

## Quoting Mr. E. M. Borrajo, Librarian Guildhall Library, London



W cannot too fully appreciate Mr. Morgan's generosity," he said, "in giving these books to the Guildhall. They are so beautifully done that they are, with perhaps the single exception of the volumes of his miniature collection, among the finest specimens of the printer's art in the world. The number of sets to be issued is limited to 500, and we have No. 7. I do not believe that even the British Museum has a set. The Guildhall has always been especially favored by Mr. Morgan anyway," continued the Librarian, "for he presented us with his catalogue of miniatures — four extremely handsome books, the costliest in the world of their kind, I believe; also his catalogue of paintings in three volumes, and the catalogue of his early printed books in three volumes.

"The present books will be twenty in number, and they will be a complete record of the North American Indian. The fact that the photographs come in separate portfolios — that is, the large pictures — is quite an advantage from our point of view, as it enables us to add to our art collection. We have decided to display fourteen of these pictures at a time until the full number has been exhibited. The photogravures are really marvellous specimens of reproductive art. They are done by special process, which certainly converts the ordinary photograph into an artistic triumph. I have not any doubt that the plates from which these photographs were made, alone must have cost thousands of pounds.

"One special reason why the photos will be more appreciated in England, perhaps than even America, is because the North American Indian is more of a novelty to us. These pictures and the descriptive matter in Mr. Curtis's graphical language give us an insight into Indian life which no other book has done. Of course the books will not be on view so that they can be handled by everybody who comes to the Library, but they can always be examined in the special room provided for them by any one manifesting an interest in this class of research."

Although the Morgan gift has been on view only a day or two in London, quite a number of distinguished savants have called to inspect it. The Librarian has deputized two assistant clerks to show the books to inquirers, and the array of photographs in the long passage leading to the Library has already attracted considerable attention. All kinds of Indians from papooses to full-grown "braves" are shown, and every phase of Indian life is pictured in a way that only Morgan's millions could have made possible.

### From *The Independent*, August 20, 1908

We do not recall any enterprise of a literary sort ever undertaken in America that can compare for splendor of typography and for historical value with that which is just now undertaken by Mr. Edward S. Curtis, backed by J. Pierpont Morgan, and titled *The North American Indian*. The Indian is passing away, and such a work as this would be impossible by the close of another generation. The intent is to give the result of fifteen years of research and travel by Mr. Curtis and his associates, in twenty volumes, at a cost of \$150 a volume. Everything is to be perfect, from the tone of the paper to the portraits of the Indians. President Roosevelt forewords the undertaking with a hearty endorsement. Mr. Leupp, our Indian Commissioner, testifies to the accuracy of Mr. Curtis's work. For contents the work recalls no other similar enterprise but Audubon's monumental "Birds of America." Copies should be placed in the libraries of all the larger and older colleges.

### From *New York American*, March 28 1908

A stupendous undertaking is the reproduction of the series of photographs which Mr. Edward S.

Curtis took of the North American Indian during his many years of wanderings in their midst. Mr. Curtis is evidently an accurate observer, with an eye for the valuable details as well as for the picturesque. In the twenty large volumes which are to be devoted to his work, Mr. Curtis intends to give such presentation of the customs and manners of the Indians of this country as will show the Indian in his life and his environment.

He will do with the aid of the camera what Captain Eastman and Henry Schoolcraft tried to do with pen and pencil. But he has some advantage over these predecessors of his, in that he has found the Indian ready to help him, and he has been able to gather much more than Eastman could record by means of his pencil and colors.

### From *New York Times*, June 6, 1908

"Photo-History" is the apt word which has been coined to describe the work which Edward S. Curtis is doing for the North American Indian. Nothing just like it has ever before been attempted for any people. Some slight inkling of its value, both artistic and ethnographic, has been given by a few articles and pictures published in magazines and newspapers. In a series of twenty large volumes and as many accompanying portfolios, Mr. Curtis's text and pictures are now being published in a limited edition at \$3,000 per set. The first and second volumes and portfolios have already appeared, and the remainder are to be published at the rate of three per year. The work is being edited by Frederick Webb Hodge of the Smithsonian Institution, editor of the *American Anthropologist*, while President Roosevelt has written a brief "Foreword" of warmest recognition of its interest and value.

