

South America: Ethnology.

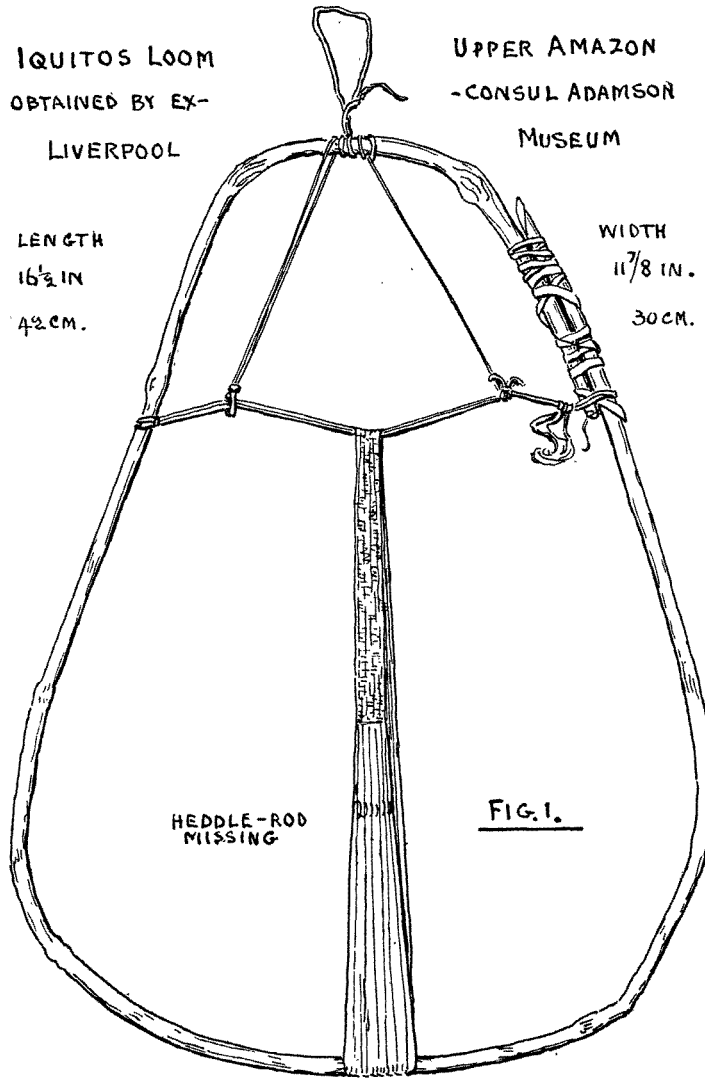
Ling Roth.

**A Loom from Iquitos.** *By H. Ling Roth.*

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The Liverpool Free Public Museum has lately received a collection of ethnological specimens from Iquitos, Peru, on the Upper Amazon, made by H.B.M. ex-Consul David B. Adamson and his son, D. Wilson Adamson. Among other articles of special interest is a small loom, which in so far as I can ascertain has not yet been recorded.

The little loom consists of a piece of cane bent into the outline of a section of a pear (Fig. 1), the two ends overlapping and being fastened together. About a third of the length from the top, a piece of band is carried across and fastened to the two sides. This cross band is supported by two stays spreading from the centre of the top of the frame. The warp is continuous and extends from the cross band to the bottom of the frame. The one leash is continuous, but the heddle rod is missing. The length of the loom is 42 cm. (16½ in.) and greatest width 37 cm. (11¾ in.). The web on the loom is about 9 mm. (⅓½ in.) wide and contains 49 warps or 54 to the cm. (137 to the inch).



The web on the loom is without any pattern, but the accompanying ribbons, made apparently on this or a similar loom, are patterned by means of coloured warps; in three of them the warp is coloured brown and buff, and in the fourth the colour is pale blue and buff. The patterns are illustrated in the accompanying figure (Fig. 2). Three of the ribbons vary from 13 to 14.2 cm. in length and their width from .6 to 1.4 cm. The fourth, a short piece, is 4.1 cm. wide. The lengths given are exclusive of the fringes made of the thrums (warp ends).

Accompanying the loom are four spindles (Fig. 3), all provided with pot whorls. Two of the whorls are decorated but with quite different designs; there is no decoration on the other two. The pivot of one is carved, all the others are plain. The dimensions are: lengths, 27, 25, 30 and 19 cm. respectively; diameters of whorls 3.6, 2.8, 2.8 and 2.7 cm. respectively.

In answer to my enquiries, Dr. Clubb, who has kindly allowed me to make the illustrations, has elicited the following information from ex-Consul Adamson:—"They, the Iquitos people, don't make any woven fabric but they wear plenty—mostly from Manchester, etc.—they are often seen with the native ribbons on their wrists, like bracelets. Specimens of Indian weaving on a larger scale are the *kushmas* (ponchos) and a skirt or waistband in the collection. These are all entirely of Indian make and are from the Ucayali and tributaries. Imported goods take their place where civilisation reaches, and they are mostly in the form of ordinary shirts or dungaree jumpers." He had not heard of any ritual in connection with weaving. As regards the ornamentation on the spindles, he says he has not heard of any significance attached to these, but continues: "I only gather the possibility of significance, as an Indian I had attached to me stated that a bit of stuff—a square with some device—at the bottom of one of the blow-pipe dart cases showed that it belonged to someone who had killed a white man. So far as I know the designs have no further meaning than ornamentation." It is not known whether men or women do the weaving. In general the articles in the collection were gathered from various tributaries and affluents of the Amazon above or near Iquitos such as the rivers Napo, Putumayo, Javary, Huallago, Atta Marañon, Ucayali etc., and the actual place of origin of many of them is not definitely known."

