



The Tale of Teeth

PROBABLY no structures in all animal anatomy have so high a degree of specialization as teeth. So characteristic have their shapes become that a well-trained and experienced scientist can pick up a stray tooth—sometimes even just a piece of a tooth—and tell at a glance whether it belonged to a plant-eating or a carnivorous animal. Frequently he can even name the kind of animal and tell what part of its jaw the tooth came from.

Most primitive of all tooth shapes is the simple elongate cone, or spike-shaped tooth, like those of trout, pike, alligator and the gigantic extinct reptiles the tyrannosaurs. Teeth of this pattern are good for grabbing and holding, fairly good for rending and tearing, but of little use in chewing. Animals that have nothing but conical teeth usually swallow their prey whole, or at most tear it into big chunks and gulp those down. They are almost never plant-eaters.

A highly specialized variation of the conical tooth pattern are the fangs of poisonous snakes. These keep their round cross section and sharp point, but are hollowed into hypodermic needles. Other teeth in snakes follow the conventional narrow-conical or spike pattern.

Teeth specialized as knives rather than spikes or hooks are typified by the terrible triangular blades that line the mouths of most common sharks. Similar to them in shape, but somewhat more complex in basic structure, are the teeth you can find just back of the eyeteeth in dogs, cats and other carnivores. These are called "carnassials" or flesh-teeth.

As remote as possible from flesh-tearing and -cutting teeth are those with flat grinding surfaces, the molars. The flatter and broader the molar surfaces, the more nearly completely herbivorous is the animal that uses them. The ultimate

in molars is possessed by the elephant, which has just one enormous molar in each half of each jaw—a tooth as wide and flat as an ordinary brick.

The last refinement in dental evolution is—no teeth at all! Animals that have dispensed with teeth altogether

either grind their food with gizzard-stones, as all birds do, or swallow soft, easily digested food in small morsels, like frogs, toads and ant-eaters. Also milk-toast-eating nonagenarians, among our own species.

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ETHNOLOGY

Indians of Both Americas Targets of "Fifth Columns"

Propaganda for Home Consumption and Hope of Stirring Up Revolutions Here Are Mainsprings of Agitation

WARNING that "fifth columnists" are driving against America's Indians—not merely the 340,000 Indian minority of the United States, but the impressive ranks of 30,000,000 Indians in the Western World—is sounded by U. S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier.

Efforts to stir up discontent and dissension among Indians within the United States are having practically no success, Mr. Collier is convinced. He has high praise for Indian loyalty to the Government, and recalls that in World War days, Indians—not subject to the draft—nevertheless volunteered in numbers far beyond draft quotas.

An example of Indian approval of democracy and its defense was offered by the biggest of United States tribes, when the tribal council of the Navajos met in June to talk over world problems. In neatly clipped language the council, speaking for 50,000 Indians, unanimously approved a resolution, which ended:

"Now, therefore, we resolve that the Navajo Indians stand ready, as they did in 1918, to aid and defend our Government and its institutions against all subversive and armed conflict, and pledge our loyalty to the system which recognizes minority rights and a way of life that has placed us among the greatest people of our race."

Why "fifth columnists" should rate the comparatively small Indian minority of this country worth special attention was explained by Commissioner Collier recently to a congressional committee.

"At first, the object seemed to be to feed propaganda back home," he stated. "The totalitarian states were persecuting their minorities, and if these states could draw a picture of present persecution by the United States against its most famous

minority, the propaganda effects at home or throughout Europe might be valuable."

It was to attract Indians toward totalitarianism, Mr. Collier points out, that a German court in a test case pronounced a Sioux Indian an Aryan, and therefore eligible to German citizenship. This would imply that Germany rates Indians among the Aryans, in contrast with the usual scientific view that Indians are Mongolian.

In recent months, he added, a more immediate and important object of "fifth column" boring has appeared: the possibility of stirring up the New World's Indians to revolution. An Indian speaker is reported as stating that three-quarters of a million Gold Shirt Indians in Mexico stand waiting for revolution in that country, expecting it this year.

Whether or not such a revolution in Mexico is attempted, Mr. Collier predicts that "fifth column" activities among the Indians will be on the scale of the hemisphere, and may have power to do infinite harm to the Indian race, to the cause of democracy, to hemisphere solidarity, and to the United States."

The New World's Indian millions, whose problems have been discussed this year in the first international meeting of government representatives ever called for that purpose, are far from a minority in some Pan-American countries. Indians constitute 80 per cent. of the people in Peru, Bolivia, Honduras, Guatemala, and Ecuador. About half of the Colombia and Venezuela populations are Indians.

A year ago, Mr. Collier rated efforts to influence Indians toward totalitarianism not very important. Now, he considers the cooperation of the Indian millions vital to the New World's future.

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