

Blind Landing System at Aerodromes

It is reported that 40 R.A.F. aerodromes are now to be equipped with blind-landing approach apparatus. This will presumably be the Lorenz system, already in use at Croydon, Heston and Manchester civil aerodromes, and extensively on the Continent, particularly in Germany. In principle, it consists of a wireless beam along and down which the machine flies as it approaches the radiating station, on or near to the aerodrome. The waves are picked up by the aircraft's apparatus, and turned into signals arranged so that they give warning to the pilot of any deviation of his from the line of approach, both in regard to his angle to the earth and in a horizontal plane. A further warning is given when it is necessary to flatten out preparatory to landing. The adoption of such a system will facilitate the operation of bomber squadrons in bad weather conditions. The presence of low cloud, mist or fog, is often an advantage to bombers when attacking, in that it helps to screen them from fighter and ground defences. It is obviously important that they should be independent of these conditions when operating from their home aerodromes. The fact that these facilities may be available in emergencies for civil aircraft, should encourage a more general adoption of the system in civil aviation, which will help to promote both safety and regularity in service in civil air transport.

Early Races of the Far North in America

DR. ALEŠ HRDLIČKA, of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, having completed his tenth summer season of archaeological and ethnological investigation in high latitudes, has brought his exploration of the far north of the American continent to a close, and is now engaged in the examination of the skeletal remains of the Aleutian and pre-Aleutian peoples, as well as of the specimens of the material culture of the latter, collected in the last three years. Dr. Hrdlička gave a summary of his results in his annual Smithsonian lecture, which was delivered in the auditorium of the New National Museum, Washington, on November 8. He then pointed out that when he entered upon this investigation ten years ago, it was supposed that only two peoples lived in this part of the globe, the Eskimo with the Aleut and the Indians. Now six races are recognized. There are two distinct types of Indians and two types of Eskimo, while it is established that the Aleut are distinct from the Eskimo. The most interesting discovery made by Dr. Hrdlička is, however, the sixth race, the pre-Aleut people, whom he regards as close to the Shoshonean and the Californian Indian. Some of them, though not all, practised mummification, and it may be that the Aleut followed them in this practice, as in a few places mummies of the two races have been found together. The remains of the older people, the pre-Aleuts, show close affinities with the peoples who were discovered in the lowest levels of the old village site on Kodiak island; but whereas those peoples appear to have been exterminated in a great slaughter, the pre-Aleuts appear to have escaped this fate,

although as a distinct people they have disappeared. The evidence which has been gathered points to the pre-Aleuts having reached these islands from Alaska, whither their ancestors had migrated at a very much earlier date from Asia. Dr. Hrdlička dates their coming to the Aleutians at approximately two thousand years ago.

Recent Accessions to the British Museum

AMONG recent additions to the ethnographical collections of the British Museum (Bloomsbury) announced at the November meeting of the Trustees, were four loans by the King from the Royal collections. Of these, one is a war drum carved from the trunk of a tree, with human skull attached, taken from the King of Ashanti at his defeat in 1826 and presented to George IV; and a Maori chief's staff of office, a combined spear and club, which was presented to Queen Victoria by Maori chiefs in 1884. The National Art Collections Fund has purchased for the Museum a gold Persian wine-bowl of the eleventh or twelfth century, having a Kufic inscription around the rim in praise of wine, and an ornamental design in which several realistic representations of ducks are a prominent feature. Among other gifts are a collection of antiquities, including small bowls, dishes and scarabs of the Eighteenth Dynasty (c. 1370 B.C.) from the excavations of the Egypt Exploration Society at Sesebi in the Sudan, given by that Society; a small finely carved Egyptian lion of ivory, probably dating from the First Dynasty about 3300 B.C., given by Mr. and Mrs. Alec Rea; and a bronze head of a Pharaoh, probably Ptolemaic, given by Lord Harlech; while Mr. Reay Geddes has deposited on loan an Indian sculpture in stone of the eleventh or twelfth century, which represents Agni, the god of fire, surrounded by worshippers and goat-headed attendants. Mr. Alvan T. Marston, with the consent of the Portland Cement Manufacturers, Ltd., has presented to the Trustees the Swanscombe skull and the bones and implements associated with it. The skull and some of the implements have been allotted for exhibition at the British Museum (Natural History), while the remainder are to be exhibited in the archaeological collections at Bloomsbury. These implements have been pronounced to be Early Middle Acheulean, Breuil's Acheulean III.

Portrayal of Weather in Art

THE *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society* for October contains a valuable paper by Mr. L. C. W. Bonacina on "Turner's Portrayal of the Weather". Landscape features and weather are the warp and weft of scenery, and the proper understanding of Turner's work as portrayer of scenery has been greatly hindered by the fact that such artists are described as landscape painters, and further by the circumstance that the salability of their work depends largely upon giving the picture a local name. Turner's pictures may be divided into two classes, those in which the *motif* is provided by the features of the landscape proper and those in which the *motif* is provided by the aspect of the weather; and the latter are probably the more important part of