

The preceding quotations, to which others of similar purport might be added, will suffice to show how much mica was valued by the former inhabitants of the Mississippi valley; indeed, the frequent and peculiar occurrence of this mineral in the mounds almost might justify the conjecture that it was believed to be invested with some mysterious significance, and played a part in the superstitious rites of the aborigines. Mica has been found in a worked and raw state in districts where it is not furnished by nature, and therefore may be safely classed among the aboriginal articles of exchange. In the State of Ohio, to which my observations chiefly refer, mica is not found *in situ*, and it is presumed that the mineral discovered in that State was derived from the southern spurs of the Alleghany Mountains. Yet, it may have been brought from greater distances, and from various points, to its present places of occurrence.

SLATE.

Various kinds of ancient Indian stone manufactures frequently consist of a greenish slate, which is often marked with darker parallel or concentric stripes or bands, giving the objects made of it a very pretty appearance. This slate is not very hard, but of close grain and therefore easily worked and polished. The objects made of this stone, which occur on the surface as well as in mounds, are generally executed with great care and regularity, and it is much to be regretted that the destination of some of them is not quite well known. Among the latter are certain straight tubes of cylindrical and other shapes and various lengths, which sometimes terminate in a kind of "mouth-piece." While the smaller ones, which often measure only a few inches, have been thought to represent articles of ornament, or amulets, a different purpose has been ascribed to the longer specimens. Schoolcraft appears to consider these latter as telescopic instruments which the ancient inhabitants used for observing the stars. This view, I think, has been generally rejected. It is far more probable that these tubes, in part at least, were implements of the sorcerers or medicine-men, who employed them in their pretended cures of diseases. They applied one end of the tube to the suffering part of the patient and sucked at the other end, in order to draw out, as it were, the morbid matter, which they afterwards feigned to eject with many gesticulations and contortions of the body. Coreal calls the tubes used by the medicine-men of the Florida Indians a kind of shepherd's flute (*une espèce de chalumeau*) and the character of some of the stone implements in question that have been found certainly justifies this comparison.* Kohl saw, as late as 1855, one of the above-mentioned cures performed among the Ojibways of Lake Supe-

* Coreal, Voyages aux Indes Occidentales, Amsterdam, 1722, Vol. I, p. 39.