

The Westside

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INDIAN CURIOSITIES.

New Department at the Museum Specially Devoted to them.

VALUABLE RELICS OF ANTIQUITY

A Room Where Indian Customs, History and Religion can be Studied—Fine Carving in Stone and Wood—Strange Weapons of War and the Chase.

Strangers from all parts of the globe who visit Victoria and include in their round of sight-seeing the provincial museum find it difficult in telling of the quiet hour spent within it, to choose words to express with adequate force their admiration of the infinite variety, the admirable arrangement and the surpassing interest of the specimens there gathered by that indefatigable man of many sciences, Mr. John Fannin, the amiable curator, who has indeed been the party of visitors that happens to reach the museum when Mr. Fannin has half an hour to spare—very often, unfortunately—for a more entertaining cicerone, or one better versed in his line of work would be sought for in vain. The representative of the Times was extremely lucky in finding Mr. Fannin in that very desirable position—half an hour to spare—when he called at the museum the other day for the express purpose of inspecting the new department just added to the museum and devoted to the native races of British Columbia—in fact, an Indian department, an annex to the main museum. Having heard that the Indian department had been begun only a short time ago, it was with no little surprise that the visitor beheld the large room crowded with a wonderful array of all manner of Indian belongings. Arms, clothing, culinary utensils, ornaments, implements and weapons of the chase, totem poles in petto, models of the houses of the great chiefs, tools of various descriptions, stone chisels and hammers noticeably, and a multitude of other interesting things, enough to keep an auctioneer's clerk making a short-hand inventory for a month.

But there is one exhibit that will prove a fund of valuable study to the ethnologist and anthropologist, and should not be overlooked even by the "lay" visitor; this is a grand collection of Indian skulls, most of them in an excellent state of preservation, although all bear evidence of having lost the "vital spark of heavenly flame" many and many a year ago. Mr. Fannin is particularly very proud of this collection, and is treating each skull to a coat of varnish and writing its brief history on the top of the cranium. In all the skulls can be noticed the characteristic backward slope of the frontal bone, and the singular compression of the cranium from the cheek bones and eye ridges upwards, always noticeable in the skulls of savages, and by professors of the so-called science of phrenology denominated the intellectual portion of the head. One of the skulls gives signs of great antiquity, the bone being bleached and covered in some places with moss. Over this array of grinning skulls the man fond of yielding to reverie's soft blandishments can ponder upon the mutability of human affairs; for might not this great bony dome, cheek by jowl with that other flat-browed skull, have been the chamber wherein the lofty ambitions and subtle schemes of some proud chief of a nation of warriors, seabed and took shape?—and now to be but a thing to gaze at for the white

race he had heard of but never seen. To be ranged upon shelves, this skull of his, with those of slaves and nameless waifs. Such is fate. Mr. Fannin expects to receive before long some fine additions to this section of the department. Very curious are the coffins of the Indians in the dead houses or mausoleums, and others again they give, with their silent occupants, to the devouring fury of the flames, for cremation has been practised among the tribes from time immemorial. The coffins are always made to resemble some animal. One there is in the museum in the form of a seal; it is a burying coffin. Another is "very like a whale" and has even the tail neatly affixed. This is a house coffin. Among the carvings, which are very elaborate, showing much taste and a genius for taking pains, the heads of eagles and ravens predominate. The bird of freedom seems to have been as much admired by the untutored savage of British Columbia as by his more enlightened brothers in other parts of the world. And the sable bird of Norway, the raven, appears to have been little less a favorite with the sculptors.

A trayful of reddish-brown earth in one of the cases is called "red paint." The Bella Bellas obtain this rich pigment in large quantities and employ it extensively in painting their houses, canoes, utensils. They merely add water to the earth and it produces a perfect stain. The color is rather deeper than terra cotta and a little ruder than burnt umber. A pair of small brushes of native manufacture for applying the paint lie on the plate. Near by are numerous specimens of the beautiful basket work of the West Coast Indians, the patterns displaying a good taste scarcely to be expected of the natives.

