

the VOCABULARY. It is supposed that this arrangement will prove the best to study the diversities and agreements of signs. For that important object it is more convenient that the names of the tribe or tribes among which the signs described have been observed should catch the eye in immediate connection with the signs, than that those of the observers only should follow. Some of the latter, indeed, having given both similar and differing signs for more than one tribe, the use of the contributor's name alone would create confusion. To print in every case the name of the contributor, and also the name of the tribe, would seriously burden the paper and be unnecessary to the student, the reference being readily made to each authority through the index.

No contribution has been printed which asserted that any described sign is used by "all Indians," for the reason that such statement is not admissible evidence unless the authority had personally examined "all Indians." If any credible correspondent had affirmatively stated that a certain identical, or substantially identical, sign had been found by him, actually used by Abenaki, Absaroka, Arikara, Assiniboins, etc., going through the whole list of tribes, or any definite portion of that list, it would have been so inserted under the several tribal heads. But the expression "all Indians," besides being insusceptible of methodical classification, involves hearsay, which is not the kind of authority desired in a serious study. Such loose talk long delayed the recognition of anthropology as a science. It is true that some general statements of this character are made by some old authors now quoted, but their descriptions are reprinted, as being all that can be used of the past, for whatever weight they may have, and they are kept separate from the linguistic classification.

Contributors will observe that there has been no attempt to change their phraseology even when it seemed to be defective. Besides the ordinary errors of the press, and those that may have crept into the copy by mistakes in reading or transcribing the written descriptions, some of the contributors will probably share the common experience of surprise at the extent to which details of expression and punctuation, when in the severe clearness of print, have altered the shade of meaning as intended to be conveyed in their MS. The wide margins and calendered paper will readily allow even of recomposition of sentences when desirable. For this purpose, as well as several others, this paper will be regarded by each correspondent as simply a proof-sheet sent directly to himself from the printer, and it will of course be understood that a correspondent who may make any kind of correction or note upon this paper will return it by mail (as book proof), so annotated, to the undersigned, thereby saving correspondence and securing accuracy. It is indeed requested that all copies shall be returned whether annotated or not, in order to prevent a professedly imperfect edition from falling into improper hands. It is much regretted that the illustrations and diagrammatic aids to the descriptions, furnished by most of the contributors, cannot be reproduced in this paper, so that their accuracy also might be determined, but the cost of such illustrations cannot be incurred at this time and for this purpose. The "Outlines for Arm Positions" and "Types of Hand Positions" were provided for from the appropriation for this Bureau, but its amount does not admit of such an undertaking as now in question. In this connection it may be mentioned that the descriptions frequently refer to illustrations furnished by the contributors or to the "Outlines" and "Types," and these references are retained in print. As all the contributors remember their own illustrations, etc., the references will be intelligible to themselves,