

# THE SCIENCE NEWS-LETTER

*A Weekly Summary of Current Science*

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## SUPPOSED "MISSING LINK" SAID TO BE SIMIAN

The "missing link" is still missing, and the skull recently discovered in South Africa by Prof. Raymond Dart, of Witwatersrand University, is definitely that of an ape, such as live today, says Sir Arthur Keith, of the Royal College of Surgeons in London, and a recognized authority on prehistoric man, in a letter to "Nature". In expressing this opinion, after seeing casts of the skull, Sir Arthur differs with Prof. Dart, who described it as representing "an extinct race of apes, intermediate between living anthropoids and man".

"This claim is preposterous," says Sir Arthur. "The skull is that of a young anthropoid ape, and showing so many points of affinity with the two living African anthropoids, the gorilla and the chimpanzee, that there cannot be a moment's hesitation in placing the fossil form in this living group. It is true that it shows in the development of its jaws and face a refinement which is not met with in young gorillas and chimpanzees at a corresponding age. In these respects it does show human-like traits. It is true that it is markedly narrow headed while the other African anthropoids are broad-headed, but we find the same kind of difference in human beings of closely allied races. Prof. Dart claimed that the brain showed certain definite human traits. This depends on whether or not he correctly identified the position of a certain fissure of the brain. When we examine the brain cast at the supposed site of the fissure we find only a broken surface where identification becomes a matter of guess-work".

Sir Arthur believes, however, that the skull is prehistoric, and that its owner lived in the Pleistocene period, a million years ago, and that it throws light on the history of the anthropoid apes, but not of man. "Java man (Pithecanthropus)," he concludes, "still remains the only known link between man and ape, and this extinct type lies on the human side of the gap."

## FARMERS OPPOSE TUBERCULIN TEST

Cows as well as monkeys are doing their share in bringing science into the courtroom. The forcible ejection of Dr. Clark H. Hays, chief of the Nebraska state bureau of animal industry, from a farm at Elkhorn, Nebraska, on June 30, has resulted in contributions from farmers in different parts of the state toward a fund to test their rights under the Nebraska law for the eradication of tuberculosis in livestock. The objecting farmer, according to Dr. Hays, refused to allow his stock to be subjected to the tuberculosis test in accordance with the state law.