[Carved, Seated Figure from the North West Coast of the America]

Author(s): W. L. Distant

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ANTHROPOLOGICAL MISCELLANEA AND NEW BOOKS.

A CURIOUS object from the North West Coast of America has recently been acquired by the British Museum. It consists of a seated human figure, $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height, carved from a solid block of greenish steatite. It is represented with the hands meeting above the knees, which are drawn up close to the body, the hands and arms, with the chest, enclosing a shallow oval cavity or bowl.

The head is slightly thrown back, and the features are prominent : the mouth is rather distended, the septum of the nose is pierced, and the execution of the eyes recalls that seen in Haida designs. The back of the head is flat, and the narrow forehead is surmounted by a raised band, conventionally representing hair ; this descends on both sides to the ears and amalgamates with them. The perforation of the lobe of one ear has been commenced, but left unfinished ; and the two small cavities made by the boring instrument are not opposite to each other. The top of the head is perforated, probably for suspension. This interesting figure was washed up in Cowichan Bay, Vancouver Island, during the high tides in the early part of 1895 ; it may possibly have been intended for an oil vessel.

Steatopygy among the Hottentots and Bushmen is a character well known to all students of Anthropology. It is principally a female development. "The fatty cushions of the buttocks project above like inverted steps and then gradually merge into the thighs; in other words, the arrangement is the reverse of that which occurs in other races" (Peschel); "the development in the female of enormous fatty masses, shaking like jelly at the least touch, which are superposed upon the glutæi muscles. This character is met with here and there in Africa, among the Somalis, Kaffirs, and Hottentots, and is constant in various degrees in Bosjesmans" (Topinard). "It is the reproduction in man of a feature noticed by Pallas as characteristic of certain races of sheep in Central Asia, among which the atrophy of the tail coincides with the appearance of enormous fatty protuberances" (De Quatrefages).

A curious use or explanation of this character has been advanced by Mr. Bryden in a recent work ("Gun and Camera in Southern Africa," p. 245). Speaking of the Bushmen and Hottentots who have undoubtedly for long ages dwelt on the parched karroos and deserts of South West Africa, he remarks:—"This unsightly prominence seems by their own admission to have served these people as a reserve force in seasons of want and hunger, in much the same way as does the tail in the case of the fat-tailed sheep. As hunger and scarcity increase, so does the abnormal development decrease. An old friend of mine (the late Mr. J. B. Evans of Reit Fontein, near Sraaff-Reinet), who farmed for many years in Cape Colony, and who was a close observer of nature, once particularly noticed this natural waste in the case of a Bushman who had endured great want and hunger during a long drought. He taxed the Bushman with his loss, and the little aboriginal admitted with a grin that the drought had robbed him of all his fat supply."

W. L. DISTANT.

Die Mangianenschrift von Mindoro, herausgegeben.
Von A. B. Meyer und A. Schadenberg, speciell bearbeitet von W. Foy, mit 4 Tafeln in Lichtdruck. Dresden, 1895.

This scholarly monograph on a kind of writing recently discovered in use amongst the Manguianes, that is, the Mongoloid or non-Negrito natives of the large island of Mindoro in the Philippines, will be very welcome to students of pre-Muhammadan culture in Malaysia. Wherever Islâm has spread amongst unlettered peoples, they have generally adopted the Arabic writing system, which has thus become widely diffused throughout North Africa, Anatolia, and Central Asia. But in Malaysia one people alone, the Malays proper, have accepted this script. The reason of its restricted use to this region was not obvious until it was discovered that all the cultured, and even some of the savage peoples of the Eastern Archipelago, were already in possession of writing systems of their own before the spread of Islâm. Such were the

VOL. XXV.

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