

### THE HARVARD ARCHEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION TO VENEZUELA

DR. ALFRED V. KIDDER, honorary curator of southwestern American archeology of the Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, has returned from Venezuela, where he directed the archeological researches of the expedition sent into the field by Harvard University. Excavations were carried on at Los Tamarindos on the peninsula of La Cabreria, Lake Valencia, and also in the desert and Andean regions west of Lake Valencia.

The *Boston Evening Transcript* reports that cultural remains were found in two distinct layers at Lake Valencia. An early civilization was in evidence in stratified layers of sand and gravel which extended from three feet below the surface of the earth to a depth of twenty-five feet or more; a succeeding civilization was discovered in the topsoil, or humus cap, three feet thick at the earth's surface. Dr. Kidder found practically no relation between the two civilizations, indicating possibly that the earlier civilization was wiped out by the inroads of a hostile tribe, and the pottery has so far yielded little evidence as to their identity. The tribe originally holding the site may have been a branch of the great linguistic group of Indians named the Arawaks, whose occupancy probably began about A. D. 1000. The invaders may have been a part of the linguistic group known as the Caribs, who possibly originated in the vicinity of the River Xingu, Brazil.

The view that the Caribs drove the Arawaks out of this region is supported by an archeological opinion of long standing that two or three centuries before the Spanish conquest of the territory there was a large Carib migration to the north, reaching as far as the Greater Antilles and perhaps even to Florida. Dr. Kidder notes, however, that the picture is far from complete, since he found that as late as 1880 Indians in the Lake Valencia vicinity still spoke the Arawak dialect. Whatever tribe held the Lake Valencia site at the time of the Spanish invasion, however, was completely wiped out.

The earlier civilization was characterized by the practise of primary burial. Bodies were buried immediately after death and left undisturbed. Pottery vessels, some of coarse material roughly made, others of fine clay, polished and decorated, were found in the graves, as well as pipes, carefully and highly decorated. These were of special interest because they seemed to have no relation to others found in the vicinity.

The first culture appears to be totally unrelated to the later civilization on the same site. Secondary burial was practised by the later inhabitants. Bodies

of the deceased were exposed, and the bones were rearranged in a particular manner in funeral urns of pottery. These pottery vessels showed characteristics distinct from those of the earlier period, but similar in some respects to those found in Central America, Brazil and the Antilles.

On a reconnaissance expedition through western Venezuela, Dr. Kidder found further fragmentary evidence of the relationships between the Indian tribes of the second period, but none with those of the earlier period. A rich archeological deposit was discovered in the Carache Valley, the sides of which, though heavily eroded, were covered with a mass of potsherds. The people of this region practised primary burial. Their pottery, hard, well-fired and intricately decorated, showed them to be distinct from any civilization previously found. Attempts at archeological research in Barquisimeto and near Merida gave few results, as little remained *in situ*, but a study of private collections in these vicinities showed a relation between the Andean culture and that of regions to the west.

### THE THOMAS ALVA EDISON FOUNDATION

THE Edison Pioneers, a group of former associates of the late Thomas A. Edison, met on February 11 to commemorate the eighty-eighth anniversary of the inventor's birth. According to the *New York Herald Tribune*, William S. Barstow, president of the group, announced that the formal incorporation of the Edison Foundation, deferred since 1932, would be carried out this year.

In 1932, the Edison Pioneers and the American Institute of Electrical Engineers formed a joint committee, the International Edison Foundation, a permanent foundation to collect funds for the establishment of memorials and scientific fellowships in Mr. Edison's honor.

Eighty of 100 leaders of industry and finance who were interviewed during 1933 were of the opinion that Mr. Edison's work should be recognized by the public in some substantial manner. The other twenty held that every incandescent lamp, phonograph, motion picture or radio set was in effect an Edison memorial. The committee, however, agreed that the progress of technical invention might leave all these devices outmoded and forgotten.

As a result of conferences with the International Electro-Technical Commission and with prominent men in this country, action was postponed until 1935 because of adverse economic conditions, but the committee has now decided to incorporate in the near future under the name of the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation. Trustees of the foundation will include members of the committee and representatives of the