

Friedjung, pediatrician; Richard Wagner and Heinrich Kahr, gynecologists; and Emil Froeschels, research phoniatrian. Prof. Heinrich von Neumann, the otologist, a "non-Aryan," was under arrest until the successful intercession of the Duke of Windsor, one of his patients.

Suicides, beside Dr. Boas, include Prof. Wilhelm Knoepfelmacher, pediatrician; Prof. Oskar Frankl, 74-year-old gynecologist; and Gabor Nobl, dermatologist.

Jews were prominent among the instructors and assistant professors, whereas few Jews have held full professorships in recent years. This, the journal points out, accounts for the large number of victims in this group.

Science News Letter, November 26, 1938

ARCHAEOLOGY

Huge Burial Mound of Vanished Race Unearthed

A VAST burial mound and trash heap combined, left by long-vanished immigrants into prehistoric America, has been unearthed on the island of Umnak in the Aleutian Islands, which swing out from Alaska.

Discovery of this evidence of "pre-Aleut" people who presumably came to America from Siberia by crossing the chain of Aleutian Islands, is reported by Dr. Ales Hrdlicka, Smithsonian Institution anthropologist.

Besides skeletons of these unknown "pre-Aleut" people, the mound yielded their bone and stone implements, beautifully made blades of black basalt, curiously decorated harpoon points, and ivory articles. This material is now at the Smithsonian, where Dr. Hrdlicka will study it in order to build a picture of the life of the vanished people.

Volunteer college students, Dr. Hrdlicka said, assisted him in investigating the contents of the mound. Resembling a natural hill, the enormous accumulation of refuse material was hidden in mound 35 feet high, over 600 feet long, and 250 feet broad.

A search for traces of ancient migration was also made by the expedition in the Commander Islands, which are the far western links in the Aleutian chain, and which swing close to Kamchatka. Finding no trace of ancient relics in these islands, Dr. Hrdlicka concludes that if the Aleutians were a migration trail long ago, the people crossed them by way of the Kurile Islands, or from the north of Kamchatka.

Science News Letter, November 26, 1938



Borrowed Names

DEEP-seated, ineradicable, seems to be the tendency of people in strange lands to give old names to new things. Thus, in comparatively recent times, have English-speaking people given the names custard-apple, alligator-pear, and grapefruit to tropical products that are neither apple, nor pear, nor grape.

Four and a half centuries ago, when men were looking with excited eyes of wonder on whole new continents, the need for new names apparently ran far ahead of their imaginations. So we have America named for a geographer who did not discover it, and its aboriginal inhabitants named in a mistaken identity with the natives of the lands its real discoverer thought he had found. And the attempt to give the red-men a distinctive title of their own, with the book-name "Amerind," only compounds the felony!

Beasts and birds and plants fare no better. The animal that we continue to call buffalo, in the face of despairing protests by zoologists, is no buffalo. The real buffalo is a quite different kind of cattle, native to tropical Asia and South Africa. Truer is his kinship to the Old-World wisent, so that the variant word "bison" fits him much better. But only the bookish call a bison a bison.

The grotesque misnaming of our wild-fowl as a turkey is of course classic, as is also the misapplication of the name of robin to what is really a red-dish-breasted thrush. The pronghorn antelope of our West is no antelope, nor is the mountain goat really a goat.

Plants on the whole have fared no better. When Columbus took back ears of maize with him he took also the native name "mahiz"; and maize the plant remains to the English and (in

various close transliterations) to the various tongues of Europe. But we on this continent insist on calling it simply corn, which is the common English term for the small grains generally, and wheat in particular.

Transfers of such names as pumpkin, squash, and beans from Old-World relatives to New-World forms are more excusable, though sometimes the kinship is not too close. The peanut represents more ingenuity than botanical accuracy, for the plant is neither a pea nor a nut; though it must be admitted that it is related to the pea and tastes like a nut.

Yet a few native names have managed to filter through: potato, tomato, tobacco, chocolate; and with these we must perforce be content.

Science News Letter, November 26, 1938

RADIO

Ultra Short Radio Waves Bend Around Earth Surface

THE DREAM of using ultra-short radio waves as secret signalling means during wartime is receiving little encouragement from experiments undertaken at California Institute of Technology, indicating that such waves—believed at first to travel solely in line-of-sight fashion—really can bend around the surface of the earth.

Prof. G. W. Potapenko and Dr. Paul S. Epstein of the Institute have recently completed preliminary studies showing that waves of five meters and one meter length can be picked up at a distance of 18 miles at sea.

Marconi first noted such bending characteristics several years ago. At that time Dr. Epstein formulated a mathematical theory of the bending and, with aid from funds from Carnegie Institution of Washington, he and Prof. Potapenko have built the apparatus needed to carry out the studies.

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