



### Batty Notions

**S**ILENT, mysterious, flying only by dusk or moonlight, inhabiting caves, and abandoned dwellings, bats have gathered a veritable aura of awe about them. Bat superstitions, originating in early times and among primitive peoples, have persisted to this day. And moderns have added a few false notions of their own, which apparently did not occur to the peoples of antiquity and prehistoric times.

The notion that bats delight in getting themselves tangled in women's hair, for example, seems to be of modern origin. Necessarily so, perhaps, for in ancient and medieval times women usually kept their heads covered in public places. If a bat got tangled in a feminine coiffure, it would have to be set down to sheer accident; for the consequences would obviously be much harder on the bat than on the lady. But bats have an astonishing ability to avoid obstacles of all kinds, even in light that is little better than darkness to the rest of us; and there is not a single really authenticated case of a hair-tangled bat in all scientific literature.

### Bats are Clean

Another modern superstition is that bats carry bedbugs and other disagreeable vermin. Bats do have their undesired "inhabitants," like all other mammals including man, but the species that infest them are not the same as our own domestic "pets." As a matter of fact, bats are among the cleanliest of animals, with probably fewer vermin per head than most other mammals. It is injustice to consider them poor housemates on that score.

"Blind as a bat" is an older false be-

lief, based probably on the desperate headlong efforts at escape on the part of bats that accidentally fly into a house. But a bird under the same circumstances dashes against blank walls in exactly the same fashion, and nobody rates birds as blind. If bats look down from the roofs of caves at human beings stumbling about in the semi-darkness of their depths, they might mutter something about being "blind as a man."

To most of us, a bat is simply a bat. That is natural, for they are very hard to catch, and most of us have no particular desire to make their closer acquaintance anyway, harmless and interesting though the little flying beasts are. Actually, however, there are many different bat species—fifty or sixty of them in temperate North America alone.

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what appear to be prehistoric workshops. Stone tools, rejected pieces, scraps, and pebbles litter what Prof. Renaud tentatively describes as ancient river terraces. The principal sites are along the valley of Black's Fork.

Prof. Renaud, who specializes in study of prehistoric man's stone craftwork, has divided the stone objects into five classes. The oldest he pronounces like scrapers and axes made in Europe in the Chellean era of the Old Stone Age. In Europe, this stage of skill and invention in stone work was attained about half a million years ago.

### Like Other Cultures

Others of the tools found in Wyoming are like things made in Europe in successive periods of the Old Stone Age. Some fit in with stone techniques of Europe's Acheulian culture, 100,000 years old. Others resemble stone tools made in the Mousterian period, which was the age of Europe's ugly and ungainly Neandertal Men, at least 50,000 years back.

Pointing out that the Wyoming tools match Old World industry through a succession of stages, covering several hundred thousand years, Prof. Renaud said this is the first time such a complex of prehistoric stone industry has come to light in this country.

The Wyoming array of tools is especially significant, he said, in resembling a similar complex of stone craft in Western Europe, which he studied there. The tools also are similar to some made in the Old Stone Age in Egypt, and unearthed along the Nile Valley.

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### MINING

## \$1,000,000,000 In Gold To Come From Earth Yearly

**G**OLD, worth more dollars per ounce, and piling up in vaults, is stimulating the taking of more gold from the ground. A few years ago even able experts felt that the gold production of the world "seems to have passed its zenith" and would decline. During the World War gold production began to fall alarmingly.

Now the new price of gold has changed the situation, and Dr. Adolph Knopf, Yale professor of geology, predicts that the world output in a few years will exceed \$1,000,000,000 and will remain at that figure for some years. (*Scientific Monthly.*)

The history of gold production, during the past twenty years, according to Prof. Knopf, appears to demonstrate that the main factor in determining production and reserves is the purchasing power of gold.

Billion-dollar-a-year production will produce an equilibrium between production and the present purchasing power of gold and if and when gold's purchasing power declines the world output of gold will decline with it.

Output of gold will be aided to some extent by improvements in mining methods and metallurgy, Dr. Knopf foresees, although these have been brought to a state of very high efficiency.

Improvements in transportation facilities, as exemplified by the airplane, which has accelerated the opening up of such inaccessible regions as the interior of New Guinea and the area of 2,000,000 square miles of Pre-Cambrian rocks north of the Great Lakes, known as the Canadian shield, will lead to new discoveries. Rich placers can not be expected to be found, but lodes will be found, which will at least counterbalance the exhaustion of those now being mined. Geophysical methods of prospecting will help in finding new deposits, as brilliantly demonstrated by the discovery of the first-class deposit at Boliden under the glacial drift of northern Sweden.

From the Russian placers, as the result of the present energetic campaign of the Soviets in mechanization and modernization of equipment, may be expected a steadily increasing output.

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The ice plume that blows away from the peak of Mount Everest has been called the highest dust cloud of the earth.