

THE COINS AND MEDALS OF KRUGERDOM.

The accompanying picture represents in facsimile all the coins and medals struck by the Transvaal Government under the presidency of Paul Kruger from the establishment of the mint at Pretoria in 1892 to the occupation of that city in June, 1900, by the British troops.

It was during a stay at Krugersdorp, the town so famous in Transvaal history as being the annual gathering place of the Boers to renew their vows at Paardekraal Monument, that I was introduced to Mr. C. Allon, of whose reputation as a collector and *cognoscente* I had frequently heard. To him I am indebted for the photograph. Several of these coins are what one may term "freaks" of the mint, as will appear below.

Coin No. 1 (a curio) is the Transvaal sovereign called in the Dutch language "een pond," value £1. Its intrinsic value is greater by a few pence than that of the English sovereign. It was struck in 1892, the year of the establishment of the mint, and as do all other coins and medals of the late Republic bears on the obverse a faithful *effigies* of the President, whose lineaments must now be familiar to the English public. On the lower edge of the bust appears the letters O. S., the initials of the designer of the coin, a German named Otto Schmidt. Now, "os" in Dutch means "ox," and a public eager to dip below the surface of things saw in these letters an allusion to the animal which has played so important a part in the development of the chosen race (of South Africa). The waggon, the inanimate companion of their wanderings, was symbolised on the coin. The waggon is represented with shafts instead of with a single pole (the *disselboom* of the South African farmer). I need scarcely say that the waggon is invariably drawn by a team of sixteen oxen, the two hindmost being attached one on either side of the *disselboom*. It seems surprising that the error was not noticed before the coins left the mint or before even a single one was struck, for we may reasonably infer that the die was submitted to the inspection of the Executive Council before being accepted. When the coins were put in circulation the error was at once discovered and a large smile spread abroad. The coins were immediately called in, but a few remained in the household stocking, and when these come into the market they fetch high prices. This coin is known as the "double-shaft" sovereign.

Coin No. 2 (also a curio) is the half-sovereign coined in 1892. It is a duplicate of the sovereign, is known in Dutch as "de halve pond," and is extremely rare.

Coin No. 3 is the double-shaft crown with milled edges, a handsome piece, of which very few were minted. It bears the same date as the previous coins. It fetches a very high price among connoisseurs, and is a duplicate of coins I. and II. except that on the obverse the pseudo-mystic letters, O.-S., do not appear. It is convenient here to describe in detail the Transvaal *wapen* (coat-of-arms) which adorns the reverse of all the coins of the Republic. The escutcheon is divided into two compartments by a broad band or bar, on which rests a small shield bearing embossed on its surface an anchor. The upper compartment is subdivided by a line at right angles to the bar, the dexter half, the field of which is covered with fine horizontal lines, bearing a burgher holding a rifle standing on the bar. The sinister division covered with fine

perpendicular lines, is occupied by a lion couchant, symbolical either of the spirit of the people or of the perils through which the voortrekkers (the pioneer Boers) went prior to and during the founding of the state. The escutcheon is surrounded by a border with occasional curled edges, above which an eagle rests with outspread wings. On each side of the escutcheon are three flags, underneath in a scroll is a motto in old Dutch, "Eendragt Maakt Magt" (Unity is Strength). At the base of the field of the coin is a rosette with (on either side) a wavy branch with conventional leaves. To prevent home collectors from being defrauded into purchasing bogus coins I may say that only sovereigns, half-sovereigns, and crowns were minted with the two shafts instead of the pole.

Coin No. 4 is a crown piece with the ordinary design of one pole. It was also minted

Coin No. 6 is a sovereign of 1900. It seems strange that after the stoppage of mint operations in 1899 minting should have been resumed in 1900. However, only sovereigns were issued. They are of the same design as the coins previously described except that no mistake is now made as to the construction of an ox waggon.

Coin No. 7 is the ordinary half-sovereign. It is dated 1893 and of the normal design.

Coin No. 8 is the half-crown (1894).

Coin No. 9 is the two-shilling piece (1894).

Coin No. 10 is the shilling (1897).

Coin No. 11 is the sixpence (1896).

Coin No. 12 is the threepennypiece (1895). This is a comparatively rare coin, at present fetching about ten times its face value. It is popularly known in South Africa as the "tickey," which is probably a Kaffir corruption of its name.

