

THE FILIPINO'S CUNNING

PATIENT SKILL AND REAL ART IN NATIVE KNIVES.

Character Revealed by the National Museum's Collection of Curiosities—The Headman's Blade—To Fit the "Talangong's" Curve a Scabbard is Designed.

Filipino ingenuity and character are revealed at the National Museum at Washington in a new collection of hunting and fishing implements, headgear, musical instruments and weapons of warfare.

The natives of the Philippine group have developed to a very high degree the use of rattan, bamboo, vegetable fibre and palm leaves in the manufacture of dozens of miscellaneous articles. Rattan is plaited and woven into hats, arrow quivers, scabbards for swords and knives, and umbrellas. Bamboo is fashioned into telescope fishing rods, water and wine bottles, covers for the swords of executioners and blowpipes. Palmleaves are shaped into a score of designs—into dippers, water-proof hats, torches and other articles. The native has apparently found in the vegetable growths of his dwelling place material to supply all his demands except the need for iron.

Possibly the most prominent feature of the collection is a group of half a dozen "talangongs," or headman's axes. They are huge knives, three feet long or more, curved like a scimitar reversed. In order the better to strike the unfortunate victim's neck this curve is irregular—wide at the two ends and acute in the middle. It is impossible, of course, to slide such a recent curve into a scabbard, but the Philippine headmen have overcome that difficulty easily. Two pieces of bamboo, shaped like the scimitar and flat on the side nearest the blade, have been joined together along one edge with a fiber which is a little elastic. Separating these two slabs of wood the swordsman can slip his blade into it from one side and from the end. The fiber at the outside joint holds the bamboo closely to the knife, open only at one end.

Among the army officers this need for a knife fitted to a man's neck has not been allowed to interfere with a sense of design. Their swords, or "campalongs," are a regular, graceful arc of a circle. One such sword, apparently made from a thick saw brought to the islands by a trading ship, is chased and inlaid with silver and has a mahogany handle. The workman who engraved the blade evidently worked long to carve the handle into a shape singularly like that of the swords used among the Saracen tribes. At the curve in the hilt Spanish coins have been sunk until flush with the surface. The handle is decorated with a fringe of hair dyed red or maroon.

Another knife is little and curved back toward the wrist when held in the closed fist. This is intended for a swift blow at the stomach, and then, when the enemy has doubled over, to complete the attack with a stab in the back. Many of the knives are decorated with horn or silver handles, and one terminates in an ivory tusk. Nearly all of these short knives are curved into the form of a kris, and look like highly ornamented bread knives.

An umbrella in the collection is a work of art, but it is suspected of Chinese origin. Palm leaves have been cut and trimmed until they fitted together for an outer covering, as smooth and firm as heavy paper. This was then applied to a frame of split bamboo in the fashion of the ordinary Chinese or Japanese parasol. Inside the frame has been decorated with rattan split into slender strands and woven about the umbrella ribs. The whole was then given a tone of deep red and the outside varnished to make it impervious to water. Everything used in the construction of the umbrella is vegetable, even the fastenings at the ends of the ribs and the little rivets used in the frame.

The Filipino blowpipe will disappoint those whose ideas of such weapons have been obtained from the geographical features of fifteen years ago or more. It is not ten feet long or two inches in diameter. On the contrary, it is a most inoffensive instrument, about three-quarters of an inch thick and only a yard long. It is merely an enlarged putty blower, of the sort possessed by the American boy. The material used in its manufacture is a section of bamboo, with the openings carefully rounded. For darts the native shapes little arrows of split bamboo, and winds about the barb end a little ball of cotton to fill the tube and offer the greatest possible resistance to the air.

Nothing could more fully meet the old idea of South Sea Islanders than the bamboo wine bottle which rests alongside the blowpipe. It is about a foot long, four or five inches in diameter and would hold possibly half a gallon. Holes have been bored in the fibre at the end, and a strip of rattan fastened into them for a sling-strap. The last item of its equipment is a round wooden cork, which is fastened to the "bottle" by rattan.

