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80. Songs of the Baluba of Lake Moero.

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## Polynesia.

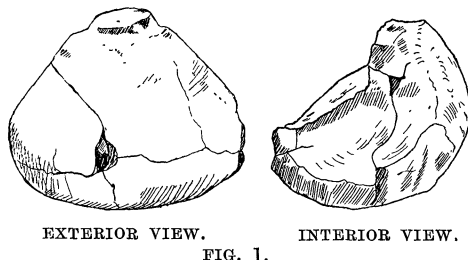
Parkinson.

**A Stone Rice-sheller from Nusa.** *By R. Parkinson.*

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It happens very often that ethnographical specimens are found in places that are far away from their original homes. Occasionally their origin can be traced and the way they have travelled; in many cases it is impossible to place them or to make out their original use.

A few months ago I visited the small island of Nusa on the north-west end of the island of New Ireland (Neu Mecklinburg). Until lately it had a dense population, but when a German firm bought the island most of the inhabitants left and settled in different villages on the large island. The gentleman in charge of the island has lately cleared away the undergrowth and forest with the intention of planting cocoanuts. Walking through the clearing, I found a piece of stone showing signs of being worked, and searching carefully I found some more pieces which fitted into each other and showed the original form of the interesting find. The remnants undoubtedly formed a hemi-spherical bowl of  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches diameter and 7 inches height; below has been a conical continuation, now broken off, apparently to fasten the bowl in the ground or in a piece of wood. The upper hollow is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep in the centre. The outer sides as well as the inner hollow have been carefully smoothed down, and the outer edge shows signs of a shallow groove, undoubtedly ornamented. None of the inhabitants were able to give any information and unanimously declared that the specimen did not belong to Nusa, or to New Ireland or New Hanover. There can be no doubt that it was brought to the islands many years ago as it shows signs of great age. I am inclined to believe that this implement is a rice-sheller. Similar shellers of stone are at present in use in Indonesia, although not so shallow. In this case it would prove that emigrations from the west towards the east have taken place, and that the emigrants have taken their original household things with them.



This find is still more interesting in connection with another made some years ago opposite the island of Nusa, when the site of the present Kavieng Station was cleared.

The proprietor when clearing the premises found a round stone ball about 4 inches in diameter; a handle of about one inch in diameter had been broken off. It is not unlikely that the two finds originally belonged together and that one part was taken to Nusa, the other to Kavieng.



FIG. 2.

The illustrations show the bowl (Fig. 1) as well as the stone ball (Fig. 2) which I consider to have been a pestle of some sort.

Can any reader of MAN give me any information about the original home of these two interesting implements?

R. PARKINSON.

## Africa.

Torday.

**Songs of the Baluba of Lake Moero.** *By Emile Torday. Communicated by T. A. Joyce.*

80

It becomes ever more difficult to collect the songs of the different tribes; soldiers, who are never garrisoned in their own country, bring their songs and teach them to the natives. The most striking example of this is the song "O Lupembe," which, certainly originating in the Stanley Falls region where was residing Major Lothaire (in whose honour it has been composed), is sung through all the Congo Free State territory. Another, and by far the most unfavourable, circumstance, is that a European has scarcely any opportunity of hearing natives sing, except when travelling, so that from

all their songs he can collect only marches, if he takes that trouble, and he very seldom does.

These songs are invariably composed of a recitative followed by a chorus, which, though nearly always the same, is slightly modified and adapted to the recitative. The improvisation is generally made by the man who possesses the strongest voice, by no means the best; but I have known certain men famous for their wit, who, whenever they were in a "safari" (caravan), had the right to lead the other singers.

The subject of these songs is very often the European who travels with the caravan, and all honours are bestowed on him by the negro bard. Though he be the most peace-

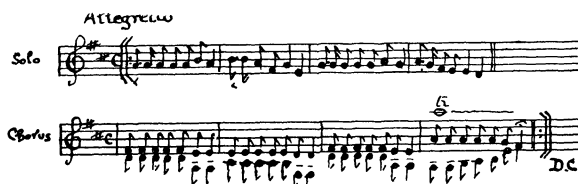


SONG NO. 1.

loving of mortals he will be mentioned as a famous warrior who has killed hundreds of enemies; though he be as thin as a lath, his embonpoint will be highly praised. Whoever he be, he must, in the song, slay people, lions, elephants, eat for two drink for three, have scores of wives; in fact, do and have anything that makes him appear

wealthy and powerful in the eyes of natives. The improvisatore must not forget to mention the numerous countries the great man has traversed, and will with the greatest *naiveté* make terrible geographical confusions.

