

The Advertiser
October 2nd 1914

PREHISTORIC MAN.

Under the auspices of the University Medical Students' Society, Professor Elliot Smith, professor of anatomy in the University of Manchester, delivered a lecture on "Prehistoric Man" in the Prince of Wales Theatre, Adelaide University, on Thursday afternoon. Nearly every seat was occupied by students and the general public, and Lady Galway was one of the audience. Dr. J. C. Veroo presided.

Professor Smith began by referring to the discovery of portions of skulls of primitive man in Germany, France, Gibraltar, and Java, and they served as an introduction to his remarks relating to the discovery at Piltdown, in Sussex, a few years ago, of the skull which has been declared by scientists to be a skull of the most primitive type of man the world had known. The discovery was due to the fact that Mr. Charles Dawson, an observant student of antiquities, noticed pieces of flint on a newly-repaired roadway. Knowing there was no such material within many miles of the locality, he made enquiries as to its place of origin, and found that the men were in the habit of digging up the flint from the side of the road, which was under water all the winter. Attaching importance to the circumstances he arranged with the men to keep their eyes open for pieces of bone, and also flint which had the appearance of having been shaped by human hands. The result was discoveries which induced Dr. Smith Woodward to collaborate with Mr. Dawson in prosecuting a thorough search. They devoted much time to the work, digging and sifting the soil until they found, in detached pieces, an almost complete skull of a man who had lived in the country probably thousands of years ago—a man who was the nearest approximation to Darwin's missing-link that scientists had ever had to do with. Professor Smith also dealt briefly with the skeleton of the blackfellow found in the Jenolan Caves, which was representative of the oldest type of aboriginal. He also referred to the skull, in a mineralised state of preservation, found on the Darling Downs thirty years ago, but to which no importance was attached until the recent Science Association meetings in Sydney were responsible for the owner of it submitting it as a curiosity. Professor David and other authorities had examined the skull, and were satisfied it was representative of the pleistocene times, when "prehistoric man" inhabited the continent. Photographs connected with the discoveries, including pictures of the skulls, were reproduced on a screen, and Professor Smith lucidly explained the main features of the Piltdown skull, particularly as there has been great controversy about it.

The Daily Herald
October 2nd 1914

THE MISSING LINK

DARWIN'S HYPOTHESIS

IMPORTANT ENGLISH DISCOVERY.

The search for Darwin's "missing link" has a peculiar fascination for all who are interested in the development of the human race, and in the course of a lecture at the Adelaide University yesterday afternoon Professor Elliott Smith (Professor of Anatomy at the Manchester University and for some years of the Cairo University) delivered a most informative lecture on the topic.

Dr. J. C. Veroo, who presided and welcomed the professor, stated that the lecture had been arranged in connection with the University Medical Students' Society. Among those present were Lady Galway, the vice-chancellor of the University (Dr. Barlow), Professor Stirling, and a number of the members of the council. Professor Smith was enthusiastically received.

The famous Piltdown skull was the main subject of his discussion. He referred first of all to the skull of a human being found in Germany a couple of years before Charles Darwin's famous "Origin of Species" was published. Six years before the finding of that skull one of the same class had been found at Gibraltar. Later two types were found in Belgium. These were augmented later by the finding of a full skeleton. This race apparently had very flat heads, eyebrows abnormally developed, and curiously brutal faces. The individuals were robust. Flint implements found enabled scientists to fix the period in which these people lived as about the middle Pleistocene. Some years ago a skull had been found which took mankind back to the beginning of that period.

Two years ago, however, there had been found a specimen of creature which was between man and ape. This was an entirely new type. The specimen was found at Piltdown. A Mr. Charles Dawson, living in that district, had made a hobby of collecting flint implements. He had been led to make investigations because he saw some flint which had been used to mend roads, and he knew that there was no flint for five miles round. He found on one occasion workmen throwing stones at a curious lump of material. He took charge of it, and immediately excavations were regularly undertaken by Dr. Smith Woodward and Mr. Dawson. These were continued for nine months, and the result was that a large part of a fossilised skull was found. The greater part of the two sides of the skull had been preserved. The greater part of the occipital bone had been found also. In the course of the excavations a fragment was turned up which showed the great importance of the discovery. It was a part of the jaw, which proved undoubtedly that the archaeologists had found a hitherto unknown type of human being. The distinctive feature was the arrangement of the bone in the region where the chin ought to have been. It revealed a type of jaw quite unknown hitherto—if it had been found alone it would have been labelled as the chin of a chimpanzee. It was, in fact, almost a facsimile of that in a chimpanzee's jaw; but the teeth in it settled that it must be the jaw of a human being. There were two, and they were undoubtedly human teeth. No serious critic now held that the jaw and the teeth belonged to different creatures. Another tooth had been discovered which proved that the teeth in the jaw must have overlapped like the teeth of an ape. This tooth was very much like the milk tooth of a modern human infant. Nasal bones discovered showed that in this primitive being the bridge of the nose was less primitive than many modern human races. The skull had been compared with that of an Australian aborigine, to which it most nearly approximated in size. The brain capacity was much smaller than that of an Australian aborigine, although to outward appearance it had a greater capacity. The thickness of the Piltdown skull accounted for the difference.

There was no doubt that the Piltdown represented the most primitive type of human being yet known. It represented a type with a number of extremely general and human characteristics. In addition, it represented in many respects the hypothetical missing link of which Darwin had written nearly 50 years ago. (Applause.)

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ANCIENT AUSTRALIANS

WERE THEY THE FIRST MARINERS?

