

GEOGRAPHY

Enormous Canyon Discovered In Unexplored Mexico

Barranca del Cobre Found 12 Days Journey From Last Outpost Is Great Scenic Wonder Over a Mile Deep

VERIFYING Indian tales that an enormous canyon resembling the Grand Canyon in size and grandeur exists in a practically unexplored part of Mexico, a zoological expedition, sent out from the zoological section of the California Institute of Technology, has rediscovered the Barranca del Cobre, a canyon described as one of the great natural wonders of the earth.

The expedition, consisting of four Americans, led by Robert T. Moore, associate in vertebrate zoology of the Institute, while making a zoological cross-section of extreme northern Sinaloa, penetrated to little known portions of Chihuahua to reach the immense chasm.

A valuable collection of birds and mammals, some new to science, was obtained.

Mr. Moore penetrated far into the hinterland of the high Sierras by means of pack trains and Talamare Indian guides. Twelve days on mule back or afoot took the party through practically unexplored areas, known only to the sly-mouthed Indians and a few Mexican miners.

On the sixth day an altitude of 8,500 feet was reached and the party entered an unexpectedly verdant country, where powerful streams had helped to erode the western face of the Mexican tableland into deep canyons which supported a growth of large pines and cedars. Several of these "barrancas," 2,000 feet deep or more, were crossed in an effort to reach an enormous canyon, which had been reported by the Indians to the leader of the expedition on his trip to southern Sonora in the spring of 1933.

Hundred Miles Long

The Barranca del Cobre was reached on the twelfth day after the departure from the last outpost of civilization. This canyon proved to be fully as large as the Indians had stated. It is claimed by the Talamares to be a hundred miles long.

The Moore expedition was equipped with excellent barometers for ascertain-

ing altitude and depths. At one point where the rim of the barranca dropped almost sheer to the Uriqui River in the bottom, the barometers registered a perpendicular distance of more than a mile. On the rim, 1,000 feet higher, it is estimated that the canyon has a depth of at least 6,500 feet. The party spent a week exploring the bottom and walls of one portion of this great gash in the earth's surface.

Mr. Moore stated that it will take a corps of surveyors several months of exacting work to determine the real width and depth of this huge natural wonder.

Shy and Elusive

The Talamare Indians proved to be a shy and elusive race. Local legends give rise to the belief that they were driven out of the lowlands of Sonora by the more warlike Yaqui Indians many decades ago and since then have led a fugitive life in these rough moun-

tains and canyons. They cut and burn down the forests on the steep slopes of the mountains to provide fields for cultivation, so that their cornfields fairly stand on end.

Plows, hewn out of the roots of trees, are used by these primitive people. Pairs of oxen pull them up the steep mountain sides between the huge stumps of freshly-cut trees. So precipitous are these farms that it is not unusual to see the legs of one ox above the back of its mate.

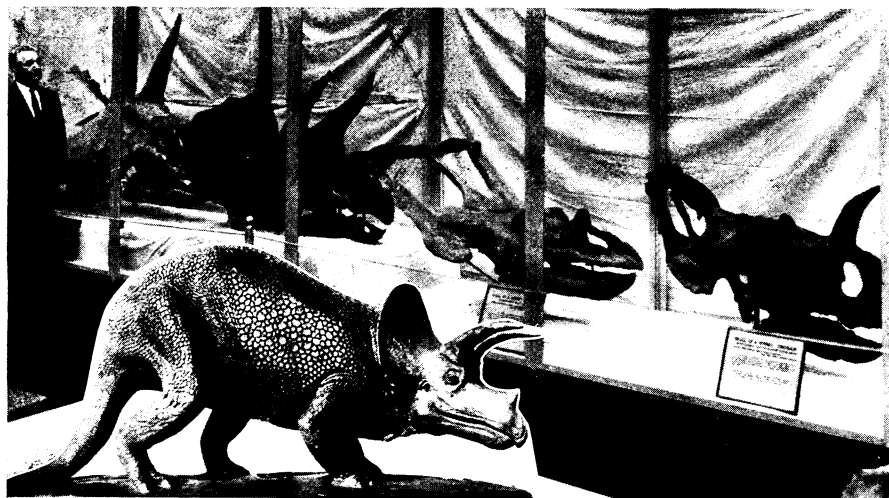
In the great Barranca del Cobre, some of these Indians were found living under the sloping walls of great cliffs, raising their families and subsisting in these difficult places without any other kind of shelter from the elements.

Science News Letter, October 20, 1934

PHYSICS

New Kind of Helium Discovered in England

THE production of a new kind of helium of atomic weight six instead of the usual four was reported to the recent International Conference on Physics by Prof. M. L. Oliphant of Cambridge's Cavendish Laboratory. Dr. Oliphant was one of the discoverers recently of triple-weight hydrogen. The new helium of atomic mass six was obtained by bombarding beryllium with



PARADE OF HEADS AND HORNS

This procession of four huge skulls in a row has just been arranged at the Peabody Museum of Yale University to show visitors how evolution revised the dinosaur "models" 60,000,000 years ago in America. The Triceratops, at the extreme left, is famous for having the biggest head and, in comparison, the smallest brain of any land animal known. This specimen is the only one of this type of dinosaur ever found in which the bones of the head are not fused. It has been mounted with the bones slightly apart, so that any one bone may be removed for study. Chief Preparator of Vertebrate Paleontology Fred W. Darby is shown inspecting the exhibit. The inset is a restoration of Triceratops.