

had possessed himself of the weaver's art, and from the hair of many animals, from the down of birds, and from the fibers of many plants he knew how to spin, to weave, and to dye fabrics.

Basket-making he had carried to so high a degree of perfection that little further improvement was possible.

The potter's art also was his, and though his methods were crude and laborious the results achieved, both as regards grace of form and ornamentation, may well excite admiration at the present day.

Copper had been discovered and was mined and roughly beaten into shape to serve for ornament and, to some slight extent, for mechanical use. In Mexico and Peru gold, silver, and copper were worked, and many authors contend that the method of making bronze, an invention fraught with tremendous possibilities, had there been discovered.

In much of South and Central America, Mexico, and the eastern parts of the United States so important an advance had been made in agriculture that it furnished a very large part of the food supply, and it should not be forgotten that the chief product of the Indian's tillage, maize or Indian corn, which to-day furnishes a large part of the world's food, was the gift of the Indian to civilization. A scarcely less important contribution to mankind is the potato, the cultivation of which also originated with the Indians. A third important agricultural product, though less beneficial, is tobacco, the use and cultivation of which had been discovered centuries before the advent of the European.

Architecture may seem like a large word to apply to the dwellings of the Indians. Nevertheless many of their houses were more substantial and comfortable than is generally supposed, while in the Northwest many tribes reared dwellings of hewn planks, sometimes as large as 210 feet long by 30 feet wide, which were capable of accommodating several hundred individuals. More pretentious and durable were the communal houses of mud and stone reared by the pueblo people of Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico, while further south, in Central and South America, were edifices of hewn stone, which from their dimensions, the size of some of the blocks contained in them, and the extent and ornate character of the ornamentation, justly excite the wonder and admiration of the traveler and archæologist.

The advantages of a beast of burden had been perceived, and though the human back furnished by far the greater part of the