

pour of rain. We therefore took our leave, and lost no time in reaching the nearest tree-bridge. We notched the slippery surface of the trunk with our machetes, so that this passage lost much of its peril. Then, after reaching the point which brought us in line with the dead brother's milpa, we cut our way directly through the forest and without much difficulty reached the abandoned group of huts. Before we continued our journey, however, I permitted my men to take an abundant supply of ears of maize, bananas, and sugar-cane to punish the fellow who had dragged us over waterfalls and tree-trunks to his *suegro*.

Amid a light shower of rain we reached the landing-place. The last rays of the sun disappearing behind the mountains lighted us as we rowed over the mirror-like surface of the beautiful lake to our camp, where those who had been left behind had spent the day not without anxiety on our account. Of course my companions never wearied of recounting to their comrades all the experiences of this day. Each one considered himself a hero.

On the next day (September 7th), leaving but a single man to guard the camp, we all crossed the lake to visit Māx and his associates. We intended to take our noon meal there, in order to have leisure to observe the habits and customs of the Indians and to take some small photographs. After crossing the tree bridge we succeeded in killing a black crax.

As we neared the huts we heard the hollow, somewhat weird sound of the conch-shells with which Māx and his associates celebrated our coming. I greeted Māx and the assembled Indians cordially, explaining to them that we would like to spend the day with them, and as we had shot a *kambul*, would they lend us a vessel in which to cook it? Upon this one of the women brought us a large pot, and my men began to prepare the bird.

Then I told the Indians that I had brought them a few presents, articles which might be useful to them in their remote forests, and I at once proceeded to distribute the salt among the men who were present. Each one received a gourd-bowl full. I also gave each man a large knife and several kinds of fish-hooks. As for the women and girls, they received gay silk and cotton kerchiefs, as well as silver ear-pendants and pretty mirrors.

Although this people, so simple in its wants, is incapable of genuine joy, a certain feeling of general satisfaction, nevertheless, became evident among them. Meanwhile I had set up the small camera in order to take a few photographs before this pleasant mood should vanish. As my brightly varnished camera with its brass mountings was a pretty sight when set up on its slender tripod, the people were not at all frightened by this magic box. I succeeded in taking several photographs, which in spite of their

small size ( $9 \times 12$  cm.) give a distinct picture of the features and dress of the men, women, and children (Plate VI, 3, 4, 5).

The men wear an ample shirt-like garment, of strong, somewhat coarse cotton material, which reaches down to the calves of their legs; but on their hunting expeditions or on journeys they wear a garment of extra-coarse fleecy material. The women wear an undergarment which reaches from the hips down over the calves of their legs, and the shirt-like upper garment falls over this. Each woman is adorned with a thick bunch of necklaces or rather strings of seeds. They are made of hard, usually black, seeds mixed with cylindrical bones, teeth, small snail-shells, or whatever else they can obtain.

The uncut hair of the men falls about their faces, which sometimes gives them a wild and leonine aspect. The women part their hair in the middle, exactly like European women, and at the end of the braid they fasten a tuft of gay bird-feathers, wings, and breasts. All the women have their ear-lobes pierced; so they could delightfully insert the ear-rings (of English manufacture) themselves or confidently allow me to insert them. Neither men nor women seemed to wear shoes of any kind.

Māx's premises consisted of a large main hut, where he lived with his wives and children. This was surrounded by four smaller, half-open huts, some intended for cooking, and some for the accommodation of guests, and one was devoted exclusively to the incense vessels with faces of gods.

Here also was an abundance of cooking-vessels and implements of every sort, and the inmates had hammocks made of agave cord for sleeping at night and also for resting by day. The hammocks of the Lacantuns are very different from those which are used elsewhere in Mexico. They do not consist of mesh-work, but a system of cross cords holds the lengthwise cords together. They are also shorter than the Mexican ones, but are broad enough. The people do not make their things for sale, but only for their own use, so that it was utterly impossible for me to obtain one of their very prettily made hammocks.

The wooden implement with which the women weave the cotton cloth, *la manta*, is also interesting. An old woman was at work on a piece of material, and I wanted to buy the implement together with the partly finished web, but she obstinately refused to sell it. The women, however, gave me some of their seed necklaces as mementos, and I requested the men to bring a few of their beautifully made bows and arrows to my camp, promising to pay well for them.