It is surprising how well the harmonisation of the choruses is done, and if a man sings out of tune he may be sure of being forcibly corrected by his neighbour, provided the said neighbour is stronger than he.



SONG NO. 2.

They generally sing in thirds, but sometimes fifths complete the accord. On one single occasion I heard a more complicated form



SONG NO. 3.

of the chorus, sung by Balubas, who came from the Upper Luapula, near Johnston Falls. I append some bars (all I remember) of this song, which I consider very greatly in advance of any negro song I ever heard at Moero. I must at the same time mention that it

was sung with great correctness by about twenty men (No. 1).

One might suppose that the measure of these marches would always be  $\frac{4}{4}$  or  $\frac{2}{4}$  as in the following song, No. 2;

but this is not consistent with the facts, for the example of No. 3 proves not only that  $\frac{3}{4}$  is equally used, but that even in the same song the tempo



SONG NO. 4.

may change. This song is among the most popular, and any European having travelled on the Moero cannot fail to remember it. Every bar is marked by a *sforzando*.

Even triolas are used in the song No. 4, which is very popular among women, who sing it when grinding corn for flour, or groundnuts for oil.

You find hardly any save tenor voices among the men, and the compass of these is very small. Baritones are scarce, and I never came across a real basso. The voice generally breaks at nine or ten years, and is, I think, seriously affected by the frequent use of the head-voice.

I never knew a woman to have a really good singing voice; they have a child-like soprano, and use only the throat- and head-voice, never the chest-voice. This is probably due to the belief that it is more *distingué* for a lady to speak in a falsetto voice. It should be pointed out that there is a well-marked distinction between ladies (*bibi*) and women (*malamuke*), and that all women crave to rank with the former.

But the days of the native songs are, I fear, limited; civilisation will soon sweep them away. I remember with horror my cook, who had grown up among missionaries, singing all the day Gounod's "Ave Maria," and Haydn's "Tantum ergo," and I am sure that the time is not far distant when the widely-spread military bands contributing European comic songs will drive away the dear old native tunes. E. TORDAY.

### Greece : Animal Folklore.

Thomas.

**Animal Folklore from Greece.** *Collected from various sources and communicated by N. W. Thomas.*

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The following sets of answers amongst others have been sent in answer to the questionnaire I issued broadcast some years ago and republished in *Journ. Anthr. Inst.*, XXX., 114, in an enlarged form. By the kindness of the British School at Athens the questions were translated into modern Greek and issued to people likely to be able to send replies. I take this opportunity of thanking the authorities of the British School and my correspondents for their aid. My hearty thanks are also due to Mr. J. C. Lawson who kindly translated the notes sent by the last-named.

#### I.

1. It is believed when anyone is going to his work or on a journey and meets on the way a snake, his work and his plans in general will succeed, but when he meets a hare the opposite will be the case, and many people prefer to return home or to put off their work.

2. It is believed that a snake living in a house is a cause of prosperity. Two curious points are :—First, that this snake passes once a year over those who are sleeping in the house, and it should be noted that in the villages of Epirus the inhabitants do not sleep on beds, but in a row upon a rush mat. The second point is that if this snake sleeps under the bed of a small child the latter will prove very prosperous.

3. It is believed that death is portended (1) by the owl; that is to say, if it hoots upon the roof of a house, especially at night, it is thought that someone in the house will die. Hence the common curse used by women, "May evil owls chatter." (2) The horned owl. (3) The dog, when it howls, especially if it is looking east. (4) The hen, when it crows like a cock and begins clucking at night. With reference to all these four, they say in such cases, "May he eat his head," and they commonly kill them. (5) Crows; when, for example, one or more of them pass over a village or town it is thought that a plague will visit that place.

4. It is thought that when wild geese alight upon sown land there will be large crops, &c.

6. It is thought that when anyone finds a tortoise's eggs he must not bring them home, and the same is the case with partridges in some places. Pigeons that are kept in the house are a cause of good fortune, but some think of bad.