As an artist in Seattle Mr. Curtis first began to be interested years ago in the Indian — in his artistic possibilities, and in that inner tribal and personal life which never fails to exercise a strong fascination over all who are allowed to gain an inkling of it. The subject drew him more and more, and for the last ten years he has spent practically all his time among the Indians, living with them, gaining their confidence and friendship, learning from their own lips their myths and folk-lore, their religious beliefs, their ideas about life and conduct, and the future world, studying their characters and customs, and photographing them in their daily pursuits. During the last few years J. Pierpont Morgan has been so interested in Mr. Curtis's researches that he has made possible the completion of the field work and the publication of the volumes.

The pictures are all from photographs made by Mr. Curtis showing the daily life of the Indians, their homes, their occupations, the landscapes which form their environment and have been partly responsible for their development, and a great many individual Indians of both sexes and all ages. Mr. Curtis himself thus explains his purpose in the pictures: "It has been the aim to picture all features of the Indian life and environment — types of the young and the old, with their habits, industries, ceremonies, games, and everyday customs. Rather than being designed for mere embellishment, the photographs are each an illustration of an Indian character or of some vital phase of his existence." Thus he has made text and pictures interpret each other, and both together present a more vivid, faithful, and comprehensive view of the North American Indian as he is to-day than has ever been made before or can possibly ever be made again. For the Indian is in the last stages of his tribal existence. In a few more years he will, as a separate race, have passed forever from the world's stage. It is a sort of solemn justice to a dying race thus to make known to future ages what manner of men and women were these whom we have displaced and despoiled.

In artistic value the photogravures are worthy of very great praise. They are beautiful reproductions of photographs that in themselves were works of art. Mr. Curtis has rare qualities as a photographer, alike in his recognition of the groupings, the light and shade, the points of view that will make a picture as pleasing as it is truthful, and in his ability to make the picture after he recognizes its value. His portraits are better, in the important qualities that go to make good portraits, than are the majority of current oil paintings, while in the other pictures one sees always that illusive quality which can be

put into them only by an artist who sees beauty as well as material fact. . . . And when it is all finished it will be a monumental work, marvelous for the unstinted care and labor and pains that have gone into its making, remarkable for the beauty of its final embodiment, and highly important because of its historical and ethnographic value.

### Mr. E. P. Powell in *Unity*, Chicago July 30, 1908

I have the prospectus of the most wonderful publishing enterprise ever undertaken in America. I refer to *The North American Indian*, a series of volumes both picturing and describing the Indians of the United States, in twenty volumes. This whole work is due to the enterprise, the knowledge, and the art of Edward S. Curtis, a man who represents the very best type of both observer and artist. He has taken up his task just at the critical point of time. The buffalo has gone from the continent, and now the Indian is passing away. "Behold, all things I make new." Twenty years from now this undertaking would be an impossibility. It is a superb record of a wonderful race, that fulfilled its place in the line of evolution and is now giving way to what we believe to be a higher race. Mr. Curtis has travelled everywhere, and for ten years has been accumulating the data necessary to make this permanent record. Fortunately he is a poet as well as an artist — that is, he can see underneath the surface of things, and that is the only way in which you can interpret the North American Indian. I do not recall a literary enterprise anywhere comparable with this work. It will undoubtedly get its deserved recognition from every lover of art and of history. If it ever comes our turn to vacate the continent may we have as able an interpreter and as kindly and skilful an artist to preserve us for the great future.

### From *The Literary Digest*, July 4, 1908

This is perhaps the most notable work in point of typography and illustrative splendor that has been published in this country for many years. The figures \$3,000, given as the price of a complete set, are not a typographical error, but the real facts in the case. Inasmuch as five hundred sets are offered, it may be seen that the gross income from sales should be about \$1,500,000. In more ways than one Mr. Curtis's work recalls Audubon's monumental "Birds of America." It is not unlike that famous work in the splendor of its manufacture, the authenticity and historical value of its illustrations, or in the methods employed in the collection of the material. During fifteen years of work in the field Mr. Curtis and his associates have travelled a sufficient number of miles to have encircled the globe twenty times.

What is more to the point is the fact that this undertaking is the fruit of fine scholarship and research. Mr. Curtis has been engaged on it for a long series of years. As to its value ample testimonials have already been received from Mr. Leupp, our Indian commissioner, from men in authority at the Smithsonian Institution, and from President Roosevelt. Thus fortified as to Mr. Curtis's qualifications, the reader will approach these volumes without misgivings as to whether as much attention has been bestowed upon the text as upon the typography, paper, presswork, and binding.

