

NOTES AND NEWS

four have been found in Elam and Sumer (at Susa, Ur and Tell Asmar (4)), and one possibly of Indian workmanship or inspiration at Hissar in Iran (5). The Mohenjo-daro seals are from the upper levels; that from Susa is probably Akkadian and that from Tell Asmar certainly of that date. The dating of the Hissar III stratum which contained the cylinder-seal is still under discussion, but an Akkadian or even later date seems not improbable. On the whole therefore the introduction of the cylinder-seal idea to India (where it obviously never proved popular) was not earlier than the middle of the third millennium B.C., and the presence of an actual Sumerian cylinder-seal at Herat in Afghanistan, dated by Sayce to the IIIrd Dynasty of Ur, would fit in with this evidence (6).

In itself the Maski seal is not an impressive work of art, both the man and the elephant he is driving being very roughly portrayed. Stylistically neither figure resembles Harappa workmanship; the elephant is a poor sloping-backed creature unlike the sturdy Harappa beasts, and one may perhaps see an indication of the two types of draught elephants commented on by Mackay (7): the flat-backed stocky Komooria Dhundia (as on the Harappa seals) and the inferior Meergha with its long legs and sloping back, seemingly represented on the Maski seal. One point is however of interest and that is the curious 'radiate' headdress of the man, which is paralleled by that of the human figure grappling with two tigers on a seal from Mohenjo-daro (8). This scene, with its affinities to the Sumerian representations of Gilgamesh, might be used as another pointer for an ultimately Sumerian origin for the Maski as well as the Harappa cylinder-seals, and there is one additional point: the groove at the base (and probably originally at the top) of the former. This feature occurs on the cylinder-seals in Indian style from Susa and Tell Asmar, and Frankfort has commented on it as a feature not normal to Sumer and perhaps to be associated with India (9).

Our enquiries have not taken us very far, and the Maski seal must still remain something of an enigma. Possible points of contact with Sumer via Harappa have been noted, but we have not yet any reliable evidence for a South Indian prehistoric culture contemporary with or immediately subsequent to that of Harappa. To such a culture the Maski seal may be the first clue, but the possibility of a freak independent invention of the cylinder-seal idea in later, early historic, times cannot altogether be ruled out.

STUART PIGGOTT.

AFRICAN PALAEOLITHIC CULTURES

Some useful information about recent progress in equating the palaeolithic cultures of West, East and South Africa is contained in a précis* of the (unpublished) 6th, 7th and 8th Annual Reports of the South African Bureau of Archaeology covering the period April 1940 to March 1943. The most important conclusions reached are that the Stone Age of the Congo includes a long series of developing industries and material cultures that provide a striking parallel to the development that took place in South Africa during the Earlier Stone Age. Toward the end of the great hand-axe group of cultures however, there is a noticeable divergence or differential development. The Congo Stellenbosch is almost a mirror-image of the Cape Stellenbosch, but the Kalinian

⁴ *ibid.* p. 345 n. for refs. cf. *ANTIQUITY*, 1943, xvii, 178.

⁵ E. Schmidt. *Excavations at Tepe Hissar*, fig. 118.

⁶ *Journ. Asiatic Soc. Bengal*, 1842, xi, 316-21; *ANTIQUITY*, 1927, I, 204-15.

⁷ *op. cit.* 329. ⁸ *ibid.* 337. ⁹ *Cylinder Seals*, 305.

* The Editors are indebted to Professor Gordon Childe for the loan of this précis.

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Culture that followed is half-Fauresmith and half-Sangoan—i.e. its affinities with the Uganda counterpart are as marked as they are with the South African expression of what appears to be the same cultural horizon. In these cultures the basic Levallois technique is the same in all three territories, but the principal tool-types vary from the pick in Uganda, to the pick and hand-axe in the Congo and the hand-axe and cleaver in the Union. The Kalinian of the Congo is followed by mid-palaeolithic industries that include Stillbay elements integrally associated with an identically developed Levallois technique, but the principal tool-types differ so markedly that an independent set of terms is required to describe the cultural horizons they and their successors represent. Dr Cabu's well-documented collections show that there is no culture such as the Tumbian as hitherto understood. Both the Abbé Breuil and the Director have submitted their views on Dr Cabu's collections to the Royal Society of South Africa for publication in the Transactions of the Society. These, it is hoped, will appear in due course.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Mr Grimes' reference to the administration of the British Museum, in his article on 'Museums and the Future' (ANTIQUITY, March 1944, p. 46), shows a misapprehension of the facts which it is desirable to remove. It is true that the Board of Trustees includes high officers of Church and State, and representatives of the families of the donors of certain important collections; but it also includes fifteen elected members, chosen on account of their interest in and knowledge of the matters with which the Museum has to deal. Further (and still more important) the actual administration is delegated to a Standing Committee, composed mainly of the elected Trustees, together with a few of the *ex-officio* Trustees who have taken an active interest in the affairs of the Museum. The result is that the Museum has a governing body fully capable of controlling the Director, while sufficiently versed in the conduct of affairs not to want to interfere in minor details; and the fact that it has an independent governing body composed of persons of weight and experience gives it an authority which it would not have if it were controlled by a Government department. There was a striking example of the value of this independence during the last war, when the War Cabinet decided to hand over the Museum to the Air Ministry. A Cabinet Minister would not have been able to resist the decision of his colleagues; but the Trustees were able to appeal to the public, and so obtain a reversal of the decision. The present system is very far from being 'indefensible'; indeed it gives the Museum the best governing body of any institution with which I am acquainted. It should not be rashly subverted without a knowledge of the facts and of its actual working.

FREDERIC KENYON.

EGYPTIAN BRONZE-MAKING AGAIN.

In ANTIQUITY, xvii, pp. 96-8 I published an Egyptian picture showing the manufacture of bronze by the advanced method of mixing and *melting* together the ready-made metals of copper and tin. This is a great improvement on the mere *smelting* of a mixture of the two ores, whether a chance one provided by nature or even a purposeful one made in the workshop. It was also shown that this step forward had already been taken by some time during the 200 years between 1580 and 1370 B.C.

It is now possible to limit the date somewhat more closely, for another scene showing this technique is to be found in the tomb of Rekhmirê, also at Thebes, and this was painted about 1450 B.C. Therefore the period during which the art of mixing and