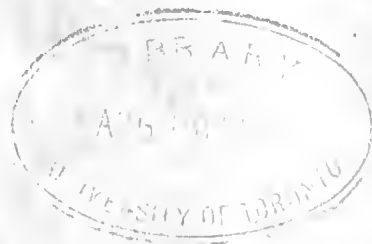


Mackenzie, Alexander
Descriptive notes on certain
implements

Pamph
Social
crime
W





DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ON CERTAIN IMPLEMENTS, WEAPONS, &c., FROM
GRAHAM ISLAND, QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS, B.C.

By ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY GEORGE M. DAWSON, LL.D., F.R.S.

Assistant Director, Geological Survey of Canada.



II.—*Descriptive Notes on Certain Implements, Weapons, etc., from Graham Island,
Queen Charlotte Islands, B.C.*

By Mr. ALEXANDER MACKENZIE,

With an introductory note by Dr. G. M. DAWSON.

(Read May 27, 1891.)

Some years ago a small collection of implements, weapons, etc., from the Queen Charlotte Islands was obtained for the museum of the Geological Survey from Mr. Mackenzie. Most of the objects in this collection are either specially fine examples of the arts of the Haida, or antiques, the value of which is enhanced by some knowledge of their history. The collection had been formed by Mr. Mackenzie under peculiarly advantageous circumstances during his residence at Masset, and was accompanied by a manuscript referring particularly to the various articles, but which includes besides some miscellaneous notes of interest respecting the Haida, their manners, customs and ideas. Mr. Mackenzie states that his notes are the result of original enquiries, and that he has purposely refrained from quoting information from sources already published. His knowledge of the Haida people, together with his habit of close observation, render his notes of special value.

It thus appears to be desirable not only to illustrate a few of the more interesting of the objects in this collection, but also to make this the occasion of publishing the notes referred to, in order that these may be rendered accessible to those interested in the ethnology of the West Coast. By permission of the Director of the Geological Survey, such of the objects as have been chosen for illustration have been drawn for this purpose by Mr. L. M. Lambe. In selecting these objects the writer has endeavoured to choose those which seem to be the most noteworthy, and particularly to exclude such as resemble those which have already appeared in his report on the Queen Charlotte Islands, contained in the Report of Progress of the Geological Survey for 1878-79. The first detailed account of the Haida people was given by the writer in the place just referred to, the material for it having been obtained in the course of a summer spent in exploring the Queen Charlotte Islands for the Geological Survey. Much additional information has, however, since appeared in various publications. Reference may be made particularly in this connection to an elaborate and copiously illustrated memoir by Mr. A. P. Niblack, entitled "The Coast Indians of Southern Alaska and Northern British Columbia," lately published in the annual report of the Smithsonian Institution.

It would appear that the pre-eminent position of the Haida among the various tribes of the West Coast has not yet been sufficiently recognized or appreciated by ethnologists. Twenty years ago little was known about them; the Queen Charlotte Islands were but rudely sketched on the charts, and the reports current as to the treacherous and warlike

character of their inhabitants, with the fact that the islands lay to the west of the main route of communication along the coast, caused them to be but seldom visited. This was even the case in 1878 when the writer undertook his exploration of the islands. Since that time the Tlingit peoples of the southern coast-strip of Alaska have been somewhat fully reported on by various writers, while considerable attention has also been devoted to the littoral of the southern part of British Columbia. As a result of these investigations, the arts and knowledge common to the coast peoples generally have been described and attached by description to various tribes in which both were less fully developed than they are among the Haida. When this difference came to be appreciated, a tendency arose to affirm that the Haida had borrowed and more fully developed the arts and customs of neighbouring tribes. In some cases this is true, but as a general statement it must be accepted with the utmost reserve. Articles formed of copper and blankets woven of the hair of the mountain goat are known to have been obtained by the Haida from the Tlingit to the north; circumstances explained by the fact that the materials employed in both do not occur in the Queen Charlotte Islands. Some customs and dances are also known to have been adopted from the Tshimsian of the adjacent mainland, but further than this the proof does not go.

The fact remains that the arts of the Haida, with those of their neighbours the Tshimsian, had reached a stage of development, tending toward an incipient civilization, higher than that found in any other people of the west coast of North America. To the north, as well as to the south of the Queen Charlotte Islands, and to some extent in correspondence with the distance from these islands, are found ruder and more barbarous people, living in dwellings of inferior construction and surrounded by fewer and less artistically fashioned implements. The comparatively isolated position of the Haida and the relative immunity which this afforded against attack, may have been important in producing this result; while their occupation of a region upon all sides of which (save that of the ocean) different peoples with habits and traditions more or less varied bordered, may have rendered the Haida more Catholic in their beliefs. These, however, are but circumstances which may explain, while they do not detract from the premier position of this tribe; a position which was largely shared by the Tshimsian, though in consequence of the greater accessibility of the Tshimsian country, their primitive condition had suffered more change before it began to be intelligently studied.

Many collections which have been made are now to be found in museums credited vaguely to the Northwest Coast, a designation justified to a certain extent by the similarity of the character of the objects met with on this coast as a whole; but where the means are still available for analysing these miscellaneous collections and assigning them to the various tribes, it is found that a great proportion of the best fashioned and most artistically finished objects come from the Queen Charlotte Islands. The writer is pleased to note that Mr. Niblack, in the remarks made in his memoir above cited, appears fully to appreciate and admit the superior culture and dexterity of the Haida, of which people the Kaigani of the southern part of Alaska are but a modern colony. Speaking from his own somewhat extended opportunities of knowing the tribes of the Pacific Coast, and referring particularly to their mental capacity, the writer has no hesitation in recording his opinion that the Haida and Tshimsian are the most intelligent and capable.

In revising Mr. Mackenzie's notes for publication, his original orthography of nearly all the native names has been retained unchanged, but in a few places some remarks which appear to be unnecessary, because covered by what is already published, have been omitted.

