Athens, Portolacca Collection (Imhoof-Blumer and Keller, *Tier- und Pflanzenbilder*, Pl. 22, 41). The four dim letters reported by the editor are *πηρα*; and although Keller thought otherwise, there is certainly a crescent moon, not a slug, over the lizard's head. No reverse inscription reported. Sardonyx.

Berlin. Agate-onyx. Climbing lizard, encircled by the inscription *LUMINA RESTITUTA*. No crescent. Reverse plain. Toelken, Class VIII, 328; Panofka, *op. cit.*, Pl. 3, 9.

Unknown location. Montfaucon, II, 2, Pl. 176, 5, from Capello, *Prodromus Iconicus*, No. 142, lizard and moon; if any letters were on the obverse Capello did not read or note them. Reverse, *Σουριηλ*.

A similar stone was reported by Gori, *Thesaurus Gemmarum Astriferarum*, II, 256, No. 41; but the description of the obverse is probably incomplete — it mentions only the lizard — and the reverse inscription is evidently garbled by the engraver or wrongly copied by the editor. It probably contained the words *κανθε σουλε*. See Drexler, *Woch. Klass. Philol.*, 1886, 1212; *Philol.*, 58, 613.

At the cost of some tedious details this list has been presented here because it affords an excellent example of the fidelity with which a certain magical prescription, to be explained presently, was carried out. The designs and inscriptions are practically identical in several cases, and we note a marked similarity in the materials used, chiefly jasper, with a preference for mottled pieces. The differences are more often to be found in the inscriptions than elsewhere.

Amulets of the kind described have been interpreted through the efforts of several scholars, especially Panofka⁵ and Drexler.⁶ The complete evidence used by these writers must be sought in their articles; the following is a summary. From passages in Pliny and Aelian⁷ Panofka elicited the following magical procedure: A green lizard was blinded and shut up in a new earthenware jar for nine days. Enclosed with it were ring stones carved with the design of a lizard. At the end of the nine days the lizard would be found to have recovered its vision, and was then to be freed.⁸ The ring stones were to be used as remedies for diseases of the eye. To this evidence Drexler added a passage from the *Cyranides*, in which the same process is described with some additional details.⁹ The lizard was to be blinded with two iron pins, one thrust into the left eye, the other into the right. These pins were to be used as settings for the ring stones. The writer further prescribes the

⁵ Panofka, "Gemmen mit Inschriften," *Abh. Berl. Akad.*, 1851, pp. 474-476, Pl. 3, 9-11.

⁶ Drexler, *Philol.*, 58, 610-616.

⁷ Pliny *N. H.* 29, 129-130; Aelian *N. A.* 5, 47.

⁸ Compare the inscription *lumina restituta* on the Berlin gem listed above.

⁹ Mély-Ruelle, II, 61.

inscriptions to be cut on the stones, *πειρα* on the obverse, *χουθεσουλε* on the reverse. Allowing for errors in orthography, it is evident that the text is describing just such stones as those listed above. The word *πειρα*, to be read *πηρά*, refers to the blindness of the animal; possibly the "two globes" on the Paris specimen represent its destroyed eyes. *κανθεσουλε* has not been interpreted. *κανθός* means the corner of the eye, but in the absence of any explanation of *σουλε* that gives us no trustworthy basis for an explanation.

The interpretation of these stones that has just been repeated may be supplemented, I think, in one particular. Neither Panofka nor Drexler has anything to offer about the moon which is usually to be seen over the lizard's head; yet an explanation is suggested by a text which Drexler cites, namely, Marcellus *De medicamentis* 8, 49. After describing the procedure that we already know from Pliny and Aelian, Marcellus adds: "Observandum etiam ut luna vetere, id est a luna nona decima in vicesimam quintam, die Iovis Septembri mense capiatur lacerta atque ita remedium fiat, sed ab homine maxime puro atque casto." "Note that the lizard must be caught and the remedy thus prepared in the old moon, that is, from the nineteenth to the twenty-fifth, on a Thursday in the month of September; and that he who catches it must be entirely pure and chaste." Precise instructions about the time when and by whom any material must be obtained in order to exert its power are well known in all magical prescriptions, and none is more common than the direction to act in a certain period of the moon's cycle. The moon on the gems may be a reminder that the lizard was taken at the proper time. The fact that the points of the moon are turned downward may confirm this suggestion, marking it as a waning moon, not an increasing one. The horns of the crescent moon, when it is represented on gems, are usually pointed to the left (as it is shown on our almanacs and calendars), or upward.¹⁰ The position of the moon on these lizard stones has no parallel, so far as I know, on other types, and it may have been so placed for the reason that I have mentioned.

