

# **An introduction to the mortuary customs of the North American Indians**

H. C. Yarrow

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION--BUREAU OF ETHNOLOGY

J.W. POWELL DIRECTOR

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF MORTUARY CUSTOMS AMONG THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS

BY DR. H. C. YARROW ACT ASST SU G USA

WASHINGTON GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1880

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION BUREAU OF ETHNOLOGY

Washington D. C. July 8, 1880

This little volume is the third of a series designed to promote anthropologic researches among the North American Indians. The first was prepared by myself and entitled "Introduction to the Study of Indian Languages," the second by Col. Garrick Mallery entitled Introduction to the Study of Sign Language among the North American Indians.

The following are in course of preparation and will soon appear.

Introduction to the Study of Medicine Practices among the North American Indians

Introduction to the Study of Mythology among the North American Indians

Introduction to the Study of Sociology among the North American Indians

The mortuary customs of savage or barbaric people have a deep significance from the fact that in them are revealed much of the philosophy of the people by whom they are practiced. Early beliefs concerning the nature of human existence in life and after death and the relations of the living to the dead are recorded in these customs. The mystery concerning the future love for the departed who were loved while here, reverence for the wise and good who may after death be wiser and better, hatred and fear of those who were enemies here and may have added powers of enmity in the hereafter--all these and like considerations have led in every tribe to a body of customs of exceeding interest as revealing the opinions, the philosophy of the people themselves.

In these customs, also are recorded evidences of the social condition

of the people, the affection in which friends and kindred are held, the very beginnings of altruism in primitive life.

In like manner these customs constitute a record of the moral condition of the people, as in many ways they exhibit the ethic standards by which conduct in human life is judged. For such reasons the study of mortuary customs is of profound interest to the anthropologist.

It is hoped that by this method of research the observations of many men may be brought together and placed on permanent record, and that the body of material may be sufficient, by a careful comparative study, to warrant some general discussion concerning the philosophy of this department of human conduct.

General conclusions can be reached with safety only after materials from many sources have been obtained. It will not be safe for the collector to speculate much upon that which he observes. His own theory or explanation of customs will be of little worth, but the theory and explanation given by the Indians will be of the greatest value. What do the Indians do, and say, and believe? When these are before us it matters little whether our generalizations be true or false. Wiser men may come and use the facts to a truer purpose. It is proposed to make a purely objective study of the Indians, and, as far as possible, to leave the record unmarred by vain subjective speculations.

The student who is pursuing his researches in this field should carefully note all of the customs, superstitions, and opinions of the Indians relating to--

1. The care of the lifeless body prior to burial, much of which he will find elaborated into sacred ceremonies.

2. The method of burial, including the site of burial, the attitude in which the body is placed, and the manner in which it is invested. Here, also, he will find interesting and curious ceremonial observances. The superstitions and opinions of the people relating to these subjects are of importance.

3. The gifts offered to the dead; not only those placed with the body at the time of burial, but those offered at a subsequent time for the benefaction of the departed on his way to the other world, and for his use on arrival. Here, too, it is as important for us to know the ceremonies with which the gifts are made as to know the character of the gifts themselves.

4. An interesting branch of this research relates to the customs of mourning, embracing the time of mourning, the habiliments, the self-mutilations, and other penances, and the ceremonies with which these are accompanied. In all of these cases the reason assigned by the Indians for their doings, their superstitions, and explanations are of prime importance.

5. It is desirable to obtain from the Indians their explanation of human life, their theory of spirits and of the life to come.

A complete account of these customs in any tribe will necessitate the witnessing of many funeral rites, as the custom will differ at the

death of different persons, depending upon age, sex, and social standing. To obtain their explanations and superstitions, it will be necessary to interrogate the Indians themselves. This is not an easy task, for the Indians do not talk with freedom about their dead. The awe with which they are inspired, their reverence and love for the departed, and their fear that knowledge which may be communicated may be used to the injury of those whom they have loved, or of themselves, lead them to excessive reticence on these subjects. Their feelings should not be rudely wounded. The better and more thoughtful members of the tribe will at last converse freely on these subjects with those in whom they have learned to place confidence. The stories of ignorant white men and camp attaches should be wholly discarded, and all accounts should be composed of things actually observed, and of relations made by Indians of probity.

This preliminary volume by Dr. H. C Yarrow has been the subject of careful research and of much observation, and will serve in many ways as a hint to the student. The literature of the subject is vast, but to a large extent worthless, from the fact that writers have been hasty travelers or subjective speculators on the matter. It is strange how much of accepted history must be rejected when the statements are carefully criticised and compared with known facts. It has frequently been stated of this or that tribe that mutilations, as the cutting off of fingers and toes, of ears and nose, the pulling out of teeth, &c., are extensively practiced as a mode of mourning and wild scenes of maiming and bloodshed are depicted as following upon the death of a beloved chief or great man yet among these tribes maimed persons are rarely found. It is probable that there is some basis of fact for the statement that mutilations are in rare instances practiced among some tribes. But even this qualified statement needs absolute proof.

I am pleased to assure those who will take part in this work by earnest and faithful research that Dr Yarrow will treat them generously by giving them full credit for their work in his final publication.

I must not fail to present my thanks to the Surgeon General of the United States Army and his corps of officers for the interest and assistance they have rendered.

J W POWELL

WASHINGTON, D C, \_April\_ 5, 1880

DEAR SIR: I have the honor to offer for your consideration the following paper upon the Mortuary Customs of the North American Indians, and trust it may meet with your approval as an introduction to the study of a subject which, while it has been alluded to by most authors, has received little or no systematic treatment. For this and other reasons I was induced some three years since to commence an examination and collection of data relative to the matter, and the present paper is the outcome of that effort. From the vast amount of material in the Bureau of Ethnology, even at the present time, a large volume might be prepared, but it was thought wiser to endeavor to obtain a still greater array of facts, especially from living

observers. If the desired end is attained I shall not count as lost the labor which has been bestowed.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H C. YARROW.

Maj. J. W. POWELL,

In charge of Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution

The wisest of beings tells us that it is better to go to the House of Mourning than to that of laughter. And those who have well considered the grounds he bad for thus his judgment will not by the title of this book (as melancholy as it appears) be affrighted from the perusing it.

What we read to have been and still to be the custom of some nations to make sepulchres the repositories of their greatest riches is (I am sure) universally true in a moral sense however it may be thought in the literal there being never a grave but what conceals a treasure though all have not the art to discover it I do not here invite the covetous miser to disturb the dead who can frame no idea of treasure distinct from gold and silver but him who knows that wisdom and virtue are the true and sole riches of man. Is not truth a treasure think you? Which yet Democritus assures us is buried in a deep pit or grave and he bad reason for whereas we meet elsewhere with nothing but pain and deceit we no sooner look down into a grave but truth faceth us and tells us our own.--MURET

## INQUIRIES AND SUGGESTIONS

upon the

MORTUARY CUSTOMS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS.

BY H. C. YARROW.

## INTRODUCTORY.

The primitive manners and customs of the North American Indians are rapidly passing away under influences of civilization and other disturbing elements. In view of this fact, it becomes the duty of all interested in preserving a record of these customs to labor assiduously, while there is still time, to collect such data as may be obtainable. This seems the more important now, as within the last ten years an almost universal interest has been awakened in ethnologic research, and the desire for more knowledge in this regard is constantly increasing. A wise and liberal government, recognizing the

need, has ably seconded the efforts of those engaged in such studies by liberal grants from the public funds; nor is encouragement wanted from the hundreds of scientific societies throughout the civilized globe. The public press, too--the mouth-piece of the people--is ever on the alert to scatter broadcast such items of ethnologic information as its corps of well-trained reporters can secure. To induce further laudable inquiry, and assist all those who may be willing to engage in the good work, is the object of this preliminary work on the mortuary customs of North American Indians, and it is hoped that many more laborers may through it be added to the extensive and honorable list of those who have already contributed.

It would appear that the subject chosen should awaken great interest, since the peculiar methods followed by different nations and the great importance attached to burial ceremonies have formed an almost invariable part of all works relating to the different peoples of our globe; in fact no particular portion of ethnologic research has claimed more attention. In view of these facts, it might seem almost a work of supererogation to continue a further examination of the subject, for nearly every author in writing of our Indian tribes makes some mention of burial observances; but these notices are scattered far and wide on the sea of this special literature, and many of the accounts, unless supported by corroborative evidence, may be considered as entirely unreliable. To bring together and harmonize conflicting statements, and arrange collectively what is known of the subject has been the writer's task, and an enormous mass of information has been acquired, the method of securing which has been as follows:

In the first instance a circular was prepared, which is here given; this at the time was thought to embrace all items relating to the disposal of the dead and attendant ceremonies, although since its distribution other important questions have arisen which will be alluded to subsequently.

"WASHINGTON, D. C., \_June\_ 15, 1877.

"To--

"SIR: Being engaged in preparing a memoir upon the 'Burial Customs of the Indians of North America, both ancient and modern, and the disposal of their dead,' I beg leave to request your kind co-operation to enable me to present as exhaustive an exposition of the subject as possible, and to this end earnestly invite your attention to the following points in regard to which information is desired:

"1st. Name of the tribe

"2d. Locality.

"3d. Manner of burial, ancient and modern.

"4th. Funeral ceremonies.

"5th. Mourning observances, if any.

"With reference to the first of these inquiries, 'Name of the tribe,' the Indian name is desired as well as the name by which the tribe is

known to the whites.

"As to 'Locality,' the response should give the range of the tribe, and be full and geographically accurate.

"As to the 'Manner of burial,' &c, it is important to have every particular bearing on this branch of the subject, and much minuteness is desirable.

"For instance:

"( a ) Was the body buried in the ground; if so, in what position, and how was the grave prepared and finished?

"( b ) If cremated, describe the process, and what disposal was made of the ashes.

"( c ) Were any utensils, implements, ornaments, &c., or food placed in the grave? In short, every \_fact\_ is sought that may possibly add to a general knowledge of the subject.

"Answers to the fourth and fifth queries should give as full and succinct a description as possible of funereal and other mortuary ceremonies at the time of death and subsequently, the period of mourning, manner of its observance, &c.

"In obtaining materials for the purpose in question it is particularly desirable that well-authenticated sources of information only be drawn upon, and, therefore, any points gathered from current rumor or mere hearsay, and upon which there is doubt, should be submitted to searching scrutiny before being embraced in answers to the several interrogatories, and nothing should be recorded as a \_fact\_ until fully established as such.

"In seeking information from Indians, it is well to remember the great tendency to exaggeration they show, and since absolute facts will alone serve our purpose, great caution is suggested in this particular.

"It is earnestly desired to make the work in question as complete as possible, and therefore it is especially hoped that your response will cover the ground as pointed out by the several questions as thoroughly as you may be able and willing to make it.

"In addition to notes, a reference to published papers either by yourself or others is desirable, as well as the names of those persons who may be able to furnish the needed information.

"Permit me to assure you that, while it is not offered in the way of inducement to secure the service asked, since it is barely possible that you can be otherwise than deeply interested in the extension of the bounds of knowledge, full credit will be given you in the work for whatever information you may be pleased to furnish.

"This material will be published under the auspices of Prof. J.W. Powell, in charge of the U. S Geographical and Geological Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region.

"Communications may be addressed to me either at the address given



above or at the Army Medical Museum, Washington, D. C.

"Respectfully, yours,

"H. C. YARROW."

This was forwarded to every Indian agent, physicians at agencies, to a great number of Army officers who had served or were serving at frontier posts, and to individuals known to be interested in ethnologic matters. A large number of interesting and valuable responses were received, many of them showing how customs have changed either under influences of civilization or altered circumstances of environment.

