

ARCHAEOLOGY

Indians Had Mysterious Art

How Indians who lived in Georgia in prehistoric times learned to make art objects very similar to the famous art of the Aztecs in far away Mexico is still a puzzle problem, according to Prof. Warren K. Moorehead, of Phillips Academy.

The famous Etowah mounds near Cartersville, Georgia, were noticed by travelers almost 200 years ago. Back in the eighties, they were partly opened, and then abandoned by science until recently. During the past two seasons, Phillips Academy has sent an expedition there which will eventually complete the work of excavating these ancient mounds and the village there.

A large collection of pottery, skeletons, terra cotta effigies, flint swords, textiles, and other objects have been found at the site. Shells and copper plates on which the artists of these pre-Columbian Indians had wrought designs are of particular interest. Human figures on the engraved shells and copper plates nearly correspond to certain early Mayan or Aztec portrayals of human beings, Prof. Moorehead has found. Some of the scenes shown on these objects are thought to represent human sacrifice, one of the well-known rites of the Aztec.

Whether traders or prehistoric tourists brought samples of Toltec art or brought descriptions of what they had seen in Central America is a question on which the archaeologists are speculating. The possibility of the art ideas having been brought to the southern states directly across the Gulf is also being taken into consideration.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

BACTERIOLOGY

Bacteria Carry Own Enemies

Streptococci, the deadly chain-germs whose various species cause such diseases as blood poisoning and scarlet fever, are constantly haunted by germs of their own that prey upon them and may turn and devour them if conditions become right, according to Dr. L. O. Dutton, director of the laboratories of the Methodist Hospital at Memphis, Tenn. The Southern scientist has found a number of strains of Streptococcus always in "mixed culture" with corresponding strains of bacteriophage, that mysterious and much-disputed something, claimed by its discoverer D'Herelle to be living though invisible, that preys upon bacteria as many bacteria prey upon us.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

BIOLOGY

An American Menu

Quotation from *CARGOES AND HARVESTS*. By Donald Culross Peattie. New York: Appleton. \$2.50.

At breakfast no oranges or grape-fruit, no oatmeal, no cream of wheat, no grapenuts. At dinner no peas, no cauliflower, no cabbage, no radishes, no carrots, no lettuce. Turnips, asparagus, celery, artichokes? Never heard of them. Tea or coffee? Absolutely unknown.

Something like this would have been the situation if the white race had had its origin in the New World, and the Old World had never been discovered. For all the plants which have been mentioned existed, before the days of Columbus, only in the Old World. Leaving out of consideration meat diet, we would under these conjectural conditions have corn meal mush for breakfast, with a nice slice of cooling *papaya*, or possibly some raspberries or blackberries. At dinner we might eat pokeweed for greens, and Jerusalem artichokes, corn fritters, potatoes, pumpkins or squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, kidney and lima beans, *chayotes* and chili peppers. Guava jelly might be served, and perhaps an avocado salad, and by way of beverages, chocolate, yerba maté, or possibly cassina tea. As dessert we would enjoy a few slices of pineapple and perhaps a *cherimoya*. For candy, we should have the peanuts to make peanut brittle, but it could not be made with cane or beet sugar. Such would be our circumscribed menu.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

PHYSICS

Revolution of the Corpuscle

A corpuscle once did oscillate so quickly to and fro,
He always raised disturbances wherever he did go.
He struggles hard for freedom against a powerful foe—

An atom—who would not let him go.
The aether trembled at his agitations
In a manner so familiar that I only need to say,
In accordance with Clerk Maxwell's six equations,
It tickled people's optics far away.

The corpuscle radiated until he had conceived
A plan by which his freedom might be easily achieved;
I'll not go into details for I might not be believed,

Indeed, I'm sure I should not be believed.
However, there was one decisive action.
The atom and the corpuscle each made a single charge,
But the atom could not hold him in subjection,
Though something like a thousand times as large.

The corpuscle won the day,
And in freedom went away,
And became a cathode ray.
But his life was rather gay,
And he went at such a rate
That he ran against a plate;
When the aether saw his fate
Its pulse did palpitate.

—From *Post-Prandial Proceedings of the Cavendish Society*, Cambridge, England.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

First Glances at New Books

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF OUR CONDUCT—William E. Ritter—*Harcourt Brace and Co.* (\$3.50). A book calculated to make its readers look at both animals and men in a new light. How such creatures as birds and bees and squirrels use their heads and hands—or what corresponds to hands—has been studied by Dr. Ritter in order to make the whys and wherefores of human conduct more understandable. "The significance of this mass of material for the interpretation of human conduct," he explains, "depends on the assumption that human animals and brute animals belong to one great family by common descent, and that brute activity lends as much assistance to the understanding of human activity as does brute structure to the understanding of human structure. While the kinship of humans and brutes in bodily structure is generally recognized, their equally significant kinship in mentality as manifest in their activities is not."

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

MANUAL OF CULTIVATED TREES: AND SHRUBS—Alfred Rehder—*Macmillan* (\$10.50). A careful, exhaustive and scholarly systematic manual of all known woody cultivated plants. Not intended for popular use, but simply indispensable for botanists, horticulturists, and every one who undertakes to deal seriously with trees and shrubs.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

THE INTERNAL CONSTITUTION OF STARS—A. S. Eddington—*Cambridge Univ.* (25 shillings). The last word on the subject by one of the men who know most about it.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

CATALOGUE OF OPTICAL AND GENERAL SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS—The Optical Convention (6 shillings). A complete illustrated compendium of British made scientific instruments.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

PROCEEDINGS OF THE OPTICAL CONVENTION, 1926—The Optical Convention (£3 1s. 3d.). Two large volumes with numerous articles on optics and its relation to science and industry.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927

THREE LECTURES ON ATOMIC PHYSICS—Arnold Sommerfeld — *Dutton* (\$1). The latest developments of the quantum theory.

Science News-Letter, February 26, 1927