In one of the cases is a splendid collection of stone weapons, the contribution of Mr. D. J. King of this city. One of the specimens is a piece of light green, vitreous substance, oblong about an inch wide and a quarter of an inch thick and sharpened at one end, resembling somewhat a carpenter's inch chisel. The stone is jade and has the dull, greasy aspect peculiar to this mineral. It is intensely hard. Where it is found in the province is a mystery to this day; the Indians will not tell where they obtain it, although perfectly willing to exhibit specimens of the stone. The nearest approach to it that has been found and placed in the museum is a boulder that was discovered in the Thompson river, but there is a great difference between the two. The aborigines valued this substance highly, it being much esteemed in the manufacture of their rude weapons, probably on account of its susceptibility to polish and its hardness, which made it capable of taking and retaining a keen edge. It is within the limits of possibility that the trail of the Toltecs and Aztecs, pieces of which they sharpened to razor-edge and stuck in their war clubs, and with a knife of which they obtained it, although perfectly willing to exhibit specimens of the stone. The nearest approach to it that has been found and placed in the museum is a boulder that was discovered in the Thompson river, but there is a great difference between the two. The aborigines valued this substance highly, it being much esteemed in the manufacture of their rude weapons, probably on account of its susceptibility to polish and its hardness, which made it capable of taking and retaining a keen edge. It is within the limits of possibility that the trail of the Toltecs and Aztecs, pieces of which they sharpened to razor-edge and stuck in their war clubs, and with a knife of which they obtained it, although perfectly willing to exhibit specimens of the stone.

There are many things that lead one to suspect, if not quite to believe, that the Toltecs and Aztecs were merely an offshoot of the northern tribes, for there are startling resemblances in language, traditions and customs between them. Every one who has heard the Indians of the province converse in their own language must have remarked the frequency of the terminations at, il, otl, tall and tsi. The student of Mexican

antiquities knows how important a part these sounds played in the language of the Aztecs. It is also a fact that the Indians of the province have a tradition about a great white being who came among them long ago and taught them the arts of peace, then departed towards the east, promising to return some day. This is almost identical with the legends of the Aztecs concerning their god of peace, Quetzalcoatl, and not immeasurably far from that of the ancient Peruvians concerning the celestial progenitor of the Incas, Manco Capac, who came mysteriously to the shores of Lake Titicaca and founded the great city of Cuzco. But many diligent students, well-fitted to trace those missing links,

These masks are exceedingly grotesque imitations of the human face. Some have straws attached to them, and the mummy, by pulling the cord, could make the eyes roll in a very hideous manner. For the feather dance—a great ceremony among the tribes—they had a robe covered with pieces of wood shaped and painted in imitation of feathers. Those now exhibited in the museum have doubtless played their part in many a wild potlatch under the giant pines, when the glare of the camp fire cast a crimson light upon the leaping, howling savages, and intensified the funereal gloom of the forest aisle—a scene for the brush of Salvator Rosa.



SPECIMEN OF BRITISH COLUMBIA'S TREES.

are now laboring to throw light upon the places where tradition and history fail, but where a mere word or trait may bridge the hiatus. Mr. Fannin, who has given thought to the matter, concurs in the opinion that the mystery enshrouding the origin of the British Columbia tribes will one day be cleared up, and their relationship, if any existed, to the wonderful people of old Mexico determined or disproved. The fondness of the primitive races for games and shows, dances and the like is well illustrated by the assortment of masks hanging at one end of the room.

What Scot is not enamored of the "ant horn spine" with which he, as a bubbly bairn, supped his parritch and scooped the luggie clean. Mr. Fannin can glad the Caledonian soul with a couple of dozen as "braw wee scoopers" as ever graced the table of a Scottish country home. They are fashioned out of the horns of the mountain goat, and not far from them in the case are sundry bowls and basins made out of the horns of the mountain sheep, all very handsomely done. Then there are the gambling stones, large circular pieces of hard stone, not

unlike the ancient Grecian discs, but having in the centre a hole an inch and a half in diameter. The feat consisted in shooting an arrow through this hole while the stone was passing rapidly along the ground from the propulsion of some strong arm, a feat not unworthy the skills of Robin Hood himself. Other stones beside the gambling stones in the show case were for use in the manner of quoits.