Following this, a comprehensive list of books relating to North American Indians was procured, and each volume subjected to careful scrutiny, extracts being made from those that appeared in the writer's judgment reliable. Out of a large number examined up to the present time, several hundred have been laid under contribution, and the labor of further collation still continues.

It is proper to add that all the material obtained will eventually be embodied in a quarto volume, forming one of the series of contributions to North American Ethnology prepared under the direction of Maj. J. W. Powell, Director of the Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, from whom, since the inception of the work, most constant encouragement and advice has been received, and to whom all American ethnologists owe a debt of gratitude which can never be repaid.

Having thus called attention to the work and the methods pursued in collecting data, the classification of the subject may be given and examples furnished of the burial ceremonies among different tribes, calling especial attention to similar or almost analogous customs among the peoples of the Old World.

For our present purpose the following provisional arrangement of burials may be adopted:

1st. By INHUMATION in pits, graves, holes in the ground, mounds; cists, and caves.

2d. By CREMATION, generally on the surface of the earth, occasionally beneath, the resulting bones or ashes being placed in pits, in the ground, in boxes placed on scaffolds or trees, in urns, sometimes scattered.

3d. By EMBALMENT or a process of mummifying, the remains being afterwards placed in the earth, caves, mounds, or charnel-houses.

4th. By AERIAL SEPULTURE, the bodies being deposited on scaffolds or trees, in boxes or canoes, the two latter receptacles supported on scaffolds or posts, or on the ground. Occasionally baskets have been used to contain the remains of children, these being hung to trees.

5th. By AQUATIC BURIAL, beneath the water, or in canoes, which were turned adrift.

These heads might, perhaps, be further subdivided, but the above seem

sufficient for all practical needs.

The use of the term \_burial\_ throughout this paper is to be understood in its literal significance, the word being derived from the Anglo-Saxon "\_birgan," to conceal or hide away.

In giving descriptions of different burials and attendant ceremonies, it has been deemed expedient to introduce entire accounts as furnished, in order to preserve continuity of narrative.

## INHUMATION.

The commonest mode of burial among North American Indians has been that of interment in the ground, and this has taken place in a number of different ways; the following will, however, serve as good examples of the process.

"The Mohawks of New York made a large round hole in which the body was placed upright or upon its haunches, after which it was covered with timber, to support the earth which they lay over, and thereby kept the body from being pressed. They then raised the earth in a round hill over it. They always dressed the corpse in all its finery, and put wampum and other things into the grave with it; and the relations suffered not grass nor any weed to grow upon the grave, and frequently visited it and made lamentation." [Footnote: Hist. Indian Tribes of the United States, 1853, part 3, p 183.]

This account may be found in Schoolcraft.

In Jones [Footnote: Antiq. of Southern Indians, 1873, pp 108-110] is the following interesting account from Lawson, of the burial customs of the Indians formerly inhabiting the Carolinas:

"Among the Carolina tribes, the burial of the dead was accompanied with special ceremonies, the expense and formality attendant upon the funeral according with the rank of the deceased. The corpse was first placed in a cane bundle and deposited in an outhouse made for the purpose, where it was suffered to remain for a day and a night guarded and mourned over by the nearest relatives with disheveled hair. Those who are to officiate at the funeral go into the town, and from the backs of the first young men they meet strip such blankets and matchcoats as they deem suitable for their purpose. In these the dead body is wrapped and then covered with two or three mats made of rushes or cane. The coffin is made of woven reeds or hollow canes tied fast at both ends. When everything is prepared for the interment, the corpse is carried from the house in which it has been lying into the orchard of peach-trees and is there deposited in another bundle. Seated upon mats are there congregated the family and tribe of the deceased and invited guests. The medicine man, or conjurer, having enjoined silence, then pronounces a funeral oration, during which he recounts the exploits of the deceased, his valor, skill, love of country, property, and influence, alludes to the void caused by his death, and counsels those who remain to supply his place by following in his footsteps; pictures the happiness he will enjoy in the land of spirits to which he has gone, and concludes his address by an allusion to the prominent traditions of his tribe."

Let us here pause to remind the reader that this custom has prevailed throughout the civilized world up to the present day--a custom, in the opinion of many, "more honored in the breach than the observance."

"At last [says Mr. Lawson], the corpse is brought away from that hurdle to the grave by four young men, attended by the relations, the king, old men, and all the nation. When they come to the sepulchre, which is about six feet deep and eight feet long, having at each end (that is, at the head and foot) a light-wood or pitch-pine fork driven close down the sides of the grave firmly into the ground (these two forks are to contain a ridgepole, as you shall understand presently), before they lay the corpse into the grave, they cover the bottom two or three time over with the bark of trees; then they let down the corpse (with two belts that the Indians carry their burdens withal) very leisurely upon the said barks; then they lay over a pole of the same wood in the two forks, and having a great many pieces of pitch-pine logs about two foot and a half long, they stick them in the sides of the grave down each end and near the top, through of where (sic) the other ends lie in the ridge-pole, so that they are declining like the roof of a house. These being very thick placed, they cover them many times double with bark; then they throw the earth thereon that came out of the grave and beat it down very firm. By this means the dead body lies in a vault, nothing touching him. After a time the body is taken up, the bones cleaned, and deposited in an ossuary called the Quiogozon."

Dr Fordyce Grinnell, physician to the Wichita Agency, Indian Territory, furnishes the following description of the burial ceremonies of the Wichita Indians, who call themselves. "Kitty-la-tats\_" or those of the tattooed eyelids.

"When a Wichita dies the town-crier goes up and down through the village and announces the fact. Preparations are immediately made for the burial, and the body is taken without delay to the grave prepared for it reception. If the grave is some distance from the village the body is carried thither on the back of a pony, being first wrapped in blankets and then laid prone across the saddle, one walking on either side to support it. The grave is dug from 3 to 4 feet deep and of sufficient length for the extended body. First blankets and buffalo robes are laid in the bottom of the grave, then the body, being taken from the horse and unwrapped, is dressed in its best apparel and with ornaments is placed upon a couch of blankets and robes, with the head towards the west and the feet to the east; the valuables belonging to the deceased are placed with the body in the grave. With the man are deposited his bows and arrows or gun, and with the woman her cooking utensils and other implements of her toil. Over the body sticks are placed six or eight inches deep and grass over these, so that when the earth is filled in it need not come in contact with the body or its trappings. After the grave is filled with earth a pen of poles is built around it, or, as is frequently the case, stakes are driven so that they cross each other from either side about midway over the grave, thus forming a complete protection from the invasion of wild animals. After all this is done, the grass or other debris is carefully scraped from about the grave for several feet, so that the ground is left smooth and clean. It is seldom the case that the relatives accompany the remains to the grave, but they more often employ others to bury the body for them, usually women. Mourning is similar in this tribe as in others, and consists in cutting off the

hair, fasting, &c. Horses are also killed at the grave."

The Caddoes, \_Ascena\_, or Timber Indians, as they call themselves, follow nearly the same mode of burial as the Wichitas, but one custom prevailing is worthy of mention.

"If a Caddo is killed in battle, the body is never buried, but is left to be devoured by beasts or birds of prey and the condition of such individuals in the other world is considered to be far better than that of persons dying a natural death."

In a work by Bruhier [Footnote: L'incertitude des Signes de la Mort, 1740, tom 1, p. 430] the following remarks, freely translated by the writer, may be found, which note a custom having great similarity to the exposure of bodies to wild beasts mentioned above.

"The ancient Persians threw out the bodies of their dead on the roads, and if they were promptly devoured by wild beasts it was esteemed a great honor, a misfortune if not. Sometimes they interred, always wrapping the dead in a wax cloth to prevent odor."

M. Pierre Muret, [Footnote: Rites of Funeral, Ancient and Modern, 1683, p 45] from whose book Bruhier probably obtained his information, gives at considerable length an account of this peculiar method of treating the dead among the Persians, as follows:

"It is a matter of astonishment, considering the \_Persians\_ have ever had the renown of being one of the most civilized Nations in the world, that notwithstanding they should have used such barbarous customs about the Dead as are set down in the Writings of some Historians, and the rather because at this day there are still to be seen among them those remains of Antiquity, which do fully satisfy us, that their Tombs have been very magnificent. And yet nevertheless, if we will give credit to \_Procopius\_ and \_Agathias\_, the \_Persians\_ were never wont to bury their Dead Bodies, so far were they from bestowing any Funeral Honours upon them. But, as these Authors tell us, they exposed them stark naked in the open fields, which is the greatest shame our Laws do allot to the most infamous Criminals, by laying them open to the view of all upon the highways: Yea, in their opinion it was a great unhappiness, if either Birds or Beasts did not devour their Carcases; and they commonly made an estimate of the Felicity of these poor Bodies, according as they were sooner or later made a prey of. Concerning these, they resolved that they must needs have been very bad indeed, since even the beasts themselves would not touch them; which caused an extream sorrow to their Relations, they taking it for an ill boding to their Family, and an infallible presage of some great misfortune hanging over their heads, for they persuaded themselves, that the Souls which inhabited those Bodies being dragg'd into Hell, would not fail to come and trouble them, and that being always accompanied with the Devils, their Tormentors, they would certainly give them a great deal of disturbance.

"And on the contrary, when these Corpses were presently devoured, their joy was very great, they enlarged themselves in praises of the Deceased; every one esteeming them undoubtedly happy, and came to congratulate their relations on that account: For as they believed assuredly, that they were entered into the \_Elysian\_ Fields, so they were persuaded, that they would procure the same bliss for all those of their family.

"They also took a great delight to see Skeletons and Bones scatered up and down in the fields, whereas we can scarcely endure to see those of Horses and Dogs used so. And these remains of Humane Bodies, (the sight whereof gives us so much, horror, that we presently bury them out of our sight, whenever we find them elsewhere than in Charnel-houses or Church yards) were the occasion of their greatest joy because they concluded from thence the happiness of those that had been devoured wishing after then Death to meet with the like good luck."

The same author states and Bruhier corroborates the assertion that the Parthians, Medes, Iberians, Caspians, and a few others had such a horror and aversion of the corruption and decomposition of the dead and of their being eaten by worms that they threw out the bodies into the open fields to be devoured by wild beasts, a part of their belief being that persons so devoured would not be entirely extinct, but enjoy at least a partial sort of life in their living sepulchres. It is quite probable that for these and other reasons the Bactrians and Hircanians trained dogs for this special purpose called \_Canes sepulchrales\_ which received the greatest care and attention, for it was deemed proper that the souls of the deceased should have strong and lusty frames to dwell in.

George Gibbs [Footnote: Schoolcraft's Hist. Indian Tribes of the United States Pt. 3, 1853, p. 140] gives the following account of burial among the Klamath and Trinity Indians of the Northwest coast.

The graves which are in the immediate vicinity of their houses exhibit very considerable taste and a laudable care. The dead are inclosed in rude coffins formed by placing four boards around the body and covered with earth to some depth; a heavy plank often supported by upright head and foot stones is laid upon the top or stones are built up into a wall about a foot above the ground and the top flagged with others. The graves of the chiefs are surrounded by neat wooden palings, each pale ornamented with a feather from the tail of the bald eagle. Baskets are usually staked down by the side according to the wealth or popularity of the individual and sometimes other articles for ornament or use are suspended over them. The funeral ceremonies occupy three days during which the soul of the deceased is in danger from \_O-mah-u\_ or the devil. To preserve it from this peril a fire is kept up at the grave and the friends of the deceased howl around it to scare away the demon. Should they not be successful in this the soul is carried down the river, subject, however, to redemption by \_Peh-ho wan\_ on payment of a big knife. After the expiration of three days it is all well with them.

