

of a British Science Service, either as an independent venture or as a London bureau of Science Service of the United States, had long been desired by the director of Science Service, Mr. Watson Davis, and after a necessary period of preliminary discussion and experiment an organisation in the second form has recently been opened at 102-5 Shoe Lane, London, E.C.4, under the direction of Mr. Donald Caley. About twenty representatives of different departments of pure and applied science, including Sir F. G. Hopkins, president of the Royal Society, have consented individually to act in consultative capacities in connexion with this London organisation. The co-operation of scientific workers with the new venture is invited, by supplying information relating to researches on which they are engaged (such information to be treated as confidential when and for as long as desired); sending advance proofs of original communications to scientific journals which they edit or control, or regular copies of the journals, which will invariably be mentioned in newspaper summaries; and to make to Mr. Donald Caley any suggestions which may help him to increase the scope and usefulness of the organisation.

#### Cultural History in Nebraska

In another column of this issue (see p. 555) there appears a brief summary of certain conclusions as to cultural sequences in Nebraska, United States, which have emerged as a result of a review of the archaeology of that State by Mr. W. D. Strong. It does less than justice to a record of remarkable interest. Among the numerous investigations of recent date, to which Mr. Strong refers, is that of Signal Butte, a stratified site examined by himself, on which evidence of three distinct cultures is to be observed. The levels in which these are found are separated from one another by deposits of Æolian origin, the whole series being superimposed upon sands, which Mr. Strong himself holds to be water-borne and of Pleistocene age. The level of the earliest human occupation is immediately superimposed on these sands. The interpretation of the deposits in terms of climatic variations, based on a correlation with data from other sources, postulates for the whole series, beginning with the period of earliest human occupation, a period of 7,000-10,000 years. Further, this is the only site as yet discovered in America on which stratification gives a clue to the progressive development of type implements of stone in chronological succession. No less interesting and revolutionary in its geographical, archaeological and historical implications is a discovery, which hitherto has escaped the attention of archaeologists, that while there was a hunting culture on the plains dependent on the bison, in the earliest and in the latest phase of aboriginal existence until it was swept away by Caucasian culture, there intervened between early and recent hunters a semi-horticultural mode of life, akin to that of the Eastern Woodland type, which was forced back to the Missouri with the coming of the horse. This carries with it implications, fully elaborated by Mr. Strong, which necessitate a

modification of current views on geographic controls in the Plains area.

#### Primitive Traits in Amerindian Skulls

It is now generally accepted that no skeletal remains of the genus *Homo* other than those of 'modern' man have hitherto been found on the American continent. Since the arguments put forward by Ameghino early in the present century in support of the primitive character and high antiquity of the skulls he had found in South America were shown by Dr. Ales Hrdlička to be untenable, it has been claimed from time to time that human remains exhibiting characters other than those of *Homo sapiens* have been discovered; but invariably closer examination of the evidence has failed to support this interpretation. One of the latest discoveries of this nature is that of a fragment of a skull found by Dr. Earl H. Pell, of the Nebraska University, in a large mound of unknown age near the site of a prehistoric village in Nebraska. The skull was that of a middle age man which showed abnormally highly developed eyebrow ridges, intermediate in degree between Neanderthal man and 'modern' man. On the evidence of these supra-orbital ridges it was at first thought that the skull might be included in the Neanderthal group. It has now been subjected to a close analysis by Dr. Hrdlička, whose decision is not only adverse to any close affinity with Neanderthal man, but definitely rules that it comes within the 'modern' group, on the evidence that in all its characters, excepting the eyebrow ridges, it belongs to the type of the modern Indian. In discussing the skull (*Amer. J. Phys. Anthropol.*, 20, 2), Dr. Hrdlička goes on to point out that while the high development of these ridges may be regarded as evidence of "an ancestral connection with Neanderthal Man somewhere outside America" it does not show uninterrupted filiation, nor can it serve as an index of antiquity.

#### Recent Acquisitions at the British Museum, Bloomsbury

AMONG the recent additions of archaeological interest, which are described in the *British Museum Quarterly*, 10, 1, is a striking example of the artistic ability of the early Maya in the form of a cup with painted ornament, which has additional claim to attention in the fact that it comes from so far south as San Salvador. Especially important for students of early Buddhist art in India is a series of stucco figurines, twenty-five pieces in all, of which eighteen are heads, obtained by the French Archaeological Delegation in Afghanistan in 1926-28, at Hadda, about five miles south of Jalalabad. In accordance with the policy, foreshadowed at the time of the acquisition of the Eumorfopoulos collections, of devoting space in the *Quarterly* from time to time to descriptions of especially important examples of the art and culture of the Far East, two notes with illustrations deal respectively with a bronze of the Chou dynasty (1123-249 B.C.) and painted bricks of the succeeding Han dynasty. The bronze bowl or *tui* for holding cereals on ceremonial occasions,