

GEOLOGY

Prehistoric Hunting

Fifty or more fossil skeletons of giant buffalo have been found in a quarry on the High Plains of northwestern Texas.

► THERE was good hunting in Texas even in prehistoric times. Fifty or more fossil skeletons of giant buffalo, much bigger beasts even than modern bison, have been found in a quarry on the High Plains of the northwestern part of the state, Prof. E. H. Sellards of the University of Texas told the Geological Society of America at its meeting. Among the bones were 27 arrow-heads and knives, showing that primitive hunters had made a highly successful kill and cut up their quarry for feasting, or perhaps to dry in the sun and store for future use.

The find, which occupies a sandy layer some 500 square feet in extent and from a few inches to one and one-half feet in thickness, is in a situation that indicates that the hunters managed to drive the herd over a bluff into a river bed, probably killing more by falling and suffocation than by direct attack with weapons. Remains of a wolf, the only other large animal found in the excavation, suggests the presence of uninvited guests at the slaughter.

Hills Now Deeply Buried

► THE HISTORY of six hills that became islands and are now deeply buried beneath massive layers of limestone was told by Robert F. Walters, oil geologist of Tulsa, Okla. Half a billion years ago, Mr. Walters stated, an ancient land surface was eroded in what is now central Kansas. Six spots, where the formation consisted of quartzite, proved resistant to the erosion and remained standing above the ancient landscape as flat-topped hills.

Then the whole region slowly sank beneath the sea, leaving the hills above waterline as islands. The lagoons and channels among them silted up, and at the same time the bottom continued to sink, until finally even the islands were submerged and buried.

Ages later, the land re-emerged from the sea. Erosion again set in. The softer, later-deposited sediments were washed away, leaving the one-time islands again as hills.

Once again the sea invaded the western lands. This time submergence became

deeper and deeper, and layer upon layer of limy bottom silt gradually hardened into stone. Even today, long after a second re-emergence, there are still 3,300 feet of limestone above the tops of the six ancient hills.

This interesting feature of the deeply-buried topography of ancient Kansas was discovered, and its details worked out, during the course of explorations for oil pools.

Medal to Geophysicist

► A FEATURE of the proceedings was the presentation of the Penrose Medal of the Geological Society of America to Prof. F. A. Vening Meinesz of the University of Utrecht, who is now in this country as Delegate for Science of the Netherlands Government. Dr. Meinesz is the inventor of a multiple pendulum which can be swung in a ship and used to measure the value of gravity beneath the sea bottom. Using this in submarines,

he discovered a number of extraordinary regions of gravitational irregularities or anomalies. Dr. Meinesz is the sixteenth recipient of the Penrose Medal.

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AERONAUTICS

Flying Boat of Plywood To Be World's Largest

See Front Cover

► AN EIGHT-MOTORED flying boat three times as heavy as the previous world's largest, the "Mars," is nearing completion in Culver City, Calif. A novel view of the interior is shown on the front cover of this SCIENCE NEWS LETTER.

The new boat, designated by the manufacturer as the H-4, weighs over 200 tons, and is 200 feet long, with wing spread of 320 feet. It is powered by eight 3,000-hp motors, each with 4-bladed propellers 17 feet across. Forty-two tons of gasoline may be carried in its 14 tanks, and the hold is large enough to carry a B-17.

As a hospital ship it could accommodate 350 patients on stretchers, plus doctors, nurses and equipment. Its cruising speed is 175 miles per hour, with a landing speed of 78 miles per hour. Take-off distance of over a mile is required.

Aside from its spectacular size, the most unusual feature of the Hughes H-4



WING SPAN 320 FEET—Some idea of the size of the flying boat may be gained from this view of the wing panels of the H-4. Note the workmen as they appear in comparison with the parts on which they are working.