The question may well be asked, is the big knife a "sop to Cerberus"?

Capt. F. E. Grossman, [Footnote: Rep. Smithson. Inst., 1871, p. 414] USA, furnishes the following account of burial among the Pimas of Arizona:

"The Pimas tie the bodies of their dead with ropes, passing the latter around the neck and under the knees and then drawing them tight until the body is doubled up and forced into a sitting position. They dig the grave from four to five feet deep and perfectly round (about two feet in diameter), then hollow out to one side of the bottom of this grave a sort of vault large enough to contain the body. Here the body

is deposited, the grave is filled up level with the ground, and poles, trees, or pieces of timber placed upon the grave to protect the remains from the coyotes (a species of wolf). Burials usually take place at night, without much ceremony. The mourners chant during the burial, but signs of grief are rare. The bodies of their dead are buried, if possible, immediately after death has taken place, and the graves are generally prepared before the patients die. Sometimes sick persons (for whom the graves had already been dug) recovered; in such cases the graves are left open until the persons for whom they were intended die. Open graves of this kind can be seen in several of their burial-grounds. Places of burial are selected some distance from the village, and, if possible, in a grove of mesquite bushes. Immediately after the remains have been buried, the house and personal effects of the deceased are burned, and his horses and cattle killed, the meat being cooked as a repast for the mourners. The nearest relatives of the deceased, as a sign of their sorrow, remain in the village for weeks and sometimes months; the men cut off about six inches of their long hair, while the women cut their hair quite short"

The Coyotero Apaches, according to Dr. W. J. Hoffman, [Footnote: U.S. Geol. Surv. of Terr. for 1876, p. 473] in disposing of their dead, seem to be actuated by the desire to spare themselves any needless trouble, and prepare the defunct and the grave in this manner.

"The Coyoteros, upon the death of a member of the tribe, partially wrap up the corpse and deposit it into the cavity left by the removal of a small rock or the stump of a tree. After the body has been crammed into the smallest possible space the rock or stump is again rolled into its former position, when a number of stones are placed around the base to keep out the coyotes. The nearest of kin usually mourn for the period of one month, during that time giving utterance at intervals to the most dismal lamentations, which are apparently sincere. During the day this obligation is frequently neglected or forgotten, but when the mourner is reminded of his duty he renews his howling with evident interest. This custom of mourning for the period of thirty days corresponds to that formerly observed by the Natchez."

Somewhat similar to this rude mode of sepulture is that described in the life of Moses Van Campen, which relates to the Indians formerly inhabiting Pennsylvania:

"Directly after the Indians proceeded to bury those who had fallen in battle, which they did by rolling an old log from its place and laying the body in the hollow thus made, and then heaping upon it a little earth"

As a somewhat curious, if not exceptional, interment, the following account, relating to the Indians of New York is furnished, by Mr. Franklin B. Hough, who has extracted it from an unpublished journal of the agents of a French company kept in 1794:

"Saw Indian graves on the plateau of Independence Rock. The Indians plant a stake on the right side of the head of the deceased and bury them in a bark canoe. Their children come every year to bring provisions to the place where their fathers are buried. One of the graves had fallen in and we observed in the soil some sticks for stretching skins, the remains of a canoe, &c., and the two straps for carrying it, and near the place where the head lay were the traces of a fire which they had kindled for the soul of the deceased to come and

warm itself by and to partake of the food deposited near it.

"These were probably the Massasauga Indians, then inhabiting the north shore of Lake Ontario, but who were rather intruders here, the country being claimed by the Oneidas."

It is not to be denied that the use of canoes for coffins has occasionally been remarked, for the writer in 1875 removed from the graves at Santa Barbara an entire skeleton which was discovered in a redwood canoe, but it is thought that the individual may have been a noted fisherman, particularly as the implements of his vocation--nets, fish-spears, &c.--were near him, and this burial was only an exemplification of the well-rooted belief common to all Indians, that the spirit in the next world makes use of the same articles as were employed in this one. It should be added that of the many hundreds of skeletons uncovered at Santa Barbara the one mentioned presented the only example of the kind.

Among the Indians of the Mosquito coast, in Central America, canoe burial in the ground, according to Bancroft [Footnote: Native Races of Pacific States, 1874, vol. 1, p 744.], was common, and is thus described:

"The corpse is wrapped in cloth and placed in one-half of a pitpan which has been cut in two. Friends assemble for the funeral and drown their grief in \_mushla\_, the women giving vent to their sorrow by dashing themselves on the ground until covered with blood, and inflicting other tortures, occasionally even committing suicide. As it is supposed that the evil spirit seeks to obtain possession of the body, musicians are called in to lull it to sleep while preparations are made for its removal. All at once four naked men, who have disguised themselves with paint so as not to be recognized and punished by \_Wulasha\_, rush out from a neighboring hut, and, seizing a rope attached to the canoe, drag it into the woods, followed by the music and the crowd. Here the pitpan is lowered into the grave with bow, arrow, spear, paddle, and other implements to serve the departed in the land beyond, then the other half of the boat is placed over the body. A rude hut is constructed over the grave, serving as a receptacle for the choice food, drink, and other articles placed there from time to time by relatives."

#### BURIAL IN CABINS, WIGWAMS, OR HOUSES.

While there is a certain degree of similitude between the above-noted methods and the one to be mentioned subsequently--\_lodge\_ burial--they differ, inasmuch as the latter are examples of surface or aerial burial, and must consequently fall under another caption. The narratives which are now to be given afford a clear idea of the former kind of burial.

Bartram [Footnote: Bartram's Travels, 1791, pp. 515.] relates the following regarding the Muscogulges of the Carolinas:

"The Muscogulges bury their deceased in the earth; they dig a four-foot, square, deep pit under the cabin, or couch which the deceased laid on in his house, lining the grave with cypress bark, when they

place the corpse in a sitting posture, as if it were alive, depositing with him his gun, tomahawk, pipe, and such other matters as he had the greatest value for in his lifetime. His eldest wife, or the queen dowager, has the second choice of his possessions, and the remaining effects are divided among his other wives and children."

According to Bernard Roman, the "funeral customs of the Chickasaws did not differ materially from those of the Muscogulges. They interred the dead as soon as the breath left the body, and beneath the couch in which the deceased expired."

The Navajos of New Mexico and Arizona, a tribe living a considerable distance from the Chickasaws, follow somewhat similar customs, as related by Dr. John Menard, formerly a physician to their agency.

"The Navajo custom is to leave the body where it dies, closing up the house or hogan or covering the body with stones or brush. In case the body is removed, it is taken to a cleft in the rocks and thrown in, and stones piled over. The person touching or carrying the body, first takes off all his clothes and afterwards washes his body with water before putting them on or mingling with the living. When a body is removed from a house or hogan, the hogan is burned down, and the place in every case abandoned, as the belief is that the devil comes to the place of death and remains where a dead body is. Wild animals frequently (indeed, generally) get the bodies, and it is a very easy matter to pick up skulls and bones around old camping grounds, or where the dead are laid. In case it is not desirable to abandon a place, the sick person is left out in some lone spot protected by brush, where they are either abandoned to their fate or food brought to them until they die. This is done only when all hope is gone. I have found bodies thus left so well inclosed with brush that wild animals were unable to get at them; and one so left to die was revived by a cup of coffee from our house and is still living and well."

Mr. J. L. Burchard, agent to the Round Valley Indians of California, furnishes an account of burial somewhat resembling that of the Navajos:

"When I first came here the Indians would dig a round hole in the ground, draw up the knees of the deceased Indian, and wrap the body into as small a bulk as possible in blankets, tie them firmly with cords, place them in the grave, throw in beads, baskets, clothing, everything owned by the deceased, and often donating much extra; all gathered around the grave wailing most pitifully, tearing their faces with their nails till the blood would run down their cheeks, pull out their hair, and such other heathenish conduct. These burials were generally made under their thatch houses or very near thereto. The house where one died was always torn down, removed, rebuilt, or abandoned. The wailing, talks, &c., were in their own jargon; none else could understand, and they seemingly knew but little of its meaning (if there was any meaning in it); it simply seemed to be the promptings of grief, without sufficient intelligence to direct any ceremony; each seemed to act out his own impulse"

STONE GRAVES OR CISTS.



These are of considerable interest, not only from their somewhat rare occurrence, except in certain localities, but from the manifest care taken by the survivors to provide for the dead what they considered a suitable resting-place. A number of cists have been found in Tennessee, and are thus described by Moses Fiske: [Footnote: Trans. Amer. Antiq. Soc., 1820 vol. 1, p. 302]

"There are many burying grounds in West Tennessee with regular graves. They dug them 12 or 18 inches deep, placed slabs at the bottom ends and sides, forming a kind of stone coffin, and, after laying in the body, covered it over with earth."

It may be added that, in 1873, the writer assisted at the opening of a number of graves of men of the reindeer period, near Solutre, in France, and they were almost identical in construction with those described by Mr. Fiske, with the exception that the latter were deeper; this, however, may be accounted for if it is considered how great a deposition of earth may have taken place during the many centuries which have elapsed since the burial. Many of the graves explored by the writer in 1875, at Santa Barbara, resembled somewhat cist graves, the bottom and sides of the pit being lined with large flat stones, but there were none directly over the skeletons.

The next account is by Maj. J. W. Powell, the result of his observation in Tennessee. "These ancient cemeteries are exceedingly abundant throughout the State, often hundreds of graves may be found on a single hillside. In some places the graves are scattered and in others collected in mounds, each mound being composed of a large number of cist graves. It is evident that the mounds were not constructed at one time, but the whole collection of graves therein was made during long periods by the addition of a new grave from time to time. In the first burials found at the bottom and near the center of a mound a tendency to a concentric system, with the feet inward, is observed, and additions are made around and above these first concentric graves, as the mound increases in size the burials become more and more irregular:

"Some other peculiarities are of interest. A larger number of interments exhibit the fact that the bodies were placed there before the decay of the flesh, while in other cases collections of bones are buried. Sometimes these bones were placed in some order about the crania, and sometimes in irregular piles, as if the collection of bones had been emptied from a sack. With men, pipes, stone hammers, knives, arrowheads, &c., were usually found; with women, pottery, rude beads, shells, &c.; with children, toys of pottery, beads, curious pebbles, &c.

"Sometimes, in the subsequent burials, the side slab of a previous burial was used as a portion of the second cist. All of the cists were covered with slabs."

Dr. Jones has given an exceedingly interesting account of the stone graves of Tennessee, in his volume published by the Smithsonian Institution, to which valuable work [Footnote: Antiquities of Tennessee, Cont. to Knowledge, Smith. Inst., 1876, No. 259, 4 deg., pp. 1, 8, 37, 52, 55, 82.] the reader is referred for a more detailed account of this mode of burial.

## BURIAL IN MOUNDS.

In view of the fact that the subject of mound-burial is so extensive, and that in all probability a volume by a member of the Bureau of Ethnology may shortly be published, it is not deemed advisable to devote any considerable space to it in this paper, but a few interesting examples may be noted to serve as indications to future observers.

The first to which attention is directed is interesting as resembling cist-burial combined with deposition in mounds. The communication is from Prof. F. W. Putnam, curator of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology, Cambridge, made to the Boston Society of Natural History, and is published in volume XX of its proceedings, October 15, 1878:

"...He then stated that it would be of interest to the members, in connection with the discovery of dolmens in Japan, as described by Professor Morse, to know that within twenty-four hours there had been received at the Peabody Museum a small collection of articles taken from rude dolmens (or chambered barrows, as they would be called in England), recently opened by Mr. E. Curtiss, who is now engaged, under his direction, in exploration for the Peabody Museum.