On enquiring of my brother, Dr. Walter E. Roth, whether he had seen any loom like the above in British Guiana, he replied he had seen something similar but the frame was made of a bent piece attached by its two ends to a straight rod and that he

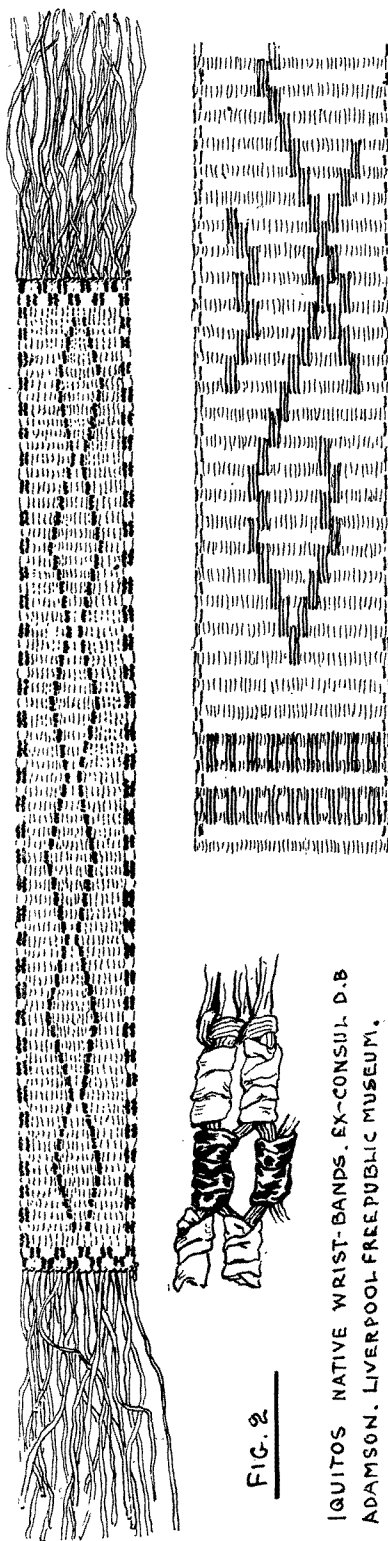
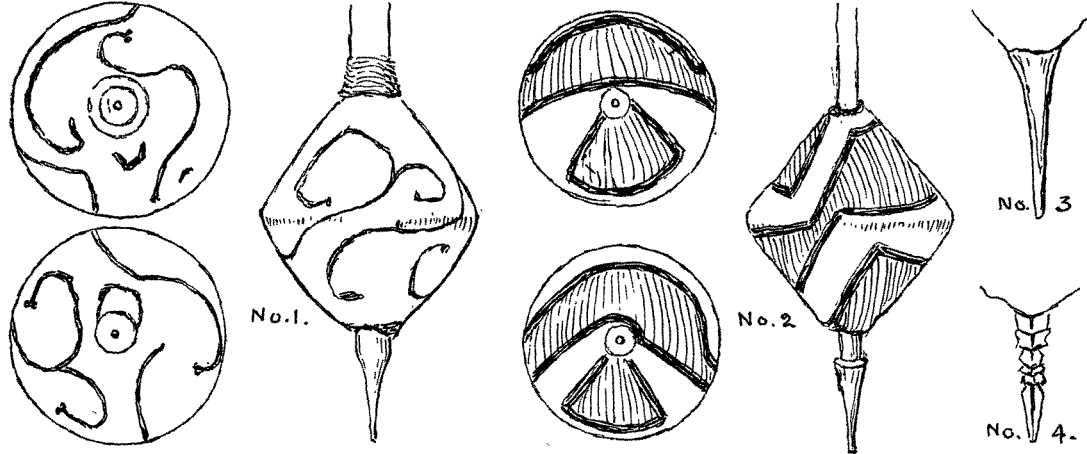


FIG. 2

IQUITOS NATIVE WRIST-BANDS. EX-CONSUL D.B. ADAMSON. LIVERPOOL FREE PUBLIC MUSEUM.

was giving details in his forthcoming work to be published by the Smithsonian Institute and now in the proof stage. A loom such as he describes is illustrated



**FIG. 3.** IQUITOS SPINDLE-WHORLES. EX-CONSUL ADAMSON. LIVERPOOL FREE PUBLIC MUS,

by W. C. Farabee in his *Central Arawaks*, Plate XXIX, Anthrop. Publications, University of Pennsylvania, Vol. IX, Philadelphia, 1918. H. LING ROTH.

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