The musical instruments are equipped with vegetable strings. One of them is much like the guitar of the Tyrol, but more slender and weighted down with long, highly curved keys. The other is somewhat like an Indian pipe—a queer bowl at one end of a long, hollow tube, with strings from the top of the bowl to the further end of the tube. The musician in the Philippines evidently gives his extra time to carving his instrument, as both guitar and fiddle are covered with little decorations cut with a knife.

The last feature of the collection is a harmless looking cane that rattles when picked up. It is one might hunt for an hour without discovering how it is opened. Inside is a steel blade,

long enough for a duel. Another cane opens at the end and lets out a sort of a spear. But the greatest surprise is the cane with a screw cap at the ferrule. When finally that cap has been worked off and the cane has been shaken, the wood grows longer and longer, until the spectator holds in his hand a light, tapering, beautifully joined fishing rod.

To Run Bird Restaurants.

Kenosha, Wis., women have gone into a scheme for making their town a regular "Bird City." They have formed a club, which nearly every villager has joined, for having bird restaurants in their front or back gardens. Each member of the club has agreed to erect a tall pole with a shelf on top large enough to hold a saucer of water and a tray of food, which will contain seeds, lettuce, cuttlebone and any other dainties birds crave.

Once the bird restaurants become popular with Kenosha's birds, the women believe the feathered ones will impart the glad tidings to their neighbors in other suburbs, and Kenosha in a little while will have a monopoly of the songsters of the North shore.

Some of the women will even go further than to establish bird eating houses. Moss and other nesting material will be placed in the trees, where it will be of easy access, and the women reason that, with all this home-building material at hand, the birds will look no further for a cozy spot in which to settle and begin housekeeping.

Increase of Cheap Telephones in Chicago.

It is only a year ago that the nickel-in-the-slot telephone was introduced in Chicago. Now the demand for this class of instruments is enormous, as they fill a place hitherto unprovided for in the telephone service of that city. Two classes of nickel-in-the-slot machines are used—one on a two-party and the other ten-party line service. The rate at which these instruments are put in is limited only by the rapidity with which they can be turned out from the factory, and the necessary wires run and provisions made on the exchange switchboard; in fact, the company is overwhelmed with new business and is even going to the extent of letting out different portions of its work of placing instruments, running wires and building pole lines to various contractors. The number of five-cent telephones put in since this service was started about a year ago is in the neighborhood of 7000, which means an enormous additional load on the company's exchanges.

The Kaiser's Family.

Emperor William is the fortunate father of six bright boys, and each of those boys has a sister, as the old conundrum puts it. Her name is Victoria Louise, and she was born September 13, 1892. We saw her at the Zoological Gardens, in charge of a governess and an aid-de-camp, laughing at the capers of the monkeys and feeding the lions and tigers, just like hundreds of other children who go to the park every day. Mingling in the throng, no one noticed her, although people entering at one of the gates might have observed that some member of the royal family was there, because of a carriage bearing the Emperor's private crest, with a coachman and footman in his private livery. By those signs the imperial family may always be distinguished in the parks, boulevards and streets. The coachman and footman wear black, trimmed with silver braid, and a wide band of silver marked with black eagles.—Chicago Record-Herald.

American Fog.

The recurrence of a foggy season directs attention again to a serious municipal problem. It causes us to wonder whether the heaviness of the atmosphere of Philadelphia is due most to the dampness or to the soot and gas which are emitted from every fire and chimney pot, and are unable to ascend during these periods of meteorological depression. It is a well known fact that a London "particular" is little more than the smoke of the great metropolis, which for the time being refuses to rise and overwhelms man and beast. The heavy atmosphere of Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and Cleveland hangs over those cities like a pall, and when dampness accompanies the habitual condition of smokiness the evil is aggravated, becoming at times intolerable to people who have ever known a clearer and happier climate.—Philadelphia Times.

Migration of Insects.

Not long ago a ship from one of the tropical countries was followed by a flock of butterflies, which persistently circled around the rigging of the vessel until the shore had faded in the distance. Then the insects lighted on the masts and decks. A few disappeared in the night and were destroyed in the water or reached the shore in safety. Some of the others crawled away in the cabins and hold of the ship. After a trip of thirty days the vessel reached New York, and from their hiding place in the ship a few of these butterflies emerged and flew ashore. Thus an entirely new species of butterfly was introduced into the country.