"These chambered mounds are situated in the eastern part of Clay County, Missouri, and form a large group on both sides of the Missouri River. The chambers are, in the three opened by Mr. Curtiss, about 8 feet square, and from 4-1/2 to 5 feet high, each chamber having a passage-way several feet in length and 2 in width leading from the southern side and opening on the edge of the mound formed by covering the chamber and passage-way with earth. The walls of the chambered passages were about 2 feet thick, vertical, and well made of stones, which were evenly laid without clay or mortar of any kind. The top of one of the chambers had a covering of large, flat rocks, but the others seem to have been closed over with wood. The chambers were filled with clay which had been burnt, and appeared as if it had fallen in from above. The inside walls of the chambers also showed signs of fire. Under the burnt clay, in each chamber, were found the remains of several human skeletons, all of which had been burnt to such an extent as to leave but small fragments of the bones, which were mixed with the ashes and charcoal. Mr. Curtiss thought that in one chamber he found the remains of 5 skeletons and in another 13. With these skeletons there were a few flint implements and minute fragments of vessels of clay.

"A large mound near the chambered mounds was also opened, but in this no chambers were found. Neither had the bodies been burnt. This mound proved remarkably rich in large flint implements, and also contained well-made pottery and a peculiar "gorget" of red stone. The connection of the people who placed the ashes of their dead in the stone chambers with those who buried their dead in the earth mounds is, of course, yet to be determined."

It is quite possible, indeed probable, that these chambers were used for secondary burials, the bodies having first been cremated.

In the volume of the proceedings already quoted the same investigator gives an account of other chambered mounds which are, like the

preceding, very interesting, the more so as adults only were inhumed therein, children having been buried beneath the dwelling-floors:

"Mr. F. W. Putnam occupied the rest of the evening with an account of his explorations of the ancient mounds and burial places in the Cumberland Valley, Tennessee.

"The excavations had been carried on by himself, assisted by Mr. Edwin Curtiss, for over two years, for the benefit of the Peabody Museum at Cambridge. During this time many mounds of various kinds had been thoroughly explored, and several thousand of the singular stone graves of the mound builders of Tennessee had been carefully opened.... Mr. Putnam's remarks were illustrated by drawings of several hundred objects obtained from the graves and mounds, particularly to show the great variety of articles of pottery and several large and many unique forms of implements of chipped flint. He also exhibited and explained in detail a map of a walled town of this old nation. This town was situated on the Lindsley estate, in a bend of Spring Creek. The earth embankment, with its accompanying ditch, encircled an area of about 12 acres. Within this inclosure there was one large mound with a flat top, 15 feet high, 130 feet long, and 90 feet wide, which was found not to be a burial mound. Another mound near the large one, about 50 feet in diameter, and only a few feet high, contained 60 human skeletons, each in a carefully-made stone grave, the graves being arranged in two rows, forming the four sides of a square, and in three layers.... The most important discovery he made within the inclosure was that of finding the remains of the houses of the people who lived in this old town. Of them about 70 were traced out and located on the map by Professor Buchanan, of Lebanon, who made the survey for Mr. Putnam. Under the floors of hard clay, which was in places much burnt, Mr. Putnam found the graves of children. As only the bodies of adults had been placed in the one mound devoted to burial, and as nearly every site of a house he explored had from one to four graves of children under the clay floor, he was convinced that it was a regular custom to bury the children in that way. He also found that the children had been undoubtedly treated with affection, as in their small graves were found many of the best pieces of pottery he obtained, and also quantities of shell-beads, several large pearls, and many other objects which were probably the playthings of the little ones while living." [Footnote: A detailed account of this exploration, with many illustrations, will be found in the Eleventh Annual Report of the Peabody Museum, Cambridge, 1878.]

This cist mode of burial is by no means uncommon in Tennessee, as they are frequently mentioned by writers on North American archaeology.

The examples which follow are specially characteristic, some of them serving to add strength to the theory that mounds were for the most part used for secondary burial, although intrusions were doubtless common.

Of the burial mounds of Ohio, Caleb Atwater [Footnote: Trans. Amer. Antiq. Soc., 1820, i, p. 174 et seq.] gives this description.

"Near the center of the round fort ... was a tumulus of earth about 10 feet in height and several rods in diameter at its base. On its eastern side, and extending six rods from it, was a semicircular pavement composed of pebbles such as are now found in the bed of the Scioto River, from whence they appear to have been brought. The summit

of this tumulus was nearly 30 feet in diameter, and there was a raised way to it, leading from the east, like a modern turnpike. The summit was level. The outline of the semicircular pavement and the walk is still discernible. The earth composing this mound was entirely removed several years since. The writer was present at its removal and carefully examined the contents. It contained--

"1st. Two human skeletons lying on what had been the original surface of the earth.

"2d. A great quantity of arrow-heads, some of which were so large as to induce a belief that they were used as spear-heads.

"3d. The handle either of a small sword or a large knife, made of an elk's horn. Around the end where the blade had been inserted was a ferule of silver, which, though black, was not much injured by time. Though the handle showed the hole where the blade had been inserted, yet no iron was found, but an oxyde remained of similar shape and size.

"4th. Charcoal and wood ashes on which these articles lay, which were surrounded by several bricks very well burnt. The skeleton appeared to have been burned in a large and very hot fire, which had almost consumed the bones of the deceased. This skeleton was deposited a little to the south of the center of the tumulus; and about 20 feet to the north of it was another, with which were--

"5th. A large mirror about 3 feet in breadth and 1-1/2 inches in thickness. This mirror was of isinglass (\_mica membranacea\_), and on it--

"6th. A plate of iron which had become an oxyde, but before it was disturbed by the spade resembled a plate of cast iron. The mirror answered the purpose very well for which it was intended. This skeleton had also been burned like the former, and lay on charcoal and a considerable quantity of wood ashes. A part of the mirror is in my possession, as well as a piece of brick taken from the spot at the time. The knife or sword handle was sent to Mr. Peal's Museum at Philadelphia.

"To the southwest of this tumulus, about 40 rods from it, is another, more than 90 feet in height, which is shown on the plate representing these works. It stands on a large hill, which appears to be artificial. This must have been the common cemetery, as it contains an immense number of human skeletons of all sizes and ages. The skeletons are laid horizontally, with their heads generally towards the center and the feet towards the outside of the tumulus. A considerable part of this work still stands uninjured, except by time. In it have been found, besides these skeletons, stone axes and knives and several ornaments, with holes through them, by means of which, with a cord passing through these perforations they could be worn by their owners. On the south side of this tumulus, and not far from it, was a semicircular fosse, which, when I first saw it, was 6 feet deep. On opening it was discovered at the bottom a great quantity of human bones, which I am inclined to believe were the remains of those who had been slain in some great and destructive battle first, because they belonged to persons who had attained their full size, whereas in the mound adjoining were found the skeletons of persons of all ages, and, secondly, they were here in the utmost confusion, as if buried in

a hurry. May we not conjecture that they belonged to the people who resided in the town, and who were victorious in the engagement? Otherwise they would not have been thus honorably buried in the common cemetery."

#### CHILLICOTHE MOUND.

"Its perpendicular height was about 15 feet, and the diameter of its base about 60 feet. It was composed of sand and contained human bones belonging to skeletons which were buried in different parts of it. It was not until this pile of earth was removed and the original surface exposed to view that a probable conjecture of its original design could be formed. About 20 feet square of the surface had been leveled and covered with bark. On the center of this lay a human skeleton, over which had been spread a mat manufactured either from weeds or bark. On the breast lay what had been a piece of copper, in the form of a cross, which had now become verdigrise. On the breast also lay a stone ornament with two perforations, one near each end, through which passed a string, by means of which it was suspended around the wearer's neck. On this string, which was made of sinews, and very much injured by time, were placed a great many heads made of ivory or bone, for I cannot certainly say which...."

#### MOUNDS OF STONE.

"Two such mounds have been described already in the county of Perry. Others have been found in various parts of the country. There is one at least in the vicinity of Licking River, not many miles from Newark. There is another on a branch of Hargus's Creek, a few miles to the northeast of Circleville. There were several not very far from the town of Chillicothe. If these mounds were sometimes used as cemeteries of distinguished persons, they were also used as monuments with a view of perpetuating the recollection of some great transaction or event. In the former not more generally than one or two skeletons are found; in the latter none. These mounds are like those of earth, in form of a cone, composed of small stones on which no marks of tools were visible. In them some of the most interesting articles are found, such as urns, ornaments of copper, heads of spears, &c., of the same metal, as well as medals of copper and pickaxes of hornblende; ... works of this class, compared with those of earth, are few, and they are none of them as large as the mounds at Grave Creek, in the town of Circleville, which belong to the first class. I saw one of these stone tumuli which had been piled on the surface of the earth on the spot where three skeletons had been buried in stone coffins, beneath the surface. It was situated on the western edge of the hill on which the "walled town" stood, on Paint Creek. The graves appear to have been dug to about the depth of ours in the present times. After the bottom and sides were lined with thin flat stones, the corpses were placed in these graves in an eastern and western direction, and large flat stones were laid over the graves; then the earth which had been dug out of the graves was thrown over them. A huge pile of stones was placed over the whole. It is quite probable, however, that this was a work of our present race of Indians. Such graves are more common in Kentucky than Ohio. No article, except the skeletons, was found in these graves; and the skeletons resembled very much the present race of Indians."

The mounds of Sterling County, Illinois, are described by W. C. Holbrook, [Footnote: Amer. Natural, 1877, xi, No. 11, p. 688] as follows:

"I recently made an examination of a few of the many Indian mounds found on Rock River, about two miles above Sterling, Ill. The first one opened was an oval mound about 20 feet long, 12 feet wide, and 7 feet high. In the interior of this I found a dolmen or quadrilateral wall about 10 feet long, 4 feet high, and 4-1/2 feet wide. It had been built of lime-rock from a quarry near by, and was covered with large flat stones. No mortar or cement had been used. The whole structure rested on the surface of the natural soil, the interior of which had been scooped out to enlarge the chamber. Inside of the dolmen I found the partly decayed remains of eight human skeletons, two very large teeth of an unknown animal, two fossils, one of which is not found in this place, and a plummet. One of the long bones had been splintered; the fragments had united, but there remained large morbid growths of bone (exostosis) in several places. One of the skulls presented a circular opening about the size of a silver dime. This perforation had been made during life, for the edges had commenced to cicatrize. I later examined three circular mounds, but in them I found no dolmens. The first mound contained three adult human skeletons, a few fragments of the skeleton of a child, the lower maxillary of which indicated it to be about six years old. I also found claws of some carnivorous animal. The surface of the soil had been scooped out and the bodies laid in the excavation and covered with about a foot of earth, fires had then been made upon the grave and the mound afterwards completed. The bones had not been charred. No charcoal was found among the bones, but occurred in abundance in a stratum about one foot above them. Two other mounds, examined at the same time, contained no remains.

"Of two other mounds, opened later, the first was circular, about 4 feet high, and 15 feet in diameter at the base, and was situated on an elevated point of land close to the bank of the river. From the top of this mound one might view the country for many miles in almost any direction. On its summit was an oval altar 6 feet long and 4-1/2 wide. It was composed of flat pieces of limestone, which had been burned red, some portions having been almost converted into lime. On and about this altar I found abundance of charcoal. At the sides of the altar were fragments of human bones, some of which had been charred. It was covered by a natural growth of vegetable mold and sod, the thickness of which was about 10 inches. Large trees had once grown in this vegetable mold, but their stumps were so decayed I could not tell with certainty to what species they belonged. Another large mound was opened which contained nothing."

