



**VOTIVE STELE FROM MARACHI:** "... it can be stated with certainty that hieroglyphic Hittite, the unknown language of an unknown people is now readable."

orrowed by the Hittites. Still others, however, are written in the same familiar script, but the language itself is Hittite, an Indo-European tongue wholly unknown till recently. As Ceram gives the story of the long and often heartbreaking attempts to decipher these tablets, culminating

Herzky's brilliant success, we begin to understand what it is that makes scholars tick.

From decipherment and comparative philology, Ceram turns to sources of criticism and the science of historical writing and wraps it all together with an admirable summary of what is thus known concerning Hittite civilization. Most of this is about the military and political organization and the administration of justice, for here, rather than in art and literature, lay the chief genius of a people whose Indo-European ancestors invaded Asia not long after 2000 B.C. and became a caste ruling the non-European population. The original home of the Hittites is not known.

Ceram is an almost ideal popularizer, for he is able to make every interesting by intimate knowledge of the subject and skill of presentation rather than by exploitation of bizarre side issues. The book is illustrated by forty-eight excellent maps, more than sixty line drawings, maps, a chronological table, and an exceptionally full bibliography. The slant on is first-rate.

## Clues in the Caves

**"On the Track of Prehistoric Man,"** by Herbert Kühn (translated by Alan Houghton Brodrick. Random House. 211 pp. \$3.95), the work of one of the most eminent of living prehistorians, is a popular account of recent discoveries of prehistoric sites. Professor Paul S. Wingert of Columbia University, our reviewer, is the author of *"The Sculpture of Negro Africa."*

By Paul S. Wingert

**T**HE "story" of prehistoric man has been unfolding for nearly a century. This story has been compiled throughout the years from the gradual and often accidental discovery of more than a hundred caves in which have been found innumerable archeological and visual evidences of the life of prehistoric man. These evidences include shaped stone tools and weapons, small carved and incised pieces of bone, antler, or stone, and, most spectacular of all, painted and/or incised pictures on the walls in many of the caves. As a consequence of the investigation of this extensive material the important field of prehistoric study has developed.

Herbert Kühn, one of the most eminent of present-day prehistorians, has during a lifetime of research and publication contributed greatly to our knowledge of prehistoric man. His book *"On the Track of Prehistoric Man"* is a popular and somewhat romantic history of his subject and the materials with which it deals. It is written partly as a travelogue, with conducted visits to a dozen of the major Ice Age caves in southwestern France and eastern Spain, including Lascaux, Les Trois-Freres, Altamira, and El Castillo. The reader is also introduced to the famous early prehistorians who discovered many of the caves, and is, through the medium of Socratic discourses held with various persons, acquainted in an interesting and painless fashion with the many problems associated with the study of Paleolithic culture. Although the history of the discovery and the contribution each site has made to our knowledge of prehistory is briefly given, the sites are not arranged in the chronological order of their discovery nor in a geographical sequence, but rather as a loosely connected series of essays on major caves.

The value of the book for the general reader, to whom it is directed, lies in the somewhat dramatic description of the geological nature of each cave

visited, further clarified by accompanying ground plans, and in the also somewhat dramatic but vivid description of the rock-paintings in their awe-inspiring, timeless surroundings. Numerous drawings and full-plate illustrations add greatly to the importance of the book. It is unfortunate, however, that Professor Kühn did not devote himself largely to a romantic presentation of the evidence of paleolithic man and less to an explanation and interpretation of them as revelations of his culture.

Although it is recognized as unscientific to form theories on analogous evidence of insubstantial nature, prehistorians have all too often turned to recent primitive peoples "at the same level of culture as that of late paleolithic man" for an interpretation of Ice Age objects. For example, Professor Kühn explains the mutilated hand-stencils among the earliest of the rock-paintings as "... "the sign of religious practices," indicating a dedication to some divine power, because "similar practices survive among several of the so-called 'primitive' peoples of our day ... at more or less the same stage of social and economic evolution." It is most unfortunate to imply and to state that present-day "primitive" peoples represent an early stage of evolution. That idea, current in the 1890s, was abandoned by the 1920s when it was recognized that primitive man had evolved a mature culture and did not represent a state of arrested development illustrative of paleolithic man.

My chief criticism of this book is therefore Professor Kühn's positive presentation as fact opinions and assumptions which are based on invalid premises. This can only lead to a popular misconception of the facts surrounding an important field of scientific study.

Random House has produced a handsome small book on the subject, which despite my adverse criticisms should be on the shelves of everyone interested in the subject; while the book can, with the above criticisms in mind, open up an entire new field to the general public.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S  
KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 1139)  
RACHEL CARSON:  
*THE EDGE OF THE SEA*

Few creatures that build permanent homes in this underground world live by themselves, so it is not strange to discover that the ghost shrimp regularly gives lodging to the small, rotund pea crab Pinnixa, a relative of the species often found in oysters.

