

Both the human remains and the objects associated with them are preserved unusually well in the frozen soil, some wooden specimens being perfectly kept. The excavations this year resulted in the discovery of eight burials, but the objects and implements recovered were not numerous or impressive although of great scientific value. It was determined definitely that the structures are charnel houses and not dwellings, and important notes on their architecture were made. Some larger dwelling houses which were not used for burials were also excavated and studied; these possess tunnels leading from the semi-subterranean room to the side of the mound. Driftwood and whale's jawbones were the materials employed in the construction of both houses and graves.

The unique specimen illustrated in Plate VI is believed by the present Eskimo to have been an implement used to pound and scrape blubber to obtain lamp-oil.

6. *A New American
Indian Collection*

THE Museum has acquired a collection of costumes, charms, objects of art and utensils from the Naskapi Indians of Northern Labrador. The locality represented by the collection is the northeastern extremity of the Labrador Peninsula and the people are known as the Barren Ground Band. The population in 1927 was sixty-two. Civilization in the form of a trading-post has only come to the band within the last fifteen years, since which time fur clothing and skin clothing, with the original technique of painting on leather, have been gradually replaced by

cloth material and bead work. The Barren Ground people are unique in the North through the fact that they are the last of the nomadic Sub-Arctic Algonkians to have preserved their original culture intact from contamination with white traders and missions. The collection has, therefore, an almost unique significance in ethnology of the Far North. The articles include men's and women's summer and winter costumes of caribou skin with the characteristic decorations applied with paint in floral and tree patterns. Some of the articles show the transition now going on from the original painting technique to woven bead work sewed on the surface of the leather. The articles used in the decorative technique—red ochre, the wooden painting pallets, caribou antler paint cups, the painting sticks, and the antler rulers for producing the straight parallel lines in decoration—are all represented by series in the collection.

Of particular interest are the objects relating to religious practices. Charms of bead work worn on the person to secure success in hunting and to avert sickness and misfortune illustrate these inner beliefs. A series of ceremonial pack-strings is of particular interest since the same are difficult to obtain from the hunters who treasure them as fetiches.

While the collection is not complete as representing the ethnology of the aboriginal Naskapi it goes a long way toward covering the field of costume and art, and the prospects are good for an opportunity to round out the collection in subsequent importations to make a complete picture of Naskapi life at the time of the advent of the first Europeans.



NASKAPI INDIANS
NAIN, LABRADOR