The next account relates to the grave-mounds near Pensacola, Fla., and was originally published by Dr. George M. Sternberg, surgeon United States Army. [Footnote: Proc. Am. Ass. Adv. of Science, 1875, p. 288]

"Before visiting the mound I was informed that the Indians were buried in it in an upright position, each one with a clay pot on his head. This idea was based upon some superficial explorations which had been made from time to time by curiosity hunters. Their excavations had, indeed, brought to light pots containing fragments of skulls, but not buried in the position they imagined. Very extensive explorations made at different times by myself have shown that only fragments of skulls and of the long bones of the body are to be found in the mound, and

that these are commonly associated with earthen pots, sometimes whole, but more frequently broken fragments only. In some instances portions of the skull were placed in a pot, and the long bones were deposited in its immediate vicinity. Again, the pots would contain only sand, and fragments of bones would be found near them. The most successful 'find' I made was a whole nest of pots, to the number of half a dozen, all in a good state of preservation, and buried with a fragment of skull, which I take from its small size to have been that of a female. Whether this female was thus distinguished above all others buried in the mound by the number of pots deposited with her remains because of her skill in the manufacture of such ware, or by reason of the unusual wealth of her sorrowing husband, must remain a matter of conjecture. I found altogether fragments of skulls and thigh-bones belonging to at least fifty individuals, but in no instance did I find anything like a complete skeleton. There were no vertebra, no ribs, no pelvic bones, and none of the small bones of the hands and feet. Two or three skulls nearly perfect were found, but they were so fragile that it was impossible to preserve them. In the majority of instances only fragments of the frontal and parietal bones were found, buried in pots or in fragments of pots too small to have ever contained a complete skull. The conclusion was irresistible that this was not a burial-place for the bodies of deceased Indians, but that the bones had been gathered from some other locality for burial in this mound, or that cremation was practiced before burial, and the fragments of bone not consumed by fire were gathered and deposited in the mound. That the latter supposition is the correct one I deem probable from the fact that in digging in the mound evidences of fire are found in numerous places, but without any regularity as to depth and position. These evidences consist in strata of from one to four inches in thickness, in which the sand is of a dark color and has mixed with it numerous small fragments of charcoal.

"My theory is that the mound was built by gradual accretion in the following manner. That when a death occurred a funeral pyre was erected on the mound, upon which the body was placed. That after the body was consumed, any fragments of bones remaining were gathered, placed in a pot, and buried, and that the ashes and cinders were covered by a layer of sand brought from the immediate vicinity for that purpose. This view is further supported by the fact that only the shafts of the long bones are found, the expanded extremities, which would be most easily consumed, having disappeared; also, by the fact that no bones of children were found. Their bones being smaller, and containing a less proportion of earthy matter, would be entirely consumed...."

"At the Santa Rosa mound the method of burial was different. Here I found the skeletons complete, and obtained nine well-preserved skulls.... The bodies were not apparently deposited upon any regular system, and I found no objects of interest associated with the remains. It may be that this was due to the fact that the skeletons found were those of warriors who had fallen in battle in which they had sustained a defeat. This view is supported by the fact that they were all males, and that two of the skulls bore marks of ante-mortem injuries which must have been of a fatal character."

Writing of the Choctaws, Bartram, [Footnote: Bartram's Travels, 1791, p. 513.] in alluding to the ossuary or bone-house, mentions that so soon as this is filled a general inhumation takes place, in this manner.

"Then the respective coffins are borne by the nearest relatives of the deceased to the place of interment, where they are all piled one upon another in the form of a pyramid, and the conical hill of earth heaped above. The funeral ceremonies are concluded with the solemnization of a festival called the feast of the dead."

Mr. Florian Gianque, of Cincinnati, Ohio, furnishes an account of a somewhat curious mound burial which had taken place in the Miami Valley of Ohio.

"A mound was opened in this locality, some years ago, containing a central corpse in a sitting posture, and over thirty skeletons buried around it in a circle, also in a sitting posture but leaning against one another, tipped over towards the right facing inwards. I did not see this opened, but have seen the mounds and many ornaments, awls, &c., said to have been found near the central body. The parties informing me are trustworthy."

As an example of interment, unique, so far as known, and interesting as being *sui generis*, the following is presented, with the statement that the author, Dr J. Mason Spainhour, of Lenoir, N.C., bears the reputation of an observer of undoubted integrity, whose facts as given may not be doubted.

"\_Excavation of an Indian mound by J. Mason Spainhour, D.D.S., of Lenoir, Caldwell County, North Carolina, March 11, 1871, on the farm of R. V. Michaux, esq., near John's River, in Burke County, North Carolina\_"

"In a conversation with Mr. Michaux on Indian curiosities, he informed me that there was an Indian mound on his farm which was formerly of considerable height, but had gradually been plowed down, that several mounds in the neighborhood had been excavated and nothing of interest found in them. I asked permission to examine this mound, which was granted, and upon investigation the following facts were revealed.

"Upon reaching the place, I sharpened a stick 4 or 5 feet in length and ran it down in the earth at several places, and finally struck a rock about 18 inches below the surface, which, on digging down, was found to be smooth on top, lying horizontally upon solid earth, about 18 inches above the bottom of the grave, 18 inches in length, and 16 inches in width, and from 2 to 3 inches in thickness, with the corners rounded.

"Not finding anything under this rock, I then made an excavation in the south of the grave, and soon struck another rock, which upon examination proved to be in front of the remains of a human skeleton in a sitting posture. The bones of the fingers of the right hand were resting on this rock, and on the rock near the hand was a small stone about 5 inches long, resembling a tomahawk or Indian hatchet. Upon a further examination many of the bones were found, though in a very decomposed condition, and upon exposure to the air soon crumbled to pieces. The heads of the bones, a considerable portion of the skull, maxillary bones, teeth, neck bones, and the vertebra, were in their proper places, though the weight of the earth above them had driven them down, yet the entire frame was so perfect that it was an easy matter to trace all the bones; the bones of the cranium were slightly inclined toward the east. Around the neck were found coarse beads that



seemed to be of some hard substance and resembled chalk. A small lump of red paint about the size of an egg was found near the right side of this skeleton. The sutures of the cranium indicated the subject to have been 25 or 28 years of age, and its top rested about 12 inches below the mark of the plow.

"I made a further excavation toward the west of this grave and found another skeleton, similar to the first, in a sitting posture, facing the east. A rock was on the right, on which the bones of the right hand were resting, and on this rock was a tomahawk which had been about 7 inches in length, but was broken into two pieces, and was much better finished than the first. Beads were also around the neck of this one, but are much smaller and of finer quality than those on the neck of the first. The material, however, seems to be the same. A much larger amount of paint was found by the side of this than the first. The bones indicated a person of large frame, who, I think, was about 50 years of age. Everything about this one had the appearance of superiority over the first. The top of the skull was about 6 inches below the mark of the plane.

"I continued the examination, and, after diligent search, found nothing at the north side of the grave; but, on reaching the east, found another skeleton, in the same posture as the others, facing the west. On the right side of this was a rock on which the bones of the right hand were resting, and on the rock was also a tomahawk, which had been about 8 inches in length, but was broken into three pieces, and was composed of much better material, and better finished than the others. Beads were also found on the neck of this, but much smaller and finer than those of the others. A larger amount of paint than both of the others was found near this one. The top of the cranium had been moved by the plow. The bones indicated a person of 40 years of age.

"There was no appearance of hair discovered; besides, the smaller bones were almost entirely decomposed, and would crumble when taken from their bed in the earth. These two circumstances, coupled with the fact that the farm on which this grave was found was the first settled in that part of the country, the date of the first deed made from Lord Granville to John Perkins running back about 150 years (the land still belonging to the descendants of the same family that first occupied it), would prove beyond doubt that it is a very old grave.

"The grave was situated due east and west, in size about 9 by 6 feet, the line being distinctly marked by the difference in the color of the soil. It was dug in rich, black loam, and filled around the bodies with white or yellow sand, which I suppose was carried from the river-bank, 200 yards distant. The skeletons approximated the walls of the grave, and contiguous to them was a dark-colored earth, and so decidedly different was this from all surrounding it, both in quality and odor, that the line of the bodies could be readily traced. The odor of this decomposed earth, which had been flesh, was similar to clotted blood, and would adhere in lumps when compressed in the hand.

"This was not the grave of the Indian warriors; in those we find pots made of earth or stone, and all the implements of war, for the warrior had an idea that after he arose from the dead he would need, in the 'hunting-grounds beyond,' his bow and arrow, war-hatchet, and scalping-knife.

"The facts set forth will doubtless convince every Mason who will carefully read the account of this remarkable burial that the American Indians were in possession of at least some of the mysteries of our order, and that it was evidently the grave of Masons, and the three highest officers in a Masonic lodge. The grave was situated due east and west; an altar was erected in the center; the south, west, and east were occupied-- the north was not; implements of authority were near each body. The difference in the quality of the beads, the tomahawks in one, two, and three pieces, and the difference that the bodies were placed from the surface, indicate beyond doubt that these three persons had been buried by Masons, and those, too, that understood what they were doing.

"Will some learned Mason unravel this mystery, and inform the Masonic world how they obtained so much Masonic information?"

"The tomahawks, maxillary bones, some of the teeth, beads, and other bones, have been forwarded to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, D.C., to be placed among the archives of that institution for exhibition, at which place they may be seen."

If Dr. Spainhour's inferences are incorrect, still there is a remarkable coincidence of circumstances patent to every Mason.

#### CAVE BURIAL.

Natural or artificial holes in the ground, caverns, and fissures in rocks have been used as places of deposit for the dead since the earliest periods of time, and are used up to the present day by not only the American Indians, but by peoples noted for their mental elevation and civilization, our cemeteries furnishing numerous specimens of artificial or partly artificial caves. As to the motives which have actuated this mode of burial, a discussion would be out of place at this time, except as may incidentally relate to our own Indians, who, so far as can be ascertained, simply adopted caves as ready and convenient resting places for their deceased relatives and friends.

In almost every State in the Union burial caves have been discovered, but as there is more or less of identity between them, a few illustrations will serve the purpose of calling the attention of observers to the subject.

While in the Territory of Utah, in 1872, the writer discovered a natural cave not far from the House Range of mountains, the entrance to which resembled the shaft of a mine. In this the Gosi-Ute Indians had deposited their dead, surrounded with different articles, until it was quite filled up; at least it so appeared from the cursory examination made, limited time preventing a careful exploration. In the fall of the same year another cave was heard of, from an Indian guide, near the Nevada border, in the same Territory, and an attempt made to explore it, which failed for reasons to be subsequently given. This Indian, a Gosi-Ute, who was questioned regarding the funeral ceremonies of his tribe, informed the writer that not far from the very spot where the party were encamped was a large cave in which he had himself assisted in placing dead members of his tribe. He

described it in detail and drew a rough diagram of its position and appearance within. He was asked if an entrance could be effected, and replied that he thought not, as some years previous his people had stopped up the narrow entrance to prevent game from seeking a refuge in its vast vaults, for he asserted that it was so large and extended so far under ground that no man knew its full extent. In consideration, however, of a very liberal bribe, after many refusals, he agreed to act as guide. A rough ride of over an hour and the desired spot was reached. It was found to be almost upon the apex of a small mountain apparently of volcanic origin, for the hole which was pointed out appeared to have been the vent of the crater. This entrance was irregularly circular in form and descended at an angle. As the Indian had stated, it was completely stopped up with large stones and roots of sage brush, and it was only after six hours of uninterrupted, faithful labor that the attempt to explore was abandoned. The guide was asked if many bodies were therein, and replied "Heaps, heaps," moving the hands upwards as far as they could be stretched. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the information received, as it was voluntarily imparted.

