

is Saxon, and is said to be extremely massive. In association were forty Merovingian coins. It is thought that this may be the burial place of Redwald, the first of the East Anglian royal family to become High King of England.

#### The British Speleological Association

DR. R. R. MARETT'S presidential address to the fourth annual Conference of the British Speleological Association, which met at Swansea on August 5-8, tendered in humorous vein an anthropologist's explanation of the attraction of the modern study of caves in 'speleolatriy'—primeval man's worship of the cave, which in the racial consciousness of a late-born generation had assumed the guise of a devotion to science. He was, however, able to support his contention that speleolatriy stood for something real in the history of religion by reference to the evident mystic intention, at least in part, of the palæolithic cave art of France and Spain and the therapeutic cult of the cave of later times. No doubt Dr. Marett had in mind the symbolism of a mystic ritual of approach, when at the opening of the Conference he presented Sir Cyril Fox, director of the National Museum of Wales, with a silver key. Members of the Association were given ample opportunity to experience the inward thrill of which their president had spoken, in the visits which were paid to the numerous caves on shore and inland in the neighbourhood of Swansea, in which the Paviland cave in the Gower Peninsula, famous in the annals of palæontology for its association with the name of Dean Buckland, received its due meed of attention; while in the exhibition arranged by Mrs. A. Williams at the Royal Institution of South Wales, they found illustration of the cave sites and their structure, as well as of the evidence of their occupation by men and animals, ranging from Mousterian to medieval times. Among those who addressed the Conference were Prof. T. Neville George, who discussed the geological aspect of the caves of South Wales, and Prof. Bosch-Gimpera, formerly rector of the University of Barcelona, who dealt with the cultures of the Spanish caves. Dr. Marett was re-elected president of the Association, with Prof. L. S. Palmer as chairman.

#### Totemic Ceremonial in Arnhem Land, Australia

DR. DONALD F. THOMSON, who was specially commissioned by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia to investigate conditions among the aborigines of the Northern Territory during 1936-7, has collected much information relating to the customs and beliefs of the tribes of Arnhem Land, shown in numerous papers published in scientific periodicals and elsewhere since his return to England. He has obtained evidence, for example, running counter to the opinion, long generally accepted, that the indigenous peoples of Australia had been virtually free from external influence after their settlement there. It is now accepted, however, that influence from the north entered the continent at York Peninsula by way of Torres Strait; and Dr. Thomson

finds in the use of wool or fabric to represent the hair of a dog in totemic ceremonial evidence of intercourse with early Malayan or Macassar voyagers, by whom this greatly valued material was brought to the area. Although the dog, which forms the central figure in a remarkable totemic ceremonial witnessed by Dr. Thomson and described by him (*Illustrated London News*, August 12), has been assimilated by the natives to the Australian dingo, it bears unmistakable evidence of an external origin, while the rites differ in many ways from the typical Australian totemic ceremonies. The ritual performance re-enacts in pantomime the myth of the original pair of 'dog' ancestors, who sank in the mud and were overwhelmed by the sea in trying to reach a stranded whale. Finally, they were turned into a great rock, whence now come the baby spirits of members of the clan who enter the mother at pregnancy. In the totemic ceremony, the figure of a dog, which has been constructed by the old men in secret, after giving birth to puppies—an event symbolized by cutting off the hindquarters—is carried along a road while members of the tribe imitate both the gait of puppies and the struggles of the original pair when caught in the mud. One of the tribal totems is a representation of a 'square-face' gin bottle carved in wood.

#### International Congress of Americanists in Mexico City

THE twenty-seventh International Congress of Americanists was held in Mexico City during August 5-15. General Cardenas was honorary president of the Congress, the acting president being Dr. Alfonso Caso, director of the National Institute of Archaeology and History, whose excavations on Monte Alban have so greatly enriched the national collections of pre-Hispanic antiquities. Mr. T. A. Joyce, formerly of the Ethnographic Department of the British Museum, and Dr. Paul Rivet, of the Musée de l'Homme, Paris, and the foremost authority in France on the ancient indigenous peoples of America, were among those elected as vice-presidents for the meeting. According to a dispatch from the correspondent of *The Times* in the issue of August 8, 120 European and 180 Mexican and other American archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians attended at the Congress. Communications were submitted in nine sections, which included anthropogeography, physical anthropology, American prehistory and archaeology, as well as a section devoted specially to the prehistory and archaeology of Mexico, linguistics, social anthropology and a section dealing with the practical problems which affect the indigenous and negro population of the continent. Excursions were made to archaeological sites at Acolman, Teotihuacan, Tenayuca, Tepoztlan, and the now famous Monte Alban.

#### Joint Industrial Councils

A BROADSHEET issued by Political and Economic Planning (PEP) reviews the present position of the joint industrial councils and their development from the Whitley Committee in 1916. During 1918-21, National Whitley Councils were established in 80