This explanation receives some support from Horapollo's statement (1, 4) that in the first fifteen days of the month the crescent is shown with the points upward, while in the latter half they are turned downward. This seems to be a Greek rather than an Egyptian notion, for in Egyptian use the downward-pointing crescent usually represented the moon without reference to its phase; see Sbordone's note on the passage.

SCIATICA

On each of a series comprising sixteen stones, which are scattered among nine different collections, there is engraved a little scene that seems to be as far removed from magic as possible.¹¹ It is only the presence of an inscription on the reverse of these stones that caused them to be classed as amulets,

¹⁰ But there are exceptions, as D. 205, 210.

¹¹ De Ridder 3488-3489, Pl. 30; Petrie, *Objects of Daily Use*, pp. 14-15, Pl. 11, 8 A; see also our illustrations, D. 115-127.

and since that was for a long time not understood, their purpose remained obscure.¹² A reaper is bending to his work, cutting several stalks of grain with a long-handled sickle; a few stubbles of the cut stalks stand in front of the reaper. Behind him is a tree. The man wears a tunic belted at the waist and forming a kind of kilt reaching to his knees; a conical cap covers his head. Variations from this type are trivial (D. 115-125). On some specimens it is doubtful whether the upper part of the reaper's body is clothed; the kilt or apron may be the only garment. On one stone the cap seems to have a long vizor.¹³ On others the man is wearing leggings.¹⁴ The number of grain stalks is three, five, or six. In one or two specimens the design is enclosed by the ouroboros, the snake holding the end of his tail in his mouth,¹⁵ and in one example the reaper seems to be standing on a snake which does not encircle the whole design but merely serves as a ground line.¹⁶ In several of the stones something hangs from a limb of the tree, perhaps the reaper's outer garment.

In all but a few of these stones the reverse bears the inscription *σχίων*, sometimes spelled *σχίον*, sometimes accompanied by one or more magical signs or characters.¹⁷ The word puzzled the editors not a little, but it is simply a beheaded or aphaeretic form of *ισχίων*, "for the hips"; the genitive is like that previously noted in *στομάχου*, "for the stomach." There was a tendency, which began in classical times and became more marked later, to pronounce an unaccented vowel lightly before sigma followed by a mute; and, not unnaturally, the uncertainty about this weak initial syllable sometimes led not only to the omission of the vowel where it belonged but also to the introduction of a vowel where it had no place. One may compare the doublets *ἀσπάλαξ*, *σπάλαξ* and *ἀσταφίς*, *σταφίς*, the late occurrence of such forms as *σχάς*, *σχάδιον* for *ισχάς*, *ισχάδιον*; *σχάρα* for *ἔσχάρα*; and the Hesychian gloss *ἰσχερω̄· ἐξῆς*, where the first word is obviously from *σχερός*.¹⁸ Actual evidence for *σχίον* = *ισχίον* is scanty apart from these amulets; but in the form *σκίον* the word occurs in a medieval Greek charm,¹⁹ and in a Coptic-Greek magical manuscript published by W. H. Worrell a formula for curing hip pains is introduced by the words **ΕΤΒΕ ΠΕΣΧΙΟΝ: ΤΟΚΙΜΟΝ**,

¹² The explanation of the reaper type, which is here presented in full, was given in all essentials, but with fewer specimens to use as illustrations, in a paper read by me before the Archaeological Institute of America, December 30, 1930. It was reported by title only, "The Reaper Design on Gnostic Amulets," *AJA* 35 (1931), 58. However, I did not carry out the purpose, then announced, of publishing the study immediately. Mr. Henri Seyrig, who arrived independently at the same interpretation of these stones, published it in his valuable article "Invidiae Medici" in *Berytus*, 1, 10-11, and further confirmed it in *Berytus*, 2, 50. I have taken account of his contributions to the subject as well as of my own.

