

### A MOUND OF THE KANAWHA VALLEY.

A MOUND recently opened by Col. P. W. Norris, one of the assistants of the Bureau of ethnology, presents some facts of more than ordinary interest. It is situated on the farm of Col. B. H. Smith, near Charleston, W. Va., is conical in form, about a hundred and seventy-five feet in diameter at the base, and thirty-five feet high. It appears, in fact, to be double; that is to say, it consists of two mounds, one built on the other, the lower or original one being twenty feet, and the upper fifteen feet, high.

The exploration was made by sinking a shaft twelve feet square at the top, and narrowing gradually to six feet square at the bottom, down through the centre of the structure, to, and a short distance below, the original surface of the ground. After removing a slight covering of earth, an irregular mass of large, rough, flat sandstones, evidently brought from the bluffs half a mile distant, was encountered. Some of these sandstones were a good load for two ordinary men.

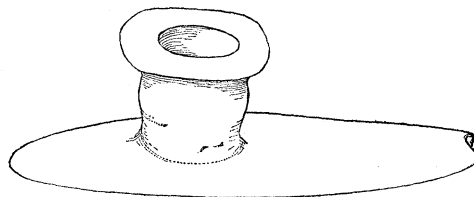
The removal of a wagon-load or so of these stones brought to light a stone vault seven feet long and four feet deep, in the bottom of which was found a large and much-decayed human skeleton, but wanting the head, which the most careful examination failed to discover. A single rough spear-head was the only accompanying article found in this vault. At the depth of six feet, in earth similar to that around the base of the mound, was found a second, also much-decayed, skeleton, an adult of ordinary size. At nine feet a third skeleton was encountered, in a mass of loose, dry earth, surrounded by the remains of a bark coffin. This was in a much better state of preservation than the other two. The skull, which was preserved, is of the compressed or 'flat-head' type.

For some three or four feet below this, the earth was found to be mixed with ashes. At this depth, in his downward progress, Col. Norris began to encounter the remains of what further excavation showed to have been a timber vault, about twelve feet square and seven or eight feet high. From the condition in which the remains of the cover were found, he concludes that this must have been roof-shaped, and, having become decayed, was crushed in by the weight of the addition made to the mound. Some of the walnut timbers of this vault were as much as twelve inches in diameter.

In this vault were found five skeletons, — one lying prostrate on the floor at the depth of nineteen feet from the top of the mound, and

four others, which, from the positions in which they were found, were supposed to have been placed standing in the four corners. The first of these was discovered at the depth of fourteen feet, amid a commingled mass of earth and decaying bark and timbers, nearly erect, leaning against the wall, and surrounded by the remains of a bark coffin. All the bones, except those of the left fore-arm, were too far decayed to be saved: these were preserved by two very heavy copper bracelets which yet surrounded them.

The skeleton found lying in the middle of the floor of the vault was of unusually large size, "measuring seven feet six inches in length, and nineteen inches between the shoulder-sockets." It had also been enclosed in a wrapping or coffin of bark, remains of which were still distinctly visible. It lay upon the back, head east, legs together, and arms by the sides. There were *six* heavy bracelets on each wrist; four others were found under the head, which, together with a spear-point of black flint, were incased in a mass of mortar-like substance which had evidently been wrapped in some textile fabric. On the breast was a copper gorget. In each hand were three spear-heads of black flint, and others about the head, knees, and feet. Near the right hand were two hematite celts; and on the shoulder, three large and thick plates of mica. About the shoulders, waist, and thighs were numerous minute perforated shells and shell beads.



STEATITE PIPE FOUND NEAR CHARLESTON, W. VA.

The gorget is precisely of the pattern represented in fig. 12, p. 100, Fifteenth report of the Peabody museum. The bracelets are very heavy, and, like the gorget, have the appearance of having been hammered out of native copper.

While filling up the shaft, Col. Norris discovered, in the dirt which had been removed from it, a steatite pipe, represented in the accompanying figure. It is worthy of note, that this pipe is precisely of the form of some found recently in the mounds of western North Carolina, and agrees exactly with the description, given by Adair, of pipes made by the Cherokees.

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