The bows (Fig. 11) are usually made of *guayacan*, or *xibé*, or else of *chicozapote*. The length of the men's bows varies from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and seventy centimetres, that of the larger boys from one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and thirty-five centimetres. All the bows are thicker towards the middle and taper very much toward

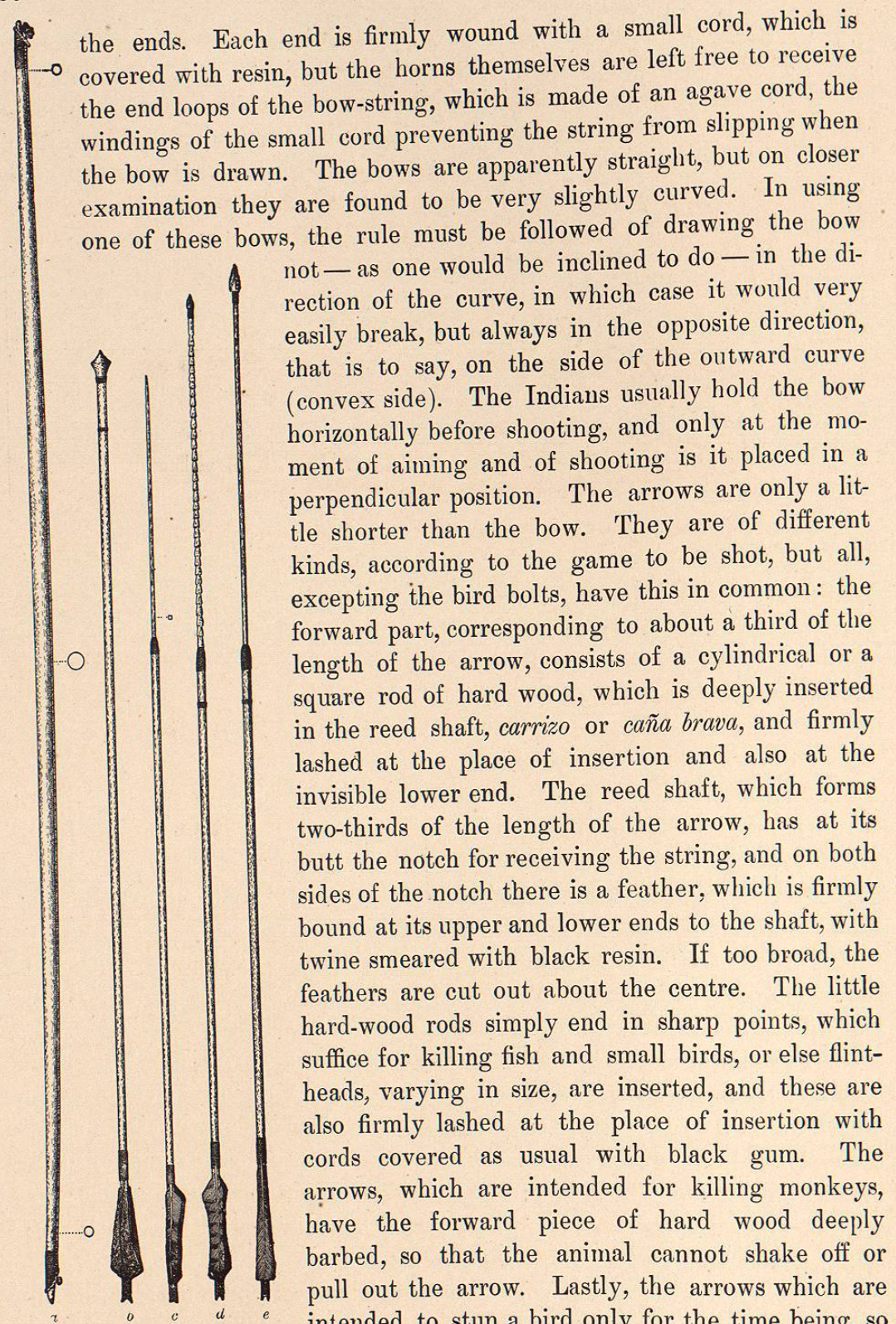


FIG. 11. — BOW AND ARROWS, LACANTUN INDIANS.

a, bow; b, bird bolt; c, wooden-pointed arrow for small game; d, stone-pointed monkey arrow; e, stone-pointed arrow for large game.

