

NOTES

The Junk in Pali.

In the Journal of the Burma Research Society, Vol. XXXII, part 1 (Dec. 1948), there is a note from the pen of the Editor, discussing the existence in Pali of the word corresponding to our modern *junk*. The inscription on the Kalyanisima, we read, records the fact that two ships were sent from Pegu in 1475 A.D. to Ceylon on a Buddhist mission. The passage in question is on the reverse of the second stone and runs :

Samuddagāminiyā *jōṅgā* nāvāyoroḥāpetvā, nādīgāminiyō
nāvāyābhiruhāpetvā Tigumpanagare vasūpesi

The translation of this is given thus:

He had then disembarked from their *sea-going vessel* and conveyed to Tigumpanagara in river boats.

There is also another passage mentioning the *jōṅga* in the sense of a sea-going vessel.

The writer points out that the word is not traceable in modern Mon. He goes on to say, however, that 25 years later (in 1501) the Portuguese, Duarte Barbosa, left notes on his Asian travels and thus wrote about Pegu:

There are in that place great ships of three or four masts which they call *juncos*, which sail to Malaca (and Samotra) and many other places.

The problem is thus raised as to whether we can connect the Pali *jōṅga*, used above in the sense of a sea-going vessel with the Portuguese's *junco*, and go on to identify the word with the Malay *jong*, the Javanese *d.jong* and the modern international word *junk*.

I put the problem to a friend who has had connection with the Siamese side of the Malay states and have been informed that the Malay word *jong* has been derived from the Persian but is going out of use, being replaced by *kapal*, which corresponds to the

Siamese *kampan*, also meaning a sea-going vessel. There is no word in Siamese corresponding to junk along etymological lines.

I have been told also that in Siamese Malaya and the east coast of British Malaya such as at Kelantan there is a type of fishing vessels which go to sea and are known as *li jong*, a corrupt form of *lilin-jong*.

Dhani.

12th June, 1942.

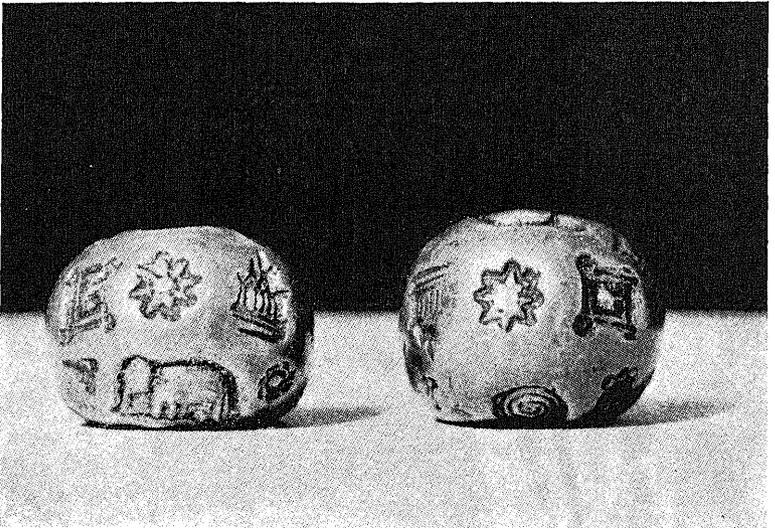
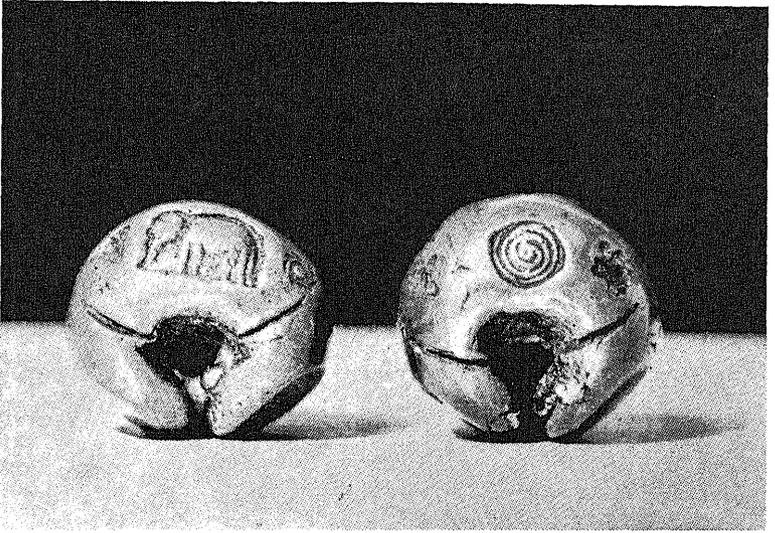
Numismatics