In a communication received from Dr. A. J McDonald, physician to the Los Pinos Indian Agency, Colorado, a description is given of crevice or rock-fissure burial, which follows.

"As soon as death takes place the event is at once announced by the medicine-man, and without loss of time the squaws are busily engaged in preparing the corpse for the grave. This does not take long; whatever articles of clothing may have been on the body at the time of death are not removed. The dead man's limbs are straightened out, his weapons of war laid by his side, and his robes and blankets wrapped securely and snugly around him, and now everything is ready for burial. It is the custom to secure, if possible, for the purpose of wrapping up the corpse, the robes and blankets in which the Indian died. At the same time that the body is being fitted for interment, the squaws having immediate care of it, together with all the other squaws in the neighborhood, keep up a continued chant or dirge, the dismal cadence of which may, when the congregation of women is large, be heard for quite a long distance. The death song is not a mere inarticulate howl of distress; it embraces expressions eulogistic in character, but whether or not any particular formula of words is adopted on such occasion is a question which I am unable, with the materials at my disposal, to determine with any degree of certainty.

"The next duty falling to the lot of the squaws is that of placing the dead man on a horse and conducting the remains to the spot chosen for burial. This is in the cleft of a rock, and, so far as can be ascertained, it has always been customary among the Utes to select sepulchres of this character. From descriptions given by Mr. Harris, who has several times been fortunate enough to discover remains, it would appear that no superstitious ideas are held by this tribe with respect to the position in which the body is placed, the space accommodation of the sepulchre probably regulating this matter; and from the same source I learn that it is not usual to find the remains of more than one Indian deposited in one grave. After the body has been received into the cleft, it is well covered with pieces of rock, to protect it against the ravages of wild animals. The chant ceases, the squaws disperse, and the burial ceremonies are at an end. The men during all this time have not been idle, though they have in no way participated in the preparation of the body, have not joined the

squaws in chanting praises to the memory of the dead, and have not even as mere spectators attended the funeral, yet they have had their duties to perform. In conformity with a long-established custom, all the personal property of the deceased is immediately destroyed. His horses and his cattle are shot, and his wigwam, furniture, &c., burned. The performance of this part of the ceremonies is assigned to the men; a duty quite in accord with their taste and inclinations. Occasionally the destruction of horses and other property is of considerable magnitude, but usually this is not the case, owing to a practice existing with them of distributing their property among their children while they are of a very tender age, retaining to themselves only what is necessary to meet every-day requirements.

"The widow 'goes into mourning' by smearing her face with a substance composed of pitch and charcoal. The application is made but once, and is allowed to remain on until it wears off. This is the only mourning observance of which I have any knowledge.

"The ceremonies observed on the death of a female are the same as those in the case of a male, except that no destruction of property takes place, and of course no weapons are deposited with the corpse. Should a youth die while under the superintendence of white men, the Indians will not as a rule have anything to do with the interment of the body. In a case of the kind which occurred at this agency some time ago, the squaws prepared the body in the usual manner; the men of the tribe selected a spot for the burial, and the employes at the agency, after digging a grave and depositing the corpse therein, filled it up according to the fashion of civilized people, and then at the request of the Indians rolled large fragments of rocks on top. Great anxiety was exhibited by the Indians to have the employes perform the service as expeditiously as possible."

An interesting cave in Calaveras County, California, which had been used for burial purposes, is thus described by Prof. J. D. Whitney: [Footnote: Rep. Smithsonian Inst. 1867, p. 406.]

"The following is an account of the cave from which the skulls, now in the Smithsonian collection, were taken. It is near the Stanislaus River, in Calaveras County, on a nameless creek, about two miles from Abbey's Ferry, on the road to Vallicito, at the house of Mr. Robinson. There were two or three persons with me, who had been to the place before and knew that the skulls in question were taken from it. Their visit was some ten years ago, and since that the condition of things in the cave has greatly changed. Owing to some alteration in the road, mining operations, or some other cause which I could not ascertain, there has accumulated on the formerly clean stalagmitic floor of the cave a thickness of some 20 feet of surface earth that completely conceals the bottom, and which could not be removed without considerable expense. This cave is about 27 feet deep at the mouth and 40 to 50 feet at the end, and perhaps 30 feet in diameter. It is the general opinion of those who have noticed this cave and saw it years ago that it was a burying-place of the present Indians. Dr. Jones said he found remains of bows and arrows and charcoal with the skulls he obtained, and which were destroyed at the time the village of Murphy's was burned. All the people spoke of the skulls as lying on the surface and not as buried in the stalagmite."

The next description of cave burial, described by W. H. Dall [Footnote: Contrib. to N. A. Ethnol., 1877, vol 1, p 62.], is so

remarkable that it seems worthy of admittance to this paper. It relates probably to the InnuIt of Alaska.

"The earliest remains of man found in Alaska up to the time of writing I refer to this epoch [Echinus layer of Dall]. There are some crania found by us in the lowermost part of the Amaknak cave and a cranium obtained at Adakh, near the anchorage in the Bay of Islands. These were deposited in a remarkable manner, precisely similar to that adopted by most of the continental InnuIt, but equally different from the modern Aleut fashion. At the Amaknak cave we found what at first appeared to be a wooden inclosure, but which proved to be made of the very much decayed supra-maxillary bones of some large cetacean. These were arranged so as to form a rude rectangular inclosure covered over with similar pieces of bone. This was somewhat less than 4 feet long, 2 feet wide, and 18 inches deep. The bottom was formed of flat pieces of stone. Three such were found close together, covered with and filled by an accumulation of fine vegetable and organic mold. In each was the remains of a skeleton in the last stages of decay. It had evidently been tied up in the InnuIt fashion to get it into its narrow house, but all the bones, with the exception of the skull, were reduced to a soft paste, or even entirely gone. At Adakh a fancy prompted me to dig into a small knoll near the ancient shell-heap; and here we found, in a precisely similar sarcophagus, the remains of a skeleton, of which also only the cranium retained sufficient consistency to admit of preservation. This inclosure, however, was filled with a dense peaty mass not reduced to mold, the result of centuries of sphagnous growth, which had reached a thickness of nearly 2 feet above the remains. When we reflect upon the well-known slowness of this kind of growth in these northern regions, attested by numerous Arctic travelers, the antiquity of the remains becomes evident."

It seems beyond doubt that in the majority of cases, especially as regards the caves of the Western States and Territories, the interments were primary ones, and this is likewise true of many of the caverns of Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, for in the three States mentioned many mummies have been found, but it is also likely that such receptacles were largely used as places of secondary deposits. The many fragmentary skeletons and loose bones found seem to strengthen this view.

## MUMMIES.

In connection with cave burial, the subject of mummifying or embalming the dead may be taken up, as most specimens of the kind have generally been found in such repositories.

It might be both interesting and instructive to search out and discuss the causes which have led many nations or tribes to adopt certain processes with a view to prevent that return to dust which all flesh must sooner or later experience, but the necessarily limited scope of this preliminary work precludes more than a brief mention of certain theories advanced by writers of note, and which relate to the ancient Egyptians. Possibly at the time the Indians of America sought to preserve their dead from decomposition some such ideas may have animated them, but on this point no definite information has been procured. In the final volume an effort will be made to trace out the

origin of mummification among the Indians and aborigines of this continent.

The Egyptians embalmed, according to Cassien, because during the time of the annual inundation no interments could take place, but it is more than likely that this hypothesis is entirely fanciful. It is said by others they believed that so long as the body was preserved from corruption the soul remained in it. Herodotus states that it was to prevent bodies from becoming a prey to animal voracity. "They did not inter them," says he, "for fear of their being eaten by worms; nor did they burn, considering fire as a ferocious beast, devouring everything which it touched." According to Diodorus of Sicily, embalmmment originated in filial piety and respect. De Maillet, however, in his tenth letter on Egypt, attributes it entirely to a religious belief insisted upon by the wise men and priests, who taught their disciples that after a certain number of cycles, of perhaps thirty or forty thousand years, the entire universe became as it was at birth, and the souls of the dead returned into the same bodies in which they had lived, provided that the body remained free from corruption, and that sacrifices were freely offered as oblations to the manes of the deceased. Considering the great care taken to preserve the dead, and the ponderously solid nature of their tombs, it is quite evident that this theory obtained many believers among the people. M. Gannal believes embalmmment to have been suggested by the affectionate sentiments of our nature--a desire to preserve as long as possible the mortal remains of loved ones; but MM. Volney and Pariaet think it was intended to obviate, in hot climates especially, danger from pestilence, being primarily a cheap and simple process, elegance and luxury coming later; and the Count de Caylus states the idea of embalmmment was derived from the finding of desiccated bodies which the burning sands of Egypt had hardened and preserved. Many other suppositions have arisen, but it is thought the few given above are sufficient to serve as an introduction to embalmmment in North America.

From the statements of the older writers on North American Indians, it appears that mummifying was resorted to among certain tribes of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Florida, especially for people of distinction, the process in Virginia for the kings, according to Beverly, [Footnote: Hist. of Virginia, 1722, p 185] being as follows:

"The \_Indians\_ are religious in preserving the Corpses of their Kings and Rulers after Death, which they order in the following manner: First, they neatly flay off the Skin as entire as they can, slitting it only in the Back; then they pick all the Flesh off from the Bones as clean as possible, leaving the Sinews fastned to the Bones, that they may preserve the Joints together: then they dry the Bones in the Sun, and put them into the Skin again, which in the mean time has been kept from drying or shrinking; when the Bones are placed right in the Skin, they nicely fill up the Vacuities, with a very fine white Sand. After this they sew up the Skin again, and the Body looks as if the Flesh had not been removed. They take care to keep the Skin from shrinking, by the help of a little Oil or Grease, which saves it also from Corruption. The Skin being thus prepar'd, they lay it in an apartment for that purpose, upon a large Shelf rais'd above the Floor. This Shelf is spread with Mats, for the Corpse to rest easy on, and skreened with the same, to keep it from the Dust. The Flesh they lay upon Hurdles in the Sun to dry, and when it is thoroughly dried, it is sewed up in a Basket, and set at the Feet of the Corpse, to which it belongs. In this place also they set up a \_Quioccos,\_ or Idol,

which they believe will be a Guard to the Corpse. Here Night and Day one or other of the Priests must give his Attendance, to take care of the dead Bodies. So great an Honour and Veneration have these ignorant and unpolisht People for their Princes even after they are dead."

It should be added that, in the writer's opinion, this account and others like it are somewhat apocryphal, and it has been copied and recopied a score of times.

According to Pinkerton [Footnote: Collection of Voyages, 1812, vol. XIII, p 39.], the Werowanco preserved their dead as follows:

"... By him is commonly the sepulchre of their Kings. Their bodies are first bowelled, then dried upon hurdles till they be very dry, and so about the most of their joints and neck they hang bracelets, or chains of copper, pearl, and such like, as they used to wear. Their inwards they stuff with copper beads, hatchets, and such trash. Then lap they them very carefully in white skins, and so roll them in mats for their winding-sheets. And in the tomb, which is an arch made of mats, they lay them orderly. What remaineth of this kind of wealth their Kings have, they set at their feet in baskets. These temples and bodies are kept by their priests.

"For their ordinary burials, they dig a deep hole in the earth with sharp stakes, and the corpse being lapped in skins and mats with their jewels they lay them upon sticks in the ground, and so cover them with earth. The burial ended, the women being painted all their faces with black coal and oil do sit twenty-four hours in the houses mourning and lamenting by turns with such yelling and howling as may express their great passions....

