



2. Kamba Protective Magic

C. W. Hobley

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his favourite study in India. Twenty years ago, in his own province of Bengal, inquiries into the origins of caste and custom by men of alien creed were often, and not unnaturally, resented. Ethnology is now one of the recognised objects of investigation of the Vangiya Sāhitya Pariṣat, or "Bengal Society of Literature," which has recently published in the vernacular a painstaking monograph by a Bengali gentleman on the Chakmas of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Sir Herbert Risley's last official work in India was intended to bring about a better understanding between people and Government by introducing the beginnings of popular representation. It may yet be recognised, in India as well as in Europe, that his most valuable achievement was the lesson he assiduously taught and practised that the best basis for progress is the careful and disinterested study of existing institutions. Out of such punctiliously impartial yet sympathetic study came his already classical *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, which will keep his memory green in India long after most of his official contemporaries and rivals have been forgotten in the oblivion which is commonly the reward of even distinguished administrators in our distant and ill-comprehended Eastern empire.

J. D. ANDERSON.

Africa, East.

Hobley.

Kamba Protective Magic. *By C. W. Hobley, C.M.G.*

Upon a recent tour in Kitui District of Ukamba, British East Africa, the **2** writer had for a guide a very interesting old elephant hunter named Solo. He had with him a varied assortment of charms and medicines which he firmly believed were of vital importance to his success in hunting and in other branches of life. One day in camp he was induced to explain the origin and uses of these curiosities. They were as follows :—

(1) A brown powder carried in a tiny gourd and composed of three ingredients. The roots of the plants used were :—(1) Muthia creeper; (2) The Kinyeli creeper (this is what the Swahilis call *Upupu* or cowitch; it has the same irritating effect as the nettle); (3) Mukutha creeper.

A little of this powder is swallowed before starting out to hunt; it is believed to make the hunter aim straight; it is also used before one takes a suit before the Council of Elders, and it is believed that it will ensure the case being favourably settled.

As a measure of the reality of the belief in this medicine, Solo stated that he had paid a medicine man Rs. 35 and five goats for this particular specific.

(2) The next was a light-brown powder composed of the roots of (1) *Musi* (a tree used by the Kamba for building houses); (2) *Mutungu* tree; (3) *Mbilili* tree. This cost four goats.

Before going to hunt a little is eaten, and it is believed that it will ensure game being seen, and if shot at it will be hit; it is also used before going to sell goats, and it is said to ensure a good bargain being effected.

(3) *Munavu*, a whip with a handle about six inches long and lash about four feet long made of plaited fibre; two fibres are used, one called *Chusia*, and the other is one of the *Sansevieria* family; the handle is made of *Chusia*, and the handle and the lash are all in one piece, but the *Sansevieria* fibre is interwoven into the lash.

Before going hunting it is customary to crack the whip seven times, and it is believed to bring good luck. This cost one bullock.

(4) Two twigs of wood bound together with strings, the twigs come from the *Mutatha* and *Mbisa bisi* bushes.

Before going to hunt he takes out this medicine and mentions the beast he wishes to get and then bites the end of the bundle. If he has a suit coming on before the

“Nzama,” or Council of Elders, he slightly burns the ends of the twigs before proceeding to court and believes he will then win his case. This cost one bullock.

(5) A small bundle of twigs from the roots of the following plants :—(1) *Muthika*, a shrub ; (2) *Mutoti*, a thorny shrub ; (3) *Mukuluu*, a shrub ; (4) *Lelambia*, the wood of a shrub.

The whole parcel was bound together with the bark of the *Lelambia* shrub.

If one is going to hunt or have a case tried the end is lit and then blown out ; the owner will, it is believed, either find his quarry or win his case.

(6) Amulet made of the end of an oryx horn filled with medicine made of the roots of the *Kinyeli* (cowitch) and *Mutuba* shrub. This is tied on to the right upper arm when one goes hunting ; it is believed to make the owner shoot straight. This cost five goats. (Fig. 1.)

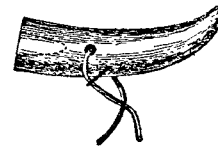


FIG. 1.

(7) Amulet made of (A) the dried skin from the nose of an ant-bear (*Orycteropus*) and (B) the wood of a big tree called *Kiawa* or *Mukao*. This is tied on the right upper arm ; if the owner approaches a fierce animal it is believed it will not attack him. This cost four goats. (Fig. 2.)

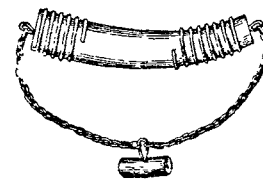


FIG. 2.

(8) An amulet made of ebony with medicine inserted in one end. The medicine is made of the roots of the following trees :—(1) *Muvoo* ; (2) *Kinyuki* ; (3) *Mbumba*.

If a new village is founded the owner walks round it with the amulet in his hand, and it is believed that fierce animals, leopards, lions, &c., will not enter it. This was very expensive and cost two bulls ; these medicines were obtained from an old professor of the art at Mutha who is now deceased. (Fig. 3.)



FIG. 3.

At one camp (Ukazzi) the old hunter, being very anxious that we should see some game, killed a goat as a sacrifice to the *Aïmu*, or ancestral spirits, and poured out a libation of blood to propitiate them ; he then placed a strip of skin from the goat's left ear on his right wrist. The results were, it is regretted to state, not very marked.

C. W. HOBLEY.

Japan : Religion.

Aston.

Sacrifice in Shinto. By the late W. G. Aston.

3

The subject of sacrifice has been dealt with from various points of view by Robertson Smith, Dr. Tylor, Dr. Frazer, Dr. Sanday, and more recently by MM. Hubert and Mauss, whose instructive essay, “Sur la nature et fonction du sacrifice,” was published in the *Melanges d'histoire du Religion* in 1909. These writers have based their views on evidence drawn from the great Aryan and Semitic religions on the one hand, and from the religious practices of savage races on the other.

A study of the old Japanese religion known as Shinto enables us to consider this subject from a fresh and intermediate standpoint. Though not a Primitive religion, if there be such a thing, it had attained a far less degree of development than the religions of Europe and Western Asia. It is a nebulous polytheism with innumerable deities, few of which have defined functions or distinct personalities. Many are sexless and mythless. Some are at one time single persons, at another dual, triple, or even more. There are not a few traces in Shinto of that earliest