

may prove to be the finest collection of Portuguese money yet recorded in Ceylon. The question of fraud must here be considered, but only to be dismissed immediately and confidently. No forger could possibly invent a wide range of new types which form, when considered all together, at least two series of previously unknown kinds of Dutch and Sinhalese coins, namely Larins bearing the names of Sinhalese kings and Larins with Dutch words or dates on them. No forger could possibly have forged about four hundred different dies to stamp with them the five thousand Larins that bear inscriptions in Persian or Arabic character. Had a forger been at work there would certainly have been a great preponderance of some one type, or at least of some few types which he chose to reproduce; but in this hoard it would be difficult to point to any six coins that have indubitably come from the same die. That there are a few forgeries of the seventeenth century seems to me probable, for some of the hoard money has all the appearance of having been made of base metal by illiterate persons, but the collection does not contain one single specimen which to me gives rise to the smallest suspicion of modern fraud. I have not the slightest hesitation in taking it for what it purports to be, namely a collection or hoard of coined money buried in the seventeenth century and dug up in the twentieth. Evidence that the copper and the silver were found together, as was stated, is afforded by the adherence to a number of the silver coins of copper patina. I had to remove this in some cases so that the coins might be read, but in others it still remains.