The typography of the work has been charmingly produced by The University Press of Cambridge. We have rarely seen in modern books more beautiful pages than these. The mouth of Gutenberg himself might have been made to water by them. The tone of the paper is alike admirable, which contributes materially to the delightful effect conveyed by this noble and lucid type charmingly proportioned to the page. Of the photogravures no words of praise could well be an exaggeration. They are admirable in every sense, the portraits of Indians, of which there are many, being particularly notable.

### From *The School and Home*, Portland Ore., March, 1908

One of the most interesting and instructive of exhibits that has ever been shown in Portland has just closed at the Art Museum. This exhibit is

naturally extend over considerable time, but it is planned to issue three volumes a year, and to complete the entire work within seven years. The first two volumes and the two portfolios which go with them have just been published.

Being an artist, he long ago recognized the manner in which the Indian lends himself to the picturesque, and he chooses for his pictures that side of the Indian which by its closeness to nature appeals especially to the artist.

No such beautiful representations of Indians, as those which he now gives us, have before been made. They are as wonderful on the side of fidelity to nature as on the side of art, and they are equally wonderful in the beauty of the photogravure reproductions which in strength, completeness, and color have done ample justice to Mr. Curtis' beautiful pictures.

The two volumes now just issued deal with tribes of the Southwest. The name Apache was long one of terror in Arizona and New Mexico, and with reason. For many years their hostile bands slaughtered settlers and avoided the troops, scourging the new region in bitter revenge for wrongs earlier inflicted on their people. Yet we know that fifty years ago the Apaches were a kindly, friendly tribe, somewhat suspicious of the whites on account of injuries already committed, yet willing to help them by gifts of food and clothing and transportation. The Apaches have perhaps been the least known of any of our Indians, and Mr. Curtis has discovered many new things about them. He had the good fortune to be in the country of the Apache when the new Messiah craze reached its culmination, and had thus an opportunity to observe the rise and progress of one of those waves of religious enthusiasm which have so many times stirred the hearts and roused the hopes of these simple people.

In this volume appears, too, the account of the Navajos—except the great Sioux nation—the largest tribe of American Indians. These people are self-supporting by means of their flocks and herds and their efforts at agriculture. They travel back and forth, here and there over their great reservation of more than fourteen thousand square miles, leading their flocks at different seasons to the pastures which suit their needs; in spring to the mesas, where the winter rains have produced a scanty growth of grass; in summer up into the higher mountains, and when autumn comes with its deep snows, back again down to the wooded uplands where there is grass for the sheep and fuel for winter warmth for man.

The account of their life, their beliefs, their folk tales, and the ceremonial based on these myths is extremely interesting.

The second volume deals with other Indian tribes of the Southwest, the Pimas and Yumas, and their allies, agricultural people and builders of those monuments of the Southwest, which indicate a great population now dispersed and vanished, and a culture that it is hard to believe was no higher than that possessed by existing tribes. These were among the people met by the early Franciscan Fathers, whose reports of the wonderful civilization of the Pueblos and of the magnificence of the seven cities of Cibola drew to the north the great expedition of Coronado with its vast labors, its long journeys, and its barren results.

Within the limits of a notice, so brief as this must be, little can be said about the marvellous pictures which accompany this work. They appeal to the popular mind, to the student of humanity, to the ethnologist, and to the artist. To be appreciated they must be seen, and to see them is worth a long journey. When completed, the work will comprise a series of representative Indian types absolutely unequalled by anything in the world, and one which can never be equalled, because the opportunity for taking such pictures is rapidly passing, and because the man who is able to see such pictures and then to take them will not again be born in our generation.

Mr. Curtis shows great ingenuity of expression in his pictures. He does not see the Indian with material eyes—the wretched ward of the Government in his poverty and latter-day commonplaceness—he sees him as the Indian really is, a natural man, and he shows us his nearness to nature. The picture entitled, "A Vanishing Race" is full of poetry and

pathos, for what could be more significant than the long line of shadow figures passing on into the darkening distance? Mr. Curtis' nature is imaginative, and by the unconscious use of composition and the massing of darks and lights he secures effects which commend his pictures as great works of art.

### W J McGee, formerly Ethnologist in Charge, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D. C.

Your *North American Indian* is a monument to a people. The volumes I have seen and the photographs I have examined impress me profoundly. Our native race is melting away; their number as I estimate it is reduced to a third or a quarter, and they have gone from the forests and plains, from the hills and valleys over which they roamed and reigned for an age; and the survivors are changed. We have taken their land; we have blotted out their homes, their faith, their philosophy, a whole type of humanity. Our conquest has been the most striking in history; near a thousand distinct languages have given way before the conquering Anglo-Saxon speech and the force of the press. Lowly as they were, our original land-holders deserve a monument; cruel as our conquest was in some respects, it deserves a record; and your great book forms both.

