MAN-MADE

Flint tools made by Peking Man are rough, but effective. As a tool-shaper, Sinanthropus showed himself very definitely human.

vegetable product that we of today would hardly regard as worth the bother of gathering and cracking. Along with the bones of his game animals (including other *Sinanthropi*) in the caves, there have been found great quantities of the hard shells of the small, nutlike oily seeds of the hackberry tree. Maybe these were the early equivalent of soybeans, present-day China's great source of food oil.

Those hackberry nutshells convey to scientists not only information regarding one item in Peking Man's diet, but also an important bit of climatological data. Hackberry trees belong to the temperate zone—they are common over a large part of the United States today. The hackberry evidence is backed up by the identification of a bit of charred wood as being from a redbud tree—again a member of the temperate zone flora.

To speak of the culture of civilization of Sinanthropus may seem a bit high-falutin', in the face of what we have seen of what he looked like and the way he lived. Yet he did have a definite culture level, even though an humble one. He knew how to make stone implements that could be used for cutting wood and flesh, digging in the earth, and possibly for hunting game and fighting with his own kind. Most important of all, he already knew the use of fire; and this discovery is rated by anthropologists as the greatest single step forward in the history of the whole human race.

So take him as you find him, beetle brows, thick neck, cannibalism and all, old *Sinanthropus pekinensis* wasn't the kind of a grandfather who'd thank any of his descendants for being ashamed of him. With all his faults, he certainly was a man.

Science News Letter, July 16, 1938

TECHNOLOGY

Compounded Wood Is New Milling Advance

THE old practice of veneering furniture, which turned out a mahogany table for $5, is back in a new and much more fundamentally important form.

Compounding wood, as the process of veneering is known to the trade, is now turning to the new field of making wooden beams which have all the uniformity of characteristics of steel and other metals. Do you wish a wood with a given density, a given elastic strength and other properties? Compounded wood is the answer and each time you place an order with the mills it comes through the same, time after time.

Wood unsuited for many construction purposes becomes the core of the plank and laminated layers supply the exterior. The proportions of each are varied so that the same characteristics can be repeated at will.

In part the use of phenolic resins as the gluing agent in the finished board is the difference between older veneer panels and the new beams of technologic mill working. The various layers of wood are arranged in "books", dried, coated with the resin, heated electrically and finally pressed at proper temperatures into finished lumber.

"These boards," states the Industrial Bulletin of Arthur D. Little, Inc., "meet predetermined specifications, with widths previously unavailable, and with a uniform adherence to specification comparable to that of the steel construction industry."

The resin used in the process impregnates the board with vapors which are obnoxious to fungi and thus the long-sought fungus-proof board is at hand.

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