

ANTHROPOLOGY

New Race of Fossil Men Found in North Africa

Studies Just Completed on Bones From Algiers Indicate Existence of Race Unlike Known Types of Early Man

FOSSILIZED human skeletal remains discovered in the cave of Afalou bou Rhummel, in the commune of Oued Marsa, Algeria, are said by MM. Marcelin Boule and Henri Vallois, the well-known French anthropologists, to represent an early race of man belonging to an entirely new type.

The deposits in the cave were excavated by M. Arambourg, with the financial assistance of the Institut de Paléontologie Humaine, in 1928-9 and were submitted to MM. Boule and Vallois for examination in the laboratories of the Institut and for report.

From the geological, paleontological and archaeological evidence it is concluded by MM. Boule and Vallois that the deposits are of ice or pleistocene age and the culture associated with the human remains belongs to the Capsian stage. The Capsian stone age culture (so-called from the stone-age site at Gafsa, Tunis) is regarded by archaeologists as closely related to the Aurignacian culture of the European upper palaeolithic age, and indeed, some would hold that it is an earlier form of the Aurignacian culture before the latter reached Europe.

The skeletal remains of about 50 individuals were brought to light in the course of the excavations. From these, up to the present, the complete skeletons of nine individuals have been reconstructed.

According to the description of the Afalou type of man given by MM. Boule and Vallois the general aspect of most of the skulls is brutal. The eyebrow ridges unite in a well-developed prominence at the glabella over the root of the nose. This must have given Afalou man a forbidding appearance. The skulls are long-headed or medium in about equal numbers. A short proportion are broad-headed. In many cases there is a chignon-like projection at the back of the skull. The limb bones were very stout and the muscular attachments strongly marked, indicating big muscles and great strength. In stature Afalou man was below the average height.

The upper front teeth had been knocked out early in life, presumably in connection with some puberty ceremonial. In this custom Afalou man resembles Asselar man, another new type of early man from the French Sahara recently described by MM. Boule and Vallois; and the same custom was followed by the Natufians, the late palaeolithic or mesolithic people whose remains were discovered by Miss Garrod in Palestine.

The Afalou race is entirely new and resembles no other known type of early man. It is not like Neanderthal man, nor the Cro-Magnon race of the Upper Palaeolithic in Europe. Nor does it resemble the new Asselar man. It has no resemblance to the Mediterranean race or the Negroes of modern times. It does, however agree with a type which had been discovered previously in Tunisia and Algeria, but for which the evidence of dating was insufficient. The deposits in which it was found are regarded by some as being as late as the neolithic. Some of these skulls were discovered in the kitchen-middens of the cave of Mechta el-Arbi, near Constantine, in Algeria, a cave in which the inhabitants lived largely on snails. It is proposed to call the new type the Mechta race, from the site on which it was first discovered.

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PHYSIOLOGY

Science Explains Hang-Over After Alcoholic Debauch

AN EXPLANATION for the well-recognized "hang-over" following alcoholic debauches is found in a study just completed by Drs. Harold Himwich, E. F. Gildea, and L. H. Nahum at the physiological laboratories of the Yale Medical School and in the Institute of Human Relations.

Dr. Himwich, who has previously determined that the ingestion of large doses of alcohol leads to radical changes in glucose and lactic acid content, the carbon dioxide capacity, and the acidity

of the blood, noted that some of the dogs used in his experiments had unusually high values for lactic acid of the blood long after the last trace of alcohol had disappeared from the blood and after the other abnormalities had been corrected. So he called in some of his associates and turned to human subjects. They have studied carefully nine individuals who were recovering from more or less prolonged alcoholic debauches. And each of them had an increased concentration of lactic acid in the blood.

There also seemed to be some correlation in these human subjects between the recovery of the individual and the disappearance of this accumulation of lactic acid in his blood. At least, in one case, even four days after recovery from alcoholic coma, the lactic acid content of the blood was still high and the patient was still showing some signs of delirium tremens. Two other patients who recovered from acute alcoholism within twenty-four hours had normal lactic acid values within that time.

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CHEMISTRY-AGRICULTURE

New Chemical Used To Fight Fungous Diseases

THE FARMER and lumberman have a new ally in their battle against fungus diseases in a new disinfectant, ethylmercury chloride, the successful use of which has been reported by W. H. Tisdale of E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company.

This organic mercurial was found to be much more poisonous to fungi and bacteria than is bichloride of mercury, which has been commonly used in agriculture. Yet it is much less likely to injure plants and is not corrosive to metal parts of tools and machinery. Properly diluted and handled with the caution necessary in using any poisonous disinfectant, it is not harmful to animals.

Powders containing 1 to 2 per cent. of the compound can be dusted on the seed of wheat, sorghum, oats and barley in a rotary dusting machine at the rate of 2 or 3 ounces per bushel, effectively controlling various types of smuts.

The new disinfectant, although not yet entirely beyond the developmental stages, is reported as already proving its usefulness also as a soil disinfectant; plant spray, and preparation for the dipping of pine and sap gum boards to prevent the fungous stains commonly called "blue stain," or "sap stain."

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