

the signs themselves—that is, of motions and positions of the same character apart from their individual significance in any oral speech.

The hearty thanks of this Bureau are rendered to all its collaborators, and will in future be presented in a manner more worthy of them. It remains to give to them an explanation of the mode in which a large collection of signs has been made in Washington. Fortunately for this undertaking, the policy of the government has brought here, during the last winter and spring, delegations, sometimes quite large, of most of the important tribes. Thus the most intelligent of the race from the most distant and farthest separated localities were here in considerable numbers for weeks, and indeed, in some cases, months, and, together with their interpreters and agents, were, by the considerate order of the honorable Secretary of the Interior, placed at the disposal of this Bureau for all purposes of gathering ethnologic information. The facilities thus obtained were much greater than could have been enjoyed by a large number of observers traveling for a long time over the continent for the same express purpose. The observations relating to signs were all made here by the same persons, according to a uniform method, in which the gestures were obtained directly from the Indians, and their meaning (often in itself clear from the context of signs before known) was translated sometimes through the medium of English or Spanish, or an aboriginal language known in common by some one or more of the Indians and by some one of the observers. When an interpreter was employed, he translated the words used by an Indian, and was not relied upon to explain the signs according to his own ideas. Such translations and a description of minute and rapidly-executed signs, dictated at the moment of their exhibition, were sometimes taken down by a phonographer, that there might be no lapse of memory in any particular, and in many cases the signs were made in successive motions before the camera, and prints secured as certain evidence of their accuracy. Not only were more than one hundred Indians thus examined individually, at leisure, but, on occasions, several of different tribes, who had never before met each other, were examined at the same time, both by inquiry of individuals whose answers were consulted upon by all the Indians present, and also by inducing several of the Indians to engage in talk and story-telling in signs between themselves. Thus it was possible to notice the difference in the signs made for the same objects and the degree of mutual comprehension notwithstanding such differences. Similar studies were made by taking the Indians to the National Deaf Mute College and bringing them in contact with the pupils.

By far the greater part of the actual work of the observation and record of the signs obtained at Washington has been ably performed by Dr. W. J. HOFFMAN, the assistant of the present editor. Dr. Hoffman acquired in the West, through his service as acting assistant surgeon, United States Army, at a large reservation, the indispensable advantage of becoming acquainted with the Indian character so as to conduct such researches as that in question, and in addition has the eye and pencil of an artist, so that he catches readily, describes with physiological accuracy, and reproduces in action and in permanent illustration all shades of gesture exhibited. It is therefore believed that the collection made here will be valuable for comparison with and to supplement those obtained during the same months in the field.

I remain, with renewed official and personal thanks and much regard,

Sincerely your friend,

GARRICK MALLERY.