

Book XI.
Title XII. (XI.)

That no one shall be permitted to ornament any bridles and saddles for horses and belts with any pearls, smaradgs (emeralds) and hyacinths (saphires) and concerning the court artisans.

(Nulli licere in frenis et equestribus sellis et in balteis margaritas et smaragdos et hyacinthos aptare et de artificibus palatinis.)

11.12.1. Emperor Leo to Leonticus.

No one shall hereafter be permitted to ornament any bridles, horse-saddles or belts with any pearls, smaragdos or hyacinths. But we permit private persons to decorate a bridle, horse-saddles and their belts with other gems. Every kind of gem, however, must be removed from bits (curcumis). Clasps also which are valuable only for their gild and for their artistic make-up, may be used on cloaks. If anyone violates this interdict, he may know that he will be immediately punished by a fine of 50 pounds of gold.

Excepting ornaments of matrons and rings worn by both men and women, no person in private station shall make any article out of gold or gems which is reserved for imperial ornaments. He shall not do so even under the pretext that he wished to make a gift to the imperial clemency. My Piety does not seek such gifts, nor asks that a kingly ornament be brought to him by private persons. 2. If anyone does anything hereafter contrary to this sanction and ventures to make ornaments reserved for kingly uses to be offered to Our Clemency, decorated with gems and gold, he will be punished by a fine to 100 pounds of gold, as well as by capital punishment. For imperial ornaments should be made by palace-artisans within the imperial court, and not here and there in private houses or workshops. 3. Hence we ordain, with the greatest severity, that whatever is sacred (imperial) and adorable in connection with our dress and ornament, shall not be made privately. 4. If anyone does anything against the prohibition of Our Tranquility, the fine fixed shall be collected from him by the staff of palatine officials (in the office of the count of the imperial exchequer) and paid into the imperial exchequer.

Note.

This law is in line with the laws of title 9 of this book in so far as certain apparel is concerned that was reserved for imperial uses. It further attempts to limit expenditures along certain other lines, perhaps partially with the idea that no one should attempt to imitate the emperor and partially to curb extravagance.