¹³ D. 118. This must be the stone brought from Egypt by Greville Chester, which Longpérier described in a communication to the Société des antiquaires de France (see their *Bulletin*, 1867, pp. 121 f.).

¹⁴ D. 125; *Berytus*, 2, 50; cf. also D. 124.

¹⁵ D. 125. ¹⁶ D. 123.

¹⁷ The reverse of a haematite reaper amulet in the University of Michigan (D. 119) is inscribed *Σαβᾶω*. One of the two in the De Clercq collection (3488) has the acclamation *εἰς θεός* on the reverse.

¹⁸ These phenomena are discussed and illustrated by K. Dieterich, "Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der griechischen Sprache," *Byzantinisches Archiv*, 1, 29-36.

¹⁹ F. Pradel, *Griechische und süditalische Gebete, Beschwörungen, usw.* (RGV III, 3), p. 81.

i.e. "for the hip; an approved (*δόκιμον*) cure."²⁰ The form *σχίον* must underlie the late Latin *scia*, *sciaticus* (whence our "sciatica"); the manuscripts read *sciadicos dolores* in Pliny *N. H.* 26, 42, where the editors print *ischiadicos*. Any lingering doubt about the meaning of *σχίων* on these amulets would be removed by the inscription of one belonging to Mr. Seyrig, *σχίων θεραπεία*, "cure for the hips."²¹

The choice of this particular type as a remedy for pains in the hips seems to be explained by a naïve reasoning. Reapers, of all laborers, seem most to need the power of free and supple movement from the waist; perhaps to a sufferer from lumbago or sciatica a reaper in the fields seemed to be immune from such tortures, and hence the figure of a man reaping grain would be good magic for his ailment. As Seyrig puts it, the sciatic patient would like to be able to do such work when his cure is accomplished.

A few variations on the type described deserve mention. The University of Michigan has a round flat orange carnelian which shows the reaper in the usual attitude, but the lapidary has humorously added a bird perched on the back of the stooping man.²² Since there is no inscription on the reverse, this specimen might be considered a rather crude piece of genre work with no magical meaning. But the attitude of the reaper, and still more his dress, shows that the design is only a variant of a type well known as an amulet, and it also probably belongs to that class.

One of Mr. Seyrig's three specimens of this type has an unusual form.²³ It is a rather thick trapezoidal pendant, apparently of steatite. A projection above was pierced with a suspension hole, but the upper half of the projection has broken off. On the obverse side below the hole is a small remnant of a bronze clasp or mounting, which has stained the stone by its corrosion. The obverse bears in rather shallow cutting the reaper design, showing nothing unusual except that the man's cap is sharp-pointed. On the reverse instead of the usual *σχίων* there are several letters from which I can get no meaning, arranged in four lines.

Another specimen in the Michigan collection illustrates the previously noted tendency to combine in one amulet types associated with the cure of different diseases.²⁴ This is a small broad oval plate of a black slatelike stone which has not been exactly identified. A projection at the top is neatly pierced for a cord in the plane of the flat surface. One side shows the characteristic design of the uterine amulets, the other the reaper bending to his work under an overarching tree, the trunk of which is behind him. An ibis is perched on a limb of the tree over the reaper's head, and from the same limb a wineskin is suspended. The man's cap has a tall peak on its top. This side has no inscription, and a few letters that are legible on the reverse make no sense. The combination of two designs which had different purposes

²⁰ University of Michigan Library, MS. 136, l. 221. This is a small vellum codex of seven leaves originally eight; edited by W. H. Worrell, *Orientalia*, 4 (1935), 17-37.

²¹ *Berytus*, 2, 50; D. 125.

²² D. 122.

²³ D. 127.

²⁴ D. 126.

suggests that it was meant to relieve a woman who suffered from the pains in the loins associated with dysmenorrhea or prolapsus.

This account of the reaper stones would suffice to explain their character as amulets. But of the type, considered apart from its magical significance, something remains to be said. First, it should be observed that the reaper cutting grain sometimes appears as a mere decorative design, with no indication of any magical purpose. There is an example of this in an amethyst in the British Museum, thought to be a work of the first century after Christ.²⁵ The action of the reaper and his stooping posture are as on amulets, but there is no tree behind him, and he wears no cap; and as might be expected, the style of the amethyst is freer and better. An agate figured by Gorlaeus may resemble the amulets more closely, for the reaper seems to wear a cap, and a single stalk behind him may be an engraver's misunderstanding of a small shrub or tree.²⁶ But the location of the stone is unknown, and the cuts in Gorlaeus are untrustworthy in matters of detail.

