

EDITORIAL NOTES

MR. M. E. L. MALLOWAN'S excavations at Tall Chagar Bazar, 30 miles SW. of Nisibin, were carried on for two months at the beginning of this year, and it is hoped that *Iraq* will shortly publish a full account of the results. Owing, perhaps, to the finds being less spectacular than in the Mesopotamian area, the earlier explorers, such as Layard and Rassam, were content with trial excavations in this district; and yet there must be an immense mass of interesting material lying buried in the neighbouring country near the Euphrates as the excavations at Senjirli, Sakje Geuze, Tall Ḥalaf, Tall Aḥmar, Arban, and, of course, the metropolis Carchemish, have already shown. Mr. Mallowan, after making an archaeological survey over a distance of 1,000 miles and an examination of more than sixty mounds, decided to excavate at Chagar Bazar. In this mound fifteen cities were found superimposed, the earliest built probably not later than 4000 B.C., and of the accumulation of debris more than a third belongs to the prehistoric periods characterized by the Tall Ḥalaf ware. The site appears to have been abandoned about 1400 B.C.

On virgin soil, sixteen metres down, were found the black and grey incised and burnished wares of Sakje Geuze, which indicate the influence of Mediterranean man in the earliest stage of occupation yet discovered on the Ḥabur. For nearly twenty years now the prehistoric pottery of Mesopotamian mounds has been exercising the wits of archaeologists, and the problems of the connexion of the immense quantity of different types of painted ware, which, broadly speaking, range from Afghanistan to Anatolia, and include that found at Susa long before the Mesopotamian finds were beginning to be properly recorded, explain why accounts of excavations are now so full of pictures of this material. Mr. Mallowan's work has thus helped to elucidate a little more of the problem.

Other finds were a remarkable set of prehistoric painted figurines of the 'Mother Goddess', which doubtless played the part of the prototype of Astarte, Ishtar, and the Oriental Venus. A cylinder seal engraved with bird-headed figures was the first of the Tall Ḥalaf period which has ever been found.

We are glad to be able to state that Mr. Mallowan contemplates a second expedition next spring to the Ḥabur district, providing that funds are forthcoming, with Chagar Bazar as a base, the object being to discover a site containing later material which may give evidence of contact between the land of Mitanni (in the mountains to the north-west) and Assyria. This expedition has been approved by the Trustees of the British Museum and the Archaeological Joint Committee, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Mallowan's energies will not be hampered by lack of money.

Sir Leonard Woolley hopes to excavate in North Syria next spring under the auspices of the British Museum, the Syrian *Service des Antiquités* having given the concession of a promising site in the neighbourhood of Antioch. This should throw light on early connexions between the mainland and the island cultures, especially that of Minoan Crete; and after the astonishing discoveries of cuneiform tablets at Ras Shamra, written in an alphabetic character in Semitic about the thirteenth century B.C., the site holds unknown possibilities.

Mr. P. L. O. Guy has been appointed a Fellow of the School for the current year and proposes to survey a dolmen field in Transjordan as his work in connexion with his Fellowship.

We are asked to state that the Second International Congress of Prehistoric and Proto-historic Sciences is to be held at Oslo at the beginning of August, 1936, and that further information may be obtained from the Bureau of the Congress, Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

(The Editor will be glad to receive brief notes of forthcoming expeditions.)