

MINERALOGY

New Field Kit Designed For Uranium Prospectors

➤ A NEW FIELD kit for uranium prospectors has been devised by T. R. P. Gibb, Jr., and Howard T. Evans at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The instrument will give semi-quantitative determinations of traces of uranium. Instrument including batteries is housed in a plywood case six by seven by 10 inches and weighs just under five pounds. A gasoline blow torch and portable balance are used with it.

The instrument is an adaptation of a method for determining traces of uranium developed by scientists abroad. It involves the spectrophotometric measurement of the brightness of the fluorescence of a sodium fluoride bead containing traces of uranium presumed to be in solid solution. The sodium fluoride bead is used in a stationary instrument devised by the Technology scientists. In the field kit they substituted for the sodium fluoride bead a cast disc of more fusible material and use a simple visual comparator. Details are reported in *Science* (Jan. 17).

Science News Letter, January 25, 1947

ZOOLOGY

Rare Pacarana Now Lives At Philadelphia Zoo

See Front Cover

➤ ONE of the world's rarest mammals, the pacarana, a white-striped rodent about the size of a groundhog, is now proudly being displayed by the Zoological Society of Philadelphia.

Rare even in its native Peru, the pacarana came to the zoo from an animal dealer, who wrote, "You may know what it is." Only three or four pacaranas have ever reached this country alive, and this one is believed to be the only one now in an American zoo.

Tame as a kitten, the pacarana has a broader head than the groundhog, with a sizable tail and white stripes on dark brown ground color. The pacarana makes a cheerful grunting noise and eats sitting erect on its hind legs.

The pacarana was first discovered in Peru by surprised natives in 1873. An early account of the animal described it as a fierce monster, but it has since been found to be peaceful and timid.

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POLE OF GENEALOGY—This totem pole of northwest-coast Indians, bought in British Columbia from the last survivor of the "Seaweed" clan of the Tlingit tribe for two cases of whiskey, was brought to the University of New Mexico by Prof. Frank C. Hibben of the department of anthropology. Besides the Seaweed coat of arms, the pole depicts the genealogy of the clan and a Seaweed man.

GENERAL SCIENCE

Science Congress in India

New epoch in history of India is organization of Association of Scientific Workers whose president is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

➤ THE ACCEPTANCE of the presidency of the newly created Association of Scientific Workers of India by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, leader of the dominant Congress Party, is taken as marking a new epoch in the modern history of India.

The All-India Science Congress, recently held in Delhi, has also worked under Nehru's chairmanship, and he has amply demonstrated that his conception of the new India is a state that depends heavily on modern science and technology, states Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of Harvard College Observatory.

Specially invited foreign delegates included five Americans, three Canadians, nine British, two French, four Russians and one Chinese scientist.

The lectures by foreign scientists were so feverishly attended that a huge tent with loud-speakers was provided. Five

hundred sat on rugs in the aisles when Dr. Shapley spoke on galaxies. A cabinet minister introduced him on that day, and on the following day Pandit Nehru introduced Dr. P. M. S. Blackett of England and Dr. Shapley for reports on the interrelations of science, society, and government in their respective countries.

"Regretfully," stated Dr. Shapley, "I had to report that no government official in America attends science congresses, and that it was apparently left to the governments of India and Russia to lead in the recognition of the role of science and technology in shaping the future."

"The first concern of the scientists in the new Association of Scientific Workers of India," Nehru said in accepting the first presidency, "is in behalf of the people of India, and secondly, for the welfare of the scientists themselves."

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