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EDITED BY WATSON DAVIS

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EDWIN E. SLOSSON, Director  
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## TO STUDY EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION OF 7000 YEARS BEFORE PYRAMIDS

By E. N. Fallaize,  
Secretary of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London.

It would appear probable that another chapter will soon be added to the already long history of civilization in Egypt; and should the anticipations of the great egyptologist, Sir Flinders Petrie, be fulfilled, it may be expected that fresh discoveries will also serve to throw light upon the origin and development of certain elements in the culture of early man in Europe as well as in the Nile Valley. With this in view, an expedition which includes among its members Miss Caton-Thompson of Cambridge, England, and Mr. G. Carline of the Halifax Museum, Yorkshire, England, has been fitted out on behalf of the British School of Archaeology in Egypt to investigate the ancient culture of the Fayum Desert.

Miss Caton-Thompson recently returned from the Fayum, where her investigations have produced some remarkable results. Her object was to study the flint industry of this district, which is remarkable for the beautifully even character of the chipping of the knives and other implements of stone. These, in the skilful nature of their workmanship, resemble the flint work of palaeolithic man in Europe in the Solutrean age.

Solutrean man is so called because of the implements, particularly knives and spear points, of especially fine workmanship, which were first found at Solutre in France, but have since been discovered at Palaeolithic stations in various parts of Europe. The Solutrean culture belongs to the upper palaeolithic and represents an incursion into Europe from the East during or at the end of the time that Aurignacian man was living in caves, in France, Spain, and elsewhere, carving and engraving animal forms in bone and ivory and painting their figures for magical purposes on the walls of his caves to ensure a good and constant supply of game. Solutrean man fed largely on the horse, as is shown by the thousands of bones of this animal which have been found near his dwelling places. Doubtless he had followed on the skirts of the great droves of horses which had swept across the great grass prairies which then stretched across the plains of Central Europe just as the Plains Indians followed the great herds of bison.

Is it possible to connect the finely chipped flint industry of early Egypt with the implements of similar workmanship in Europe? Miss Caton-Thompson's investigations have already brought to light some remarkable finds, among them pottery of a very rough kind in the shape of saucers and cooking vessels, very poorly fired. These were found in prehistoric camping grounds. In some cases a careful owner had placed the pots out of harm's way on a limestone ledge, and one of them contained five lumps of haematite, a red iron ore; with parts of a flint nodule, and twelve shells of a freshwater bivalve. Even more remarkable were a

number of bone implements, harpoons with barbs and points, the first examples of the working of bone to be discovered in connection with the Fayum culture.

Stone implements of the Fayum type have been found in Egypt from the Siwa Oasis, through the Fayum Oasis, eastwards to the Wady el Arish and thence up to Palestine at Gaza and Ascalon. Another extension of greater importance has been brought to light by the excavations of the British School of Archaeology on a site called Badari, 30 miles south of Asyut, where a settlement was found with flints of the Fayum type. There, however, these flints were found in graves for the first time, and not on the surface, as in the Fayum. During three winters the expedition has worked on this site, finding not only flint implements, arrow heads, adzes, and the like, of the Solutrean form, but pottery very finely glazed and very hard, ivory statuettes and ivory combs, spoons, and other objects.

The date of the settlement in the Fayum is fixed by Sir Flinders Petrie at some time between 12,000 to 13,000 B. C.; for the level in which these objects were found was covered by the Nile after that date and was only dried up again when the Ptolemies stopped the flow of the Nile into the Fayum to acquire cultivable land.

Sir Flinders Petrie therefore suggests that this early culture in Egypt is derived from the same source as the Solutrean culture of Europe. He thinks that a people, originating possibly in the Caucasus or by the Caspian, split into two sections, one passing into Europe, and the other southward into Africa. Against any relation of this kind between the Solutrean culture of Europe and the Badarian culture of Egypt, as it is proposed to call it, it is argued that while pottery is associated with the culture both in the Fayum and at Badari, no palaeolithic pottery has ever been found in Europe. Sir Flinders Petrie, however, holds that the southward bound branch, passing on its way to Egypt through a favorable climate, would be able in these easy conditions to preserve its original culture, whereas the European Solutreans, hunting and fighting their way along the glacial fringe, would not be able to carry pottery and, therefore, lost the art of making it.

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#### INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC DECLARED POSSIBILITY

The world has been afflicted with an unusual amount of influenza and pneumonia during the last six months. While medical authorities will not predict an epidemic like the one of 1918, they admit its possibility.

Three factors make an influenza epidemic a grave contingency: first, its apparently cyclic character; second, the coal strike; third, lack of knowledge with respect to its control.

Cyclic character means that it is likely to come back again and this is demonstrated by study of its previous occurrence. The big influenza epidemics of the past, notably in 1889 and 1918 have been characterized by recurring waves in the succeeding years. After about 1894, unfortunately, influenza faded out of public attention, until by 1918 much valuable knowledge acquired in the earlier epidemic had been forgotten. Dr. Victor C. Vaughan of the National Research Council has expressed himself, in a recent talk, as of the opinion that the present outbreak is a secondary wave of this sort.