



FALSE HEAD FOR IMPORTANCE

A badge of importance is the false head which tops this mummy bundle in its funeral setting. This prehistoric American grave, reproduced at the Field Museum, brings the observer into the atmosphere of the cult of the dead as practised in the arid coast country of Peru, about 1250 A.D.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Age of Modern Man in Doubt With Failure to Find "Cradle"

THE CRADLE of modern man, *Homo sapiens*, is again in doubt, as British scientists renew their controversy over the age of African skeletons heretofore hailed as the oldest of modern humans and said to be some 60,000 years old.

A Scotch verdict of "not proven" is the set-back given to the antiquity of the African remains famous throughout the scientific world as "Kanjera Man." Prof. P. G. H. Boswell, geologist of the Imperial College of Science, announced in a letter (*Nature*, March 9) that he visited the region in Kenya, East Africa, where the skeletal remains were unearthed, and that he failed to find the site. It had been his intention to establish the geological age of the earth layer where the bones were deposited, geological evidence being one of the

most convincing clues to the antiquity of such human remains.

The ancient human type called Kanjera Man, discovered by Dr. J. S. B. Leakey in 1932, consists of three skulls and skeletal fragments. These long-ago Africans walked erect and had other traits of modern humans. Dr. Leakey has maintained that the site is of the Middle Pleistocene period of geologic history. This would indicate that Africa had humans of modern racial type so early that Europeans were still of the shambling, stooped Neandertal race, a type which became obsolete and vanished from the earth.

A conference of the Royal Anthropological Institute was called in 1933 to hear Dr. Leakey report on his discoveries, and the conference gave a verdict that the young anthropologist had not

exaggerated the age of the African remains. This opinion was based partly on the types of animal bones associated with the bones of man. Meanwhile, American anthropologists have remained cautiously skeptical, awaiting such confirmation as Prof. Boswell sought to obtain, and failed to find.

Prof. Boswell records that his failure to identify the site was due partly to errors connected with the exhibited photographs of the earth beds, and to the fact that deposits in the area had frequently been disturbed by slipping.

Science News Letter, March 16, 1935

PHYSICS

Chinese Paper Windows Admit More Ultraviolet

OCcidental visitors to the Orient may deplore the use of paper instead of glass in house windows, but new tests disclose that the paper is far more effective in transmitting the sun's rickets-preventing ultraviolet rays than the transparent glass windows of the western world. (See *SNL*, Mar. 2, p. 137).

First exact measurements on the ultraviolet penetration through window paper used in the homes of 300,000-000 people in China have just been reported (*Journal of the Optical Society of America*, March).

Tests by Ch'en Shang-Yi, Peiping Institute of Physics Research, and Meng Chao-Ying and William Band, of Yenching University, reveal that Chinese window paper passes nearly twice as much ultraviolet as the ordinary window glass used in American homes. When the paper is oiled, to make it rainproof, the transmission goes up another fifty per cent.

The glass commonly used in window panes cuts off the sun's rays just on the long wavelength side of the ultraviolet region which produces sunburn and tanning of the skin. And it cuts off, too, those rays which help prevent rickets.

In China, the scientists report, "the

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