ART. XIX.—*Note on a Jade Drinking Vessel of the Emperor Jahángír.* By EDWARD THOMAS, F.R.S.

AMONG other curiosities dispersed at the sale of the late Col. C. S. Guthrie's Oriental Collection, Lot 118—described as "A DARK-GREEN JADE JAR, the neck engraved with an inscription"—realized £60, and was wisely retained in the family by Mr. Arbuthnot Guthrie.

The vase in question constitutes a most interesting memorial of the Great *Mughal* Emperor JAHÁNGÍR, being in fact one of his drinking vessels, cut expressly for his use at Fathpúr,¹ near his capital of Agra; and in its surroundings brings vividly before us the tales of his drunken revels, of which we hear so much from Captain Hawkins and Sir T. Roe, the Ambassador of James I. at the Court of the Indian monarch. W. Hawkins, an almost boon companion, in speaking of his potations, goes on to say—

"Foure or five sorts of very well dressed and roasted meats are brought him, of which as hee pleaseth, he eateth a bit to stay his stomacke, drinking once of his strong drinke. Then hee commeth forth into a private roome, where none can come, but such as himselfe nominateth, (for two yeeres together I was one of his attendants here). In this place he drinketh other five cupfuls, which is the portion the Physicians alot him. . . . And after he hath slept two houres, they awake him, and bring his supper to him, at which time he is not able to feede himselfe."—Hawkins (A.D. 1603–1611, A.H. 1018–1020), in Purchas, vol. i. p. 224.

Sir Thomas Roe's more reserved experiences are also preserved in his own words—

"The King sent me word, it was his birth day, and that all men did make merry, and to aske if I would drinke with them. . . . So hee called for a Cuppe of gold of mingled wine, halfe of the grape, halfe artificiall, and dranke, causing it to bee filled, and sent to me. . . . I dranke a little, but it was more strong than euer I tasted,

¹ Jahángír was born at Fathpúr Sikri, in 977 A.H.—Kháfi Khán, i. 69.

so that it made me sneeze, whereat he laughed.”—Sir T. Roe (A.D. 2nd Sept. 1616, A.H. 1025), Purchas, vol. i. p. 551; Pinkerton, vol. viii. p. 15; Churchill, vol. i. p. 636.

Jahángír's own confessions are embodied, with full naïveté, in his diary, which has been preserved in its more or less authentic form in the various memoirs of his life—

“Up to my fourteenth year I had never drunk wine, except two or three times in childhood, when my mother or nurses had given me some as a remedy for some childish ailment. Once also my father called for some spirit (*'arak'*) to the amount of a *tola*, and mixing it with rose-water, made me drink it as a remedy for a cough. In the days when my father was in the field against the Yúsufzái Afgháns, I was encamped near Átak, on the Níláb (Indus). I one day went out hunting. I met with many mishaps, and was very tired, when one of my attendants told me that if I would drink a cup of wine, it would relieve my fatigue and weariness. I was young, and prone to indulgence, so I sent a servant to the house of Hakím 'Alí for a refreshing drink. He brought me about a cup (*piyála*) and a half of yellow wine of sweet taste in a small bottle, and I drank it. The result was pleasant. From that time I took to wine-drinking, and from day to day took more and more, until wine of the grape had no effect upon me, and I took to spirit-drinking. In the course of nine years I got up to twenty cups of double-distilled spirit, fourteen of which I drank in the day, and the remaining six at night. The weight of this was six *sirs* of Hindústán, equal to one *man* of Irán. . . . No one dared to expostulate with me, and matters reached such an extreme, that when in liquor I could not hold my cup for shaking and trembling. I drank, but others held the cup for me. At last I sent for the *hakím* (doctor) Humám, brother of Hakím Abú-l Fath, who was one of my father's attendants, and placed my case before him. With great kindness and interest, he spoke to me without concealment, and told me that if I went on drinking spirits in this way for six

¹ “Being entered, you approach the King's Derbar or Seat, before which is also a small court inclosed with railles, couered ouer head with rich Semianes to keepe away the Sunne . . . sitting forth in a small more inward Court . . . into which none but the *Grandes* . . . are permitted to enter, where he drinks by number and measure, sometimes one and thirtie, and running over, mixing also among, seure iudicatures.”—Wm. Finch (A.D. 1610–11), Purchas, vol. i. p. 439.

