

awe-inspiring, as unexplained psychic phenomena always are.

Until psychologists and ethnologists came along to explain the unbelievable, by ferreting out the natural laws, the Indians kept their secrets. A medicine man transmitted his power and the techniques for using it only to his son or nephew. With solemn ceremonies, the youth received the power which was "coughed up" by his older relative, held invisible

in his hand, and transferred to the boy's heart through the chest wall.

Indian medicine men never tried their famous power to down the white men, when they invaded America. Or, if they did, it failed to work. The Spaniards and other foreigners were, as Dr. Harrington has pointed out, mere infants in psychic development, and the Indian's most potent medicine failed to "take."

*Science News Letter, October 5, 1935*

#### ARCHAEOLOGY

## Earliest Americans Linked With Old Stone Age Europeans

WERE the earliest known Americans contemporaries of the cave men of the end of the Old Stone Age in Europe and Asia? The remains we have of their arts and crafts indicate that they were, Sir Arthur Smith Woodward of the British Museum, noted student of Stone Age man, intimated at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

Sir Arthur identified the stone implements of the "Yuma" culture of the American Southwest with the "Solutrean" culture of France, carried on by an apparently highly intelligent branch of the Cro-Magnon race. This does not mean, however, that the earliest Americans were also Cro-Magnons; very different races often use similar things—as Indians and Fiji Islanders of today drive Fords. But the use of similar things by different peoples in widely separated parts of the world is at least an indication of their possession of a common culture,

and suggests that they lived at about the same time. On this basis, Sir Arthur provisionally assigned the end of the Ice Age as the possible date of the first human immigration into the North American continent.

Once man got here, he was not content to use only his own versions of Solutrean tools which he had brought with him, but branched out into inventions of his own. The speaker told of types of spearheads used by these earliest comers from the "Old Country," which were fitted to the shaft after a fashion never used by Stone Age man in Europe. It is perhaps the first known instance of "Yankee inventiveness."

These first Americans came into a land that must have been as strange to them as the later America, with its bison, grizzly bears, pronghorn antelope and other animals never before seen by white men, must have looked to the first settlers from Europe. Associated with implements of human manufacture in the Southwest are bones of extinct species of bison and musk ox, the latter found only as a vanishing genus in today's Arctic regions. Even stranger were the lumbering long-haired ground-sloths, which have been found not merely as fossils but as dried natural mummies, with parts of flesh and hide and hair still on them. Sir Arthur mentioned having visited these sites during a recent sojourn in the United States.

All these things make the "dating" of the earliest American very difficult. These animals were all dead in Europe by the end of the Ice Age. The most plausible inference at present seems to be that they survived, at least in small numbers, considerably later on this continent, to serve for food to the earliest American immigrants—and no doubt to give him moments of bewildered wonderment as well.

*Science News Letter, October 5, 1935*



Buffalo-Grass

MANY features of the proposed national reform program for land use are simple returns to the natural state, as things were before our young and over-eager civilization "tore the country wide open" to transplant into it cultivation and exploitation methods that worked all right "in the Old Country." Now we are undertaking to re-grow the forests our grandsires cut down, to re-flood the lakes and swamps our fathers drained. It has been realized that wildlife at high productivity may quite readily pay better than farming at low.

In keeping with the rest of this program is the endeavor to re-establish buffalo grass on the now unprofitable plowlands of the Great Plains region. We have found that a cycle of drought will easily wipe out all the agricultural gains made by years of "boom" wheat farming, and that winds often double the ruin and make it permanent by whirling away the soil itself, after drought and the locust have eaten every green thing.

The old native vegetation of the "short-grass" country was dominated by a low-growing, crisply curled, thick-bodied species known as buffalo grass, because of its importance in the diet of the great herds of bison that once covered the

### FALL BOOK NUMBER

- The Fall Book Number, to be issued October 26, will list practically all of the important new books on science.
- Readers of the NEWS LETTER, who have written scientific books published since July 1 or to be published before December 31, are invited to send in the titles for inclusion in the list. Please give title, author, publisher and price. Mail before October 10 to:

Editorial Department  
SCIENCE NEWS LETTER  
2101 Constitution Ave., Washington, D. C.

### ● RADIO

Tuesday, October 8, 4:30 p. m., E.S.T.  
WORLD'S OLDEST LANGUAGE—  
ETHIOPIAN, by Dr. John P. Harrington,  
Bureau of American Ethnology,  
Smithsonian Institution.

Tuesday, Oct. 15, 4:30 p. m., E.S.T.  
WHEN THE DUCKS FLY SOUTH, by  
Dr. W. B. Bell, Chief, Division of Wild  
Life Research, Biological Survey.

In the Science Service series of radio addresses given by eminent scientists over the Columbia Broadcasting System.