

GOSSIP

HOW LONG HAVE MEN LIVED IN AMERICA?

The subject of the antiquity of man in America has now been reviewed in Bulletin 33 of the Bureau of American Ethnology. On behalf of the bureau, Mr. A. Hrdlicka, an accomplished student of human osseous remains, has long been engaged in a critical examination of all the finds and their locations in North America that have been supposed to indicate the presence of early man. These finds include fourteen specimens or groups of specimens, from the New Orleans bones discovered in 1814 to the Nebraska "loess man" of 1906. The distribution of the specimens was from California to New Jersey, and from Canada to Mexico. Most of them have been previously examined and reported upon, but the entire question has now been reconsidered by the most recent scientific methods. The bulletin contains Mr. Hrdlicka's detailed description of the specimens arranged in the order of their discovery, together with many photographs and the general conclusion which he has reached.

Abundant and convincing evidence had been found of the great antiquity of man in the Old World, and it was thought to be a reasonable theory that similar conditions might be discovered in America. The attitude of the bureau, however, has been much more conservative than that of some of our geologists. In the earlier years of the investigation there was a marked tendency on the part of students to accept testimony that seemed to favor antiquity. Even in the case of the latest investigations relating to the Lansing, Kan., skeleton of 1902, and the discovery of remains of the Nebraska loess man from 1894 to 1906 some well-known geologists appeared to jump at conclusions without sufficient verification.

The gist of Mr. Hrdlicka's conclusions is that in every instance in North America, where enough of the bones of human remains have been provided for comparison, the anatomical and physiological evidence bears witness against the geological antiquity of the remains and for their close affinity to, or identity with, those of the modern Indian. The only deductions justified under these circumstances is that thus far on this continent no human bones of undisputed geological antiquity are known. This is not equivalent to saying that there was no early man in this country, but means only that if early man did exist in North America convincing proof of the fact, from the standpoint of physical anthropology, remains to be produced.

Mr. Hrdlicka's longest discussion relates to the Nebraska loess man, the latest discovery, widely believed to afford the strongest proof of the great antiquity of man in America. But in view of Mr. Hrdlicka, these specimens only strengthen the conclusion that "the existence on this continent of a distinctly primitive type, and of exceptional geological antiquity has not yet been proved."

Mr. Hrdlicka mentions a consideration of far-reaching significance adding strength to the belief that man's introduction in America must have taken place in a comparatively recent geological period. Man made his appearance in the Old World probably during the tertiary period, at least 200,000 or 300,000 years ago, through differentiation from the primates, the class of animals to which he presents the closest structural analogies. Primates of the higher forms, such as the gorilla and chimpanzee, were not found in America until they existed only in the warm regions of Asia, Africa, and Europe. It is there that we must look for the first traces of man's appearance. The investigator says: "Accepting this view, it follows that America was peopled by immi-

gration from the Old World, which could not have taken place until after great multiplication and wide distribution of the human species and the development of some degree of culture. This implies a vastly later date than that which must be assigned to man's origin. A wide dispersion of the race over the earth could hardly have taken place before the later stages of the Cenozoic era (the glacial period)."

Mr. Hrdlicka believes, however, that there is still abundant stimulus to renewed, careful, and scientifically conducted exploration. A satisfactory demonstration that a geologically ancient man existed on this continent would be important in the history of the American race and of mankind in general. He believes that the Missouri and Mississippi drainage areas offer exceptional opportunities for the discovery of this link of humanity, if it really exists.

SUCCESS OF THE GRADUATE FARMER.

The graduate farmer should not forget that the eyes of the farming community are upon him. He should not think it strange that it is so. The measure of their demands, with reference to his success, may easily be set too high, but they have a right to expect more from him by way of success in his calling than from those who have not enjoyed his advantages, just as the world has a right to expect more from the life of the professing Christian than from the life of one who has made no such profession.

The graduate of an agricultural college begins the life work of agriculture from the threshold of opportunity in advance of the one who has not attended an agricultural college, and his achievement, other things being equal, should certainly be greater.

The graduate farmer has to face temptations that do not come to other men engaged in farming. He has been pointed to better methods than those usually practised. He is probably without much means. To introduce these methods may involve outlay more than he can afford. If he yields to the temptation, and incurs the outlay, it may involve him to such an extent in financial troubles that he cannot extricate himself. He should put away the temptation and be content to go slowly. Theories in farming may be perfectly correct, and yet the attempt to practise them may bring disaster, because of want of experience as to the best methods of reducing them to practice.

With reference to the best methods of doing things, many things are to be learned which can only be learned in the school of experience. The graduate farmer is also much inclined to experiment. This inclination is the outcome of the instruction given to him with regard to better methods. It would be strange if he were not inclined to experiment. There should be moderation, however, in his experimenting, for all experimentation is costly. The cost of experimental work is one of the reasons for establishing and maintaining experiment stations. The temptation, therefore, to experiment in a way that will incur financial hazard should be put away, for in no way can the confidence of the public be more quickly shaken with reference to the value of the work done by experiment stations than by witnessing the failure of the graduates in doing their work.

The fund of practical information imparted in such a course of study is both large and greatly helpful. The information deals in some instances with facts that need no qualification. That live stock which are to be fattened on concentrated foods should be fed up to full feeding is a fact that cannot be gainsaid, and it needs no qualifying. That such concentrates when fed should be so blended as to meet the requirements called for from feeding the roughage calls for the exercise of judgment on the part of the feeder, hence the application of the truth calls for qualification. The

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