I do not know any other general picture of the American Indian so faithful as yours—indeed none other nearly so vivid and accurate. I could hope that every American library may have a copy; and that others may enter many homes.

### From the Oregonian

Within the past few months E. S. Curtis, the Seattle artist, has taken by storm art critics, ethnologists, and connoisseurs in their strongest citadels of the East.

His marvellous portraits of Indians showing every species of tribal type, illustrating this vanishing race in all its ancient glory, is not only a new revelation in art which appeals to all lovers of the picturesque and beautiful, but as a study of Indian customs and character in all its most subtle and fascinating phases is an educational work of unique and remarkable value which should be enjoyed by all public-school pupils, teachers, students of American history, and the public generally.

The historical value of this collection of Indian pictures has been recognized by the Smithsonian Institution, United States Government, scientists of Washington, D. C., and President Roosevelt, as a matter of international importance. As to the average man and woman, more or less ignorant of Indian life and tradition, the pictures are fascinating in the extreme.

For several years Mr. Curtis has been quietly studying and photographing the various Indian tribes at home in the wilderness, by sundry extraordinary devices obtaining access to their most secret and occult ceremonies. These will be explained in delightfully informal fashion by Mr. Curtis himself, who in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties has now made himself a leading authority on all these points. A new term has indeed been created for him, "photo-historian."

The touch of the artist is everywhere visible, whether in the marvellous atmospheric effects or the picturesque grouping of the figures. Immense labor has been expended to secure these results. One picture alone, "The Three Chiefs," required three visits to Montana and consumed in all three years' time before Mr. Curtis was satisfied with the result.

### From New York Herald, June 16, 1907

The most gigantic undertaking in the making of books since the King James edition of the Bible is what the bibliophile of the future will know and cherish as *The North American Indian*.

The undertaking is one that never can be repeated. The real, savage Indian is fast disappearing or becoming metamorphosed into a mere, ordinary, uninteresting imitation of the white man. It is probably safe to say that Mr. Curtis knows now more about the real Indians than any other man alive. He has

eaten and lived and slept with them. He has been admitted to their councils and taken part in their ceremonies.

He has been with them in the blizzards of the bitter northwest winter and in the blinding heat of the torrid summer; he has suffered with them and he understands them. It is not his admission into so many tribes that he has difficulty in remembering them all that counts so much with Mr. Curtis as does the fact of his having been taken into their fraternities or secret orders. All their ceremonial life is made up of the rites of these orders, and it is their ceremonial life that is of the deepest interest.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the value of the work will have doubled and trebled before many years. A case in point is that of the Audubon book, which was worth \$1000 at the time of its appearance and sold recently for \$5000.

### Matilda Cox Stevenson, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

I beg to express to you my high appreciation of your splendid work. The Washington artists and all interested in art, as you know, are enthusiastic over your work. The ethnologists are grateful to you for securing such truthful records of a race which is rapidly losing the race characteristics, we may say with truth the "vanishing race." Now is the time to be up and doing, and I await with keenest interest the results of your efforts to secure such aid as will enable you to continue in the great work of preserving picture records of the North American Indians. As a field student for the past twenty-five years, I fully appreciate the many difficulties under which you labor; I fully understand the requisites necessary for success in such work as you are doing. Only the few will record for future generations the true history of the "vanishing race," for without certain qualities it is simply impossible to succeed in obtaining the confidence of the Indians. It is a continual wonder to me that you have in so few years passed within the doors of the inner life of so many tribes. I, from my long experience with native peoples, read pages in your work which are not open to all: a ready insight into the character and conditions of the Indian; great persistency, courage, powers of endurance, and that great love of truth without which we would not to-day have such records as you have given us.

I have travelled over the ground, and am familiar with all the tribes and ruins you have pictured in the Southwest, and your work splendidly illustrates the results of my studies as an ethnologist in that region.

It will afford me pleasure to be of any service to you.

### W. H. Holmes, Chief of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

Your idea is a grand one—the preservation for the far future of an adequate record of the physical types of one of the four races of men, a race fast losing its typical characters and soon destined to pass completely away. The only means of preservation available is by publication in permanent coloring materials and on paper of the very best quality. The ordinary book of to-day will last but a few generations. This publication should last a thousand years, and it would not be the part of wisdom to undertake the expenditure required for its issue without having a series of types satisfactory artistically and covering the ground ethnologically. Such a publication should not consist of a haphazard collection of Indian portraits, but should represent all the important tribes, and, so far as possible, should consist not only of portraits but of illustrations of the arts and customs of the peoples. The project is a splendid one, and has an importance that can be realized only by those who, having a true conception of the work proposed, take the trouble to assume the point of view of the student of human history a thousand years in the future. I sincerely hope that you will succeed in this most commendable undertaking. The series of volumes would be a monument to yourself and especially to the institution making the publication possible.

