XVIII. *Part of a Letter from Smart Lethieullier, to Dr. Charles Lyttelton, relating to some Antiquities found in the County of Essex.*

Read at the SOCIETY of ANTIQUARIES, November 27, 1746.

IN a letter I wrote some years ago to my worthy and learned friend, Mr. Roger Gale, I acquainted him that, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifteen, a Roman pavement was discovered in Wansted Park; that it was immediately destroyed by digging holes through it, for planting an avenue of Trees, the owner of it having no great taste for things of that nature. But, from the account I got from Mr. Holt, the then surveyor of the works, I found that there was the figure of a man on horse-back, plainly to be seen, in the center, and with several borders of wreathed work and ornaments, as are usual in these kinds of pavements. From the situation of this pavement, as I remember the ground thirty years ago (though the face of it now is totally changed), viz, upon an easy declivity fronting the south, close by a beautiful well of bright water, and at a small distance from the foundation of a building, which, by the nature and size of the bricks, I was certain, was Roman; I was induced to believe, that this might have been the pavement of a banqueting house belonging to some Roman Villa, by reason of the beauty of the situation, its vicinity to the capital, and the Icening-street, which I had the pleasure of shewing you where it crosses the forest, passes through my estate, and pushes for the passage crosses the river Roden, now called Ilford, though two stone bridges have in more modern times been built there.

BUT this idea of its being a place of mirth and pleasure has very lately been quite overthrown; for Lord Tilney, having this

summer made considerable alterations in this park, when they came to the spot, where this pavement formerly lay, the head-workman came to acquaint me, that they had discovered the fragments of broken pots, with divers bones, teeth, &c. my curiosity quickly carried me to the place, where I found the fragments of several urns of different colours, but of the coarsest earth, with a great deal of brick and tiles, which had undoubtedly been used in some building there, and among them one of those common Roman coins, that has on one side a head in armour, inscribed VRBS ROMA, and on the reverse, Romulus and Remus-sucking the Wolf, under them P S I S, which Du Cange reads “percussa Siffiae.” The Roman coins found here admit of no hesitation, as to what people these urns belonged; and the number of them being but small, and the situation near four miles remote from Leyton, the *Durolitum* of Antoninus (as I think there is little room to question), we may conjecture this to have been the Mausoleum of some private family, whose Villa perhaps stood on that more elevated situation, where Wansted now stands.

THAT this side of our extensive forest, perhaps for a mile or two in width, was very early grubbed of its wood, and converted into culture and habitations, seems to admit of no dispute. Londinum, we know, soon became a populous city, and under a necessity of a large quantity of fuel, which could no where be had nearer than this forest; and I have observed, that, when they came to carry their magnificent roads throughout this kingdom, they always endeavoured to have an open country on each hand of them; a thing on all accounts useful, either for marching of troops, or safety of travellers. And as that (which, for distinction sake, I will call the southern Icening-street) ran evidently very near the present great road from London to Rumford, and we find Wansted mentioned as a Lordship, confirmed, with its appurtenances, by Edward the Confessor, to the church of Westminster; and in Domesday it is said to belong to St. Paul (Quere, “if not St. Peter?”); there can be no reason to be surprized that remains of the Romans should

should be discovered in this neighbourhood. One difficulty still remains, which is, to ascertain what period of the Roman government in this island these urns can be ascribed to.

THE current opinion is you know, that Burning ceased with the Antonines, and that Sepulture then took place: but this must evidently be understood to extend even to the last emperor, who took that name, viz. Heliogabalus; and not to be confined to the time of Marcus Aurelius; since, more than thirty years after his decease, we have a clear account of the burning of the Emperor Severus, who died at York; and the learned Dr. Brown, with very strong arguments, supports his opinion, that burning in general did not cease (at least in these distant provinces) until after the thorough establishment of Christianity, which, were it not for tiring your patience, I think, I could confirm, by having been an eye-witness of a discovery, where urns of Pagans and coffins of Christians were both together in one spot.

S. L.

Aldersbrook, Sept. 27, 1746.

XIX. *Part of a Letter from Smart Lethieullier, Esq, to Mr. G. Vertue, relating to some Antiquities at Bourdeaux, in France.*

Read at the SOCIETY of ANTIQUARIES, March 27, 1746.

I PROMISED to send you some account of what remains of our English princes I was able to observe, during my stay at Bourdeaux, in France, once the capital of the large dominions they possessed in that Country; but you will soon perceive, how trifling and insignificant they are; pride and revenge having exer-