XXIX.—*Letter from C. ROACH SMITH, Esq. F.S.A. to Captain W. H. SMYTH, F.R.S. Director, on the British Coins found in 1845 at Chesterford.*

Read 18th February, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR,

5, Liverpool-street, City,
February 15, 1847.

IN the paper which was recently communicated by the Honourable R. C. Neville, through me, to the Society, mention was made of some British coins. Casts have since been forwarded to me by Mr. Neville, viz.—

1. Obv. CVNOBEL . . . Galeated head and bust to the left.
Rev. TASC. FIL. A hog on its haunches, apparently browsing a plant.
2. Obv. CVNOBELINVS REX. Head to the right.
Rev. TAS? The letters A and s apparently united; a bull butting.
3. Obv. Head to the right.
Rev. A hog walking to the right; above, a lunette or part of a circle; below, a pearly star of five points.
4. Obv. . . VER. Head to the left.
Rev. A goat standing, to the left; in the field, stars, and a circle.
5. As Ruding, pl. 5, fig. 34.

Of these coins Nos. 1 and 2 are well known to numismatists. They have gained additional interest from the interpretation given by Mr. Birch^a to the hitherto puzzling word *Tascio* or *Tascia*, which, for a couple of centuries, furnished a theme for discussion and controversy, and brought into the field of literary disputation much learning and research to no satisfactory purpose. It remained for Mr. Birch to apply to the stubborn word the simple test of comparison, when it immediately resolved itself into *Tasciovanus*, and the F or FIL. became *Filius*; when these two words were found in conjunction with that of Cunobelinus, the entire legend natu-

^a See communication to the Numismatic Society, April 25th, 1844; published in the Numismatic Chronicle, vol. iii. p. 78. The Rev. Beale Poste in an elaborate paper on British Coins published in the Journal of the British Archæological Association, vol. i. p. 232, gives reasons for dissenting from Mr. Birch's interpretation and for proposing a different reading.

rally would be *Cunobelinus Filius Tasciovani*; "Cunobelin the son of Tasciovan;" suggested, no doubt, by the formula "Cæsar Divi F." on the coins of Augustus, which, together with the consular coins, in many instances furnished designs for the British currency.

The reverse of No. 1 is not from the same die as that engraved by Mr. Birch from the collection of Mr. Wigan; the inscription is in a different style, and the object before the hog seems to be more like a plant than a snake.

No. 3 appears to be a new type, but the coin is in bad preservation.

No. 4 is altogether new. The letters upon it appear to be VER; but, as the piece of metal has not covered the entire surface of the die, only a portion of the inscription appears. It may belong to the word VERVLAMIVM, often occurring upon the coins of Tasciovanus. The head is apparently that of Hercules, copied from a consular coin; the goat is derived probably from the same source.

I need not dwell upon the importance of these monuments, almost coeval with the earliest historical account of Britain. They are indeed almost the only works of art which we can point to and pronounce exclusively British. Weapons and ornaments, funeral urns, and the mounds which covered them may be disputed, but coins and their inscriptions admit of no doubt of correct appropriation. The new varieties which are constantly occurring (as in the little collection before us) should stimulate us to use every effort to secure those which may be brought to light in excavations, or by other means, for careful examination. Essex, as you are aware, was included in the kingdom of Cunobeline, and consequently in this county we find his coins in the greatest abundance. Some time since, I am informed, a considerable number were dug up in the vicinity of Colchester, and passed into the hands of a London dealer, by whom they were dispersed without any regard to the purposes of scientific inquiry to which they might have been made available.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

C. ROACH SMITH.

Capt. W. H. SMYTH, R.N.

Director of the Society of Antiquaries of London.