AN ENGLISH FIFTEENTH-CENTURY GOLD PENDANT.

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THIS small gold pendant, which measures only $\frac{7}{16}$ inch, 2 mm. in diameter, dates from *circa* 1490 and has a gadrooned edge and a grooved loop for suspension. This jewel, the designs upon which are engraved and enamelled in black, bears upon one side "The Image of Pity"[1] and upon the other "The Madonna and Child." These designs were probably derived from xylographic pictures, which at that period enjoyed considerable popularity, particularly "The Image of Pity," which, like "The Mass of St. Gregory," was reputed to be Indulgenced (Fig. 1).

This "Image of Pity" shows the half-length figure of Christ, Whose head, inclined to the left, has a cruciferous nimbus, standing in the tomb, His wounded hands are held cross-wise in front of His body, which exhibits the sacred wound in His right side.[2] Behind is the transom of the cross, whilst upon the left is the spear and on the right the reed and sponge. The Madonna, who is nimbed and veiled, faces to the right, supporting her Divine Child, Who is nimbed and lifts up His left hand towards her.

As previously mentioned, "The Image of Pity" was

[1] Cf *Bury Wills and Inventories*, Camden Society, p. 88. Will of Nicholas Talbot, 1501. "A relykt that hangyth a bowt my neckt w^{t} ij ymage ther upon, that on of our lord the othyr of our lady" . . . "a Seignt Gregorius pyte of gold enamelyd."

[2] *The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy*, ed. Harris Cowper, Chap. XXXV. "Judas . . . struck the right side of Jesus . . . that side . . . the Jews pierced with a spear."

much venerated, particularly during the latter half of the fifteenth century and earlier years of the sixteenth century, and was long anterior in origin to that more complex subject, "The Mass of St. Gregory," of which of course it forms the essential element.

It would appear that there was, in the Middle Ages, a painting of "The Image of Pity," the work of a Byzantine artist, of the twelfth or thirteenth century, preserved in the Church of Holy Cross, in Rome. From this picture, an engraving,[1] doubtless elaborated, was made, *circa* 1500, by Israel van Meckenem, which closely resembles the gold pendant under review.

"The Mass of St. Gregory," which would seem to have developed out of "The Image of Pity," represents the appearance of our Lord to the saint, during the celebration of the Mass, surrounded by various emblems of The Passion.

"Passion Emblems," such as occur in "The Mass of St. Gregory," were very popular in England, at the close of the fifteenth century, for the enrichment of glass quarries, though, alas, but few such now survive. The sixteen quarries illustrated (Fig. 2) were inserted, for more than a century, in a window of Lymm Old Hall, Cheshire, but previous to that were probably in Sefton Church, Lancashire, where a few corresponding quarries still exist.

The reputed Indulgence, which varied from six to forty-six thousand years, was believed to be conferred by repeating, before "The Image of Pity" or "The Mass of St. Gregory," from three to seven of "The Seven Prayers of St. Gregory," together with a corresponding number of Paters and Aves.

[1] Émil Mâle, *L'Art religieux de la fin du Moyen Age*, Fig. 49.

FIG. 1.—NELSON COLLECTION. X3.

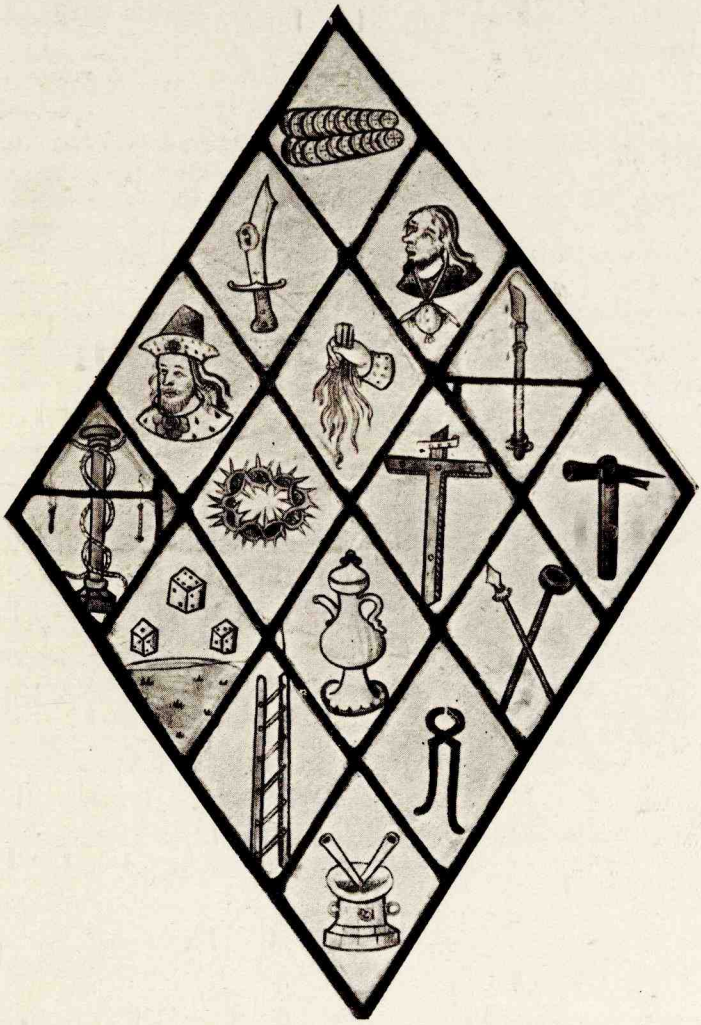

FIG. 2.—"PASSION QUARRIES," NELSON COLLECTION. AB. 1/4.