A reaper type that is obviously related to that seen on the amulets²⁷ was used on the reverse of some Alexandrian bronze coins, all apparently of Antoninus Pius, and probably all of the fifth year of his reign (Pl. XXII, Fig. 1).²⁸ There are several minor differences among the coins, and not all of these differences are paralleled on the amulets. On some of the coins the reaper wears a conical cap, on others he is bareheaded; some show the tree behind him, others do not. On one type a sheaf of cut grain lies on the ground before the reaper. From these coins is probably derived a reaper type found on some lead tokens from Oxyrhynchus and (perhaps) Hermopolis. There is reason to think that amulet types have not infrequently been drawn from coins, and, in fact, there seems to be at least one certain example of this, namely, a Palestinian coin (New Samaria) showing the statue of Marsyas carrying a wineskin, which, apparently arbitrarily interpreted as Aeolus with the winds in a sack, was used for a colic amulet.²⁹

The question why the reaper should serve as a coin type does not, strictly speaking, concern this investigation, but it is not without interest. R. S. Poole, who published one of the coins of Antoninus with this reverse, thought that the reaper might be an Egyptian constellation, since some astronomical symbols are certainly found on coins.³⁰ But there is no evidence in any ancient

²⁵ *B. M. Cat. Gems*, 2166, Pl. 27 (D. 114).

²⁶ *Dactyliotheca*, II, 226.

²⁷ The resemblance of the reaper amulets to the coin type seems to have been noticed for the first time by Longpérier (*Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de France*, 1867, 121); but the genuineness of the white gold (electrum) coin that he cites is said to be open to suspicion (De Ridder, in his comment on No. 3488 of the De Clercq collection). It is in the Cabinet des Médailles, and its reverse, with the reaper, is shown in Imhoof-Blumer and Keller, *Tier- und Pflanzenbilder*, Pl. 9, 25. I do not know on what authority the last-named writers say that the reaper is also found on bronze coins of Pautalia (Thrace). So far as I have been able to learn, it is seen only on Alexandrian bronzes of Antoninus Pius.

²⁸ *B. M. Cat. Alex.*, 1092, Pl. 12; Dattari 2986-2989 (2987 and 2989 shown on Pl. 26). J. G. Milne has published two lead tokens with the reaper type (*Catalogue of Alexandrian Coins in the Ashmolean Museum*, 5341 b, Pl. 6; 5403 b, Pl. 7). See also Dattari 6491, 6546, Pl. 37.

²⁹ See the discussion of this type above, pp. 64-66.

³⁰ R. S. Poole in *B. M. Cat. Alex.*, pp. lvii-lviii.

sources for the existence of a constellation of the Reaper,³¹ while there is much to be said for the view that the reaper merely represents summer, the season of harvest.³² A figure holding a sickle certainly symbolizes summer on coins of Commodus, Caracalla, and Geta,³³ which show personifications of all four seasons, with the inscription TEMPORUM FELICITAS or FELICIA TEMPORA, and a sickle enters into the design for the sixth month in the chronograph published by Strzygowski.³⁴ Christian paintings adopt the reaper as a symbol of summer,³⁵ and in the Byzantine middle ages he was the symbol of June.³⁶ The subject could be illustrated at considerable length, but it is sufficiently clear already that the reaper type may have been used merely to mark the season when the coin was minted.

There is, however, one more factor which should be mentioned, particularly since we are dealing with coins of Egypt. From very early times a rich harvest of grain seemed to the Egyptian the most appropriate symbol of felicity, so that even in the other world the souls of the blessed were represented as reaping grain in the Elysian fields. Designs showing the departed so engaged are known from copies of the Book of the Dead and from tomb paintings and reliefs (Pl. XXII, Fig. 2).³⁷ The reaper of the coins may not have had a religious meaning, though a competent authority thinks that religious tendencies dominated the coinage of Antoninus Pius. The incidence of a rich harvest may have prompted the mintmaster to use a design that appealed to all Egyptians by its ancient associations and by its symbolic allusion to that plenty which, like other blessings, was held to be a gift of the divine emperor. Nor would the significance of Egypt as the harvest field of the whole empire be forgotten.

