

**WEAPONS AND  
IMPLEMENTS OF SAVAGE  
RACES (AUSTRALASIA,  
OCEANIA, AND AFRICA)**

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Weapons and implements of savage races (Australasia, Oceania, and Africa) by L. A. D. Montague

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WEAPONS  
AND IMPLEMENTS  
OF SAVAGE RACES

(AUSTRALASIA, OCEANIA, AND AFRICA)

BY

LIEUT.-COL. L. A. D. MONTAGUE

FULLY ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR FROM SPECIMENS  
MOSTLY IN HIS COLLECTION

LONDON

"THE BAZAAR, EXCHANGE & MART" OFFICE  
WINDSOR HOUSE, BREAM'S BUILDINGS, E.C.4

1921

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## PREFACE

THE fact that works on ethnographical specimens are few in number, and that reliable information concerning these interesting objects is hard to obtain, has led to the re-publication in book form of a series of articles on the subject which I have contributed to *The Bazaar* during the last four years. The study of weapons and implements of savage races has been taken up by an increasing number of collectors, and also by many outside that fraternity ; it is therefore hoped that this little work may at any rate go some way towards supplying a want.

The subject is such an extensive one that its adequate treatment would entail the publication of many volumes, and the present attempt claims to be nothing more than a handbook or guide. It contains as full a description of specimens from Australasia, Oceania, and Africa as its size permits ; but it was impossible to include any from Asia or America without unduly curtailing the other sections.

The specimens illustrated are mostly in my own collection, and I have made every effort correctly to

identify and describe them. It is, however, often extremely difficult to trace ethnographical specimens with certainty to the place of origin, so it is quite possible that mistakes of attribution may be discovered. Still, as in doubtful cases I have consulted the authorities connected with our public collections (for whose courteous assistance I must here offer my thanks), I think that the information I have got together may be taken as up to date and generally correct.

LEOPOLD A. D. MONTAGUE.

*September, 1921.*



# WEAPONS AND IMPLEMENTS OF SAVAGE RACES

## INTRODUCTION

TO most of us, whether we have the collecting instinct or not, there is a peculiar fascination connected with the strange weapons, implements, and other objects coming from the less civilized parts of the world, where mankind, in many cases, is still in a stage of evolution which could only have been paralleled in this country some centuries before the Roman invasion. That most of the savage races producing these objects are gradually becoming civilized or are dying out, renders it all the more important that no time should be lost in gathering all possible information concerning their history, religion, art, and customs, and preserving specimens of their handiwork, which, not many years hence, may be very difficult to obtain.

But, apart from the scientific study of ethnography, there is a romantic interest about a collection of South Sea, African, or other specimens of native work which makes a general appeal. These curious clubs of

polished wood, spears barbed with human bones, and swords edged with sharks' teeth take us mentally to the coral islands of the Pacific, and call up reminiscences of many a tale of adventure in the South Seas; whilst the sight of African fetishes, war-knives, and throwing-spears instantly transports an imaginative individual to the mysterious forests of the Dark Continent, suggesting perils encountered by Stanley and the other explorers, human sacrifices, and what not.

The ethnographical room in a museum is therefore always popular, but, curiously enough, the scientific study of ethnographical specimens was greatly neglected up to quite a late period in the last century, and the only obtainable general work on the subject was (and would seem still to be) Wood's "Natural History of Man," to illustrate which the author formed a private collection. Nearly every local museum possessed, it is true, a certain number of specimens, but these were seldom properly arranged, and were incorrectly labelled almost as often as not. Even at the present day there is much room for improvement as far as some of the small provincial museums are concerned, but the magnificent ethnographical collection at the British Museum, re-arranged since the War, offers an excellent example of modern classification, followed by the museums at Oxford, Cambridge, Exeter, and others of the same standing.

Collecting such curiosities upon scientific lines is now being taken up to an increasing extent, and will

undoubtedly become quite a fashionable hobby before long, causing the prices, already fairly high, to rise still further. The bargains of the last century are now rarely obtainable, though, unless one goes in for rarities such as ancient Maori productions, it is by no means too late to begin collecting. The nucleus of a collection may be found on the walls of the entrance-hall or staircase of many a residence, for it has long been customary to hang up such weapons as decorations, although in many cases their present owner has a very hazy notion of what they really are and where they came from.

No doubt ethnographical specimens will be faked as the demand for them increases, but at present they are imitated to a less extent than other things collected. West African curios, particularly fetish figures and carved work, are made to order by the natives, and also counterfeited by Europeans for sale to passengers on the West Coast steamers (if not for the English market), yet I have never come across faked weapons such as spears and war-knives. The costly Maori antiquities are doubtless imitated now and then, whenever deception is possible, though, as far as I am aware, the faker has not yet concerned himself with Australian weapons. South Sea clubs and spears do not lend themselves to fraudulent imitation, and it would never pay a European carver to copy the intricate designs on some of the paddles, axe-hafts, and other implements; but the collector should fight shy