

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.

Another volume asserts that consumption may be caused by putting on spring clothing too early in the season! One also reads that cider-drinkers are peculiarly crabbed and cross, that tobacco makes old men ill-natured, that sour milk is unwholesome, cheese is indigestible, *pork is a meat not fit to eat*, and bile has the properties of baking soda? Here is a fish story told in the words of a highly commended book: "The Esquimaux who live in Greenland, drink one or two quarts of oil, and eat several pounds of candles every day!" But see how a story will "grow" even in a scientific text-book. In the next number of the "series" written by the same author, and from the same reliable notes, doubtless, we read, "An Esquimaux consumes about twenty pounds of blubber fat daily, besides drinking several quarts of train oil." What it will be in the next volume, who can tell?

As to the style and accuracy of these "scientific" treatises, the following may be taken as samples: "The eyeball is a bag (!) almost round, thick and dull everywhere but in front, where it has a transparent covering called the cornea, meaning a horn. This is fitted into the eye just as a watch-crystal is fitted into a watch." How lucid and true, now proceed, "The back chamber" (of the eye) "also holds a jelly-like fluid, called the 'glassy humor,' which allows the iris-curtain to float and move freely." Who don't understand that much at least?

Another matter in connection with these physiologies should receive attention. Many of them contain a statement, printed in a prominent manner in the first portion of the book, that they contain "*a full and fair treatment of the nature and effects of alcoholic drinks and other narcotics in connection with relative Physiology and Hygiene.*" When the books are examined, however, the "full and fair treatment" dwindles into statements true and imaginary, of the evil effects of alcohol on the body. There is no effort at all made to discuss the different effects of large and small doses, of the effects on a full and on an empty stomach, of individual idiosyncrasies and not a word of the beneficial effects of alcohol and narcotics when properly used. There can be no doubt but this unfair, unscientific and untruthful manner of presenting this subject is having an effect, exactly the reverse to that which is intended. Children will soon find out that they have been deceived, and the result will be worse than if nothing had been said at all on the subject.

The strictures here noted apply to the books used in the public schools, and to a very limited extent to those used in academies and colleges.

BIRDS OF RARE OCCURRENCE IN NORTHERN COLORADO.

BY WM. OSBURN, NASHVILLE, TENN.

COLORADO is prolific in bird life. There the eastern and western forms converge. There mountain, valley, woodland, lake and barren plain, contribute their peculiar species, thus furnishing to the student a field most varied. When observers have completed the record, their labors will probably show a list approaching four hundred species and varieties.

During the years 1888, 1889 and 1890 I had opportunity to study the avi-fauna of a small section of the State. My field of observation was Larimer County, with Loveland, Colorado, as headquarters. Loveland is about seventy-five miles north of Denver, in the midst of a rich farming section, with the foothills some six miles to the west and the open plains a few miles east. During the

period named two hundred and forty-one species and varieties were observed. All but a very few of these were actually taken in the field; their skins were preserved, and such data recorded as sex, measurements, color of iris, contents of stomach, etc. From this list I have selected ten birds which to me proved of unusually rare occurrence. Their enumeration may be of interest to other observers. It is not improbable that a few of these have hitherto escaped observation in the locality named and contiguous parts.

Micropalama himantopus. Stilt Sandpiper. Occasionally met with during the spring migration, in May and early June.

Pediocetes phasianellus campestris. Prairie Sharp-tailed Grouse. This bird was formerly quite abundant.

Accipiter atricapillus. American Goshawk. A male of this species was captured on February 26, 1889, at Arkins, Colorado. A female was taken in the same locality on March 5. The male was much darker than the female, and with finer markings on the under parts, answering to the description of variety *striatulus*. Mr. Wm. G. Smith, a careful observer of birds, reported at the time that he had not seen a specimen of this hawk during five years residence. In his "Key to North American Birds" Dr. Elliott Coues says: "It breeds in mountainous regions as far south at least as Colorado, where I have seen it in summer."

Bubo virginianus arcticus. Arctic Horned Owl. A fine Horned Owl, which I have referred to this variety, was shot in the mountains and brought to me on Nov. 29, 1890. It was nearly white. A dissection revealed a large tape-worm in the back, above the intestines.

Colaptes auratus. Flicker. A typical Flicker was taken during the fall migration, September 24, 1889. While the hybrid form, exhibiting every conceivable gradation between *auratus* and *cafer*, is quite abundant, yet a typical *auratus* is seldom observed.

Scolecophagus carolinus. Rusty Blackbird. One specimen was taken in November, 1889. No other observation recorded.

Zonotrichia coronata. Golden-crowned Sparrow. Concerning the habitat of this species, Dr. Coues makes the following record: "Pacific coast (to Rocky Mountains?) from Alaska to Southern California." A small flock of these birds spent the winter of 1889 in a thicket along the Big Thompson. They were associated with Intermediate Sparrows. One specimen was taken on February 23.

Dendroica graciae. Grace's Warbler. During the spring migration of 1889 a small flock of this species was seen near the foothills. One specimen, taken April 25, is in the writer's possession.

Cistothorus palustris. Long-billed Marsh Wren. Two specimens were taken in March, 1889. Its occurrence is apparently not common.

Among others collected, the following may be named as more common than the preceding, yet only met with occasionally: Golden-crowned Kinglet, Wilson's Warbler, White-throated Swift, Cedar Waxwing, Slate-colored Junco, House Finch, Arizona Goldfinch, Pallid Horned Lark, Woodhouse's Jay, Hammond's Flycatcher, Alpine Three-toed Woodpecker, Pigmy Owl, Prairie Falcon, Richardson's Merlin and American Golden Plover.

—"Our Own Birds," by Wm. L. Bailey, published by J. B. Lippincott Company, is an excellent little manual for those who wish to become familiar with the common birds of this country. It contains a number of half-tone full-page illustrations, with others in the text.