Here we may add an amulet meant to cure gout, which has been briefly mentioned before. It is a sardonyx in the Russian Imperial Collection,

³¹ Boll, *Sphaera*, pp. 230-231.

³² This was the opinion of Drexler (*Woch. Klass. Phil.*, 1895, pp. 29-30) and of Dattari. It is made all the more probable by Dattari's publication of a lead token which has on one side a reaper, on the other a ploughman with his oxen (6546, Pl. 37). The ploughman apparently represents autumn.

³³ A. L. Millin, *Mythol. Gall.*, No. 91 (p. 16, Pl. 28); H. Cohen, *Descr. des monnaies*, IV², p. 148, No. 57; p. 257, No. 34. These references are taken from Drexler.

³⁴ *Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Ergänzungsheft* 1, 70, Pl. 24. On the frieze now built into the façade of the church of Hagios Eleutherios in Athens there is a nude figure with a sickle (?) and some stalks of grain; it probably represents summer. See J. C. Webster, *The Labors of the Months*, p. 11, Pl. 1, 24. Webster's work shows by many medieval illustrations that the figure of a reaper represented harvest time and was associated with different summer months according to climatic conditions. Literary evidence in the form of Latin verses (second and fifth centuries) describing the work of the months is cited on pp. 105, 109. See also P. Waltz's discussion of three epigrams of the Palatine Anthology in *Mélanges Desrousseaux*, pp. 489-500. Particularly important for our Egyptian reaper is the epigram (9, 383) with the verse (9):

λήϊα δ' αὐανθέντα Παχῶν δρεπάρησι φυλάσσει.

Pachon, approximately corresponding to May, would be the harvest month in Egypt.

³⁵ Martigny, *Dict. des antiquités chrétiennes*, p. 708.

³⁶ Eustathius (Eumathius) 4, 18.

³⁷ For illustrations see Capart, *Thebes*, p. 338, fig. 250; Budge, *The Papyrus of Ani*, III, Pl. 35; *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum*, December, 1930, p. 25, fig. 28.

described by Koehler in 1836.³⁸ The obverse represents Perseus flying towards the right. He wears a chlamys and Phrygian cap, and the wings attached to his boots are slightly indicated. In his left hand he holds the head of Medusa, in the right the *harpe*, or scimitar, which is his regular attribute. The reverse is inscribed $\phi\upsilon[\gamma\epsilon] \pi\omicron\delta\acute{\alpha}\gamma\rho\alpha, [\Pi]\epsilon\rho\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma \sigma\epsilon \delta\iota\acute{\omega}\chi\iota$ (l. $\delta\iota\acute{\omega}\kappa\epsilon\iota$). It is a useful example of an amulet containing no non-Greek elements.

A stone in my possession, formerly in the Wyndham Cook collection, illustrates the previously noted tendency to apply a proved amulet type to new uses for which it was not intended.³⁹ It is properly a uterine amulet, belonging to a large class which will be treated in a later division of these medical stones. It differs from most of the specimens in its material, which is a deep red jasper instead of the usual haematite; otherwise it is rather ordinary. On the obverse an ouroboros encloses the uterine symbol, which resembles a round pot turned mouth down, with three deities above it. In the center, on the vessel itself, is a crudely executed mummy, doubtless intended for Osiris, with a flail whip over each elbow. On the curving appendages that extend outward to each side from the top of the "vessel" stand two goddesses facing the mummy, probably Isis and Nephthys. Round the rim, outside the ouroboros, is the word Ororiouth followed by a character Υ (four times) and several combinations of the vowels. The reverse bears the inscription $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota \pi\omicron\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$,⁴⁰ which shows that the stone was expected to relieve pains in the feet.⁴¹ There is no reason to doubt that the reverse inscription is contemporary with the work on the obverse, else we might surmise that it was cut by a much later owner, knowing nothing about the original purpose of the design, who sought to turn an old and mysterious amulet to his own use.

An amulet in the form of a bronze prism, now in the Antioch Museum, was intended to keep the wearer free from some sort of lameness, the cause

³⁸ H. Koehler, "Über ein Schreiben Rubens' an Peiresc," *Mém. Acad. St.-Petersbourg*, Ser. 6, 3, 1836, 21 f., No. 27 on the folding plate. See R. Heim, *Incantamenta magica*, pp. 479-482, for further examples of formulas containing threats against disease and other dangers.