“Often overcome with wine, but severely punishing that fault in others.”—Terry, Purchas, vol. ii. p. 1481. See also p. 387, his “Voyage to East India.” London, 1787.

months longer, my state would be past remedy. His advice was good, and life is dear. I was greatly affected by his words, and from that day I began to diminish my potations, but I took to eating *saluhá*. As I lessened my drink, I increased the opium, and I directed that the spirits should be mixed with wine of the grape; two parts wine and one spirit. Lessening my allowance daily, I reduced it in the course of seven years to six cups, each cup weighing eighteen *miskáls* and a quarter. For fifteen years I have now kept to this quantity, taking neither more nor less."—Elliot's *Historians, Waki'át-i Jahángirí*, vol. vi. p. 341. See also p. 285. [Entry under the tenth year of the reign, A.H. 1024, A.D. 1615.]

"The climate of this part of the country (Gujarát) was not beneficial to my health, and the physicians had advised me to lessen the quantity of wine I usually drank. I deemed this prudent, and began to do so. In the course of one week I reduced the quantity about one cup. Formerly I took six cups every night, each cup containing seven *tolas* and a half of liquor, that is, forty-five *tolas* altogether; but now each cup contained six and one-third of a *tola*, the whole being thirty-seven *tolas* and a half."—Elliot, vol. vi. p. 361. [Entry under the thirteenth year of the reign, A.H. 1027, A.D. 1618.]

These definitions of quantities enable us to determine the extent of the Emperor's potations. The two estimates¹ in *miskáls* and *Indian tolas* accord so closely that we need not seek to reconcile the weight of the *sir* of Hindústán or the *man* of Írán. Under these tests, our potentate, in his evil days, is found to have consumed 52 or 53 ounces of "double-distilled spirits." The quantity was sufficiently startling, but the strength and the quality of the liquor² must have been the great trial for the constitution.

Our monarch does not appear to have had any such scruples or reserve in the avowal of his tippling tendencies as has been sometimes attributed to him; for we find him causing the

¹ The *miskál* of 40 *ratis*, or 70 grains troy, gives as the maximum $70 \times 18\frac{1}{4} \times 20 = 53\cdot220$ ounces Apothecaries weight. The minimum being $18\frac{1}{4} \times 6 = 15\cdot966$ oz.

The *tola* of 96 *ratis*, or 168·00 grains ($7\frac{1}{2}$ *tolas* $\times$ 6 = 45), gives a maximum of 52·600 oz., and a minimum of 37 *tolas* = 15·750 oz.

² Bábu Rajendralál Mitra has given us a full account of the strong drinks of the ancient Hindús in the *Journal Asiatic Society of Bengal* for 1873, p. 1. He there shows that *arrack* was in use among the rites of the Vedic Aryans.

representation of his own sacred person to be stamped on the coinage of the empire, in the act of raising the wine-cup to his lips, so early as the sixth year of his reign,¹ a device which is retained, with slight modification, till his ninth year. In these examples the cup is shaped like an ordinary China tea-cup, so that we must suppose that this Jade vessel² constituted the water mug of his repentant efforts at the reduction of stimulants, an inference alike demanded by the date and tenor of the inscription itself, as well as by the form of the jar, which follows that of the ordinary Indian *Lotah*, made

¹ Marsden, No. 1335. Gold. Weight, 168 grains. A.H. 1020.

Obv. Bust of Jahāngir raising the wine-cup preparatory to drinking. A light nimbus surrounds the head.

Legend. *Right*—شبه جهانگیر شاه اکبر شاه Image of Jahāngir Shāh (son of) Akbar Shāh.

Left—سنه شش جلوس Year six of the reign.

Rev. The Sun in the constellation of Leo, occupying the full surface of the piece—at the foot of the device the words

سنه هجری ۱۰۲۰ Year 1020 Hijri.

Marsden, 1338. Gold. Weight, 167 grains. Ajmír, A.H. 1023.

Obv. Full figure of the King seated on his chair of State, holding a cup of wine. A prominent nimbus encircles the head.

Legend. *Left* verse—قضا بر سکه زر کرد تصویر By (divine) decree the picture of the form of H. M. Shāh Jahāngir was placed on the gold coin.

Right—شبه حضرت شاه جهانگیر

Rev. Small sun in the centre.

Above—ز روز ازل در عدد شد برابر From eternity, the numeral letters for *Jahāngir* and *Allah Akbar* have been in unison. [The totals in either case being 292.]

Below—حروف جهانگیر و الله اکبر

On the two sides—یا معین سنه ۹ ضرب اجمیر ۱۰۲۳

Oh Defender! Year 9 (of the reign). Struck at Ajmír, 1023 (A.H.).

