

## ARCHÆOLOGICAL RECON- NAISSANCE IN GUATEMALA

THE memoir on "Archæological Reconnaissance in Campeche, Quintana Roo, and Peten", as its name implies\*, describes a reconnaissance, comprising four expeditions organized by the Carnegie Institution between 1932 and 1938, which did not include any excavation. The region is densely forested and practically uninhabited, but with the aid of the local knowledge of the chicle collectors the expeditions proved it to be rich in Maya remains. These present many interesting features, which are set out in a short summary. This is followed by a description of individual sites, the geographical position of which is given in each case to the nearest 0.1 minute of arc, a wise precaution in an area where clearings vanish in a few seasons. A section on the monuments, with a useful chronological table, follows. In the introduction to this is described a method of taking rubbings, which may well prove useful to workers elsewhere for the recording of carvings in low relief, provided that the proper type of long-fibred Korean paper can still be obtained. The illustrations, comprising a liberal allowance of plans, sections and photographs, are grouped at the end.

The buildings in the southern area, associated with the Peten, differ in style from those in the north. The southern group has undecorated lower zones, an indentation in each side wall and a slight projection of the central part of the back wall. The northern, or Rio Bec type, has in its most striking instances two or three ornamental masonry towers which rise above the roof, but even where these are absent, it is distinguished by elaborately decorated facades. A restoration drawing of a notable example with three towers at Xpuhil forms the frontispiece of the work. The southern group is dated by means of the stelæ between 8.18.9.17.18 and 10.3.0.0.0, or between the first and seventh centuries A.D. according to Spinden's correlation, but no decipherable dates have yet been found in the northern group, though there is some evidence that they were contemporary.

Parallels to Group E, at Uaxactun, believed to have been a solar observatory, were found in a number of sites in the centre and south of the area. The axial line departs by varying amounts up to 15° from true east, without any apparent correlation with latitude, so it is suggested that the origin of the grouping may be astronomical, but the later examples merely ritualistic.

A particularly interesting vaulted building, unfortunately far from perfect, in which the true arch was almost attained, was found at La Muñeca. Another site, Pechal, seems to have included an amphitheatre. Like the majority of Maya sites, most of those visited were without defences, but one town, Becan, had an elaborate moat, traversed by seven causeways, though it is uncertain whether this was ever completed.

Considering the overgrown nature of the country and the bad state of the monuments, these four short expeditions brought back a great wealth of material, which is admirably presented. Excavation will doubtless follow as soon as it is practicable.

G. H. S. BUSHNELL.

\* Archæological Reconnaissance in Campeche, Quintana Roo, and Peten. By Karl Ruppert and John H. Denison, Jr. (Publication 543.) Pp. vii+230+75 plates. (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution.) 4.25 dollars.

## GENEALOGY OF HUMAN FOLLY

SCHOLARS are to-day busy tracing the spiritual antecedents, before Pan-Germanism, of Herr Hitler. Substantial work has shown the linear connexion with Luther. Prof. Collingwood even triumphantly exposed the scalp of an ancestor in the person of Thomas à Kempis. A study of the similarity of Hitler and Mr. G. B. Shaw has yet to be made. The similarity with Carlyle (and dissimilarity with Emerson) is substantial and extensive in the vertical line, when all allowance is made for the fact that Hitler, Carlyle and Emerson are all horizontally men of their time and place.

Prof. MacKeehan, in the most recent issue of the University of Colorado Studies (vol. 2), has made a useful contribution by underlining this. There is a genealogy of human folly as well as of truth. It is well to be reminded that Thomas Carlyle wrote: "Germany, from of old, has been the peaceablest, most pious, and in the end most valiant and terriblest of nations. Germany ought to be President of Europe, and will again, it seems, be tried with that office for another five centuries or so". This indicates the danger of judging any people's policy by the ideas of its literary nabobs. In fairness, however, to Carlyle and Emerson, it should be said that they were more concerned with what is now fashionably called 'the restoration of moral values' than with the nature of leadership.

Prof. MacKeehan's study will have done good work if it deters a few would-be leaders from supplying us with moral reach-me-downs from their nearest peg as poor Carlyle tried to do from the Ecclefechan store. The University of Colorado, always known as a foyer of ideas, is to be congratulated on its enterprise, although I found the "Thirteen Points of Spelling and Punctuation" enjoined on contributors intimidating. I am against standardization alike in printing and politics; and rejoiced when the revolting printer's devil produced the magnificent variant 'virute'.

GEORGE CATLIN.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

(Meeting marked with an asterisk \* is open to the public)

### Saturday, January 8

GEOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION (at the Geological Society of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W.1), at 2.30 p.m.—Mr. C. E. N. Bromhead: "Geology and Health".

ROYAL INSTITUTION (at 21 Albemarle Street, London, W.1), at 2.30 p.m.—Prof. E. N. da C. Andrade, F.R.S.: "Vibrations and Waves", 6: "Long Electromagnetic Waves".\*

### Monday, January 10

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY (at Kensington Gore, London, S.W.7), at 8 p.m.—Capt. the Rev. H. R. Rokey-Thomas: "Islands of the Canadian Arctic".

### Tuesday, January 11

SOCIETY OF CHEMICAL INDUSTRY (CHEMICAL ENGINEERING GROUP) (joint meeting with the INSTITUTION OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERS) (at the Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W.1), at 2.30 p.m.—Mr. A. J. Andersen: "The Manufacture of Margarine".

IRON AND STEEL INSTITUTE (joint meeting with the STAFFORDSHIRE IRON AND STEEL INSTITUTE) (at the Dudley and Staffordshire Technical College, The Broadway, Dudley), at 7 p.m.—Mr. J. H. Whiteley: "A Study of Austenitic Grain Growth in Medium-Carbon Steels".

### Wednesday, January 12

SOCIETY OF CHEMICAL INDUSTRY (PLASTICS GROUP) (joint meeting with the FARADAY SOCIETY to which the LONDON SECTION OF THE OIL AND COLOUR CHEMISTS ASSOCIATION is invited) (at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, Storey's Gate, St. James's Park, London, S.W.1), at 2 p.m.—Symposium on "Molecular Weight and Molecular Weight Distribution of High Polymers" (to be opened by Prof. H. W. Melville, F.R.S.).

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS (at John Adam Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.2), at 2.30 p.m.—Sir Frank Smith, G.C.B., F.R.S.: "The Story of Petroleum—A Giant of Modern Industry".