Easy.

The girls of Smith College at Northampton, Mass., are indignant at a new set of rules, one of which forbids any one of them taking a carriage ride with any students of Amherst College unless engaged to be married to him. There must always be two girls, but there may also be two men, provided they are all in the same vehicle. Announcements of many engagements are expected.—Philadelphia Times.



A New Solution.

THE world may become indebted to Russia for a new method of overland transportation. The device in question is that of Prince Khilkoff, the Czar's Minister of Ways and Communication, and is so simple that one is inclined to wonder that it was not thought of before. The plan contemplates the employment of automobiles of from three to six horse power for hauling ordinary carts over tramways made of boards, sheet iron, cement or any material that may be found readily at hand. Stone, iron and wooden tramways have been used for transportation from time immemorial; traction road engines are not new, nor can the idea of drawing farmers' or carters' wagons in trains from farm to factory to the nearby market towns or railway centres be regarded as a novelty. The traction engines hitherto thought of in this connection, however, are comparatively slow, expensive and so heavy that a considerable portion of the power generated by them would be required to haul their own weight. Moreover, a prerequisite for their successful employment is a hard, smooth and costly road.

Prince Khilkoff's initial experiments were conducted in the park surrounding his home. Ordinary sleepers were laid down, and upon these two lines of planks were nailed, instead of rails, at a distance apart corresponding to that of the automobile wheels. Wooden combings were placed on the outer sides of the planks as guards, to prevent the machine from leaving the track. With an ordinary three and one-half horse power carriage a cart laden with bricks, and weighing with its contents nearly two tons, was easily hauled over the wooden tramway at a speed of twelve versts an hour. The estimated cost of a tramway constructed like the foregoing is less than 2000 rubles per verst, while the cheapest macadamized road would cost five times as much. The first practical experiment of the new system is to be made between Tsarkoo-Selo and the new water works, which are being built a few versts from that city. The line will be laid over swampy ground, where an ordinary road could not be built. Various substances will be tried for the new automobile rails, such as iron, cement and different kinds of wood.

In the event of the success of this experiment, of which there is no reasonable doubt, the system is to be extended throughout the empire as a supplementary means of transportation between points not reached by railways. Another consideration moving the Russian Minister to extend the system is the impracticability of ordinary Russian roads for carriages and carts in the spring and autumn, when the wheels are apt to sink deep into mire. The considerations are as valid in the greater part of this country as they are in Russia, and it is quite possible that the general adoption of Prince Khilkoff's plan would be the solution of the haulage problem in the rural districts of the United States. An automobile can be bought at a price but little exceeding that of a team of horses, and costs incomparably less to keep. The cheapness of the timber tramway would lay the road tax bog, which fills farmers with apprehension whenever improved roadways are mentioned. The point which would count most heavily in favor of the tramway principle is its adaptability to all locations. On any sort of soil the sleepers and board rails could be laid with equal celerity and ease. No clay would be too soft, nor sand too deep for it; the road could be made to follow the rubble stone bank of dry river, and it would not be necessary to make long detours around marsh lands. On grounds of economy and general utility, the plan appeals to one so strongly that it would be surprising if some of the freeholders or supervisors of our progressive rural communities should not give it an early trial.

New Method of Road Building.

A novel system of road construction has been successfully resorted to in Monmouth, Ill. The ground was prepared for it by grading and being allowed to remain so for two months. It was treated to an occasional scraping, so that it would pack evenly, being thus rendered hard and even for the laying of a surface of brick, the chief constructive feature. The first thing was the setting of a curb, made of two by six inch planks seven feet apart, held by oak stakes eighteen inches long and put down every four feet. Inside of this was a five-inch bed of sand, all evened up, and a single course of No. 1 paving brick then put down, a fine roadbed being thus obtained. Outside the curb two feet of crushed rock were laid, graded up to make an easy approach, this plan insuring a way of eleven feet in width, and, as the earth on each side was graded and worked, there was afforded a width of some forty feet, affording tracks on each side for use in dry weather. Such a brick road costs about ninety cents a running foot.

The Industrial Discoverer.