Variety. Similar coins, with the figure of the monarch and the lion and the sun (of No. 1335) reduced in size to meet the more ample legends. See Marsden, p. 609. The coins are dated *Ajmír*, the 8th year and the 9th year = 1023 A.H.

² William Hawkins, in his enumeration of Jahāngir's treasures, says, "Of vases for wine very faire and rich, set with jewels, there are one hundred. Of drinking cuppes five hundred, that is to say made of one piece of Ballace ruby and also emerods, of *eshim* (which stone cometh from Cathay), of Turkish stone and other sorts of stones."—Purchas, vol. i. p. 217. This *eshim* is the identical term which is engraved on the cup, *یشم yashm*, the Chinese *Yuh-shih*, "gem-stone."

upright in the neck for facility of drinking, with an inner groove to receive and retain a cover. The cup holds $25\frac{1}{2}$ ounces weight of water.

INSCRIPTION ON THE CUP.

هسپت این طرف یشم خوش حوهر	الله ابر
از جهانگیر شاه شاه ابر	در فاکبور مرتب شد
باد آب حیات در ظرفش	۱۴ جلوس سنه
با بود آب خضر جان برور	هجری ۱۰۲۸ سنه

TRANSLATION.

Diamond scrolls.

- 1 God is great.
- 2 Manufactured at Fathpúr,
- 3 in the 14th year of the reign,
- 4 the year 1028 Hijri.

Intermediate spaces.

- 1 This cup of jade, choice gem, is
- 2 (the cup) of Jahángír Sháh, the great king.
- 3 Let the water of life be in his cup,
- 4 so that it may be the water of
Khizr,¹ life prolonging.

¹ It is necessary to examine the Muhammadan idea of the prophet Khizr, which may be gathered from Vullers's note on the word, giving, as we must suppose, the local view of the Indo-Persian Lexicographers.

"*خضر* *nom. prophetæ cujusdam* (پیغمبر) Bh. Quis fuit Khizr, cui fontem vitæ, cujus custos est, invenisse contigit, et vis vitalis tribuitur, totam naturam animans et viriditate induens, qui a periculis liberat et viam per deserta vitæ monstrat, ex iis, quæ Arabum et Persarum scriptores tradunt, haud intelligitur, quum alii sapientem quendam et socium Mosis, alii Eliam prophetam vel St. Georgium, alii denique Vezirum Alexandri illum fuisse contendunt."

See also Sale's Kurán, Surat xviii. note. "Some . . . suppose *Al Khedr*, having found out the fountain of life and drank thereof, became immortal; and that he had therefore this name from his flourishing and continual youth."

I have reproduced, with as much exactness as modern type admits of, the original extant record on the jade cup, omitting intentionally all dots and points of the Persian version, which the workers in hard stone have seen fit to leave out.¹ There may be a suspicion that certain discriminating dots have been designedly dropped, with a view to alternative, and to us enigmatical, readings of the more obvious version; for instance, هبیت “*is*” may be read as مہیت “*drunk*,” the succeeding ظرف “*cup*” is left as طرف, and the خوش جوهر, without the qualifying dots, may lend themselves to many saturnalian imageries. At first sight I supposed that the contrast of تا بود آب خضر implied a higher motive, as rising beyond the mundane آب حیات “*water of life*;”² but the general tenor of the couplet reduces the leading idea into something very sublunary, and the fabulous mission of the Prophet Khizr may perchance bring the whole version within the arena of the drunken orgies to which Jahángír and his English visitors so freely confess, and which were probably not altogether abandoned under the influence of the sanitary measure of comparative temperance, so newly inaugurated, to which his Majesty alludes.

¹ The Emperor Bábar, in noticing the abundance of artificers in India in 1526 A.D., and the presence of stone-masons from “Azerbaiján, Fars, Hindustán, and other countries,” goes on to remark, “In Agra alone, and of stone-cutters belonging to that place only, I every day employed on my palaces 680 persons, and on other works 1941 stone-cutters.”—Leyden’s Bábar, p. 334.

Thevenot, in Sháh Jahán’s time, refers to the perfection of one of the special industries of Agra, the working on hard stone. London, 1687. p. 39. See also Asiatic Researches, vol. xv. p. 434.

² Akbar had already given this name to water cooled with saltpetre.—Ain-i-Akbari, Gladwin, vol. i. p. 71.