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RECENT DISCOVERIES RELATING TO THE ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY OF MAN¹

IN the great drama of the prehistory of man converge all the many branches of science which have been cultivated and encouraged by the American Philosophical Society since its foundation two hundred years ago. In fact, we do not progress very far in this most difficult, as well as most noble, branch of biological research if we pursue pathways which are purely anthropological or purely archeological. It is such specialistic mode of attack which has led more than one generation of man into pitfalls of opinion and of theory from which there is no escape except by direct retreat. In the list of those who have been compelled to reverse engines are the names of many great anthropologists, among them the renowned Hans Virchow, the still more widely known Ernst Haeckel and, probably to your great surprise, no less a name than that of Thomas Henry Huxley. Virchow opposed the recognition of the Neanderthal skull of 1846 with pathologic and theologic preconceptions. Haeckel also eagerly espoused the Ape Ancestry hypothesis by ignoring the profound cleft between ape and man. Huxley failed disastrously in rating the Neanderthal man with recent types of man and threw Darwin completely off the track of this veritable missing link. Huxley, too, failed to visit the Foxhall quarry of Ipswich, site of the greatest discovery in modern times, namely, the fireplace and tool flint quarry of Tertiary man. Even Jupiter nods when the purely specialistic pathway is pursued.

In the triumphs of modern astronomy, four sciences converge, namely, mathematics, mechanics, physics and chemistry; but, in the triumphs of anthropology, beginning with its dawn in the mind of Blumenbach, 1796, and reaching a succession of climaxes in 1927, no less than twelve of the major and minor branches of science converge, as follows:² The astronomy of Croll (1875) and Wallace (1880); the glaciology of Geikie (1894-1914), of Penck and Brückner (1909), of Leverett (1910); the glaciology and river terraces

¹ Address before the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, on April 28, on the occasion of the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the society.

² Osborn-Reeds: "Old and New Standards of Pleistocene Division in Relation to the Prehistory of Man in Europe," p. 413.

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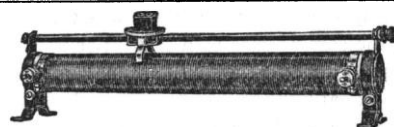
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