N the translation of the *Annals of Tacitus*, by Murphy, 1805, vol. iii, p. 338, we find the statement that "Prasutagus, the late King of the Icenians, in the course of a long reign, had amassed considerable wealth. By his will he left the whole to his two daughters and the Emperor in equal shares, conceiving by that stroke of policy that he should provide at once for the tranquillity of his family. The event was otherwise." He must have died between the years A.D. 43 and A.D. 63.

We also find that instead of the Roman Emperor being satisfied with his share, he, through his lieutenants, claimed and seized the other two parts bequeathed to the King’s daughters. This high-handed and most unjustifiable proceeding was one, and not the least, of the contributory causes of the insurrection of the heroic Boadicea. It is not of this insurrection or its results that I wish to speak, but of the historian’s statement that the King Prasutagus, the husband of Boadicea, had during a long reign amassed great wealth. So far as I am aware, the question of what did this great wealth consist has never been considered by any numismatist; at all events, I know of no paper on the subject. It would almost appear as if the subject had been thrown aside as not worthy of consideration, as if it could only be such as a Kaffir chief could gather at the present day—slaves, cattle, and so on.

But if we give the subject a moment’s consideration we must certainly conclude, knowing as we do, that he was not such a barbarian that he would think the Emperor would be satisfied with numerous flocks and herds which naturally could be of little service to him. The
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The fact that he was sufficiently civilised to make a will would alone teach us that, if we had no other evidence of his being advanced in civilisation. Again, the statement of great wealth having been accumulated could not to a man like Tacitus have meant solely flocks and herds. It must have been something more than that, and we may fairly conclude that his conception of the term "great wealth," would be somewhat of the same character as the words would imply, and should be understood as referring to those things which to-day are understood when the same term is used—the precious metals and other forms of wealth, excepting land, and this latter could hardly have come into the meaning, as land at that period, and under the then civilisation, was probably owned by the tribe.

If we then, using the terms as meaning what we understand by them at the present day, consider the wealth of Prasutagus to have consisted of the precious metals—and what other form could it have taken?—which required a long reign to have enabled it to have been accumulated, it raises another question, as to the form in which this treasure was accumulated. It could hardly have been in ingots solely, as they would be comparatively useless, but still they probably formed part, with possibly amber and other minerals. If it was not solely these, was it in coin? And if in coin, how is it that we do not find coins of this King in hoards and other finds at the present day, like those of other British princes? For if his coins were in sufficient number for him to accumulate largely, there must have been plenty of them in the hands of his subjects. We know from many of the coins of other princes, even from those uninscribed, which are found in particular districts, that certain types, from their frequency, must have belonged to the princes of those districts; and we also know that the various kings of the South-Eastern corner of England had a coinage before the invasion by Julius Cæsar, and had certainly an inscribed coinage very generally at the period of the invasion by Claudius Cæsar.

Although this was the condition of the princes of the district now represented by Kent, it does not follow that those of the Icenian people were so far advanced, for we are told that the people of Kent were the most advanced in civilisation of any of the Britons, and therefore no surprise need be felt that the early Icenian coinage was
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uninscribed. The late Sir John Evans stated that there is but little difficulty in assigning any series of British coins to the district to which it belonged, and although the early Icenian coinage was uninscribed, the later, as is well known, was inscribed in some of its types. The theory he advanced to account for the appearance of a very similar set of coins in the Western part of Britain would seem to be based upon a very good foundation.

The suggestion here advanced, that the great wealth of Prasutagus consisted principally of precious metals and of coinage, will not be contradicted by the fact that no coins have been discovered with his name upon them. In fact it causes no difficulty at all, when we remember that even those tribes or nations whom contemporary historians, Cæsar included, say were the most advanced in civilisation, had no inscriptions on their coins when Julius Cæsar first appeared in Britain. In many parts and on many occasions, large hoards of Icenian coins have been discovered in those counties which formed the territory of Prasutagus, and if these coins were not those of this Prince, whose were they?

The late Sir John Evans showed very conclusively that the British coinage followed the general rule of gradually diminishing in weight as time went on, and it will be found that at the time of the invasion by Claudius, the British coinage generally was of about the same weight as the coins which have been found in Suffolk and Norfolk in hoards and singly. And, therefore, on this ground it is somewhat of a confirmation of the suggestion that the uninscribed coins discovered in the district which comprised the Icenian kingdom are the coins of Prasutagus.
ROMAN COINS FROM THE LITTLE ORME FIND.