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66. Note on Marali Currency.

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Mr. G. W. Stow, in his admirable book *The Native Races of South Africa* (1905), figures (p. 518) three copper castings of the Magaliesberg Bakuenas, found near some old copper workings in the Transvaal. He says they appear to have been a *madula* or phallic charm. From his illustrations they seem to be simply the casts of the funnels used for making copper rods, the broad flange, which he takes to be a separate casting, being merely the overflow of the molten metal on the surface of the ground around the edge of the funnel. If this view be correct fourteen to twenty-five rods could be cast at the same time. Perhaps the root-like appendages described above may be simply the vestiges of similar castings; a long thick rod was all that the smith needed, but as other castings had numerous rods it is possible that he thought his funnel should have them too. There is no evidence that these abortive rods were ever any longer than they are at present, as they present the character of an untouched casting.

A. C. HADDON.

Africa, South.

Hemsworth.

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I have seen a specimen entirely without the root-like bars, so I imagine that the bars were not a feature of much importance.

I have not heard of any *marali* being used during the present generation in connection with marriage. Old natives have told me that one *lirali* and 20 hoes would possibly have been given for a wife in the same way that cattle, goats, and money are now given. As *marali* are (possibly on account of their rarity) apparently no longer used as a means of exchange, it is difficult to estimate their value. As a rule the owners, when they are to be found, will not part with them at any price, unless in immediate need of money, as when their taxes become due. On such occasions they will accept whatever is offered, provided the amount is sufficient for the needs of the moment.

If one *lirali* and 20 hoes was the value of a girl, a *lirali* would have been at that time (some fifty years ago) equivalent to ten cows, or say 20*l*. At the present time a *lirali* is of very little, if any, value to any native but the owner, who, as I have said, will not part with it except when pressed for money.

The *marali* seem to be regarded more in the light of heirlooms—of value only to the families who possess them. There may also be some magic or “medicine” associations which might account for the reluctance of the owners to sell them or explain anything about them.

Pallaboroa, the only district in which, as far as I know, they are to be found, is about midway between the village of Leydsdorp and the nearest point of the border of Portuguese East Africa and the Transvaal. This country abounds with big game and, before the cattle disease known as rinderpest appeared in the Transvaal, was infested with tsetse fly so that cattle could not live there; the absence of cattle might explain the necessity for some other form of exchange in marriages; this necessity would have disappeared when, after the appearance of rinderpest, it was found that the fly had disappeared and cattle and other stock could live.

The disuse of *marali* might also have been caused by the output coming to an end through a dearth of men skilled in their manufacture. This may have been the case, as it is a known fact that the tribes, amongst whom these rods are found, have dwindled very considerably in numbers owing to intertribal wars, raids by the Swazi, fever, and famines, particularly the famine of 1896, which was caused by the damage done by immense swarms of locusts followed by a drought.

I do not think there is any doubt that the copper ore was obtained from the old workings to be found at Pallaboroa.

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