The Australian contribution to the recent meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Sydney, was an aboriginal skull—an old, fossilised thing that the "man in the street" would have picked up to throw at a dog. But it was a gold mine to the scientists, and yesterday afternoon, at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Adelaide University, Professor Elliott Smith made some enlightening comments on the relic. He first of all outlined the facts surrounding the previous oldest Australian specimen of skull. Then passing on to the finding of the latest skull he said that about 30 years ago a man on the Darling Downs picked up the specimen, and it was kept as a curio by an auctioneer in Queensland. When there was so much discussion about the Australian aborigine during the association meeting he thought it might be of interest, and sent it to Professor David, of the Sydney University. It turned out to be highly valuable.

The skull was of a low, brutal type; it was exceedingly narrow, with low orbits, and the very slightest traces of eyebrow ridges. The outstanding feature was an enormous canine tooth—larger than that known to be possessed by any other human being, at least in this part of the world. By the manner in which it was set it could be seen that the corresponding tooth on the lower jaw must have closed upon it in the manner of the teeth of an ape. The skull was undoubtedly of the Pleistocene period.

It brought up the interesting question, "Did the people of the Pleistocene period know anything about navigation?" for the earliest evidence they had of that art was long after that period in the world's history. They must have had, for it was impossible for the people to have come across from the Malaysian Archipelago to the Australian group of islands without boats of some kind.

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October 3rd 1914

Professor Henderson, of the Adelaide University, who went for a trip to Europe several months ago, is returning by the mail steamer Osterley, which is expected at the Outer Harbor to-day.

The Register
Oct. 3rd 1914

ROMANCE OF TRADE.

Foundations of Empire.

When Germany Developed England.

After listening to one of Professor Portus's lectures on economics one realizes indeed that the delights of romance are not confined to works of fiction. The professor has been instructing—and entertaining, too—large audiences in the Adelaide University recently with chapters from the records of economic history, and his contribution on Friday, "The beginning of England's foreign trade and the advance of capital," was highly illustrated. Particularly interesting was that which he dealt with Germany in the 15th and 16th centuries. His lecture on the foreign trade of England in the 15th century showed that the advance of England was more rapid than that of Germany.

...those merchant adventurers who were largely instrumental in founding the Empire.

—Foreign Traders.—

During the thirteenth and fourteenth century, Professor Portus explained, England was largely a self-supporting country. She produced what was required within the borders of the country and no more. In time, however, the production of wool exceeded the consumption, and so the surplus was exported—not by Englishmen themselves, but by foreigners. In those days the English had very much of the insularity which until within a few years the Chinese possessed; but, like China again, traders from other parts were at last admitted within the country, and they bought wool, and sent it away and received back most of the luxuries of the upper classes. These foreign merchants obtained exclusive monopolistic privileges from the English kings, and they consisted in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries of two strong bodies which practically controlled the foreign trade—the Hanseatic League, which was established in the steelyards, London, and the Venetian maritime traders, who visited England annually. It is in the Hanseatic League that one was most interested to-day, for it consisted of Germans who became very firmly established in London. That league was a private concern—whereas the Venetians were under State control—and its members took England's goods to the north of Germany and brought back the products of the countries around the Baltic. Gradually, however, Englishmen began to transport their own wool to European centres. They, like the foreign bodies which had exploited England, were driven into combination by the fear of piracy and the necessity for uniting to buy trade privileges in the markets with which they bartered. So there came into being, in the time of Edward I., The Association of the Merchants of the Staple, who traded with Europe—particularly the north of Germany—in wool, leather, hides, and tin, but, latterly, principally in wool, which in the end became the staple. It was these Staplers, as they were called, who were the means of first introducing State regulation of commerce, for the kings of the time argued that as wool was the national trade it should be controlled, and the custom—because the merchants were making money, they should be made to pay the kings a portion.

—Merchant Adventurers.—

Then came the Merchant Adventurers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, who were the forerunners of the Empire founders. Cloth was now being manufactured in England, and when endeavours were made to place it on the Continent the Hansards objected. Those Germans whose business had taken so strong a root in England had previously promised to help English exporters when they desired to deal with Germany, but they went back on their word. The Englishmen now, however, were possessed of the wanderlust and the Company of the Merchant Adventurers was formed to make their own way in the Continental towns. They tried to buy trading rights in Bruges, failed, and succeeded in Antwerp, and, despite the opposition of the Hanseatic (or German) monopoly soon had big commercial interests there. By this time Londoners were becoming thoroughly tired of the Germans. The apprentices organized a big revolt against them, but it failed mainly by reason of the fact that the foreigners had obtained a grip on the York kings by loans; but the feeling was not to be denied, and in 1552 foreign trading monopolies were terminated, and the rights of the Germans of the Steelyard to peculiar advantages were ended, after some 200 years.

—Capital and

By home and foreign trade—or capital—was accumulated in England, and men looked for further fields where it might be used. Members of the old craft guilds became in time more than mere humble workers or craftsmen—they became merchant princes, and the guilds which had previously been for the protection of these artisans in their various callings became associations for the protection of the interests of mere exchangers or barterers, and the most powerful of them were typical barterers like the mercers, the grocers, and the drapers. Those associations financed the merchant adventurers who sailed the seas for fresh fields of exploitation. First came the individual, trading under theegis of a company which paved the way, as it were, Common subscriptions were taken for common expenses, but each individual made his profits from his own dealings. This was for the ventures with countries near at hand. For trading with more remote centres there were the periodical joint stock companies in which, for certain periods, expenses were paid, and profits shared in common over only a fixed period. Those were all based on the old guild principle, and to cap them all came the complete joint stock company as we now know it. By this latest means continuance of policy and definite planned expansion could be obtained. The East India Company illustrated that idea, and in the manner in which trading companies founded the British Empire as they knew