

NOTES ON A HOARD OF SINHALESE COINS

In the autumn of the year 1925, in the neighborhood of the town of Gampola in the Island of Ceylon, a villager working in his garden dug up an Earthen pot of coins. The greater part of these, though precisely what proportion is not known, passed into the hands of Dr. Casey A. Wood after dwelling on their journey in the hands of four intermediaries. This fact makes it a little uncertain what the whole extent of the find originally was; for it is known that a few coins of similar type were being hawked in the bazars of Kandy at the same time that Dr. Wood was making his collection. However, it seems probable that very nearly the whole hoard was secured, and its value as a collection is greatly enhanced thereby, for it becomes an epitome of the coinage of the Kandyan districts as current in early Dutch times in Ceylon.

When Dr. Wood asked me to examine the coins, several most unusual features immediately struck me. To begin with, more than twenty years of coin hunting in this island had revealed to me at most some score or two of the silver coins called "Hook money" or "Larins", - the catalogue of the Colombo Museum describes only fifteen specimens-, but in this hoard they are numbered by hundreds. The next surprise was that not only were the known types of Larins apparently all found, but also absolutely new types of which no numismatist had previously suspected the existence. These will be described shortly. Another feature was the existence side by side with hundreds of larins of a couple of score copper coins of the Sinhalese kings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D. With these coins of eastern origin, in the very same pot, was found what