

SEFIN. (See Thumb ring.)

SELF BOW (simple), made of a single piece of wood or other material.

SHAFT, anciently an arrow, but strictly the portion behind the head, and in a fore-shafted arrow the lighter portion behind the foreshaft.

SHAFT GROOVES, furrow cuts along an arrow shaft from the head backward; they have been called blood grooves and lightning grooves, but these names are objectionable as involving theories of function little understood.

SHAFTMENT, the part of an arrow on which the feathering is laid.

SHANK, the part of an arrowhead corresponding to the tang of the sword blade.

SHORT ARROWS, those which fall short of the mark.

SIDES of an arrowhead, the sharpened portions between the apex and the base, also called the edges.

SINEW-BACKED BOW, one whose elasticity is increased by the use of sinew along the back, either in a cable, as among the Eskimo, or laid on solid by means of glue, as in the western United States. Wedges, bridges and splints are also used.

SLEIGHT, the facility with which an archer releases his bowstring.

SPALL, a large flake of stone knocked off in blocking out arrow heads.

STELE (stale, shaft), the wooden part of an arrow, an arrow without feather or head.

STRINGER, a maker of bowstrings.

TARGET, a disk of straw covered with canvas, on which are painted concentric rings, used in archery as a mark in lieu of the ancient butt.

THUMB RING, a ring worn on the thumb in archery by those peoples that use the Mongolian release; called sefin by the Persians.

TIP, a term applied to the sharp apex of an arrowhead.

TRAJECTORY, the curve which an arrow describes in space, may be flat, high, etc.

VENEER, a thin strip of tough, elastic substance, glued to the back of a bow.

WEIGHT of a bow, the number of pounds required to draw a bow until the arrow may stand between the string and the belly, ascertained by suspending the bow at its grip and drawing with a spring scale.

WHIPPING (seizing, serving), wrapping any part of a bow or arrow with cord or sinew regularly laid on.

WIDE ARROWS, those shot to the right or left of the mark.

Most of the words contained in this vocabulary stand for characteristics which are important in the study of bows and arrows according to natural history methods. By means of these terms any number of bows and arrows may be laid out so as to become types for all subsequent accessions and classifications. False information is thus eliminated, slowly, but the most scrupulous curator is not able to get rid of all that at once.

In all times the bow and the arrow have been the basis of much art and metaphor. Not only is this true in higher culture, as in the Bible, the Homeric poems, or the "arrow-head" writing of the Mesopotamians, but even among the North American Indians. The charming Ute ditty,

The doughty ant marched over the hill
With but one arrow in his quiver,

could easily be matched in other tongues. The Indians of the Southwest fasten an arrow dipped in blood on the bodies of their stone fetiches and call them the lightning. And Mr. Frank Cushing suggests that the positions of the elements in cuneiform writing are those of arrows dropped from the hand in divination.