

A Collection of Human Skulls.

Prof. W. H. Holmes, curator of anthropology of the National Museum, has just received from Harvard university a collection of skulls, part of a still larger collection gathered by the expedition which, about one year ago, that university sent to the South Sea islands. The skulls received at the National Museum are all from Borneo, where they were obtained by the expedition from the Dyak head-hunters, of the interior of that island. The skulls are a genuine rarity, and the first examples of a most singular art that have ever reached the National Museum. The different Dyak tribes of the island of Borneo are eternally at feud with one another, and in their raids, forays, and battles, they make a practice of decapitating their enemies. These they regard as trophies, viewing them in the same light in which the North American Indian braves once looked upon the taking of scalps; namely, as the visible evidences of a warrior's prowess and courage in the eyes of his fellow-tribesmen. When in a foray or battle a Dyak warrior takes a number of heads he buries them for a time, until the flesh and soft parts have completely disappeared, when they are removed from the earth, carefully cleaned, and polished, and set away to dry. After this is accomplished, the Dyak warrior, equipped with diuerent vegetable pigments and bone implements, proceeds to engrave upon the skulls a most elaborate and intricate design, consisting of chevrons, "herring bones," crosses, and a world of other patterns, which when completed render the skull a work of art in every sense of the term.

Being the heads of their enemies, and regarded as trophies of war, it is next to impossible for a white man, either European or American, to gain possession of one of them, and it is for this reason that they are to be seen only in small numbers in a few of the great museums of Europe and America. The Harvard expedition appears to have been unusually successful in their quest for Dyak skulls, and the National Museum is to be congratulated upon so choice and rare an acquisition.—Washington Post.

Mount Ranier.

A telegram to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch under date of Tacoma, Wash., July 25, says: Dr. W. R. Betts of New Orleans and H. M. Sarvant of Tacoma have made a thrilling ascent of Mount Ranier, known by the Indians as Mount Tacoma, 14,444 feet above the level of the sea. Dr. Betts read that the mountain had not been ascended for four years on account of great breaks in ice walls above Gibraltar rock. Old guides had gone to Gibraltar rock for several seasons, only to turn back without reaching the top, and Dr. Betts was determined to disprove the theory that the mountain now is unscalable.

After previously carrying food to Camp Muir, the climbers started Sunday evening to make the ascent. They camped at Muir until daybreak, but the weather was bitterly cold, making sleep impossible. At 3 a. m. they discarded all clothing possible, and, taking only alpenstocks and cameras, started. Reaching the glaciers above Gibraltar, they were compelled to use ropes and to cut 500 steps in the ice with a hatchet in making a zigzag journey up the ice slopes and around crevasses. They found avalanches had carried away the great rock ledge above Gibraltar, on which previous climbers had depended in ascending one of the steepest places. Investigation showed there has been no recent volcanic activity, as supposed. The party reached Paradise valley at 6 o'clock Monday night, twenty-four hours after commencing the ascent.

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