GEORGE M. DAWSON.

Dance Staff (Haida *Tusk*).—A ceremonial staff of this kind was formerly used at feasts, dances and distributions of property. The principal man concerned in the ceremony, by forcibly tapping the floor with such a staff or baton, called the attention of the audience to the business immediately in hand. At feasts where property or blankets were given, or paid away, a significant tap of this staff intimated that the transaction was closed, resembling much the tap of an auctioneer's hammer on a bargain being concluded. The carved devices of crane, whale, crow, owl, and bear, with which it has been ornamented, refer to tribal legends.

The proprietorship of such a staff of course shewed that the owner was an *Eillahgeet* or chief, who had made the necessary feasts and distributions of property to entitle him to that dignity. The staff was always carefully preserved in a safe place in the owner's lodge. [No. 1339.]¹ Several somewhat similar staffs are figured by Mr. Niblack (plate xvii.)

Woven Hats (Haida *Haht-ul-sung-ah*).—These are made of spruce roots, and were both plain and painted, the shape being that common along the coast of British Columbia and frequently illustrated. One of these hats [No. 1335] is of more than ordinary dimensions [diameter 23 inches], and is of the kind worn only on the occasion of a distribution of property, the wearer then having on also a "dance blanket," and holding in the hand a staff, of the kind just noted. Such costume was suitable for either male or female. The devices painted on these hats seem to have been a matter of fancy, and to have had no particular significance. The dog-fish, whale, crow or bear were often represented on them. [Nos. 1333 to 1335.]

Large woven and pieced Dance-Blanket (Haida *Na-hung*).—This is a specimen of the dance-blanket or covering almost universally used at feasts, dances and ceremonials by the native tribes of the coast. Such blankets were made only by the Chilkats of the Alaskan coast, and although often called Haida blankets, the term is erroneous, as the Haida never practised the art of weaving wool or hair. These blankets were, however, highly valued by the Haida, and any one aspiring to the position of chief was expected to possess one such elaborate covering. Now they are rare, having been eagerly sought after by collectors. The devices are similar to those on Haida carvings, indeed the ornamentation of the latter seems by all evidence to have been copied from the tribes of Northern Alaska. The material used in making these blankets is mountain goat's wool and cedar bark. [No. 1374.]

Dance Head-dress (Haida *Tsilk*).—Ornamental head-dresses of this kind are used in ceremonial dances by the tribes of the Northwest Coast. An excellent illustration in

¹ The numbers thus given throughout, are those under which the objects specially referred to are catalogued in the Museum of the Geological Survey. Some of them are figured in the accompanying plates.

colours of a head-dress of this kind is given among those published by the directors of the Ethnological Department, Berlin Museum, plate I. [No. 1317].

The upper part fits on the wearer's head like a cap. Above the forehead is a carving of some crest or device, beaver, bear, eagle, etc. No rule seems to be followed in selecting the device. In this instance the carving represents the beaver; it being merely a decoration according to the fancy of the carver. On either side of the carving there is a row of feathers of the great wood-pecker. Bound round the circlet of the cap at close intervals, are a number of bristles of sea-lion whiskers, while suspended from the back of the head-dress is a train of ermine skins. When the dancer was ready to go through his or her evolutions, a handful of eagle's down was placed on the top of the cap, being loosely held in position by the upstanding bristles. On every contortion of the body and jerk of the head the flexible sea-lion whiskers permitted a small quantity of the down to escape and float round the dancer's vicinity like snow-flakes. The effect of this was certain to ensure the applause of the spectators, according as the dancer's exertions were vigorous or otherwise.

On occasion of an arrival whom it was desirable to honour, the settlement of an individual quarrel, healing a tribal feud, making a treaty of friendship or peace, or celebrating a potlach or "house-warming," an indispensable adjunct to the ceremony was the dance with the *Tsilk* and *Na-hung* and scattering of eagle down. Sometimes a number of persons thus attired performed at once, and the costume was considered quite appropriate for either male or female dancers.

Sea-lion Whiskers (Haida *Kish-kow'-eh*). *Ermine Skin* (Haida *Klick*).—Wooden carved device on forehead (Haida *Tsil-kwull*).

Specimens of Wooden Masks (Haida *Neh-tsung*).—[Nos. 1305, 1306, 1309 to 1311 and 1313 to 1315]. These masks, grotesque and otherwise, were used at merrymakings pertaining to feasts, house inaugurations and dances. Faces of human or mythological beings, of birds or beasts, were represented by such masks, and no rule seems to have been followed in the matter of selection of subjects, that being according to the fancy or taste of the carver. Wooden or bone calls were generally used to imitate the cries of the animal represented by the mask.

Dance Head-dress Carving (Haida *Tsil-kwull*).—[No. 1312]. This represents a spirit-face seen by the doctors in their trance or reverie. The inlaid border of mother-of-pearl is made from the Abalone shell, brought in early days by trading vessels from California and the Sandwich Islands. Probably in still earlier times from the smaller native *Haliotis*.

Two models of carved Heraldic Columns (Haida *Keeang*).—One showing the circular aperture through its base which is used as the entrance to the house. [Nos. 1316, 1340.]

Such poles vary in height from 40 to 60 feet. The object in erecting these poles was to commemorate the event of a chief taking position in the tribe by building a house and making a distribution of all his property, principally blankets, which he had been accumulating and hoarding for years with this view. *Keeang* is the Haida name of such poles or columns in general application, but each pole has besides an individual and distinguishing name. Thus, for instance, one of the poles at Masset is named *Que-tilk-kep-tsoo*, which means "a watcher for arrivals," or "looking," or "watching for arrivals." It was erected by a Haida chief, named *Stullah*, on his decision to build a new lodge. The occasion, as usual, was marked by a large distribution of property, hundreds of

blankets and other valuables being given away to all who assisted at the making of the pole, or who were invited to the ceremony. Stultah was of the eagle crest, and according to custom, the recipients all belonged to other crests, no eagles receiving anything. Not long afterwards Stultah died, before his projected lodge was completed. His brother succeeded him, and assumed his name. He erected another carved pole in commemoration of Stultah's death and his own adoption of his brother's place. This was again accompanied by a feast or distribution of food to the multitude and of blankets to the makers of the pole.

