

## ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

## New Guinea.

## With Plate K.

Haddon.

*A Papuan Bow-and-Arrow Fleam.* By A. C. Haddon, ScD., F.R.S.,  
President of the Anthropological Institute. **121**

Like most primitive peoples, the Papuans resort to blood-letting and counter-irritation to alleviate most of their aches and pains. During the recent Cambridge Expedition to British New Guinea we came across several examples of this practice. One of the most interesting of these was the one which is here illustrated. A small bow is made, usually of three midribs of coconut palm leaflets; these are tied together at their ends, and there is a third lashing near the centre of the bow: the bow string is a delicate vegetable fibre some 30-48 cm. in length. The arrow is also a midrib of a palm leaflet (about 27-34 cm. in length); this is passed between the elements of the composite bow, and the butt end is fastened to the string, while the free end is armed with a thorn or a splinter of glass. The surgical operation consists in repeatedly shooting the arrow at the affected part. The arrow is held between the thumb and index finger of the right hand and the remaining fingers draw back the string of the bow. This is the "secondary release" of Morse, which I have previously shown (*Journ. Anth. Inst.*, xix, 1890, p. 330) is the Papuan method. The arrow passes between the index and middle finger of the left hand as in ordinary Papuan archery.

This method of drawing blood was mentioned by the late Rev. James Chalmers, in his *Pioneering in New Guinea* (1887, p. 178), in the following words:—"Motu—Bleed with flint got at Port Moresby on a small arrow with bow made from "rib of coconut leaf." We obtained a specimen in the Mekeo district with a thorn point and several with glass points at Bulaa in the Hood Peninsula, Rigo district. The operation was photographed for me by the late Anthony Wilkin at the latter village. In his *Annual Report on British New Guinea* (July 1896-June 1897; C. A. 6-1898, p. 6) Sir William Macgregor gives an illustration from a photograph of the use of this fleam, but as this publication is not very accessible I do not hesitate to publish another figure. There is a specimen of a bow-and-arrow fleam from South New Guinea in the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford. It was collected by Sir W. Macgregor and presented by Dr. John Thomson in 1897.

A. C. HADDON.

## Asia Minor: Religion.

Crowfoot.

*A Yezidi Rite.* By J. W. Crowfoot, M.A.

Travelling last June (1900) on a "Messageries Maritimes" boat between Marseilles and Constantinople I met an Armenian who told me various things about the Yezidi. Many of these seem trivial enough, as, for instance, that they are fond of eating white mice, or that they collect the blood of slain animals and let it congeal and then fry it as a special delicacy. Others were accurate descriptions of the costume worn by their priests, and the tabus on various colours, &c., which are mentioned by all travellers. But one rite he described to me is entirely new and if true, as I believe, deserves publication. As a boy my informant lived in Armenia near Sert, where the Yezidi are very numerous, and once, when about ten years old, he happened to be present at one of their festivals in a village named Takhari, between Sert and Redvan. He was playing about at the time in the courtyard of a Yezidi's house, and, as he was a mere child, was either unnoticed or considered unworthy of attention, so he was able to see all that went on, and its strangeness impressed itself on his memory. This is what occurred: I use practically his own words. The head of the village came in with saddlebags hanging over his shoulders. From the bag in front, which was over his chest, he took the bronze figure of the Melek Taus which was wrapped carefully in linen. It was put on a mat

and the wrappings removed. The figure was shaped like a bird with a hole in the middle of the back covered by a lid, and a base like the stand of a candlestick. The bird was then filled with holy water through the hole, and while this was going on all sang songs in Kurdish. (My informant knew Kurdish as well as Arabic and Armenian, and was positive on this point.) Next, the priest approached it, kissed the basis first and then the other parts until he came to the beak. This was pierced, and the priest put his lips to it and sipped a drop of the water, and all those who were present, except, of course, the Armenian, "received the sacrament" in the same way, for so we must describe it.

Can we accept this account as true ?

First, as to the character of this Armenian. He is well known to several English and American travellers and others, and those to whom I have applied say that they regard him as trustworthy on the whole. The story seems to be inherently probable and consistent, and he had no motive whatever for inventing it. If he had studied comparative mythology and had read accounts of a ceremonial "eating of the God" he might have made it up, but he was not a student of this subject or of any other, but simply a shrewd dragoman and commercial traveller. The recital of the circumstances which enabled him to see it inspires me with much more confidence than the claims of Layard and other travellers to have endeared themselves so deeply to the Yezidi that the latter made them free of all their mysteries.

