

ANTHROPOLOGY

'50 Romeo Not Romantic

► A MODERN Romeo can't hold a candle to the average buck in some of the primitive societies of South Africa when it comes to romantic courtship, asserts an anthropologist who recently made a study of the tribesmen.

Dr. Edwin M. Loeb, who was a member of the recent University of California African Expedition, has just completed an analysis of "Courtship and the Love Song," in which he cites courtship customs among the tribesmen as well as among other peoples both past and present.

The anthropologist said the courtship customs of the primitives are a lot more intricate and leave much more room for ingenuity and spontaneity than among modern young people.

All the ancient flourishes—the love lyrics, the rhymed riddles exchanged between lovers, spontaneous verses and secret languages of courtship—still exist among some of the tribes. Also, bundling is "unionized" in at least one tribe.

Only among some of the cattle-raising peasants of Europe are any of these customs, one or more of which once existed among nearly all peoples, still followed outside of primitive societies.

Dr. Loeb said that the love song and the complexities of courtship which attend it seem to be the product of delayed marriage and the frustrations resulting therefrom.

Delayed marriage—and romantic love—is characteristic of cattle-raising societies from Switzerland to Southwest Africa and to Sumatra. The delay is caused by the difficulty of accumulating enough wealth, in the form of cattle, to set up housekeeping.

Rhymed riddles are important in courtship in some parts of South Africa. When the girl puts riddle to the boy, the boy must answer in rhyme. Upon his wit may depend the Romeo's success.

During group dances, verses are spontaneously composed and sung by the participants, and the boys ask for bundling dates. Bundling is both chaste and carefully supervised among some of the tribes.

In one tribe, the Dinka, bundling is "unionized." All the boys of an age group have vested rights to bundling with all the girls of the same age group. If a boy wants to bundle with a particular girl, he must ask permission of his age fellows. If the fellows approve, they approach the girl on the boy's behalf.

Dr. Loeb said that "necking" is the modern American counterpart of bundling, an ancient custom which was widely practiced in colonial America.

The anthropologist said that the love song and the other ancient flourishes of romantic love are largely confined, in America, to the stage.

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GENERAL SCIENCE

Good Neighbors in Science

► SCIENTIFIC and technological "know-how" is playing an important part in promoting the "good neighbor" policy among the Americas, it is evident from a timely report of the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Ill.

The work is being carried out by the institution's Armour Research Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation organized and operated to provide a confidential and independent research and engineering service to industry, government and the general public.

Since 1942 an international division of the Foundation has provided for other nations the same impartial, non-profit, non-political industrial research available in the United States. A research center established in Mexico City is an example of the method of procedure and what can be accomplished.

The Armour plan was brought to Mexico in 1944 at the request of local authorities. The first step taken was a nation-wide technological audit made jointly by United States and Mexican technologists. The audit

revealed many possibilities for new and wider usage of Mexican resources which could contribute to the economy of the nation and its people.

Following the survey, laboratory research and development were started at once on the industrialization of cascalote tannin, the domestic extraction of quinine, the improved domestic production of oils for treatment and finishing of leather, and the development of by-products of henequen, a valuable plant for its rope or cord fiber.

The research on henequen has proven particularly valuable. After the sisal fiber for ropes has been taken out, the waste pulp was found to be able to yield a wax with properties similar to the widely used Brazilian carnauba wax. The new product has been valued as worth \$20,000,000 annually in exports to the United States.

A well-equipped laboratory building has now been constructed in Mexico City for the Armour project. Mexican scientists are being trained to carry on all activities. The number of American scientists to be em-

ployed will be limited. However, technical help from the Foundation in Chicago, with a staff of some 650 persons, will always be available.

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PLANT PATHOLOGY

Apple Scab Makes Earliest Appearance Yet

► APPLE scab appeared in Delaware and Illinois this year at the earliest dates on record. The orchard disease costs U. S. apple growers millions of dollars annually.

Scientists at the Universities of Delaware and Illinois reported the early development of characteristic leaf blotches to the Department of Agriculture. If not checked by spraying, the infection spreads to the blossoms and fruit. It can ruin high percentages of an orchard's yield.

A mild winter coupled with exceptionally warm weather in January was blamed for the record appearance of the disease.

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ENGINEERING

Small-size TV Tube Has Industrial Applications

► A NEW small-size television pick-up tube, called the "vidicon," was revealed in New York to the Institute of Radio Engineers by P. K. Weimer, S. V. Forgue and R. R. Goodrich of the Radio Corporation of America, Princeton, N. J. It is particularly designed for industrial applications.

The new tube is one inch in diameter and six inches long. Now in an advanced stage of experimental development, it employs a photo-conductive target. Photo-conductivity offers the possibility of designing a television pick-up tube in its simplest, most sensitive and most compact form, the scientists stated.

Photo-conduction is the property of a poor conductor of electricity in darkness of becoming a good conductor when exposed to light, as a result of the freer passage of electrons under the influence of the light.

With this new tube, according to the RCA scientists, the target sensitivity is sufficiently high to permit operation at moderate light levels without requiring an electron multiplier.

A miniature television camera system developed around the new vidicon pick-up tube was described by R. C. Webb and J. M. Morgan, also of the RCA Laboratories at Princeton, N. J.

A simplified self-contained synchronizing generator in the master control-monitor unit establishes a scanning rate identical with the generally used standards for broadcasting. This makes it possible to use existing TV receivers with the system.

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