A mortuary pole is called *Sath-lung-hât*, and is altogether different from a pole erected on occasion of lodge-building. *Keeang*, or lodge poles, are hollowed out at the back, whilst *Sath-lung-hât*, or mortuary poles, are solid, being generally a circular column with carving only on base and summit.

When it was decided to erect a *Keeang* and build a lodge, invitations were sent to the tribes in the vicinity to attend, and on arrival the people were received by dancers in costume and hospitably treated and feasted. When all the Indians from adjacent places were assembled, at the appointed time they proceeded to the place selected for the erection of the pole. A hole, seven, eight or ten feet deep having been dug, the pole was moved on rollers till the butt was in a proper position to slip into the hole. Then the process of elevation began. Long ropes were fastened to the pole and gangs of men, women and children took hold of the ends at a considerable distance away. The most able-bodied men advanced to the pole, standing so close all along on each side that they touched each other, and grasping the pole from underneath they raised it up by sheer strength, by a succession of lifts as high as their heads, while, in the meantime, others placed supports under it at each successive lift. Stout poles, tied together like shears, were then brought into play, while the lifters took sharp-pointed poles, about eight feet long, and standing in their former positions, lifted the pole (which was immediately supported by the men who shift the shears) by means of these sticks, until it attained an angle of about forty-five degrees. The butt was then gradually slipped into its place and the gangs at the ropes, who had been inactive all this time, got the signal to haul, when, amidst the most indescribable bellowing, holloaing and yelling, the pole was gradually and surely elevated to the perpendicular position. Great hurrahs, shouting and antics took place as the pole was set plumb and the earth filled into the hole.

The crowd next adjourned to the house of the owner, who feasted the people with Indian food, such as grease, berries, sea-weed, etc. This being completed, the man takes the place of *Eillahgeet*, great chief, and the next thing he does is to distribute his property, a task requiring great discrimination. Very often on such occasions he adopts a new name, discarding that by which he was hitherto known. When he proclaims to the crowd that he is quite impoverished and has distributed all his effects, they appear to be delighted, and regard him as indeed a great chief.

This distribution of property was often the scene of riot and disorder, sometimes ending in bloodshed. Some of the recipients would consider that their share of the plunder was too small, and that they had been slighted, others who were less deserving having got a larger share. Invariably there was a show of discontent on the part of some of the guests, and if the donor could not reconcile them by fair words or an additional present, a forcible attack was often made on the pile of blankets and goods received by

those who were considered unduly favoured. The body of the lodge was then often the arena of serious disturbance, in which blankets and clothing were torn to shreds by an infuriated mob. Knives were sometimes freely used, and often the ominous report of a gun or pistol would be heard in the crowd, which would cause a panic and frantic rush to the doors and apertures of the house with what goods could be hastily snatched in hand, leaving a small knot of excited men and wailing women surrounding a bleeding corpse on the floor. Such an incident would, of course, lead to another feast and dance with payment of property to the relatives of the deceased. To the guests not implicated in the affair, a murder only meant more feasts and more fun, and to judge from appearances, these good old times were not disliked.

It is worthy of note, as already remarked, that the giver of a feast does not distribute presents to those of his own crest, whether such an one be a relative or not; for instance, an eagle making an occasion of raising a pole, would give nothing to the eagles, but the bears would be the recipients.

An invariable concomitant of these feasts after the arrival of the whites on the coast, was ardent spirits of a vile nature, supplied by rascally traders in sloops and schooners, or a fiery compound distilled by the natives themselves from molasses, sugar, rice, flour, or beans.

As far as the Haida of Masset are concerned, all the above is but a tale of the past, as they now neither erect columns, give potlaches, dance, nor distil liquor, having decided to follow the advice given them by the government and missionaries to live according to law and order.

Daggers (Haida *Kah-oolth*).—[Nos. 1300, 1301, 1304, 1330, 1331]. Such daggers are for the most part very ancient, and many of them have individual histories and traditions appertaining to them. They are formidable weapons in a hand to hand fight, and were always carried round the neck to feasts and similar social gatherings. No. 1331 is of tempered copper, the mode of its manufacture being said to have been possessed by the "ancients," who could hammer out native copper and give it a keen edge.

A legend is connected with No. 1304, in which it is said to have been carved and tempered by a woman who came from northern Alaska. Its history is known for two or three generations, it having passed from one chief to another, but its true origin is lost in obscurity. In former times assassination was by no means uncommon, and slaves were often commanded to perform the deed, generally with these formidable daggers. To the knowledge of several persons still alive, two cowardly murders were perpetrated by a slave at his master's instigation, with this particular weapon.

No. 1300 was procured from a man, now dead, who was for a long time under a tribal ban as a murderer, having deliberately stabbed a woman to death in a canoe in mid-sea, and thrown her body overboard, for the sake of getting her money. Years after, the deed was brought home to him, and he had to pay largely to save his life.

Stone Tomahawk (Haida *Hlth-at-low*).—[No. 1329.] This is a formidable weapon of offence, and was used by the tribes of the Northwest Coast in their forays and fights. Although small and light, one blow from a stout arm, fairly delivered, would pierce the strongest cranium.

Reindeer-antler Tomahawk (Haida *Scoots-hlth-at-low*).—[No. 1302.] This very ancient and interesting relic is made from one of the antlers of a species of reindeer which

inhabits the mountainous interior of Graham Island.¹ In olden times these reindeer were hunted by the Haida and killed with bow and arrow, being highly prized both for meat and skin.² This weapon was the property of the Masset doctor or medicine man, who is still alive but aged. To him it was bequeathed by his predecessor, who died many years ago. It was essentially a weapon of offence, a regular skull-cracker, similar to the last, and is said to have been used with fatal effect more than once. It is undoubtedly a relic of the times before these natives had intercourse with white men.