Secondly, it is very easy to reconcile this with what we know of the Yezidi from other sources. Dr. Mark Lidzbarski has published an important document upon them in the shape of a petition dated 1872-73, giving various reasons why the Yezidi should not serve in the Turkish Army (Ein Exposé der Yesiden, *Zeitschrift der Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 1897, p. 592 foll.). The first runs thus "Every member of our sect, great and small, woman and maid, must three times in the year . . . visit the figure of the Melek Taus." For this purpose several of these bronze figures, said to number five now, are sent round to the various districts where Yezidi abound, and Sert is mentioned as one of the regular districts on these circuits (Siouffi, *Revue Asiatique*, sér. vii., tom. 20, p. 268, 1882). Now, according to M. Menaut (*Les Yezidiz, Leroux, Paris*, 1892, p. 95 foll.), the Melek Taus thus circulated is simply a badge with no ritual or religious significance attached to it, but serving as sole credentials to the messengers employed by the heads of the sect to levy contributions from the faithful. But there is no evidence to support this view except the word Sanjak (standard) sometimes applied to the figure; it absolutely fails to account for the reverence paid to this object, or for the choice of this object in particular. A badge of this type should be something which is secret, especially when it has the power of opening the purses of its beholders; the mere sentiment of the "Flag" may appeal to a patriotic Frenchman, but hardly in the same degree to an Oriental heretic. The position which the Melek Taus occupies in Dr. Lidzbarski's petition shows, I think, that some real boon, equivalent to the blessing derived from a sacrament, is obtained from it, and no doubt duly paid for. And the Armenian's story is further confirmed by a detail reported in Badger's account (*The Nestorians and their Ritual*, London, 1852) to which I have not referred before because its authority has been called in question: "Close by the stand [of the Taus]," writes Mrs. Badger, "was a copper jug, filled with water, which we understood was dealt out to be drunk as a charm by the sick and afflicted" (p. 124). The Yezidi refused to let the Badgers see their worship, and this explanation of the water was only given to throw them off the scent; the ritual described above suggests another use.

The conclusion, then, will be that the Taus is not merely a banner, but is, as the older writers said, itself an object of worship. The word, furthermore, no doubt, conceals the name of some old god, and we may follow Dr. Lidzbarski in making an equation

which occurred independently to the present writer. In the Harranian Calendar, published by Chwolsohn, occurs the name Taus, which Chwolsohn himself identified with Tammuz, and Professor Sayce has more recently connected with Theias or Thoas, who is in various places the Lemnian husband of Myrina, the king of Tauric Khersonese, the king of Assyria, the father of Adonis and Myrrha or Smyrna (*Hibbert Lectures*, 1887, p. 235). It is true that the Arabic letters which form the three names Taus, Tautz, Tammuz, differ more than the ordinary English transliterations suggest (تموز, تاوز, طاوس), but this is not really a formidable objection to their identity. Tammuz becomes Tautz by an omission of *m*, which is not uncommon in Kurdish names (see Lidzbarski) and which was well established, if Professor Sayce is right, in the classical period. Then Tautz is identified with Taus (peacock) by a piece of vulgar etymology. The survival of the name of so important a god as Tammuz is intrinsically likely enough, and it is probable that more than the name has survived; the red anemones which, according to the Badgers, played a great part in the April celebrations, deserve more notice than they have had. And, again, the peacock element may have some more material foundation than the mere verbal assonance; as Sir George Birdwood writes (*Athenæum*, 30th September 1899), "the Melek Taus may indeed be an actual relic of Babylonian or Assyrian art."

More interesting to anthropologists than these speculations about origins will be, perhaps, the recurrence of the same figure among the Tachtadji in Lykia, a phenomenon to which writers on the Yezidi do not refer. Among the Tachtadji, however, the Melek Taus, so far, at least, as the reports of Von Luschan and Bent carry us, has no bronze embodiment; the natural peacock with them is regarded as the incarnation of evil. The Tachtadji speak Turkish only, the Yezidi Kurdish and a little Arabic. They live very far apart. To what, then, are we to attribute this common element? Two possibilities seem to be open to us. It might conceivably be an independent survival in each case of the Tammuz-Thoas worship which once extended over the whole area. Or there may in more recent times have been some connection between the two peoples, which has now been lost or else has completely eluded the observation of travellers.

Two religious developments seem to be universal over the whole Islamic area, the worship of Saints (Welis, Dedes, Marabouts), and the existence of Orders or Fraternities; both are common to the heretics as well as the true believers, but the former try, ineffectually indeed, to shelter themselves under the prestige of an orthodox Saint, in the case of the Yezidi, for example, Sheikh Adi (see Siouffi, *Journal Asiatique*, 1885, p. 78). I have shown how closely parallel this is with the pre-Christian worship of heroes (*J. A. I.*, 1900), and need not say more about it here. The religious Orders belong to another phase. The worship of heroes is something essentially local, and belongs to the family; the Fraternity is something which is in itself open to all, and knows no limits of race or place. One of the great Muslim Orders will include Negroes Arabs, Berbers, Turks, and Persians; difference of language is no bar. In the Pagan world they correspond to the thiasoi or brotherhoods of Orphic or Pythagorean initiates. It is, perhaps, on the lines of one of these Fraternities that subsequent research will prove that the common elements of Yezidi and Tachtadji may be explained.

J. W. CROWFOOT.

## Egypt.

*Egyptian Cutting-out Tools.* By W. M. Flinders Petrie, Edwards' Professor of Egyptology at University College.

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The use of special tools for cutting out textile fabrics has not yet been recognised in Egypt, nor perhaps elsewhere. When we notice the very elaborately made clothing of the Eighteenth Dynasty and later, and when we handle the exquisitely fine linen,