"Upon the top of certain red sandy hills in the woods there are three great houses filled with images of their Kings and devils and tombs of their predecessors. Those houses are near sixty feet in length, built harbourwise after their building. This place they count so holy as that but the priests and Kings dare come into them; nor the savages dare not go up the river in boats by it, but they solemnly cast some piece of copper, white beads, or pocones into the river for fear their Okee should be offended and revenged of them.

"They think that their Werowances and priests which they also esteem quiyoughcosughs, when they are dead do go beyond the mountains towards the setting of the sun, and ever remain there in form of their Okee, with their heads painted red with oil and pocones, finely trimmed with feathers, and shall have beads, hatchets, copper, and tobacco, doing nothing but dance and sing with all their predecessors. But the common people they suppose shall not live after death, but rot in their graves like dead dogs."

The remark regarding truthfulness will apply to this account in common with the former.

The Congaree or Santee Indians of South Carolina, according to Lawson, used a process of partial embalmment, as will be seen from the subjoined extract from Schoolcraft; [Footnote: Hist. Indian Tribes of the United States, 1854, Part IV, p. 155, et seq.] but instead of laying away the remains in caves, placed them in boxes supported above the ground by crotched sticks.

"The manner of their interment is thus: A mole or pyramid of earth is raised, the mould thereof being worked very smooth and even, sometimes higher or lower, according to the dignity of the person whose monument it is. On the top thereof is an umbrella, made ridgeways, like the roof of a house. This is supported by nine stakes or small posts, the grave being about 6 or 8 feet in length and 4 feet in breadth, about which is hung gourds, feathers, and other such like trophies, placed there by the dead man's relations in respect to him in the grave. The other parts of the funeral rites are thus: As soon as the party is dead they lay the corpse upon a piece of bark in the sun, seasoning or embalming it with a small root beaten to powder, which looks as red as vermilion; the same is mixed with bear's oil to beautify the hair. After the carcass has laid a day or two in the sun they remove it and lay it upon crotches cut on purpose for the support thereof from the earth then they anoint it all over with the aforementioned ingredients of the powder of this root and bear's oil. When it is so done they cover it over very exactly with the bark of the pine or cypress tree to prevent any rain to fall upon it, sweeping the ground very clean all about it. Some of his nearest of kin brings all the temporal estate he was possessed of at his death, as guns, bows and arrows, beads, feathers, match coat etc. This relation is the chief mourner, being clad in moss, with a stick in his hand, keeping a mournful ditty for three or four days, his face being black with the smoke of pitch pine mixed with bear's oil. All the while he tells the dead mans relations and the rest of the spectators who that dead person was, and of the great feats performed in his lifetime, all that he speaks tending to the praise of the defunct. As soon as the flesh grows mellow and will cleave from the bone they get it off and burn it, making the bones very clean then anoint them with the ingredients aforesaid, wrapping up the skull (very carefully) in a cloth artificially woven of opossum's hair. The bones they carefully preserve in a wooden box, every year oiling and cleansing them. By these means they preserve them for many ages that you may see an Indian in possession of the bones of his grandfather or some of his relations of a longer antiquity. They have other sorts of tombs as when an Indian is slain in, that very place they make a heap of stones (or sticks where stones are not to be found), to this memorial every Indian that passes by adds a stone to augment the heap in respect to the deceased hero. The Indians make a roof of light wood or pitch pine over the graves of the more distinguished, covering it with bark and then with earth leaving the body thus in a subterranean vault until the flesh quits the bones. The bones are then taken up, cleaned, jointed, clad in white dressed deer skins, and laid away in the \_Quiogozon,\_ which is the royal tomb or burial place of their kings and war captains, being a more magnificent cabin reared at the public expense. This Quiogozon is an object of veneration, in which the writer says he has known the king, old men, and conjurers to spend several days with their idols and dead kings, and into which he could never gain admittance."

Another class of mummies are those which have been found in the saltpeter and other caves of Kentucky, and it is still a matter of doubt with archaeologists whether any special pains were taken to preserve these bodies, many believing that the impregnation of the soil with certain minerals would account for the condition in which the specimens were found. Charles Wilkins [Footnote: Trans. Amer. Antiq. Soc., 1820, vol. 1, p. 360] thus describes one:

"... exsiccated body of a female ... was found at the depth of about



10 feet from the surface of the cave bedded in clay strongly impregnated with nitre, placed in a sitting posture, incased in broad stones standing on their edges, with a flat stone covering the whole. It was enveloped in coarse clothes, ... the whole wrapped in deer-skins, the hair of which was shaved off in the manner in which the Indians prepare them for market. Enclosed in the stone coffin were the working utensils, beads, feathers, and other ornaments of dress which belonged to her."

The next description is by Dr Samuel L. Mitchill: [Footnote: Trans. and Coll. Amer. Antiq. Soc., 1820, vol. 1, p. 318]

[A letter from Dr. Mitchill of New York, to Samuel M. Burnside, Esq., Secretary of the American Antiquarian Society, on North American Antiquities.]

"Aug 24th, 1815

"DEAR SIR: I offer you some observations on a curious piece of American antiquity now in New York. It is a human body [Footnote: A mummy of this kind, of a person of mature age, discovered in Kentucky, is now in the cabinet of the American Antiquarian Society. It is a female. Several human bodies were found enwrapped carefully in skins and cloths. They were inhumed below the floor of the cave, \_inhumed\_, and not lodged in catacombs.] found in one of the limestone caverns of Kentucky. It is a perfect exsiccation, all the fluids are dried up. The skin, bones, and other firm parts are in a state of entire preservation. I think it enough to have puzzled Bryant and all the archaologists.

"This was found in exploring a calcareous cave in the neighborhood of Glasgow for saltpetre.

"These recesses, though under ground, are yet dry enough to attract and retain the nitrick acid. It combines with lime and potash, and probably the earthy matter of these excavations contains a good proportion of calcareous carbonate. Amidst these drying and antiseptick ingredients, it may be conceived that putrefaction would be stayed, and the solids preserved from decay. The outer envelope of the body is a deer skin, probably dried in the usual way and perhaps softened before its application by rubbing. The next covering is a deer's skin, whose hair had been cut away by a sharp instrument resembling a hatter's knife. The remnant of the hair and the gashes in the skin nearly resemble a sheared pelt of beaver. The next wrapper is of cloth made of twine doubled and twisted. But the thread does not appear to have been formed by the wheel, nor the web by the loom. The warp and filling seem to have been crossed and knotted by an operation like that of the fabricks of the northwest coast, and of the Sandwich islands. Such a botanist as the lamented Muhlenburgh could determine the plant which furnished the fibrous material.

"The innermost tegument is a mantle of cloth like the preceding, but furnished with large brown feathers arranged and fastened with great art so as to be capable of guarding the living wearer from wet and cold. The plumage is distinct and entire, and the whole bears a near similitude to the feathery cloaks now worn by the nations of the northwestern coast of America. A Wilson might tell from what bird they were derived.

"The body is in a squatting posture with the right arm reclining forward and its hand encircling the right leg. The left arm hangs down, with its hand inclined partly under the seat. The individual, who was a male did not probably exceed the age of fourteen, at his death. There is near the occiput a deep and extensive fracture of the skull, which probably killed him. The skin has sustained little injury, it is of a dusky colour, but the natural hue cannot be decided with exactness from its present appearance. The scalp, with small exceptions is covered with sorrel or foxy hair. The teeth are white and sound. The hands and feet, in their shrivelled state, are slender and delicate. All this is worthy the investigation of our acute and perspicacious colleague, Dr Holmes.

"There is nothing bituminous or aromatic in or about the body, like the Egyptian mummies, nor are there bandages around any part. Except the several wrappers, the body is totally naked. There is no sign of a suture or incision about the belly whence it seems that the viscera were not removed.

"It may now be expected that I should offer some opinion, as to the antiquity and race of this singular exsiccation.

"First, then, I am satisfied that it does not belong to that class of white men of which we are members.

"2dly. Nor do I believe that it ought to be referred to the bands of Spanish adventurers, who, between the years 1500 and 1600, rambled up the Mississippi, and along its tributary streams. But on this head I should like to know the opinion of my learned and sagacious friend, Noah Webster.

"3dly. I am equally obliged to reject the opinion that it belonged to any of the tribes of aborigines, now or lately inhabiting Kentucky.

"4thly. The mantle of the feathered work, and the mantle of twisted threads, so nearly resemble the fabrics of the indigenes of Wakash and the Pacifick islands, that I refer this individual to that era of time, and that generation of men, which preceded the Indians of the Green River, and of the place where these relicks were found. This conclusion is strengthened by the consideration that such manufactures are not prepared by the actual and resident red men of the present day. If the Abbe Clavigero had had this case before him, he would have thought of the people who constructed those ancient forts and mounds, whose exact history no man living can give. But I forbear to enlarge; my intention being merely to manifest my respect to the society for having enrolled me among its members, and to invite the attention of its Antiquarians to further inquiry on a subject of such curiosity.

"With respect, I remain yours,

"SAMUEL L. MITCHILL"

It would appear from recent researches on the Northwest coast that the natives of that region embalmed their dead with much care, as may be seen from the work recently published by W. H. Dall, [Footnote: Cont. to N. A. Ethnol., 1877, vol. 1, p. 89] the description of the mummies being as follows:

"We found the dead disposed of in various ways: first, by interment in

their compartments of the communal dwelling, as already described; second, by being laid on a rude platform of drift-wood or stones in some convenient rock shelter. These lay on straw and moss, covered by matting, and rarely have either implements, weapons, or carvings associated with them. We found only three or four specimens in all in these places, of which we examined a great number. This was apparently the more ancient form of disposing of the dead, and one which more recently was still pursued in the case of poor or unpopular individuals.

"Lastly, in comparatively modern times, probably within a few centuries, and up to the historic period (1740), another mode was adopted for the wealthy, popular, or more distinguished class. The bodies were eviscerated, cleansed from fatty matters in running water, dried, and usually placed in suitable cases in wrappings of fur and fine grass matting. The body was usually doubled up into the smallest compass, and the mummy case, especially in the case of children, was usually suspended (so as not to touch the ground) in some convenient rock shelter. Sometimes, however, the prepared body was placed in a lifelike position, dressed and armed. They were placed as if engaged in some congenial occupation, such as hunting, fishing, sewing, etc. With them were also placed effigies of the animals they were pursuing, while the hunter was dressed in his wooden armor and provided with an enormous mask, all ornamented with feathers and a countless variety of wooden pendants, colored in gay patterns. All the carvings were of wood, the weapons even were only fac-similes in wood of the original articles. Among the articles represented were drums, rattles, dishes, weapons, effigies of men, birds, fish, and animals, wooden armor of rods or scales of wood, and remarkable masks, so arranged that the wearer when erect could only see the ground at his feet. These were worn at their religious dances from an idea that a spirit which was supposed to animate a temporary idol was fatal to whoever might look upon it while so occupied. An extension of the same idea led to the masking of those who had gone into the land of spirits.

"The practice of preserving the bodies of those belonging to the whaling class--a custom peculiar to the Kadiak Innuits--has erroneously been confounded with the one now described. The latter included women as well as men, and all those whom the living desired particularly to honor. The whalers, however, only preserved the bodies of males, and they were not associated with the paraphernalia of those I have described. Indeed, the observations I have been able to make show the bodies of the whalers to have been preserved with stone weapons and actual utensils instead of effigies, and with the meanest apparel, and no carvings of consequence. These details, and those of many other customs and usages of which the shell heaps bear no testimony ... do not come within my line."