Bone Club (Haida *Sitz*). [No. 1303.]—This club is made from a rib bone of some species of whale and was used as a fish- or seal-killer like the next.

Carved Wooden Club (Haida *Sitz*). [No. 1277.]—This is one of the characteristic fish-killing clubs of the Haida used for knocking halibut, seals, etc., on the head after hooking or spearing them. No doubt it also proved a handy weapon in a personal tussle over the spoils of the chase. These carved clubs were invested with supernatural properties. Thus the Haida firmly believe, if overtaken by night at sea and reduced to sleep in their canoes, that by allowing such a club to float beside the canoe attached to a line, it has the property of scaring away whales and other monsters of the deep which might otherwise harm them.

Bone Dagger (Haida *Thl-saga-skwoots*.) [No. 1298.]—This was used by the medicine man in one of his imaginary conflicts with some malicious rival spirit doctor. At other times he used it as a skewer or hair-pin to keep up his long hair when rolled in a knot at the back of his head. On the handle is carved the representation of a land otter, an animal held by medicine men to possess supernatural attributes.

Twisted Copper Necklet (Haida *Hull-kuntz-tig-ah*). [No. 1332.]—This rare and valuable relic is the only one of the kind known in the Haida nation. It was prized more highly than any ornament or implement in their possession, and of a certainty was made before the natives were acquainted with white men. Tradition states it was made from native copper brought from Alaska. Capt. Dixon (1788) mentions having seen such a necklet worn by a chief at North Island, and it is believed by old Haida who have been questioned on the subject, that this identical necklet was the one that attracted his attention.³

As a work of art by untutored savages with rude tools it is remarkable. Though it has three strands it is all in one piece, twisted most systematically and tapering with precision from the centre to each end, all the strands being in perfect uniformity one with the other. Its history and former owners are known for two or three generations, but its origin is not known. It was worn by chiefs as a mark of their importance and descended in turn to each successor who was able to make a feast and distribution of property and take the place of the departed.

Carved Copper Armlet or Bracelet. [No. 1308.]—This is very old, and is the only copper armlet known in the Haida nation. It has been preserved in the same family for several generations and worn by the chief's wife. Its origin is unknown, but it certainly was made before the Haida saw white people. The mother-of-pearl inlaid work was renewed

¹ See Trans, Royal Soc. Can., vol. viii, section iv, p. 52.

² See Marchand's Voyage, chap. v, 1791.

³ Dixon writes:—"We frequently saw large circular wreaths of copper both at Norfolk Sound and Queen Charlotte Islands, which did not appear to be of foreign manufacture, but twisted into shape by the natives themselves, to wear as an ornament about the neck." "Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America, p. 237."

lately, the original pieces having been lost. Since they have had opportunity of obtaining silver from the whites, all bracelets, bangles and such like ornaments are made of that metal. Copper is now considered too base a metal for such use, although anciently it was esteemed of high value, next to iron.

Ancient "Coppers" (Haida Taow). [Nos. 1337, 1338.]—These are the only two antique coppers known among the people of Masset, and were made before the natives procured sheet copper from the Russians in Alaska. They have been in the possession of the same family through a long line of chiefs who displayed them on festal occasions. A chief named Edensaw, now long deceased¹, used to wear them bound one to each side of his head-dress (*silk*) on occasions of ceremonial dances, etc.

These coppers were formerly of great value among the coast tribes, ten slaves or one thousand blankets being sometimes bartered for one. They were regarded with peculiar veneration, and a chief who could afford to purchase one of these costly articles and cut it in pieces at a feast of property-distribution was highly honoured. The pieces were given away to the principal chiefs who were guests, and were most highly valued by them. Sometimes such a copper was nailed to the carved heraldic column or pole which was erected at the feast, and it then served as a permanent ostentatious mark of the owner's extravagance. Sometimes they were attached to mortuary receptacles in honour of the departed.

The size of these coppers varied from seven or eight inches to four feet long. The original coppers were brought from the northern portion of Alaska, and the tradition runs that they were first made out of lumps of native copper which were found in the bed of a river there, but latterly the Indians bought sheet copper from the Russians at Sitka, and also in Victoria, and several natives along the coast commenced manufacturing spurious coppers from this material, which ultimately produced a fall in the value of coppers, and by glutting the market destroyed the romance of the idea that the copper was one of earth's rarest and choicest treasures, fit only to be purchased by great chiefs who desired to squander away their property for the sake of gratifying their self esteem. The customs appertaining to such coppers were not peculiar to the Haida, but were practiced by all the tribes of the Northwest Coast.

These coppers were not polished, but blackened by a very peculiar process (long kept a secret by the makers) which produced a permanent dull black, on which heraldic devices were scratched or engraved. This blackening effectually prevented corrosion.

Each of the genuine old coppers had an individual name such as :—

Taow-ked-oos—"The copper that steals all the people."

Yen-an-taous—"The copper that is like a cloud."

Taow-kee-ass—"The copper that stands perpendicular."

Len-ah-taous—"The copper that must needs be fathomed."²

These names served to perpetuate the identity of the copper when it changed hands, and were used in referring to it in the traditions of the people.

The name of a copper in Haida is *Taow*, Sitka *Tinnah*, Tshimsean *Hy-y-etsk*.

¹ Edensaw, is a name successively assumed by each chief of a certain district, by virtue of his office.

² Referring to its large size.