³⁹ *Wyndham Cook* 252; some points in the description are to be corrected. The editors' suggestion that $\epsilon\pi\iota\pi\omicron\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$ is equivalent to $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\pi\acute{\omicron}\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$ is unacceptable.

⁴⁰ The diminutive $\pi\omicron\delta\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ is rare in classical Greek. *LSJ* cites it from Epicharmus (fr. 57), who uses it of the feet of a crawfish or some similar crustacean, and from (Hippocr.) *Epid.* 7, 52, where it is used of an infant's feet. In both cases the word is a true diminutive. In Modern Greek it has lost the diminutive force, and, in the form $\pi\omicron\delta\acute{\iota}$, has become the ordinary word for foot. The gem inscription shows that this extended use of the diminutive form must have begun in popular speech at a much earlier period.

⁴¹ A red jasper in the *Southesk Collection* (N 51) has on the obverse a solar deity (Horus as Helios, according to the catalogue) in a chariot drawn by four galloping horses preceded by Phosphoros carrying a torch. The reverse has a brief magical formula followed by the prayer, "Keep me ageless and full of favor"; the words might be those of an aging hetaira. On the bevel is $\alpha\upsilon\chi\omicron\nu\iota\epsilon\pi\iota\pi\omicron\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$. The latter part is perhaps to be read $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota \pi\omicron\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$ (H for Π). $\alpha\upsilon\chi\omicron\nu\iota$ is probably to be connected with the acclamation $\alpha\upsilon\chi\epsilon\iota$, $\alpha\upsilon\chi\epsilon\tau\omega$ (Peterson, *Heis Theos*, pp. 181-182, 319). $\alpha\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\iota$ is not to be recommended because the short form of the verb is preferred in these acclamations. $\alpha\upsilon\chi\omicron\nu$ seems to be a hybrid imperative form. As such it may be taken as an interjection, without syntactic connection with the next words. The prepositional phrase may indicate that the woman's fear of oncoming age was pointed by twinges of arthritis.

not specified.⁴² An inscription on the four faces of the object reads Φοῖβος κελεύει μὴ κύιν πόνον πόδας. The formula is like that prescribed by Marcellus for a colic amulet,⁴³ except that Φοῖβος takes the place of θεός and πόδας that of κόλον.

MISCELLANEOUS

Among the odd items that belong to the class of medical amulets there is a group of seven stones alike in material, obverse design, and reverse inscription. All are of yellow jasper or a similar yellowish stone, and all have as their obverse design a scorpion, which is very well executed on some of the specimens. The inscriptions on the reverse differ only in trivial errors.

British Museum 56180. Obverse, scorpion, reverse *ωρθμενχινιαμβων*. This is probably the correct form of the magical word.

Lewis Collection, p. 81 (Class C, 22). Obverse, a finely cut scorpion, reverse *ωιβμενχενιαμβων*. The engraver probably read a small-looped rho as iota, and mistook a rectangular theta for beta.

Museo Borgiano, p. 457, 21. Obverse, scorpion, reverse *ωρθμενχινι . . . λβων*. The lambda of Zoega's copy probably represents the second half of mu.

Seyrig 25 (D. 128). Obverse, scorpion, reverse *ωθμενχινιλαμβων*. Lambda is, as often, meant for alpha, the cross stroke of which is frequently omitted in amulet inscriptions. In this specimen the reverse inscription looks later than the well-cut obverse design; but it may be that some illiterate lapidaries were capable of better work in a design from life than in copying a text.

Ustinow collection. Obverse, scorpion; reverse, *ορθμενχινιαμβω*. Discussed by S. Eitrem in Eitrem and Fridrichsen, "Ein christliches Amulett auf Papyrus," p. 21, with Pl. 2, 13 (cf. p. 11); in *Forhandlingar i Videnskapsselskapet*, Oslo, 1921.

Oval intaglio found in Tunisia. Agate, "couleur café au lait." Obverse, scorpion; reverse, *ωργεμηνχινιανξων*. Reported by Poinssot, *Bull. arch.*, 1936-1937, 47-48.