"The Indian, as an Indian, is on the point of perishing, and when he has become a United States citizen, thought it will be a much better thing for him and for the rest of the country, he will lose completely his value as a living historical document. You are doing a service which is much as if you were able suddenly to reproduce in their minute details the lives of the men who lived in Europe in the unpolished stone period. The publication of the proposed volumes and folios, dealing with every phase of Indian life among all tribes yet in a primitive condition, would be a monument to American constructive scholarship and research of a value unparalleled." ----- THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

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"This is perhaps the most notable work in point of typography and illustrative splendor that has been published in this country for many years. In more ways than one Mr. Curtis's work recalls Audubon's monumental 'Birds of America.' It is not unlike that famous work in the splendor of its manufacture, the authenticity and historical value of its illustrations, or in the methods employed in the collection of the material. The typography of the work has been charmingly produced. We have rarely seen in modern books more beautiful pages than these. The mouth of Gutenberg himself might have been made to water by them. The tone of the paper is alike admirable, which contributes materially to the delightful effect conveyed by this noble and lucid type charmingly proportioned to the page. Of the photogravures no words of praise could well be an exaggeration. They are admirable in every sense, the portraits of Indians, of which there are many, being particularly notable." ----- From THE LITERARY DIGEST, July 4, 1908.

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"This great enterprise is in a class by itself. It cannot be compared with any publishing venture in the annals of American book-making, or indeed in those of any other nation. Mr. Curtis has set out to picture and describe the remaining tribes of American red men with an accuracy and fidelity to detail never before attained in the countless volumes about the Indian that have been written and printed since the days of Captain John Smith. Had he put off the task even for a few years, he would have been too late to record many of the tribal customs and religious observances that form the subjects of some of the most interesting photographs that he has secured. So rapidly are the remaining Western tribes putting aside their native customs and modes of life that even before the publication of this remarkable series can be completed many of the scenes depicted therein will have become virtually obsolete. Mr. Curtis is rendering indeed a great service to the American people and to the science of anthropology. Not only are his photographs superior to any previous attempt to picture Indian life, but the accompanying text is illuminating and helpful as an interpretation of the Indian character. In richness of typography and illustration the work is without a rival in this country." -----From REVIEW OF REVIEWS, February, 1909.

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"It remained for an artist working with the camera to come to the front and avail himself of the opportunity offered by the American Indian - almost at the last moment, but still in time - and to make a series of photographs covering almost every existing tribe, portraying hundreds of various types of character and illustrating methods of life, tribal customs, religious observances, hunting scenes, war dances, etc. In fact, Mr. Edward S. Curtis has become acquainted with practically every

Indian tribe in the United States, has gained the confidence of the Indians, and has established relations with their chiefs, priests, and other functionaries, with the result of securing exception opportunities for making comprehensive photographic representation of contemporary Indian life." --- From Dr. Chas. M. Kurtz, Director of the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, in ACADEMY NOTES, March, 1908.

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"Mr. Curtis's harvest has passed far beyond the statistical or encyclopaedic domain; he has actually reached the heart of the Indian, and has been able to look out upon the world through the Indian's own eyes. This gives so vivid a color to his writing that his readers not only absorb but actually feel the knowledge he conveys. I do not think I exaggerate the facts in saying that the most truthful conceptions of the Indian race which will ever form themselves in the mind of posterity may be drawn from this great work." --- From Francis E. Leupp, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington.

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"The pictures are all from photographs made by Mr. Curtis showing the daily life of the Indians, their homes, their occupations, the landscape which form their environment and have been partly responsible for their development, and a great many individual Indians of both sexes and all ages.

"The work will be a monumental one, marvelous for the unstinted care and labor and pains that have gone into its making, remarkable for the beauty of its final embodiment, and highly important because of its historical and ethnographic value." -- From NEW YORK TIMES, June 6, 1908.

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Text of

Volumes of THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN may be purchased separately and also the portfolios of plates. These plates are suitable for mounting, and may be exhibited at schools and institutions because of their educational value and interest. Inside fold of this circular shows reproductions of some plates appearing in this set.