

SCIENCE

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INDIAN RELICS.

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SOME time ago Mr. R. J. Neervoort v. d. Poll, well known among entomologists, invited me to see his ethnological collection, the specimens of which amounted at that time to about a hundred and fifty. Though his collection has been brought together by buying and exchanging a new object here and there, it contains, as nearly every private collection does, weapons, utensils, dresses, tools, etc., from all parts of the world. The greater part of them, however, were brought back from Indonesia (the Malay Archipelago), especially from the island belonging to the Dutch crown, as well as from our colonies in the West Indies, especially Surinam. This country was visited by Mr. v. d. Poll himself, some years ago, with the purpose of completing his collection of insects. On his return from his journey, after the determination of the new additions had been finished, Mr. v. d. Poll went to Paris in order to make arrangements for the publication of these new specimens. It was on this occasion that he had the good luck to fall in with some very good old American Indian objects, the description of which I think may interest the readers of *Science*.

The reason why I think it worth while to publish them in this paper is that they are really relics, gathered at a time when the Indians had not yet experienced the influence of civilization so much as now-a-days, and, moreover, as the person who collected them was no less than the Prince Maximilian of Wied. Mr. v. d. Poll bought them from a friend of the painter Bodmer, one of the Prince's companions on his travels. Bodmer was rather badly off in his last days. He had scarcely enough to live upon. Therefore from time to time he sold some of the objects which were left to him to his friends, very glad to receive some money in exchange, and at last he gladly accepted the offer made by the lithograph N. N. for the rest of his curiosities and original drawings made when in America. The latter gentleman sold them to Mr. v. d. Poll, who entrusted them afterwards to the Ethnological Museum of the Royal Zoölogical Society *Natura Artis Magistra*, at Amsterdam, so that the remnants of this expedition, till of late lying forgotten in private possession, can now be studied by everybody who will take the trouble to visit the museum above mentioned.

The objects are nine in number.

I. *Pipe* with nicely carved bowl of green soapstone, somewhat in the shape of a very small tomahawk. The bowl is fastened to a reed stem, provided with a small, cylindrical, bone mouthpiece. *Blackfoot Indians*

II. *Tomahawk* made of a cylindrical piece of green-and-white spotted serpentine fastened in a wooden handle. The latter is a wooden strip bent round the stone. The two remaining ends are laid against each other and firmly bound together with a strip of buffalo hide of a reddish color, ending in a loop. *Mandan Indians*

III. *Pair of moccasins* of yellowish leather. The instep is richly decorated with blue and red porcupine quills. *Mandan Indians*

IV. *Pair of moccasins* of black leather, on the instep and at the sides decorated with dyed porcupine quills. *Blackfoot Indians*

V. *Medicine bag* made out of a dried dogskin from which the hair has been scraped off. The bag is split at the chest, and is drawn together by means of a hard leather ring round the neck. The head, legs and tail dangle loosely at the bottom part of the bag. The tail is ornamented with red flannel. *Mandan Indians*

VI. *Medicine bag* made out of a dried skin, the sides are ornamented with dyed porcupine quills and bundles of hair. *Mandan Indians*

VII. *Sheath* for a knife, made of leather, richly decorated with dyed porcupine quills and leather fringe. *Mandan Indians*

VIII. *Leather jacket* made of soft yellow leather, with short sleeves, decorated all over with blue and black bundles of hair fitted into little tin cones. On the front the totem is embroidered with silk, a black circle with two red ornaments in it. *Blackfoot Indians*

IX. *Buffalo robe*, the outside still showing the hair, the inside prepared and adorned with porcupine quills forming a striped, square pattern with bird-shaped ornaments at the sides. *Blackfoot Indians*

The costume formed by the Nos. I., IV., VIII. and IX. was taken from a Blackfoot chief, whose portrait, unhappily enough, is not found in any of the editions of the Prince's famous work on North America.

SCIENCE TEACHING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

BY GEO. G. GROFF, LEWISBURGH, PA.

ATTENTION should be called to the very loose and imperfect manner in which many of the more popular textbooks for use in elementary and secondary schools have been prepared. A few years ago copies of an elementary work on natural history were sent the writer for examination. After looking it over, the publishers were informed by the writer that he could not endorse the book. In reply, he received a printed list of names of several hundred educators who strongly commended the work. This list was carefully studied, but not a name known to science could be found in it. The book referred to was written in such a slipshod manner as to contain misleading errors of statement on every few pages.

There is a very popular chemistry in use in secondary and high schools, of which it is affirmed that in the first editions the author said, "An old woolen shirt can be made to yield its weight of sugar!" Be that as it may, the errors still in the book after use in the schools for nearly a generation are numerous enough. The following may serve to illustrate: "We say, 'We are so warm that we pant.' Really it is the reverse. The panting is the cause of our warmth." Speaking of the borax beds of Nevada, the statement is made "There are hundreds of acres covered to a depth of nearly two feet with crude semi-crystalline borax." Of chloral hydrate it is remarked, "Taken in proper quantities it is entirely safe, and is exceedingly pleasant in its influence." "Albumen may thus be carried by the blood through the system, but when once deposited, it cannot be dissolved and washed away again." Probably no school books are so full of errors as those hastily prepared to meet the demands of the new temperance laws now in force in most of the states, requiring the effects of alcohol and tobacco on the body to be taught in the schools.

One of the best of these books several times makes the positive assertion that tobacco produces cancer in its users.