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66. The Legend of Oro.

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according to the value of the woman. Their dances are accompanied by clapping of hands. Their chiefs have very gaudy war dresses, ostrich feather head-dresses, and leopard skins over their shoulders; they use a sort of white earth to ornament themselves, and present altogether a very fine appearance. They are armed with four to six light throwing-spears and a light shield. They say when a man is dead he is dead, but the fact of putting a dead man's gourd outside on the village path seems to show they have some sort of belief in the hereafter. No one chief is supreme now; the father of Kawadjo at Gondokoro was supreme when alive.

A. JENNINGS BRAMLY.

Africa, West: Yoruba.

Parkinson.

The Legend of Oro.* By John Parkinson.

In the olden days Olorun made six people, four men and two women, to whom after a certain time children were born, but these children always died.

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And the people said to Olorun, "O Olorun, how is this; you made six people, and, although children are born, they never live?" So they said, "We will find out another god who will let the children live."

Now amongst the four men, two were Babalawo (a priesthood who use the palm nut as a means of divination).

Then said the Babalawo, "Olorun is your father, but you must have some 'idol' to worship too." The others replied, "We are ready, let us know the name of this god"; and the Babalawo replied, "It is Oro, you must worship him."

So the Babalawo made the Oro and brought it to the others and said, "You must give food every day." They answered, "That is good, but how shall we make him talk if we want anything of him?" To this the Babalawo replied that when the food was given the people should dance, and sing, and clap their hands. And so doing, the Oro began to talk, saying,† "Baba ma mu-o" ("O Father don't take them"). Since the people did this none of their children died, but the women were hidden in the house. Slowly the numbers of the people increased, and after a time they thought they would like to have a king, and they made a king. The king said, "I will worship only Oro, the god that makes us populous."

When the time of the yearly feast was come the king gave a bullock to be killed, and he said, "I am king, and I do like a king. All my wives are to be present when Oro sings." And the wives were brought, and the bullock was killed, and the people danced and sang.

Then the king said, "I am king; how is it that common wood can talk and say 'Baba ma mu-o'?"

But when Oro saw that women were present he kept silence. Then said the two Babalawo, "It is against the rules that women should be present when Oro is made, but since you are king we could not dictate to you at first, but now you yourself have proved that this cannot be done, for Oro does not cry where women are. This is not simply wood but Eru Male, the slave of male (Male = Oro)."

And the king said to his wives, "Go home," and they went; and the Babalawo said, "Sing again." Then as once more they sang, the Oro cried, "Baba ma mu-o." Hence it is that from that day Oro is not made in the presence of women.

A Second Legend of Oro.—In the earliest time six men were made by God, and the place where they lived was called Aking-oro (full of Oro). In those days this place was surrounded by bush and trees, and now and again the people could hear a sound, or cry, of "Ma mu, ma mu," and so afraid were they that they dared not go into the forest.

* Oro, the bull-roarer. See Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking People of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, p. 109.

† "Idol," used in the sense of a visible and tangible object of veneration.

‡ Approximately onomatopoeic of the sound made by the "bull-roarer."

On a certain day one of them said, "I had a dream, and in the dream Olorun said, " ' You must go from this place because it is Aking-oro, full of Oro.' "

But they answered, " We will not go from here ; we will find animals and kill them " as a sacrifice, sprinkling blood upon the ground to appease Oro." This ceremony they carried out, but the dreams came again, and worst of all their children died.

Now in those days Oro was a hunter, and Oro came into their country. When the people saw this hunter they were surprised and said, " Where do you come from ; we " thought there were but six of us ? " Then Oro replied, " I came to tell you that this " place belongs to me, and I will show you a spot where you can see me always," and he showed it to them and they cleared it. He told them that when they wanted to perform the ceremony of sacrifice to appease the spirit calling " Ma mu, ma mu," they should sing, and he would come and see them in the spot they had cleared. Moreover, Oro said, " When this spot is cleared come every seven days and bring fowls, and sheep, " and fufu" (fufu is mashed yam), and they went on the days indicated and Oro came as he had said.

When Oro had done eating he said, " I will make you a present." Then said one, " May I ask you something ? You are the owner of this place, and since we have been " here we hear the sound of ' Ma mu, ma mu.' What is this noise, since you are the " owner of the place ? "

And Oro replied, " I am the man who makes that noise every night." Then he cut a piece out of his forearm and gave it to them. But they said, " What shall we do with " it ? " Oro replied, " I am very old and cannot always come here every seven days, " but when you come, bore a hole in the flesh and place a thread in it, and when you " fling it outwards it will cry like me, being part of me. Take care, moreover, that no " woman comes, and when you have finished with the piece of flesh put it in the ground " before going home. You dare not take it to the house. And you will call this place " Ebu Male" (Ebu = bush, Male = a name for Oro).