Examples of the prices paid for such coppers may be interesting. Thus *Taow-keed-oos* was sold by Edensaw to Legaic, a Tshimsean chief, for ten slaves. *Yen-an-taous* was sold by Edensaw to the same man for ten slaves, two large cedar canoes and one dance head-dress. *Taow-kee-ass* was purchased by a Tshimsean chief named *Nees-thlan-on-oos* from a Haida chief for eight slaves, one large cedar canoe, one hundred elk skins and eighty boxes of grease.¹

The devices graven on the upper part of the copper were according to fancy, and represented the bear, eagle, crow, whale, etc. A conspicuous mark was always on these, the (T) cross, and on the skill with which this was executed depended in a great measure the value of the copper. This T or indentation is called in Haida *Taow-tsoo'-eh*, namely, "back-bone of the taow." It was hammered, when fashioned, on a pattern by a peculiar process known only to skilful workers, with the result that when the taow was finished the indentation of the T was of the same thickness as the rest of the copper plate. If this T proved thinner the value was considerably diminished, in fact the copper was considered not genuine.

Fantastic carving in red stone representing incidents and transformations related in traditions of the doings of Ni-kil-stlass, an evil mischievous spirit, sometimes described as a creator. [No. 1296.]—The inherent love of ornamentation and method of preserving tradition from oblivion by means of imagery in absence of written symbols is well shown by this carving.

As an illustration, one of the traditions regarding the doings of Ni-kil stlass may be here related.

Ni-kil-stlass, who at this time has assumed the form of *Yelth* (the raven) wished to become possessed of the moon, and so determined to steal it from a great spirit-chief who owned it and guarded it with jealous care. In order to gain access to this spirit-chief's lodge, the raven decided to change his form. He therefore transferred his spirit to a small piece of moss which hung above a clear spring of water. A young woman, a chief's daughter and wife of the son of the above spirit-chief, came to the spring to take a drink of water. She used a small basket or vessel made of woven roots. At that time the small piece of moss fell into the spring, and was lifted in this vessel to the lips of the woman, who blew it two or three times from her lips, but eventually swallowed it. In time she bore a son, a remarkably small child. This child incessantly cried for the moon to play with, thus—*koong-ah-ah, koong-ah-ah* ("The moon, the moon"). The spirit-chief in order to quiet the child, after carefully closing all apertures of the house, produced the moon and gave it to the child to play with. The child rolled it about for a time, but now kept crying *ah-ah-kineet, ah-ah-kineet*. ("open the smoke-hole"). He also put the moon in his mouth, but his mother observing this pulled it from him, but gave it to him again to roll about. The smoke-hole had been opened a little. He still kept crying *ah-ah-kineet*, till to quiet him the smoke-hole was opened a little more. Watching his opportunity he quickly put the moon in his mouth, assumed the form of a raven and flew out. He alighted on the summit of a high tree, where he hid the moon under his wing. A number of people then took stone axes and commenced to fell the tree. When the tree was nearly falling, the raven would fly to another tree. The people then began to fell the second tree, but again the raven would fly to another tree. This was repeated several times, until the people wept over their failure to recover the moon. A great chief

¹ Olachen fish grease; esteemed a delicacy.

then told the people to desist from their efforts, for the probability was that the raven was the great spirit himself who made them all.

With the moon concealed under his wing, the raven flew to the stream where many people were engaged in catching the oolachen (candle-fish), which were running into the river in great numbers at that time. It was dark, for there was no sun, moon or stars to give light.

The raven then asked the people for some oolachens, and promised to give them light if they would supply him. They answered him "You tell lies." Twice they said so. The raven then said, "You do not believe me, but you shall see if I lie." He then pulled the moon out a little way from under his wing, and all the people beholding light were very glad and hastened to give him plenty of oolachens. The raven was so pleased that he took the moon from under his wing, and said, "You shall have abundance of light." He then broke the moon in two. Taking one half he threw it up above him, calling out to the people, "The name of this is *Tsoo-way* (the sun) it will give you light in the day." He then took the other half and threw it up above him, and called out, "The name of this is *Koong* (the moon). Then taking up the fragments which had fallen when he broke the moon, he threw them up above him and called out, "The name of these is *Kah-ilt-ah* (stars). The moon and stars shall give you light at night."¹

Three Jade Adzes (Haida *Qua-hootah*).—[Nos. 1291, 1276, 1293]. The most perfect of these was procured from a Haida medicine-man, to whom it was bequeathed by his predecessor.

Amongst the Haida such adzes were rare and costly, and only the principal chiefs were able to obtain one of them. They were prized for the keen cutting edge which could be given them and for their durability. The place from whence they were originally obtained is not known, but it is certain that the Haida and coast tribes of British Columbia procured some of them from the natives of Alaska.

With such adzes trees were felled for making large columns or lodge poles. It has often been a question in what manner large trees were felled with such a small and insignificant implement, but in fact the method was quite simple, and as the work was performed by slaves, the owner of the adze did not find it at all arduous. First a ring of two or three inches wide and deep was hewn with the adze round the butt of the tree, and then about three or four feet higher up another ring of the same dimensions was hewn out. Next the wood between these rings was split off by means of wedges, driven by heavy stone mauls or hammers. This proceeding was repeated until the heart of the tree was reached when it toppled over.

Pale-green Jade Tomahawk (Haida, *Hlth-at-low*).—[No. 1295.] This resembles No. 1329, but being of jade was much more highly esteemed and of greater value.

Slate Labret (Haida *Skoots-tet-kah*).—[No. 1274.] This, the only known specimen of a stone labret, was found about two feet below the surface of the ground at Masset. Its origin is unknown, but the Haida say that they never before heard of any of the ancients using labrets made of stone. Labrets were invariably made of bone, ivory, wood or shell. Prior to the finding of this labret, an aged Haida chief related that in olden time, when the status of a chieftainess mainly depended on the size of her labret, a

¹ Cf. Report of Progress, Geol. Surv. Can., 1878-79, p. 150 B. It will be observed that this version of the story differs somewhat from that obtained by me. G. M. D.

competition used to take place between wives of prominent chiefs as to which should have the longest protruding under lip and largest labret. The contest often resulted in injury to the lip by forcing into the orifice labrets of undue size. Sometimes the lip split from the orifice to the surface, making it then impossible to button in the labret. It seems, however, that rather than give up wearing the labret, they tied it to the lip by boring a hole in the labret and attaching it to the jagged edges of the wounded lip by threads. This stone labret shows evidence of having been used in this way, as one perfect hole and portion of the edge of another are distinctly seen. When the narrator of the above saw it, he agreed that it had evidently been fastened to the lip in the manner described. He added that he had never seen a pierced one before, or known personally of such a custom, but that any doubt he had entertained as to the truth of the legend was now removed by seeing this pierced labret.

