

COINS FROM MOGADISHU, c. 1300 to c. 1700

During 1957 the late Dr. John Walker, Keeper of Coins and Medals in the British Museum, arranged for me to have access to an important private collection of coins in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, amounting to over 7,500 pieces. These have now been studied in conjunction with the collection of the Mogadishu Museum, a small collection in the British Museum, a description of some coins found in Somalia by Professor Enrico Cerulli, of Rome, and some specimens of Mogadishu origin found in Tanzania, at Kilwa and in the Mafia Islands. This work has presented considerable technical difficulties, but it is now at press and will shortly be published in the Numismatic Chronicle, 1964. An offprint of the work will be placed in the library.

This study is important for a number of reasons. It includes the first dated coin from East Africa, dated 1322. It shows that the coinage of Mogadishu was related to the coinage of Kilwa, in that both coinages have the characteristic rhyme between the legends of the obverse and reverse. It appears to show that when the Turkish naval commander Amir Ali Bey raided the East African coast in the late 16th Century, Mogadishu was able to defy the Portuguese for a long period, perhaps the whole of the 17th Century, in employing a local coinage which followed the Turkish pattern, thus proclaiming an attitude of independence in regard to the Portuguese. It includes no less than twenty-six rulers of whom all but three are new both to numismatics and to history.

G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville

THE AUGUSTINIAN MISSIONS IN EAST AFRICA, 1596-1730

It was necessary earlier this year to correct an English newspaper, the Universe, which stated that the first Christian missions in East Africa were started only in the 19th Century. The year which saw the foundation of the Augustinian Mission in Ghana, 1572, also saw the foundation of an Augustinian Mission in Goa, which gradually increased the number of its stations in India and also reached Persia, and, finally, Mombasa, on the coast of the present Kenya, in 1596.

Some recent publications of documents by Professor A. de Silva Rego have