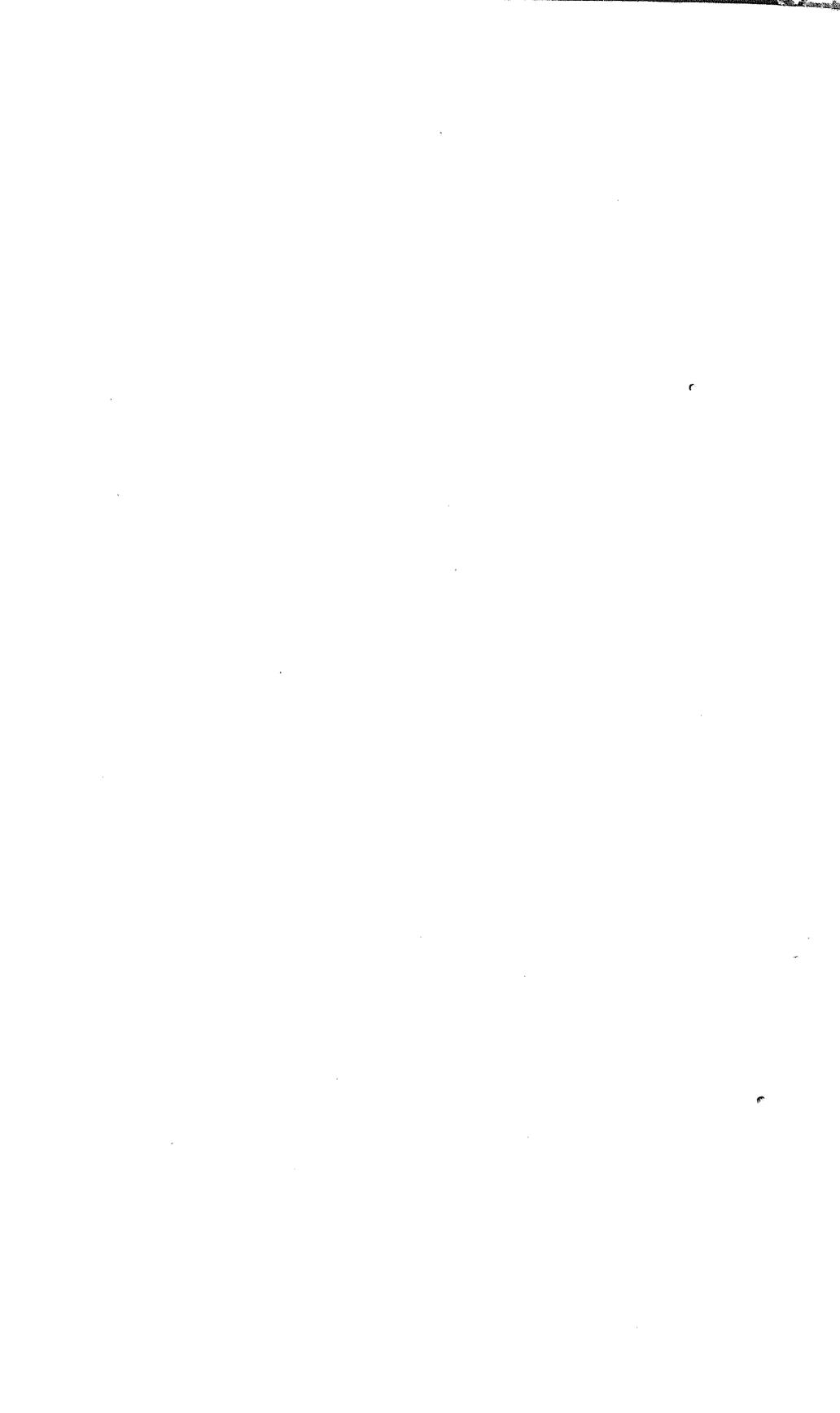
The two pieces of coins or weights, shown on the accompanying plate, were given to me for examination by Mr. D.C. Rivett-Carnac of Bangkok, to whom they had been handed down by his father, the late Mr. C. J. Rivett-Carnac, formerly financial adviser to His Majesty King Chulalongkorn during the early years of this century.

Although old pieces of weights, similar in shape and size, are known and described by Le May ("Coinage of Siam" Plate VI/5) the two specimens under examination are of special interest inasmuch as they seem to represent a new type, so far unknown.

An approximate analysis resulted in a metal-composition of 30% tin and 70% copper. The weight of the two specimens is 66 and 75 grammes. Both have rounded shoulders, with one clear hammer-mark, and the ends are bent together and meet. Each piece has a hole and two marked cuts. Nine marks are distributed on the surface of each specimen in almost identical positions, i.e.:

- Wheel of the Law (top mark);
- Elephant (one main mark);
- Spiral (the opposite main mark);
- Chakra-Wheel-Mark;
- Unalom-Mark;
- Prasat-Mark;
- Rectangular Mark;
- Yantra-Mark;
- Triangular Mark;





Both pieces are well worn and seem to be of considerable age. They offer quite a number of problems: 1) Are they genuine? 2) Are they coins or weights? 3) Is it possible to determine their age?

1) It seems to me beyond doubt that the two pieces are genuine and very old. They are worn by age, the corrosion of the metal indicates a very long period and the wear and tear could scarcely have been produced artificially.

2) The question whether they have been used in former times as coins or weights, is difficult to decide. The composition of the metal seems to indicate that they have been used as "Tamlung-weights", as they contain no silver and are therefore of little intrinsic value. Le May states on page 20 of his book, "The Damleng (Tamlung), we know was never a coin, but only a weight, except in the north of Siam . . ." In this particular case, however, it is open to doubt whether this statement is correct, because a) Both pieces have an approximate weight of 4 Baht (= 1 Tamlung), whereas the specimens of similar shape shown on Le May's Plate VI have no connection with standard weights, and b) Because both specimens have cuts. The existence of these cuts proves that both pieces have been tested for their metal composition. Why should a weight be tested for the quality of its metal? It would be sufficient to compare its weight with another weight. The great number of marks is confusing, two or three marks being generally found on coins and weights. It might be possible that the two specimens have represented a subsidiary coinage of lesser value, similar to the usage in European countries where base metal was used for smaller values in addition to precious metal for the higher values.

On the basis of the evidence and on account of the fact that no similar pieces have come to my notice, I must leave the question open whether the two pieces here represented are coins or weights.

3) The range of their assumed age would be between the XIIIth and the XVIIth century, perhaps nearer to the latter.

U. Guehler.

Bangkok, 15th September 1947.