The method of preparing the lip for the reception of these large labrets was as follows:—At a very early age, the under lip of the female child was pierced with a tiny hole,¹ and a small pin of bone or metal with a head on it was inserted in the orifice from the inside. As the child increased in years, these pins were gradually exchanged for ones of larger size, until on attaining womanhood, the pin was generally discarded and a small labret proper was inserted in the hole; this again being exchanged as years passed on for one of a larger size, until on middle age being attained, it became possible to insert labrets of huge size. This is a custom which has now fallen into disuse. It will be understood from what is above stated, that a young woman could never wear a very large labret.

Two Small Dolls or Images (Haida *Kwah-keet*).—[Nos. 1294 and 1289.] These are very old and their origin is unknown. Report says they were highly prized by the ancients, but they are not known to have been used otherwise than as children's toys. They are carved in white marble. One shews a labret, the other a peculiar incision in the lower lip.

Two Carved Mountain-goat Horns (Haida *Nee-sang* or *Nee-sang-ah*).—[Nos. 1286 and 1287.] These peculiar head ornaments were worn only by the sons of chiefs. A lock of hair above each temple was drawn tightly through the hollow of such horns and bound on the outside, which gave the horns an erect position. They were worn on festive occasions.

Two Carved Ivory Mortars (Haida *Qua-kull*).—The ivory of which these mortars are made is walrus tusk, and came from Northern Alaska. [Nos. 1284 and 1285.]

In olden times the Haida cultivated a plant which possessed a sedative-narcotic principle. This principle was contained in the leaves, which when of mature growth, were gathered and dried like tobacco leaves. When wanted for use some of the leaves were pounded in one of the large stone mortars (*tow*). Calcined clam shells were pulverized in the small ivory mortar. The pounded leaves were then mixed with a portion of the calcined clam shell, and the compound was chewed in the same manner in which the betel nut is employed in the east. This plant was called *Win-dah*, but at the present day no trace of it can be discovered. On the introduction of tobacco by white people the cultivation of windah was discontinued. The Haida made it an important article of barter with the neighbouring tribes.²

¹ Generally in public, at a distribution-of-property feast.

² Cf. Report of Progress, Geol. Surv. Can., 1878-79, p. 114 B. Mr. R. Cunningham, of Port Essington, informs me that the Tshimsean used to obtain this narcotic weed in early days from the Haida, under the name of *win-dah* or *win-daw*, which is its Haida appellation. *Um-shi-wa'* is Tshimsean for "a foreigner," as for instance a white man,

Medicine-man's Ivory Charms (Haida *Kun-si-kah*).—[Nos. 1278, 1278A.] These were worn suspended round the neck by the Medicine man during the ceremony of operating on a patient. When the conjuring and rattling were concluded, the doctor very often detached one of these charms or amulets and suspended it round the sick person's neck. In other instances he sold or lent them as a protection to the wearer against evil influences.

Medicine-man's Rattle (Haida *Sissah*).—[No. 1328.] This rattle belonged to a medicine-man, and was in use for a long time. It was supposed that the sound of the rattle assisted the doctor to draw out the sickness from the patient's body, and when exercised for a considerable time with an uninterrupted monotonous sound, produced by a peculiar motion of the arm and wrist, it had a soothing effect on the sick person, and often caused him to fall into a kind of stupor resembling sleep.

Two Dance Rattles (Haida *Sissah*).—[Nos. 1280 and 1283.] These were used only as an accompaniment in keeping time to songs and dances, and were invariably made after the same pattern, with beak of a raven in front and body ornamented with frogs, etc.¹

Carved Dish of Mountain Sheep's Horn (Haida *Skoots-kāū-thlah*).—[No. 1307.]² The horn of which dishes and spoons of this sort were made was brought from the Upper Stikine river.

Bone Spear-heads (Haida *Skoots-kah*).—[Nos. 1297 and 1299.] These were made at a time when iron was a rarity, and were used for spearing seals and other sea animals.

Halibut Hook (Haida *Khain-tow*).—[No. 1281] This kind of hook was universally used by the coast tribes in catching halibut before they procured iron hooks. It is made out of a knot of the spruce tree, cut out of the heart of the log and then steamed into the proper shape.³

Skyll Hook (Haida *Skyll-towl*).—[No. 1282.] This hook is also made out of a spruce knot steamed into form, and is used for catching the skill or black cod; a fish which inhabits very deep water, being sometimes hooked at the depth of 200 fathoms. When the hook is baited, it requires to be set by springing it open and keeping it in that position by means of a small wooden pin about three inches long. When the fish is hooked it pushes the pin out, and the strain on the hook being released it closes on the fish's jaw and thus effectually prevents its ridding itself of the barb and escaping.

Whistles and Calls, named in the Haida tongue variously *Sah-an* and *Hut-teet*.—[Nos. 1318 to 1327.] These were used in dances and merrymakings to imitate the voices of the birds and animals which were often depicted on the carved wooden masks worn on the same occasions.

and the compound *W'in-dun-shi-wa'* or "foreigner's tobacco" is now used to denote ordinary tobacco. It is interesting to note, further, that the place called Cumshiwa on the Queen Charlotte Islands was one of the chief localities of cultivation of the native narcotic plant. This name is, however, not the Haida name of the actual place, but that of its hereditary chief. The connection, if any, of the name with that of the tobacco has not been traced. Mr. R. H. Hall states that though the native narcotic weed is not now known, he has found reason to believe that it was a yellow-flowered poppy—*Papaver nudicaule*? G. M. D.

