

apparatus, manuscripts, rare books, diplomas medals and various other objects of historical interest and demonstrated impressively the value and usefulness of collections of this kind.

Throughout the United States there is undoubtedly scattered a large number of similar objects and specimens of paramount historical interest and significance left by departed naturalists and students, partly emigrants from European and Central American States, which after the demise of their owners have passed to succeeding generations, perhaps as little understood and appreciated, obsolete relics. Most of such articles, even of more recent American investigators and scholars sooner or later sink into oblivion and frequently are lost. When gathered by purchase, donation or bequest and collected and preserved in one museum they would form a comprehensive collection, valuable and instructive for the history of chemistry and pharmacy as well as of their foremost representative men of the past.

Some such stray relics are to be found in a number of the collections of American institutes and universities, among them in the *materia medica* collection of the National Museum at Washington. They are the few remaining implements of Joseph Priestley from his kitchen laboratory in Northumberland, Pa., which will be remembered by the surviving American chemists who on August 1, 1874, assembled at that secluded village in the beautiful Susquehanna valley in centennial commemoration of the discovery of oxygen. Many interesting objects from the laboratories and studies, as well as an abundance of documents consisting of books, diplomas, medals, manuscripts, correspondence of American chemists and naturalists of the departing century, now scattered and concealed on the shelves of college museums and in domestic shrines, when gathered and united in a national museum, would at once and still more in time form a memorable and most valuable and interesting collection to which the older generation of still living American chemists and scientists would not fail sooner or later to contribute their share.

In this way an historical library and museum of chemistry and cognate sciences and arts

could be realized in the course of time which from the start would bear the impress of a national one and which in interest and value might soon surpass the existing corresponding European libraries and museums.

These random suggestions may be in place and in time at the dawn of a new century. They may also serve as a timely warning to all interested in this matter against dispersing the historical literary treasures and relics of the past and against the untoward multiplication of petty and inadequate historical libraries and collections as met with in the old and not less in the new world.

FRED. HOFFMANN.

BERLIN, April, 1900.

CEDAR COLLARS OF THE NORTH PACIFIC COAST INDIANS.

EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Can any one tell me whether the cedar collars of the North Pacific Coast Indians are made rights and lefts. In Dr. Boas's paper in Report of U. S. National Museum for 1895, on the Kwakiutl Indians there are many examples of the cedar bark collars figured, but it does not appear from the drawings whether they are worn indifferently on the right or left shoulder, that is, whether the ornament is worn on a particular side. The reason for asking is this: The Porto Rican stone collars are rights and lefts. In the National Museum collection of thirty, every one of them is carefully carved to imitate the splice joint shown perfectly in Dr. Boas's examples of cedar bark. In the drama of the expulsion of the Cannibal, acted with so much spirit by these Indians in Chicago, two men led the Cannibal to the fire, each wearing a cedar bark collar. It requires little imagination to transfer this scene to Porto Rico, where stone collars in likeness of those of bark would surround the necks of the captors, one on the right hand, the other on the left, wearing each the decoration outside. I discovered twenty-five years ago that the Porto Rican collars were rights and lefts, also that the overlapping ornament at the side of each stood for the sizing or wrapping of a hoop, but then did not know that Dr. Boas's Kwakiutl Indians were wearing homologous decorations.

O. T. MASON.