Martin Sauer, secretary to Billings' Expedition [Footnote: Billings' Exped. 1802, p. 167.] in 1802, speaks of the Aleutian Islanders embalming their dead, as follows:

"They pay respect, however, to the memory of the dead, for they embalm the bodies of the men with dried moss and grass; bury them in their best attire, in a sitting posture, in a strong box, with their darts and instruments; and decorate the tomb with various coloured mats, embroidery, and paintings. With women, indeed, they use less ceremony. A mother will keep a dead child thus embalmed in their hut for some months, constantly wiping it dry; and they bury it when it begins to

smell, or when they get reconciled to parting with it."

Regarding these same people, a writer in the San Francisco Bulletin gives this account-

"The schooner William Sutton, belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company, has arrived from the seal islands of the company with the mummified remains of Indians who lived on an island north of Ounalaska one hundred and fifty years ago. This contribution to science was secured by Captain Henning, an agent of the company, who has long resided at Ounalaska. In his transactions with the Indians he learned that tradition among the Aleuts assigned Kagamale, the island in question, as the last resting-place of a great chief, known as Karkhayahouchak. Last year the captain was in the neighborhood of Kagamale, in quest of sea-otter and other furs and he bore up for the island, with the intention of testing the truth of the tradition he had heard. He had more difficulty in entering the cave than in finding it, his schooner having to beat on and off shore for three days. Finally, he succeeded in effecting a landing, and clambering up the rocks he found himself in the presence of the dead chief, his family and relatives.

"The cave smelt strongly of hot sulphurous vapors. With great care the mummies were removed, and all the little trinkets and ornaments scattered around were also taken away.

"In all there are eleven packages of bodies. Only two or three have as yet been opened. The body of the chief is inclosed in a large basket-like structure, about four feet in height. Outside the wrappings are finely-wrought sea-grass matting, exquisitely close in texture, and skins. At the bottom is a broad hoop or basket of thinly-cut wood, and adjoining the center portions are pieces of body armor composed of reeds bound together. The body is covered with the fine skin of the sea-otter, always a mark of distinction in the interments of the Aleuts, and round the whole package are stretched the meshes of a fish-net, made of the sinews of the sea lion; also those of a bird-net. There are evidently some bulky articles inclosed with the chief's body, and the whole package differs very much from the others, which more resemble, in their brown-grass matting, consignments of crude sugar from the Sandwich Islands than the remains of human beings. The bodies of a pappoose and of a very little child, which probably died at birth or soon after it, have sea-otter skins around them. One of the feet of the latter projects, with a toe-nail visible. The remaining mummies are of adults.

"One of the packages has been opened, and it reveals a man's body in tolerable preservation, but with a large portion of the face decomposed. This and the other bodies were doubled up at death by severing some of the muscles at the hip and knee joints and bending the limbs downward horizontally upon the trunk. Perhaps the most peculiar package, next to that of the chief, is one which incloses in a single matting, with sea-lion skins, the bodies of a man and woman. The collection also embraces a couple of skulls, male and female, which have still the hair attached to the scalp. The hair has changed its color to a brownish red. The relics obtained with the bodies include a few wooden vessels scooped out smoothly; a piece of dark, greenish, flat stone, harder than the emerald, which the Indians use to tan skins; a scalp-lock of jet-black hair; a small rude figure, which may have been a very ugly doll or an idol; two or three tiny

carvings in ivory of the sea-lion, very neatly executed, a comb, a necklet made of birds' claws inserted into one another, and several specimens of little bags, and a cap plaited out of sea-grass and almost water-tight."

With the foregoing examples as illustration, the matter of embalment may be for the present dismissed, with the advice to observers that particular care should be taken, in case mummies are discovered, to ascertain whether the bodies have been submitted to a regular preservative process, or owe their protection to ingredients in the soil of their graves or to desiccation in arid districts.

## URN-BURIAL.

To close the subject of subterranean burial proper, the following account of urn-burial in Foster [Footnote: Pre-Historic Races, 1873, p. 199] may be added:

"Urn-burial appears to have been practiced to some extent by the mound-builders, particularly in some of the Southern States. In the mounds on the Wateree River, near Camden, S. C., according to Dr. Blanding, ranges of vases, one above the other, filled with human remains, were found. Sometimes when the mouth of the vase is small the skull is placed with the face downward in the opening, constituting a sort of cover. Entire cemeteries have been found in which urn-burial alone seems to have been practiced. Such a one was accidentally discovered not many years since in Saint Catherine's Island, on the coast of Georgia. Professor Swallow informs me that from a mound at New Madrid, Mo, he obtained a human skull inclosed in an earthen jar, the lips of which were too small to admit of its extraction. It must therefore have been molded on the head after death."

"A similar mode of burial was practiced by the Chaldeans, where the funeral jars often contain a human cranium much too expanded to admit of the possibility of its passing out of it, so that either the clay must have been modeled over the corpse, and then baked, or the neck of the jar must have been added subsequently to the other rites of interment." [Footnote: Rawlinson's Herodotus, Book 1, chap 198, note.]

It is with regret that the writer feels obliged to differ from the distinguished author of the work quoted regarding urn-burial, for notwithstanding that it has been employed by some of the Central and Southern American tribes, it is not believed to have been customary, but \_to a very limited extent, \_ in North America, except as a secondary interment. He must admit that he himself has found bones in urns or ollas in the graves of New Mexico and California, but under circumstances that would seem to indicate a deposition long subsequent to death. In the graves of the ancient peoples of California a number of ollas were found in long-used burying places, and it is probable that as the bones were dug up time and again for new burials they were simply tossed into pots, which were convenient receptacles, or it may have been that bodies were allowed to repose in the earth long enough for the fleshy parts to decay, and the bones were then collected, placed in urns, and reinterred. Dr. E. Foreman, of the Smithsonian Institution, furnishes the following account of urns used for burial:

"I would call your attention to an earthenware burial-urn and cover, Nos. 27976 and 27977, National Museum, but very recently received from Mr. William McKinley, of Milledgeville, Ga. It was exhumed on his plantation, ten miles below that city, on the bottom lands of the Oconee River, now covered with almost impassable canebrakes, tall grasses, and briars. We had a few months ago from the same source one of the covers, of which the ornamentation was different but more entire. A portion of a similar cover has been received also from Chattanooga, Ga. Mr. McKinley ascribes the use of these urns and covers to the Muscogees, a branch of the Creek Nation."

These urns are made of baked clay, and are shaped somewhat like the ordinary steatite ollas found in the California coast graves, but the bottoms instead of being round run down to a sharp apex; on the top was a cover, the upper part of which also terminated in an apex, and around the border, near where it rested on the edge of the vessel, are indented scroll ornamentations.

The burial-urns of New Mexico are thus described by E. A. Barber: [Footnote: Amer. Natural, 1876, vol X, p. 455 \_et seq\_ ]

"Burial-urns ... comprise vessels or ollas without handles, for cremation, usually being from 10 to 15 inches in height, with broad, open mouths, and made of coarse clay, with a laminated exterior (partially or entirely ornamented). Frequently the indentations extend simply around the neck or rim, the lower portion being plain."

So far as is known, up to the present time no burial-urns have been found in North America resembling those discovered in Nicaragua by Dr. J. C. Bransford, U. S. N., but it is quite within the range of possibility that future researches in regions not far distant from that which he explored may reveal similar treasures.

## SURFACE BURIAL.

This mode of interment was practiced to only a limited extent, so far as can be discovered, and it is quite probable that in most cases it was employed as a temporary expedient when the survivors were pressed for time. The Seminoles of Florida are said to have buried in hollow trees, the bodies being placed in an upright position, occasionally the dead being crammed into a hollow log lying on the ground. With some of the Eastern tribes a log was split in half and hollowed out sufficiently large to contain the corpse; it was then lashed together with withes and permitted to remain where it was originally placed. In some cases a pen was built over and around it. This statement is corroborated by Mr. R. S. Robertson, of Fort Wayne, Ind., who states in a communication received in 1877 that the Miamis practiced surface burial in two different ways:

"... 1st. The surface burial in hollow logs. These have been found in heavy forests. Sometimes a tree has been split and the two halves hollowed out to receive the body, when it was either closed with withes or confined to the ground with crossed stakes; and sometimes a hollow tree is used by closing the ends.

"2d. Surface burial where the body was covered by a small pen of logs

laid up as we build a cabin, but drawing in every course until they meet in a single log at the top."

Romantically conceived, and carried out to the fullest possible extent in accordance with the \_ante mortem\_ wishes of the dead, were the obsequies of Blackbird, the great chief of the Omahas. The account is given by George Catlin: [Footnote: Manners, Customs, &c., of North American Indiana, 1844, vol. ii, p. 5]

"He requested them to take his body down the river to this his favorite haunt, and on the pinnacle of this towering bluff to bury him on the back of his favorite war-horse, which was to be buried alive under him, from whence he could see, as he said, 'the Frenchmen passing up and down the river in their boats.' He owned, amongst many homes, a noble white steed, that was led to the top of the grass-covered hill, and with great pomp and ceremony, in the presence of the whole nation and several of the far-traders and the Indian agent, he was placed astride of his horse's back, with his bow in his hand, and his shield and quiver slung, with his pipe and his medicine bag, with his supply of dried meat, and his tobacco-pouch replenished to last him through the journey to the beautiful hunting grounds of the shades of his fathers, with his flint and steel and his tinder to light his pipes by the way; the scalps he had taken from his enemies' heads could be trophies for nobody else, and were hung to the bridle of his horse. He was in full dress, and fully equipped, and on his head waved to the last moment his beautiful head-dress of the war-eagles' plumes. In this plight, and the last funeral honors having been performed by the medicine-men, every warrior of his band painted the palm and fingers of his right hand with vermilion, which was stamped and perfectly impressed on the milk-white sides of his devoted horse. This all done, turfs were brought and placed around the feet and legs of the horse, and gradually laid up to its sides, and at last over the back and head of the unsuspecting animal, and last of all over the head and even the eagle plumes of its valiant rider, where all together have smouldered and remained undisturbed to the present day."

#### CAIRN BURIAL.

The next mode of interment to be considered is that of cairn or rock burial, which has prevailed and is still common to a considerable extent among the tribes living in the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevadas.

In the summer of 1872 the writer visited one of these rock cemeteries in middle Utah, which had been used for a period not exceeding fifteen or twenty years. It was situated at the bottom of a rock slide, upon the side of an almost inaccessible mountain, in a position so carefully chosen for concealment that it would have been almost impossible to find it without a guide. Several of the graves were opened and found to have been constructed in the following manner: A number of bowlders had been removed from the bed of the slide until a sufficient cavity had been obtained; this was lined with skins, the corpse placed therein, with weapons, ornaments, etc., and covered over with saplings of the mountain aspen; on top of these the removed bowlders were piled, forming a huge cairn, which appeared large enough to have marked the last resting place of an elephant. In the immediate

vicinity of the graves were scattered the osseous remains of a number of horses which had been sacrificed no doubt during the funeral ceremonies. In one of the graves, said to contain the body of a chief, in addition to a number of articles useful and ornamental, were found parts of the skeleton of a boy, and tradition states that a captive boy was buried alive at this place.

In connection with this mode of burial it may be said that the ancient Balearic Islanders covered their dead with a heap of stones, but this ceremony was preceded by an operation which consisted in cutting the body in small pieces and collecting in a pot.

## CREMATION.

Next should be noted this mode of disposing of the dead, a common custom to a considerable extent among North American tribes, especially those living on the western slope of the Rocky Mountains, although we have undoubted evidence that it was also practiced among the more eastern ones. This rite may be considered as peculiarly interesting from its great antiquity, for Tegg informs us that it reached as far back as the Theban war, in the account of which mention is made of the burning of Menoaeus and Archemorus, who were contemporary with Jair, eighth judge of Israel. It was common in the interior of Asia and among the ancient Greeks and Rom



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