Oval yellow jasper. Obverse, scorpion; reverse, *ωθμενχενιαμew*. *Bull. arch.*, 1936-1937, 344. The reporter, Lapeyre, had seen another stone of the same material, with the same design and inscription, in private possession at Carthage, and still another at an earlier date.

These stones, like some other groups, show clearly that certain magical words of unknown meaning, or meaningless, were regarded as powerful for certain purposes and when used under certain conditions. In spite of its variations the word on the reverse of these stones was meant to be the same, and whether meaningless or not, it was chosen not at random but for the sake of some power imputed to it. It is probable that these five amulets — and others like them may yet appear — closely followed a prescription set down in some magical book that was common and much used.

It is natural to think that these stones may have been intended to protect against the painful sting of scorpions, a risk well known in Mediterranean lands. The scorpion design may have been apotropaic, just as on some Attic vases representations of the eye were probably meant to ward off the evil eye. But another possibility must be allowed, particularly with amulets which, like these, are late enough to come under the influence of systematic astrology. Adepts in that science assigned to each constellation of the zodiac

⁴² Published by H. Seyrig, *Berytus*, 2, 48.

⁴³ Marcellus *De medic.* 29, 23; cf. p. 64 above.

a special part of the human body to govern and influence for good or ill, and the region assigned to the Scorpion included the genital organs. It is possible, therefore, that the type that we are considering was valued not only as a protection against scorpions but also as a remedy for sexual disorders and disabilities.⁴⁴

More than other dangerous ailments, hydrophobia was liable to the imputation of demonic origin. The distressing symptoms attending the later stages of the disease — the convulsions, the nervous excitability, the mental disturbances — were enough like the phenomena of “demonic possession” to fix in untutored minds the conviction that a demon was responsible for the sufferer’s agonies and death. It is not surprising, then, to find that a *δαίμων ὑδροφόβας* is conjured away in an inscription on one of the Athenian amulets published by Delatte, a greenish-black jasper.⁴⁵ The obverse shows a rectangular space enclosing arrangements of the vowels in five lines, and a sixth line of magical characters. The space round this rectangle is set thick with more characters. The rectangle on the reverse contains a few characters, a star, crescent, and key, the whole surrounded, as on the obverse, with a number of other characters occupying the remainder of the surface. It is worth noting that no definite type is used for this amulet, and the absence of a special design may indicate that the stone was supposed to be protective in a general way; the reference to hydrophobia, which appears only on the bevel, may have been added at the buyer’s wish. The words are *φύγε δαίμων ὑδροφόβα ἀπὸ τοῦ φοροῦντος τοῦτο τὸ φυλακτήρι(ο)ν*,⁴⁶ “Flee, demon hydrophobia, from the wearer of this amulet.”

The word *φθίσις*, “wasting,” became a definite term for pulmonary consumption at an early date. A gem inscription published by Mouterde may have been intended as a safeguard against this disease, although it is equally possible that all wasting diseases are comprehended.⁴⁷ The important words are *ἀπάλλαξον τῆς φθίσεως καὶ τῆς νόσου*, “Rid me of the wasting and the disease.” No design accompanies the inscription, which covers both sides of the stone. The amulet was made for Pancrates, son of Mathenis, who may have been a Christian, if the editor’s reconstruction of the opening words is right; some important letters are uncertain.

⁴⁴ The statements made above are fully elaborated and documented in S. Eitrem’s essay “Der Skorpion in Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte,” *Symb. Oslo.*, 7 (1928), 53–82; see especially 68 and 70. The arguments used to show that the scorpion had a sexual significance before the time of the astrologers are not entirely convincing, though the idea must have had some foundation in popular belief.

⁴⁵ *Musée Belge*, 18 (1914), 70, No. 31.

⁴⁶ The form *ὑδροφόβας* (masculine) was used by Plutarch and some medical writers (references in *LSJ*), and it appears also on the silver lamella published by Froehner, a long phylactery of Jewish origin, directed against a variety of demonic visitations (W. Froehner, “Sur une amulette basilidienne” [Caen, 1867], an extract with renumbered pages from *Bull. Soc. des Antiquaires de Normandie*, 7, 217 ff.). It is scarcely necessary to say that there is nothing Basilidian about the text.

⁴⁷ Jalabert and Mouterde, *Inscr. gr. et lat. de la Syrie*, I, 120, No. 221.