

# Stone Age Tribe Like Modern Americans

*Ethnology*

## American Ethnologist Describes Philippine People

**H**UMAN nature has not changed much since the Stone Age, Dr. Margaret Mead, ethnologist at the American Museum of Natural History, found when she studied a tribe in the Admiralty Islands, near the Philippines, from which she has just returned.

Dr. Mead, who lived with the Manus tribe in its village built on stilts above the water, found that these people today live in the manner of the Stone Age, which flourished in Europe 20,000 to 30,000 years ago. Their chief concession to modern progress is the use of steel knives and adzes, obtained from white men.

"But in mind and spirit," Dr. Mead declared, "the Manus people are exceedingly like us Americans. They are thoroughly commercially-minded. They have only a rudimentary sense of humor, they are just as Puritanical as we were before the war and they have a lot to

learn yet about getting a good time out of life.

"With them 'life is real, life is earnest'—lots of dogs' teeth to be won or lost, dogs' teeth being their most valuable form of money. Unfortunately canny European traders have caused a glut in the dogs' tooth market, seriously depreciating this currency. Old men sit around and wag their heads telling each other that the world is going to the 'demnition bow-wows' since it takes ten dogs' teeth today to buy what one would when they were boys.

"These people are exceedingly democratic, also. In fact, they settle all of their problems of state by quarreling it out, much as we do, except that they have no form of Government—not even a head to their tribe. Public questions are ragged over until public opinion is fairly well settled before concerted action is taken, as a rule.

"They are efficient, honest, hard-working and unimaginative except that they take advantage of the main chance—almost like good New Yorkers. Certainly no one can obtain power or public respect without accumulating wealth. Some of the greatest plutocrats in New Guinea are found in this tribe, their wealth, in addition to dogs' teeth, consisting of carved wood, shell money, pigs, oil and sago.

"Their Puritanism, just as ours formerly did, depends chiefly upon establishment of property rights. A mating represents a considerable investment on the part of many people, and therefore must not be interfered with. Child betrothal is the custom. The relatives of the boy at betrothal make extensive gifts of dogs' teeth, shell money and beads to the relatives of the girl. The relatives of the girl respond in pigs, oil and sago.

"This trading relationship somewhat resembles the American custom of Christmas giving and is kept up by the relatives throughout the lives of both the boy and girl. It is practised upon every possible excuse. When the boy has his hair cut at about the age of five, for example, there are exchanges of gifts.

"This becomes complicated as families grow and children are betrothed. The productive economic

effort, however, is very largely the occupation of fishing. Fish are traded to one mainland tribe for carved wood, the wood is traded to another group for pigs, and the pigs are traded to still another tribe for dogs' teeth. The Manus folk are apt to make a profit on each transaction.

"I have subjected my friends and neighbors to no formal tests, but observed them closely and noted my observations. This did not bother them in the least. In fact, one group describes a white man as 'one who looks in a book all the time.'

"The Manus Islander is not like many of his Polynesian cousins—he doesn't make an art of living in any way. He has no manners, and no art of any importance, although like us he buys and sells the art of others. He lacks the charm and grace of many other South Sea tribes. Nor has he the emphasis upon sorcery found in Papua. He is just an ordinary, primitive capitalist."

*Science News-Letter, February 22, 1930*

**MIRAKEL**  
DAYLUX  
BINOCULAR



**\$35 Stereoscopic pocket;  
8 power, 10 oz., 150 yds.  
field.**

**New and Used  
POCKET  
PRISM  
BINOCULARS**

3½ to 8 power \$13 upward. Pocket microscopes 18 to 200 power \$1 to \$10.75. We carry everything in glasses and guarantee satisfaction or refund.

**J. Alden Loring  
Box SN, Owego  
New York**

Staff of Science Service—Acting Director, Vernon Kellogg; Managing Editor, Watson Davis; Staff Writers, Frank Thone, James Stokley, Emily O. Davis, Jane Stafford, Marjorie Van de Water, J. W. Young; Librarian, Minna Gill; Sales and Advertising Manager, Hallie Jenkins. Board of Trustees of Science Service—*Honorary President*, William E. Ritter, University of California. Representing the American Association for the Advancement of Science, J. McKeen Cattell, *President*, Editor, Science, Garrison, N. Y.; D. T. MacDougal, Director, Desert Laboratory, Tucson, Ariz.; Dr. Raymond Pearl, Director, Institute for Biological Research, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md. Representing the National Academy of Sciences, John C. Merriam, *President*, Carnegie Institute of Washington; R. A. Millikan Director, Norman Bridge Laboratory of Physics, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California; David White, Senior Geologist, U. S. Geological Survey. Representing National Research Council, Vernon Kellogg, *Vice-President and Chairman of Executive Committee*, Permanent Secretary, National Research Council, Washington, D. C.; O. G. Abbot, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.; Harrison E. Howe, Editor of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry. Representing Journalistic Profession, John H. Finley, Associate Editor, New York Times; Mark Sullivan, Writer, Washington, D. C.; Marlen E. Pew, Editor of Editor and Publisher, New York City. Representing E. W. Scripps Estate, Harry L. Smithson, *Treasurer*, Cincinnati, Ohio; Robert P. Scripps, Scripps-Howard Newspapers, West Chester, Ohio; Thomas L. Sidlo, Cleveland, Ohio.

### Mercurial Barometer

**Improved Design**  
(Patent Pending)

Mercury column entirely exposed.

Straight form, Fortin Type.

Sensitive zero-point adjustment.

Checked against certified instrument.

Range 25" to 31" by 0.01" and 60 to 83 cm. by 0.1 mm.

Vertical reading to 0.01" and 0.1 mm.

#### Outstanding Features

1. Exposed mercury column makes clear Torricelli principle and eliminates error due to broken column of mercury.
2. Zero setting by adjusting float in mercury. No movable piston.
3. Tube completely protected by frame. Range from sea level to 3,000' altitude. With thermometer reading C & F.

**No. 1215 Mercurial  
Barometer, \$27.50**

CA Sign of Quality **WELCH** CA Mark of Service

**W. M. Welch Scientific Company**  
Manufacturers, Importers and Exporters of  
Scientific Apparatus and School Supplies  
1516 Orleans Street Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.