Hanging on the wall are two nets side by side; one was made by the South Sea Islanders out of grass; the other by the Queen Charlotte Islanders out of some sort of fibre. It is somewhat startling to find that the mesh knot in both is exactly similar. Two peoples, separated by thousands of miles of tempestuous ocean adopting the same very intricate knot in manufacturing their fishing nets is somewhat remarkable.

In one of the cases is a stone instrument which was dug up on the banks of the north arm of the Fraser river three years ago, and it may well be classed as one of the most remarkable relics of antiquity in the province, for these reasons: (1) Hundreds of Indians have seen it, but not one of them has the remotest idea as to what use its ancient possessors put it. It is the only relic of early times shown to them that baffles their knowledge. (2) This implement or weapon—no one knows which it is—was dug up from beneath a great length of time to deposit, and above all, growing over the spot where it and some human bones were found, was a gigantic Douglas fir 900 feet in height and of enormous girth. The strange instrument is of dark green stone faintly flecked with dull white specks. Its shape is like a flat marlin spike, only that its shank is conical, that is, shaped like a short, double-edged Roman sword, carrying a ridge along both sides and tapering to a fine point. At the blunt end the stone evens out and there is a neat round hole a quarter of an inch in diameter bored through the centre, each side being countersunk, as if it had been done by a machine, the utmost diameter of the countersink being about two inches. The supposition that the hole was meant for a thing to pass through so that the owner could twist it upon his wrist, sword-knot fashion, is destroyed by the fact that the edges of the hole are so sharp as to saw through a string very quickly. The instrument is shapely, beautifully finished, and could only have been made with great patience and care. The mystery as to its use imparts fresh interest to this curious implement.

It would be idle to attempt an enumeration of even the most remarkable exhibits, for there are so many and all so interesting that it would require several issues of this paper to do them justice—that is, from the antiquarian's point of view. But all antiquarians interested in the life and antiquities of the native tribes of British Columbia will find in the new addition to the provincial museum abundant material for carrying on their studies, and in Mr. John Fannin they will find a kindly sympathizer in their search after "mush light," and whose experience in the field of natural history and his complete love of the subject eminently fit him to be "mentor, philosopher and friend."

Sure Signs of Old Age.
"Do you know the surest indication of old age?" asked Dr. Reed, of St. Louis. "The surest indication in man," he continued, "are the moist eye, a dry palm and a shrinkage of the calf of the leg. All these indications are due to some action of the nerves consequent upon advancing years. In the matter of the eye, the fifth section is interfered with,

and it is this which causes a flow of water. The dryness of the palm is produced by an interference with the functions of the body, also due to the action of the nerves, and the shrinkage of the leg follows from similar causes. In old age, too, you notice some men become more corpulent than in the earlier portions of their lives. With drinking men the change is often produced by the quantity of saccharine which they consume with their drink, with those who do not drink it follows from other physiological changes, as to the hair becoming gray, it results in the majority of cases from the partial closing of the hair cells and the reduction of the quantity of natural coloring matter which the clothing produces. With women the thinness of the eye does not come so soon as it does in men."—Chicago Herald.

A King's Life Policy.

One of the queerest things I have seen on my travels is the life insurance policy of the late King Kalakaua of New York has the policy—which has been paid, of course—among its papers and notes, preserved in its original form, it would be in some museum, for really it is a remarkable curiosity. The king was insured in the company for \$5,000, and the original policy was the ordinary document that every life insurance policy is, but now there is scarcely a speck of white space of the paper left. It has been written upon all over, and cross-written and cross-written again until the policy is as black as a silk hat, and the writings and cross-writings are numerous assignments of the policy made by the king when he was hard up and wanted to borrow money either to continue on in a poker game or to prolong a spree.