¹ Cf. Report of Progress, Geol. Surv. Can., 1878-79, plate xi, fig. 26.

² This resembles that figured in Report of Progress, Geol. Surv. Can., 1878-79, plate ix, fig. 18.

³ Cf. Report of Progress, Geol. Surv. Can., 1878-79, plate vii, fig. 10.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

The Sun.—The ancient Haida in a manner worshipped the sun. They considered it to be a great spirit, and in times of distress or peril its assistance was invoked. When small-pox visited the Queen Charlotte Islands for the first time, presents of blankets, clothes, dance-dresses, ornaments, etc., were hung outside the lodge to propitiate the sun, while the people cried, "Preserve us sun, do not kill us," etc. Other spirits besides the sun were propitiated or invoked by the Haida.

Origin of some of the Stars.—When the great flood took place which covered the face of the earth, a man had just stretched a sea-otter skin. As the waters rose he took refuge with his effects in his canoe.

The flood rose to the skies, the canoe was swamped and the man was drowned. The sea-otter stretcher had been on top of the canoe and floated. When the waters subsided the sea-otter stretcher remained in the skies, where now it is seen as the group of stars *Koh-eet-ow*, which white people call the Great Bear. *Koh*, a sea-otter. *Koh-eet-ow*, a frame for stretching sea-otter skins.

The water-bailer and triangular foot-board of the canoe also remained on high after the waters subsided; the former is now seen as the Pleiades, and the latter as the Hyades. (*Hoot-öo* a water-bailer, Pleiades; *Tulth-uk-thley* or foot-board for a canoe, Hyades). The outline of the Pleiades resembles a water-bailer, and the outline of the Hyades that of the foot-board of a canoe.

The ancient Haida are said to have had names for all the constellations, but most of these are now forgotten.

Festivals—*Lah-out* festival of the dead. *Lag-un-ing* festival of the house-building.

Festivals for the dead were held as soon after the decease as sufficient food could be amassed and guests collected. Festivals were tribal, and all were guests except those of the same crest or totem as the deceased who were non-participants. The ancient Haida are said to have always endeavoured to hold their distribution-of-property feasts at the full of the moon, but the reason for this is not now known.

A Visit to Spirit-land.—A certain young man (name unknown) was mourning for his eldest brother and his sister's son, who had both been murdered shortly before, and he resolved to try and penetrate the mystery of the place where their spirits had gone to in the heavens.

He went to the top of a mountain with his bow and wood to make arrows. He sat down and made fifty arrows, which, one after another he shot up into space, where they disappeared. He then made fifty more, which he shot up with the same result. He then made a third lot of fifty, which he disposed of in the same manner. Then a fourth lot followed, and he noticed that the arrows were now fixed one in another by the point of each entering into the notch of the preceding one.

When he had finished shooting these last fifty arrows they reached nearly to the earth. So, to complete the connection, he stuck one end of his bow in the earth and leant the other against the string of arrows. Seizing the pillar of arrows he put his foot on the bow and commenced to climb aloft. To his surprise he now observed that each arrow was transfixed through a human head, which was strung as it were on this line of arrows, crown of head down and under jaw uppermost. This afforded him good foot-

hold, and each time as he put his foot on a jaw to raise himself up, the jaw closed sharply, making a noise as the upper and lower teeth met.

At length he reached the realms above, where he was hospitably entertained by the chief of the spirit-land. He saw his eldest brother and his sister's son, who told him not to mourn for them, for they were very happy and well off where they were.

When he was ready to descend to earth again, the chief of the spirit-land told him that if he now killed a man on earth the spirit of the deceased could easily find its way to the spirit-land, as he (the young man) had made a path with steps of human heads to reach it. The young man then safely descended to the earth.

Here the story suddenly ceases. Stories such as this were very popular amongst the Haida. They seem to have no moral to inculcate or point to illustrate, but are apparently related merely for pastime and are often most incongruous and contradictory.

Thunder (Eelung) is said to be caused by a large bird "Eelung" flapping its wings. This bird, of immense dimensions, lives on whales, which it catches in its talons made of copper. It flies away with a whale into space, and conceals itself in a dark cloud. Lightning is caused by the eyes of the bird opening and shutting. Eelung is said to have had two helpers, a man and a woman, spirit-people who assisted in whale catching.

The Greek cross (+ *Scalim*) was used to mark the skins of animals, such as bear, otter, etc., after they were stretched and dried, for the purpose of propitiating the spirit of the dead animal. Four crosses were used in a line down the middle of the back on the flesh side, and the color of the crosses was invariably red. The custom is still practised. This symbol was not used in any other way.

Certain clouds occasionally seen in the western horizon are termed *Qyow*. It is said qyow clouds indicate good weather. These clouds have the form of a T and the base-line of the T is supposed to represent the horizon. Spirit-people are said to inhabit the region of the qyow. An old medicine-man saw the place in a vision. These spirit-people's heads were elongated on each side like the upper end of the T. They were called Qyow people.

There were no prescribed stages or degrees in the initiation of a medicine-man. (Haida *Sah-gah*.) The aspirant to that office was instructed by another medicine-man, generally his uncle, to whom he succeeded, and on his aptitude to learn the system did the length of his probation depend.

An old doctor says that there are a great many spirit doctors, who assist the medicine-man by advice, and whom the medicine-men continually see in visions. There is, however, one spirit doctor pre-eminent above all the rest. He is known by two different names *Kou'-cull-at* and *Yee-kan-eek*.

I can find no meaning attached to these names. Haida doctors never used the drum by way of divination, nor did they employ passes or signs among themselves. Their great aim was to avoid meeting, as they professed to be afraid of each other, and the custom was for each doctor to magnify himself and traduce his rival. They professed to fight in visions. When the doctor exorcised a spirit of divination or conjuration, he uttered words and language which neither he himself nor others understood. This unknown speech was prompted by the spirit medicine-man who attended on him.