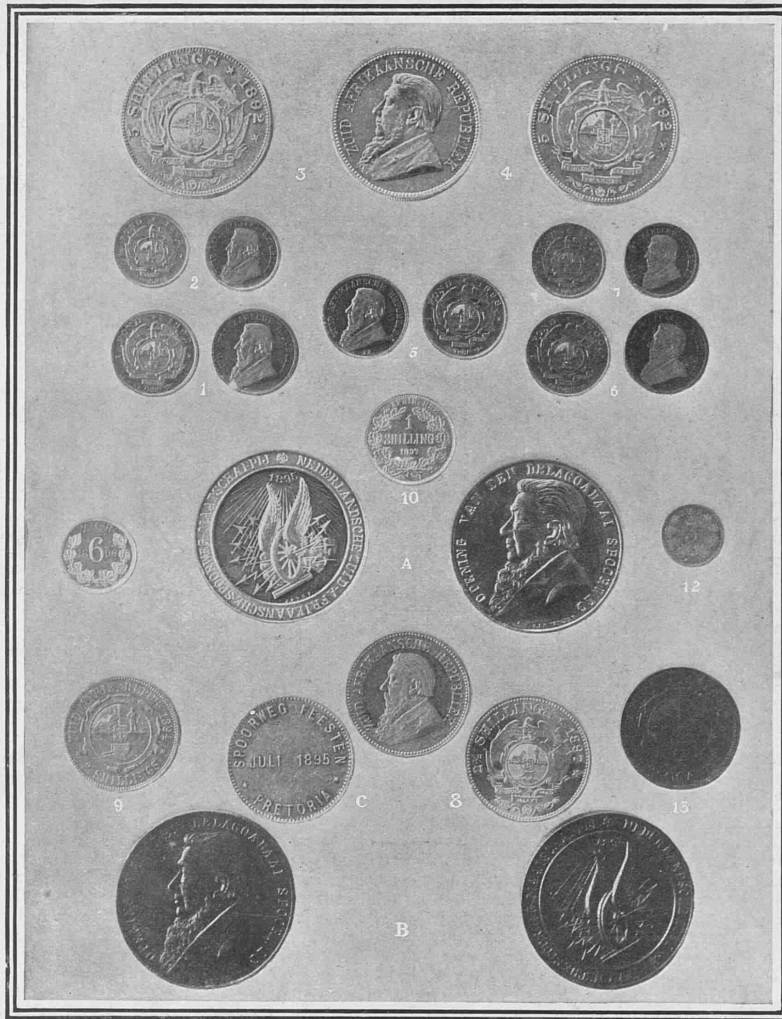
Coin No. 13 is the penny (1892). During the late *régime* a copper coin was rarely seen in circulation, the silver "tickey" being the *ne quid infra* of social life. These pennies were minted, it is said, at the desire of the banks so that cheques involving odd pence might be cashed without the use of postage stamps. These "Kruger pennies" were selling at from 15s. to 25s. when the British troops first entered the Transvaal, but their value has much depreciated, the current price being about 1s.

The medals struck by or for the Transvaal Government are of three different kinds. They were issued in the year 1895 in commemoration of the opening of the Pretoria-Delagoa Bay Railway in the year 1895.

Medal A, of which some fifty were struck, is of silver. They were given to the chief constructors and engineers and to the directors of the railway. The obverse bears the head of President Kruger, surmounted by the inscription, "Opening van den Delagoabaai Spoorweg" (opening of the Delagoa Bay Railway). Under the head or bust of the President, in small capitals, is the name of the designer, thus, J. P. M. Menger, F. The obverse has around it the inscription, "Nederlandsche Zuid-Afrikaansche Spoorweg-Maatschappij"—a rosette separating the final j and initial N—(Netherlands South African Railway Company). Under the rosette in the centre of the disc is the date, 1895, from which as a nucleus rays emanate, surrounding and piercing a winged wheel running along a length of rail. From the wheel radiate spears with shafts zig-zagged (as forked lightning), while the wheel is accompanied by a cloud of dust. Under the length of line appear the letters J. P. M. M. F.

Medal B is a bronze medal of the same size and of identical design with the silver one just described, and was presented by the Transvaal Government to the minor *employés* of the railway.

Medal C is a silver medal of the size of a half-crown with unmilled edges. The obverse bears the head of Kruger surrounded by the inscription, "Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek" (South African Republic). The reverse bears the inscription, "Spoorweg Feesten Pretoria" (Railway Festivities, Pretoria). This medal was issued in 1885 by the Government to all burghers and others who had been invited from various parts of South Africa to take part in the opening ceremony. It served at the same time as a passport to the luncheon served at Pretoria on the occasion.



THE COINAGE OF THE LATE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Reproduced in their actual size

in 1892 and has not since been struck. This, too, is a rare coin.

Coin No. 5 is by far the most interesting and rarest piece of the collection. It is a sovereign of the ordinary design minted in 1898. When I say that of the whereabouts of two only is anything positively known some idea may be formed of its value. The uniqueness of the coin lies in the fact that on the obverse, under the bust of the President, appear the figures 99. The secret history of this coin is, perhaps, not altogether known, but among the many conjectures the following is the most plausible. It appears that the die of 1899 went astray—perhaps it was commandeered. The Government, however, being anxious to issue a gold coinage that year to prove to the world that though it had other fish to fry its minting operations were still duly carried on, attempted to remedy matters by stamping 99 upon the 1898 sovereign. After a dozen or so had been dealt with further work was stopped.