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GREENSTONE NECK ORNAMENTS (HEITIKI)

Maori, New Zealand.



From the collection of Sir John Evans.

Obtained by Sir Rider Haggard 1914-18.  
Presented by Lady Rider Haggard.

The grotesque human form of these ornaments (which are highly valued by the Maori) is sometimes believed to represent the human foetus. This is doubtful, though there is reason to believe the figure may be a fertility symbol. Of interest, from an anatomical point of view, is the fact that these little figures are frequently carved with the RIBS clearly indicated.