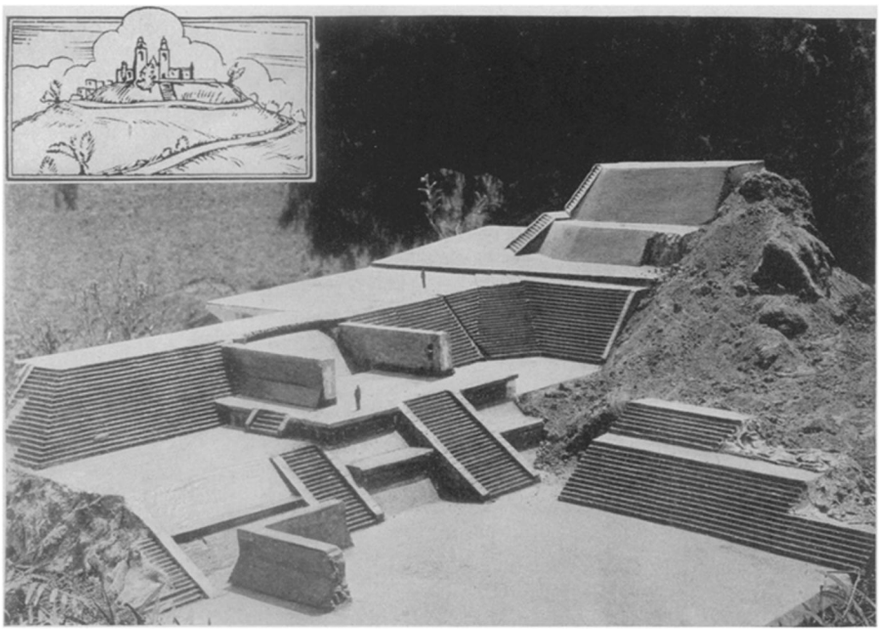

GREATER THAN EGYPT'S PYRAMIDS

METEOROLOGY

Twin Hurricanes Unique In American Weather History

UNPRECEDENTED in the weather history of this country, were Labor Day's twin hurricanes, that struck Florida and Texas simultaneously, C. L. Mitchell of the U. S. Weather Bureau informed Science Service.

"It has happened fairly frequently that we have had two hurricanes on the weather map at the same time," said Mr. Mitchell, "but this is the first time that I can recall when two actually 'made land' at the same time."

Although the Gulf hurricane that lashed the Texas coast from Corpus Christi to Brownsville was both "a big one and a bad one," in Mr. Mitchell's phrase, he did not anticipate the terrific damage and loss of life that followed the storm and tidal wave of 1900 at Galveston. The population in the path of the Texas storm is much smaller; moreover, the storm warning service is far better nowadays than it was on the Texas coast a generation ago.

The two storms started from the same general region, the South Atlantic in the neighborhood of the Cape Verde islands. One crossed the ocean, ravaged Cuba, and swept on over the Gulf of Mexico to the Texas coast. The second, following close upon its heels, visited its fury first upon the Bahamas and then struck southern Florida.

The present hurricane season, which has several more weeks to run, promises to come close to the record for number of such tropical terrors. Since 1886, the average number of hurricanes per year has been about seven, and the highest number on record is twelve or thirteen. Already this year there have been nine or ten storms of hurricane force, and there can easily be four or five more if they keep on coming at the present rate.

What causes hurricanes, and why some years are worse than others, are riddles which weathermen have not yet solved. However, a considerable boost has been given to hurricane research lately by the receipt of two meteorological radio dispatches a day from the breeding grounds of the hurricane family. When the belt of "doldrums"—Cape Verde islands, which are near the spotty tropical calms—shifts northward, hurricanes can be expected, Mr. Mitchell explained; and this year the doldrums shifted northward farther and earlier than usual, so that we have had a long and violent hurricane season.

Science News Letter, September 9, 1933

ARCHAEOLOGY

Tunneling Reveals Layers Of Mexican Pyramid

PESTERED by hostile Indians with rifles, and working underground like miners, Mexican archaeologists are at last discovering what Mexico's grandest old pyramid looked like. This pyramid at Cholula was bigger in volume than the famed pyramids of Egypt.

A Christian church (shown in inset) stands solidly at the top of the mound today, and the archaeologists can only find out what the ancient pyramid was like by tunneling cautiously under the church. To keep track of their progress, the archaeologists are making a plaster model of the wrecked and buried building. The photo shows how much of the hidden plan has so far been recovered. The two black figures suggest how tiny a human would feel at this site of ancient Indian worship.

So complex is the hidden maze of buildings that it is a hard problem in solid geometry to visualize them. The complexity is due to the fact that the Great Pyramid was enlarged several times, the Indians each time building a new layer over the old and using the old stairs and walls for foundation.

Local Indians have objected violently to tunneling at the site, feeling sure that the church on the hill was going to be dynamited. It required much diplomatic effort on the part of the archaeologists to persuade the natives to put up their rifles and to refrain from filling up the tunnels.

Science News Letter, September 9, 1933

ENGINEERING—LINGUISTICS

Linotype Machine Can Now Set Sanskrit

PRINTING in Sanskrit, the ancient language of India, can now be composed on the linotype machine. Hari G. Govil, a young Hindu scholar, has recently perfected the method with the collaboration of C. H. Griffith, of the Mergenthaler Linotype Co.

The alphabet used for printing Sanskrit is called Devanagari, and though it consists of only 49 separate elements, nearly 700 separate characters are used, often consisting of two or three pieces of type one above the other. But by means of the Govil-Griffith system, this can now be set on the standard 90-key linotype.

Science News Letter, September 9, 1933