It is not the boy who is surrounded by the best implements and tools that ingenuity can manufacture, but an Eli Whitney making a cotton gin in a cellar in the South with the simplest tools, or a Cuneard whittling the model of a ship with a jackknife, that makes great industrial discoveries.—Success.

Old Joe, the Night Watchman.

(From the Pall Mall Gazette, London.) How often on returning home late on a dreary winter's night has our sympathy gone out to the poor old night watchman as he sat huddled up over his cage fire, overlooking the excavations which our City Council in their wisdom, or otherwise, allow the different water companies to make so frequently in our congested streets. In all weathers, and under all climatic conditions, the poor old night watchman is obliged to keep watch over the companies' property, and to see that the red lights are kept burning. What a life, to be sure; what privations and hardships; but they have aches and pains, which nothing but St. Jacobs Oil can alleviate.

"Old Joe" is in the employ of the Lambeth Water Works, and is well and favorably known. He has been a night watchman for many years, in the course of which he has undergone many experiences. What with wet and cold, he contracted rheumatism and sciatica, which fairly doubled him up, and it began to look a serious matter for old Joe whether he would much longer be able to perform his duties, on which his good wife and himself depended for a livelihood, but as it happened a passer-by, who had for some nights noticed Old Joe's painful condition, presented him with a bottle of St. Jacobs Oil, and told him to use it. Old Joe followed the advice given; he crawled home the next morning and bade his wife rub his aching back with the St. Jacobs Oil "a gentleman gave him," and undoubtedly his wife did rub, for when Old Joe went on duty at night he met his friend and benefactor, to whom he remarked: "Them oils you gave me, Guv'nor, did give me a doing; they was like pins and needles for a time, but look at me now," and Old Joe began to run and jump about like a young colt. All pain, stiffness and soreness had gone; he had been telling everybody he met what St. Jacobs Oil had done for him. Old Joe says now he has but one ambition in life, and that is to always be able to keep a bottle of St. Jacobs Oil by him, for he says there is nothing like it in the world.

St. Jacobs Oil serves the rich and the poor, high and low, the same way. It has conquered pain for fifty years, and it will do the same to the end of time. It has no equal, consequently no competitor; it has many cheap imitations, but simple facts like the above tell an honest tale with which nothing on earth can compete.

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It is estimated that of the whole population of the globe about 50,000 die every day.

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Sir Thomas Lipton says there are "no girls like American girls."

WHEN RUSSIANS EAT.

No Fixed Meal Time—Many Peculiarities at Table.

The Russian has no fixed meal time. He eats when he is hungry, which is often. He has about six square meals a day. He has at least a dozen lunches, a little bit of salt fish or some caviare, or a piece of bread and cheese, washed down with a nip of fiery vodka. He never passes a station without a glass of tea—marvelous tea, with a thin slice of lemon floating in it. You get a fondness for Russian tea, and forswear bemuddled decoctions forever. The table manners of the Russian—such as you see in hotels and buffets—are not pleasing. He sprawls with outstretched elbow on the table, and gets his mouth down to his food rather than raise the food to his mouth. He makes objectionable noises in his throat. He has a finger bowl, and rinses his mouth as the rest of us do when cleaning our teeth in our bathrooms. Then he squirts the water back into the bowl.

Thackeray's House.

The house which Thackeray built for himself in Kensington has recently been sold by the son of the auctioneer who sold it for the first time 37 years ago. When the great novelist decided to build, many people thought he was putting too great a strain on his pen, but events have shown that the speculation was a sound one, for last week this house went for \$75,000. It is a red brick mansion, screened from the road, and the lease has 41 years to run.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children's teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, 25c a bottle.

No large comet has appeared within our environment since that of 1882.

Pisco's Cure is the best medicine ever used for all affections of throat and lungs.—Wm. O. ENDSLEY, Vanburen, Ind., Feb. 10, 1900.

The hide of the hippopotamus in some parts is fully two inches thick.

Hair Splits

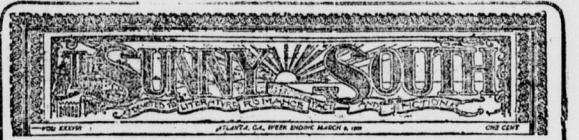
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