# The Saturday Review

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## The Best Investment on Earth

EDITOR'S NOTE: At the end of the First World War John Galsworthy did an estimate of the age in an essay titled "Castles in Spain." The guest editorial this week is drawn from that essay.

IT IS the contemplation of beautiful visions, emotions, thoughts, and dreams, expressed beautifully in stone, metal, paint, words, and music, which has slowly, generation by generation, lifted man to his present stature, such as it is. The precise definitions of beauty are without number or value, to speak of. I just use the word to mean everything which promotes the real dignity of human life. The dignity of human life demands in fact not only such desirable embroideries as pleasant sound, fine form, and lovely color, but health, strength, cleanliness, balance, joy in living, just conduct, and kind conduct, for there is no beauty in the sight of tortured things. A man who truly loves beauty hates to think that he enjoys it at the expense of starved and stunted human beings or suffering animals. A cruel or pettifogging estheticism has sometimes smeared the word beauty and given it a bad odor. But that is not the beauty which gleams on the heights in the sunrise.

Beauty, and the love of it, is surely the best investment modern man can make; for nothing else—most certainly not trade—will keep him from destroying the human species.

Consider what science has become in the hands of engineers and chemists; its destructive powers increase a hundred-fold with each decade; and the reproductive powers and inclinations of the human being do not vary. Recollect that nothing in the world

but the love of beauty in its broad sense stands between man and the full and reckless exercise of his competitive greed; and remember the Great War—a little war compared to that which, through the development of scientific destruction, we shall be able to wage next time! Remembering all this, we get an inkling of the sheer necessity there is for us to invest in beauty and the love thereof. No other investment will give us interest on our money and our money back. Unbalanced trade, science, industry will give us a high momentary rate of interest, but only till the crash comes again, and the world goes even more bankrupt than it is at present.

The professor who has invented a rocket which will go to the moon and find out all about it (though whether it is to be boomerang enough to come back with the story, we are not told), that professor would, I venture to think, have done more real good if he had taught a school full of children to see the beauty of—moonshine.

The final war necessary for the complete extirpation of mankind will be fought with radium or atomic energy; and we shall have no need to examine the moon, for the earth will be as lifeless.

The pursuit of beauty as a national ideal is no picnic. Idlers need not apply. Consider the rank growth which must be cut down, the stumps and roots to be burned out and cleared, the swamps to be drained, before even the foundations can be laid.

Members of a practical race will say: "Well, what do you want us to do? Cut the flower and come to the fruit?" Alas! All literary men can tell people what they oughtn't to be; that's

literature. But to tell them what they ought to do is politics. It would be impertinent, then, for a literary man to suggest anything practical. Let me, however, make a few affirmations. I do believe that, on the whole, modern man is a little further from being a mere animal than the men of the Dark Ages.

The great lack of our age is an ideal, expressed with sufficient concreteness to be like a vision, beckoning. To me there is no other ideal worthy of us, or indeed possible to us in these unsuperstitious days, save beauty—or call it, if you will, the dignity of human life. We must be able to smell, and see, hear, feel, and taste our ideal. We must know by plain evidence that it is lifting human life, that it is the heritage of all, not merely of the refined and leisured among us. The body and soul are one for the purpose of all real evolution, and I regret any term which suggests a divorce between them. But nobody, I think, can mistake what is meant by quality, or the dignity of human life. Anything which crosses and offends against that ideal is our Satan.

FEAR is at the back of nearly all the savagery in the world; and if there be not present in the individual that potent antidote—the sense of human dignity, which is but a love and a belief in beauty, he must infallibly succumb to fear.

Democracy has no greater enemies than her unthinking friend Short sight is her danger, short sight verging on blindness. What will happen if democracy really goes blind? She must have an ideal, a star which to fix her eyes—something distant and magnetic to draw her to something to strive towards, beyond the troubled and shifting needs, passions, and prejudices of the moment. Lovers of beauty should try to give her that ideal, to equip her with the only vision which can save the world.

The war was no spasmodic visitation; it was the culmination of a long competitions. The six years war have devoured many millions grown men, more millions of little children—prevented their birth, killed them, or withered them for life. We begin again these crazy competitions, without regard for beauty, the dignity of human life, we shall live to see ten millions perish every million perished in this war. We shall live to curse the day—this when, at the end of so great a lesson, we were too sane to take it to heart, too sensible and practical and businesslike and unemotional to see visions and dream dreams.

—JOHN GALSWORTHY