The Haida never believed in the transmigration of souls, that is to say, the soul of a

human being taking possession of a beast or bird, but they formerly believed, and to a great extent still believe, that the spirit of a human being deceased enters the flesh again in the person of a new-born babe, and it was the medicine-man's business to reveal whose soul it was and the name of the child. They also believed that every living thing, beasts, birds, fishes, reptiles and insects had spirits, which after death returned to their spirits abodes.

Great regard was paid by the ancient Haida to the number eight. For instance, eight products of the chase, as seals, otters, etc., was a cause of rejoicing. To catch eight halibut was a subject for congratulation. Eight times ten was favourably regarded, and eight hundred was the *ne plus ultra* or summit of good fortune. A chief who could give away eight hundred pieces of property in a feast was pre-eminent.

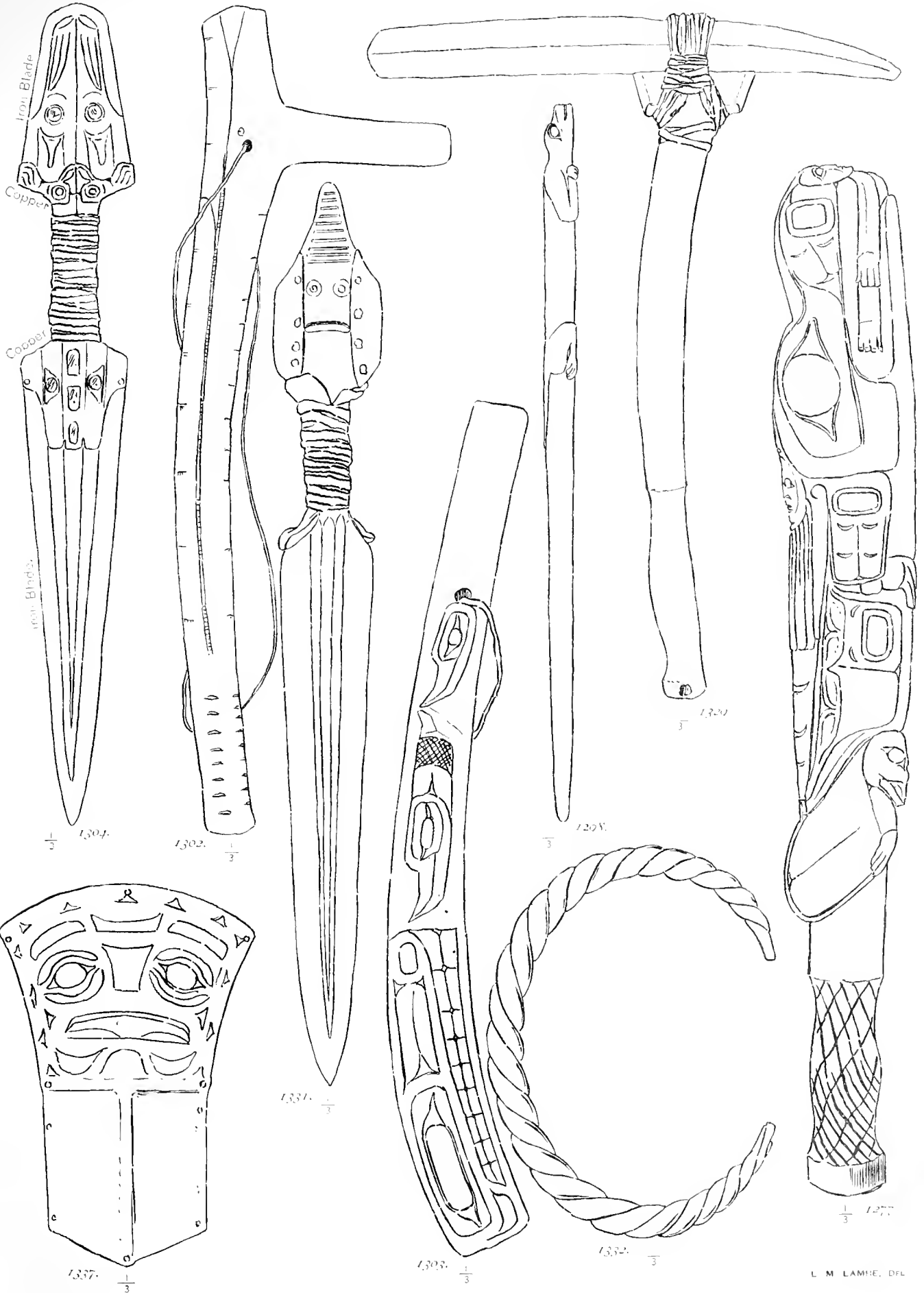
[In a late communication, Mr. Mackenzie states that he has found, on a small island named *Tee*, opposite the mouth of Lignite brook in Naden Harbour, a considerable portion of a stone arrow-head. The portion of an arrow-head in question is nearly two inches in length, but wants both tip and base. It is formed of streaked red jasper, narrowly tapering in form, but rather thick, one side being distinctly more convex than the other. It is rather neatly chipped, and a stone identical with it in character is found commonly in pebbles at the same place. [No. 2680.]

Mr. Mackenzie regards this as a very interesting discovery, as it is the only specimen of a chipped arrow-head or spear-head which he has ever known to have been found on the Queen Charlotte Islands. He further states, that with one exception, the Haida to whom he showed it were much surprised, and said that they had never seen or heard of such a thing before. The exception was an Indian who hunts a good deal on the west coast of the islands, where he stated that he had found such chipped stones at one place there.]

G. M. D.







L. M. LAMIE, DEL.

To illustrate Mr. Mackenzie's Paper on Implements from Queen Charlotte Islands.



**PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET**

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