The releases back to the king when the "borrow" was paid are also there, and the frequent assignments cover every bit of the surface of the paper. The lowest borrow made by the king on his \$5,000 policy was \$2 and the highest \$50. Old Kalakaua must have been in pretty hard luck to get down to borrowing \$2, probably to come in one jack-pot with, and the ink-strewn policy shows that though a king, his credit was pretty bad when he had to put up his life insurance as collateral for the loan of \$2.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Put in a New Nerve.

A medical correspondent sends to an English newspaper an account of a remarkable operation recently performed in one of the largest London hospitals, and which had a very successful result. It seems that an artisan, about thirty years of age, some five years ago fell and severely injured his right arm, and was operated upon at the time, and the result proved that either the surgeon or misadventure had divided the nerve or it had been torn by the fall. At all events, the injured arm never recovered its former appearance, but wasted and became quite useless. It was a serious misfortune to the workman, and it was decided to open up the arm and explore, with the result, at first surmised, that the nerve was found to be partly divided. Two fresh ends were made, and a live rabbit having been obtained, the patient was then stitched up, and the wound placed in bed. It is now some weeks since the operation, and the result is most favorable. The man has perfect power in the right arm, which is already regaining the original bulk, and he is now able to follow his employment.

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THE WONDER OF

(Continued from

too much and vice versa found necessary to keep from the mold except when made. Otherwise heated so fast that the not cool fast enough. The pump which forced the mold is of the simple type. Its plunger acts on the cylinder and the other end of the cylinder is connected with the pot. Although the cast is hollowed, it is often, they are all found the face of the type, matrices, is absolutely holes or roughness. This much appreciated the molten metal is squarish against the matrix there first. The confined towards the back of the most of it escapes, en form of bubbles and

One more feature of serves special menamgely remarkable for and its automatic self-example, the same matrices for any of type and can cast five inches in length. A ator desires several cast is often the case, he lever and the machine cast after cast from matrices, instead of lifting the matrices, as is By "self-protection" merous provisions are throughout the machinatic stoppage in case, the casting process st with no matrices and the able jaw closes in fro and instead of a squirt the result is blank, high. Should a matrix tributing mechanism stantly detached, stopp the machine under the In fact, provision is ma ful point that one mov begin until the necessar ment is completed. In machines in one: a ty moulder and a distribut work of three men with spective of the fact that though only an ordinat set the type alone as f many printers the hand chines can be run eith electric power, and each operated singly. The speed of the linot unlimited, or rather it is the ability of the oper the keys. The work the keyboard as ordinary typewriter wo suit would be something an hour—and the spee cannot be attaine In fact, the better d in other cities where been in use long conce get accustomed to it from 5,000 to 5,500 em the average without and had, is 3,500 em t are many operators in set, month after mont water. The dryness of the palm is produced by an interference with the functions of the body, also due to the action of the nerves, and the shrinkage of the leg follows from similar causes. In old age, too, you notice some men become more corpulent than in the earlier portions of their lives. With drinking men the change is often produced by the quantity of saccharine which they consume with their drink, with those who do not drink it follows from other physiological changes, as to the hair becoming gray, it results in the majority of cases from the partial closing of the hair cells and the reduction of the quantity of natural coloring matter which the clothing produces. With women the thinness of the eye does not come so soon as it does in men."—Chicago Herald.

When the linotype wa the attention of the p was a violent oppositi graphical Union, and that the general use would drive all printe out. Rates were cons of the members to ree organization, no matter the cause of the m the men were enthu anism. In some cases attended solely by the a newspaper, the is cheaper to leave the k utteredly at the let one man responsible for the entire work. When the linotype wa the attention of the p was a violent oppositi graphical Union, and that the general use would drive all printe out. Rates were cons of the members to ree organization, no matter the cause of the m the men were enthu anism. In some cases attended solely by the a newspaper, the is cheaper to leave the k utteredly at the let one man responsible for the entire work.

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