Then they worshipped Oro every seven days, and the children ceased from dying, and the people multiplied.

When they became populous they elected a king.

Now the king had a wife whom he greatly loved, and the wife said, " I know you " love me very much, and I have a favour to ask of you. It is this : May I see the " thing that cries at night ? " And the king said, " It is against the rules, but I will " let you see it, for I love you greatly."

So when the day for the feast came the king had a big chair made with a seat inside for the woman.

Arrived at the place they made the usual feast, and, as before, took the flesh from the ground and flung it out, but there came no sound. Then one of the four elders said, " Something is wrong here ; the hunter said, ' No woman must come,' or he would fail " to answer. We have called upon Ita (= Oro) but there has been no answer, let us " look at the king's chair." Then one went to the king's chair and broke it and saw the king's wife inside, and they began again to fling the flesh of the hunter into the air when suddenly the thread broke and the flesh flew off and cut the throat of the woman.

Then said the small piece of flesh, " I go to my father and will tell him what I have " seen here to-day, but since you have broken the rule I must change myself, and on " the next feast-day you will see what I have taken to fill my place."

When all had gone the piece of flesh told the hunter what had happened, and Oro the hunter came back, and Oro said, " Come to my flesh again," and Oro cut a stick and tied a string to it and left it in the ground.

Then Oro departed from the world, being offended because a woman had seen part of him.

Note the legend adds that Oro went into the cam-wood, hence any "Oro" made from cam-wood is held to be especially good. These stories of Oro, the bull-roarer, do not seem to be opposed to Ellis's suggestion that Oro was originally the spirit presiding at male mysteries, but my carriers do not know, or do not admit this idea.

JOHN PARKINSON.

Australia.

Lang.

The Euahlayi and Missionary Influence. *By Andrew Lang.*

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Mr. Thomas, reviewing Mrs. Langloh Parker's *The Euahlayi Tribe*, expresses doubt as to how far the people may have come under missionary influences. The author says (page 2): "The nearest missionary settlement was founded after we settled among the Euahlayi, and was distant about 100 miles, at Brewarrina. None of my native informants had been at any time, to my knowledge, under the influence of missionaries."

Several years ago, in answer to an inquiry of mine, Mrs. Langloh Parker (now Mrs. Percival Stow) wrote to me that she had asked a native informant, "Did you not get these ideas (religious) from the whites?" "If that were so," replied the dark logician, "the young men would know all about them, but they do not." Mrs. Langloh Parker also told me last summer that natives spoke to her secretly about their Byamee beliefs. She had a mosquito-proof room on a hillock, whence the surrounding country could be watched, and in that place of security they revealed their theology, "in whispers," she says, speaking of Yudtha Dulleebah, who was grey-haired in 1846 (page 5).

Why should blacks be so secret about religious opinions learned from the whites? I pointed out, long ago, that if the beliefs in the All-Father, reported by Mr. Howitt, Mr. Cameron, and many others, were derived from European teaching, the native women would be at least as well instructed as the native men; but to the women the very name of the All-Father is everywhere tabooed. As to missionary influence among the Euahlayi, at all events, Mrs. Langloh Parker has told all she knows, namely, that the nearest missionary settlement was 100 miles away and was founded after her own arrival among the tribe.

A. LANG.

Dolls.

Thomas.

Questionnaire on Dolls. *By N. W. Thomas, M.A.*

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A doll is, properly speaking, a child's plaything in the form, real or pretended, of a human figure. But there are points of contact between them and (a) magical figurines, (b) idols, (c) votive offerings, and (d) costume figures. Answers to this *questionnaire*, with or without specimens, should clearly state the original purpose, etc. (especially where they relate to non-European peoples), of the doll, if it is not purely a plaything.

I shall be glad to receive specimens, which should be carefully labelled with the name of the tribe, etc. The value of specimens would be much increased by the addition of details on the points raised in the *questionnaire*, especially the age and sex of the owner.

Personal recollections of their doll age from adults will be especially welcomed, and the names of correspondents treated as confidential in the absence of special permission. Accounts of children should distinguish (a) points from the personal observation of the correspondent, and (b) answers based on questions directly addressed to the child. A sketch of the character of the child, apart from the dolls, will increase the psychological value of the replies.

1. Describe the dolls in detail and get the child to do the same. What is the name for "doll," and what does it mean? Of what material are they? What objects do