the ends. Each end is firmly wound with a small cord, which is covered with resin, but the horns themselves are left free to receive the end loops of the bow-string, which is made of an agave cord, the windings of the small cord preventing the string from slipping when the bow is drawn. The bows are apparently straight, but on closer examination they are found to be very slightly curved. In using one of these bows, the rule must be followed of drawing the bow not—as one would be inclined to do—in the direction of the curve, in which case it would very easily break, but always in the opposite direction, that is to say, on the side of the outward curve (convex side). The Indians usually hold the bow horizontally before shooting, and only at the moment of aiming and of shooting is it placed in a perpendicular position. The arrows are only a little shorter than the bow. They are of different kinds, according to the game to be shot, but all, excepting the bird bolts, have this in common: the forward part, corresponding to about a third of the length of the arrow, consists of a cylindrical or a square rod of hard wood, which is deeply inserted in the reed shaft, *carrizo* or *caña brava*, and firmly lashed at the place of insertion and also at the invisible lower end. The reed shaft, which forms two-thirds of the length of the arrow, has at its butt the notch for receiving the string, and on both sides of the notch there is a feather, which is firmly bound at its upper and lower ends to the shaft, with twine smeared with black resin. If too broad, the feathers are cut out about the centre. The little hard-wood rods simply end in sharp points, which suffice for killing fish and small birds, or else flint-heads, varying in size, are inserted, and these are also firmly lashed at the place of insertion with cords covered as usual with black gum. The arrows, which are intended for killing monkeys, have the forward piece of hard wood deeply barbed, so that the animal cannot shake off or pull out the arrow. Lastly, the arrows which are intended to stun a bird only for the time being, so that it can be caught unhurt, have a little conical piece of wood in place of a flint head.

The bow is bound up with the arrows, and the

bundle is protected by a covering of bark (*majahua*, as it is called in Tabasco) which is usually stripped from young ceiba-trees. The art of cleaving flint into thin layers has been preserved up to the present day by this secluded little nation. It appears that in some cases the cleaving is facilitated by previously heating the stone red-hot, but this is not always done. The cleaving is effected by means of a piece of deer-horn, especially prepared for this purpose, and by means of this elastic medium the blow of the mallet is

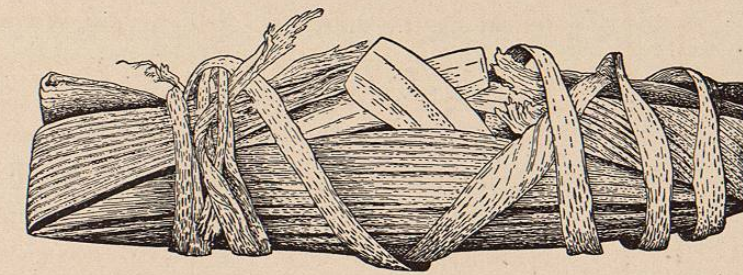


FIG. 12. — PACKAGE OF FLINT FLAKES, FROM WHICH ARROW-POINTS ARE MADE.

transferred to the edge of the stone. The layers thus obtained (Figs. 12, 13) then receive the desired shape and an edge (Fig. 14), by means of a piece of an old knife (now made of iron). Inasmuch as the Indians also find many discarded bottles in the abandoned monterías, they use the glass of these bottles in place of flint. They make the arrow-points of this broken glass, which does not admit of cleaving.

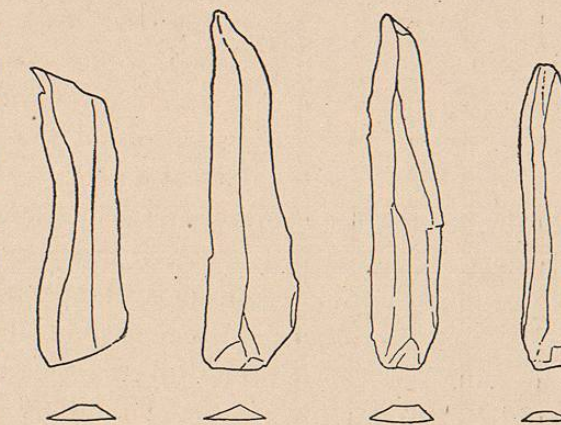


FIG. 13. — FLINT FLAKES FOR CHIPPING INTO ARROW-POINTS.

There were only a few domestic animals to be seen on Māx's premises. The only mammals were dogs, which are always tied up, and belong to the present modern breed. Among the birds I noticed the large green parrots with blue heads, which occur exclusively in these forests. They are therefore called *los loros de los Lacandones* or *loros palencanos*. There were also several specimens of a beautiful small *Coturnix* species, called *bolonchac*, confined in small bejuco cages.

It is hardly to be expected that a remnant of those ancient breeds of dogs—*Techichi*, *Xoloitcuintli*, *Itscuintepotsotli*—should still be preserved among the Lacantuns. All the lumbermen who had come in contact with these Indians had seen only dogs of the same breed as those found everywhere in Mexico.