

Received December 12, 1765.

IV. *Account of an inedited Coin of the Empress Crispina. In a Letter to the Rev. Thomas Birch, D. D. Secretary to the Royal Society, from the Rev. John Swinton, B. D. F. R. S. Member of the Academy degli Apatisti at Florence, and of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona in Tuscany.*

S I R,

Read Feb. 13,
1766.

AN inedited Greek coin of the empress Crispina, which seems to have had a place formerly assigned it in the cabinet of the celebrated Professor Ott, and from thence afterwards to have passed into that of his son, the late Reverend Mr. Ott, some years since fell into my hands. The medal is nearly of the size of the middle Roman brass, and tolerably well preserved. The workmanship is somewhat rude, and favours sufficiently both of the age and the remote province in which it first appeared. On one side is exhibited the head of Crispina, wife of the emperor Commodus, attended by the Greek legend ΚΡΙΣΠΙΝΑ ΣΕΒΑΚΤΗ, CRISPINA AVGVSTA; and on the reverse two human figures, one sitting in a chair, with a lance in its left hand, and the other standing by its side, present themselves to our view. They are both

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surrounded

furrounded by the inscription ΔΑΡΔΑΝΟΕΛΛΗΝΩΝ, DARDANOSSE NORVM, or DARDANOSSENSIVM, which evidently points at the inhabitants of some antient town. Not one of the letters, either of the legend or inscription, has suffered greatly from the injuries of time.

Who the Dardanoffenians were, or in what part of the world situated, I must not take upon me absolutely to decide; the word ΔΑΡΔΑΝΟΣΣΑ, DARDANOSSA, not appearing, as the name of a city, in any antient writer. But that this word occurred, in such a sense, in the original text (1) of Ptolemy, and was afterwards converted by some ignorant transcriber into DARANISSA, which still remains in all the printed and manuscript copies of that author, will, I persuade myself, not be contested by the critics of the present age. The coin therefore was struck at Dardanoffa, or Daraniffa, which seems to have been a town seated in Sophene, a province of the Greater Armenia, in the reign of the emperor Commodus, where the Roman power at that time prevailed. And this is consonant to the faith of history (2), from whence we learn, that the conquest of Armenia was effected, after the reduction of Artaxata, by Statius Priscus, not many years before Commodus ascended the imperial throne. Nay, the whole country is said to have been conquered, and reduced to the form of a Roman province, in the days of Trajan. The figure of the *Sigma* likewise on this medal, so similar to the form of that element on certain Armenian

(1) Ptol. *Geograph.* Lib. V. c. 13.

(2) Dio, Lib. LXVIII. Jul. Capitolin. in *Marc.* & in *Ver.* Lucian. p. 347. Jamblichus apud Photium, p. 242.

coins of the same age, will bring a fresh accession of strength to the notion here proposed to the consideration of the learned; if it will not, in conjunction with what has been offered, evince this beyond the possibility of a doubt.

As the medal before me has never been hitherto published, nor perhaps ever seen in any other cabinet, either of the curious or the learned, I was inclined to believe, that a description of it, as well as the draught of it attending this paper, [See TAB. I.] might not prove altogether unacceptable to the Royal Society; especially, as it enables us to emend the corrupted proper name of a town in Ptolemy, and evinces Dardanossa, or Daranissa, to have been subject to Commodus when he presided over the Roman world. Nor can any thing, as the authority of MSS. must give way to that of antient coins and inscriptions, be better supported than such an emendation. Nor have any coins of this city been ever discovered before. All which will, I flatter myself, be deemed a sufficient apology for the trouble given on this occasion by,

S I R,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

Christ-Church, Oxon.
Dec. 7, 1765.

John Swinton.