

THE STORY OF "EIGHT DEER."

The Story of "Eight Deer" in Codex Colombino.

By J. Cooper Clark. Pp. 33+plates A-J (coloured). (London: Taylor and Francis, 1912.) Price 21s. net.

AMONG the papers presented to the International Congress of Americanists during the session held in London at the end of last June was a pamphlet by Mr. J. Cooper Clark entitled "The Story of 'Eight Deer' in the Codex Colombino." This is an attempt to throw some light into the obscurity of the pre-Columbian American manuscripts.

Mr. Cooper Clark commenced his researches with a careful examination of the Codex Colombino, a picture-writing painted on prepared deer-skin, folded like a screen, and measuring 6'80 metres in length when spread open, now preserved in the National Museum in the City of Mexico. In this manuscript Mr. Cooper Clark traced the history of a warrior chieftain named "Eight Deer." All the personages identified by Mr. Cooper Clark in this codex are named after days of the month, and the name "Eight Deer" is expressed by a deer's head with the numeral eight (that is, by eight round discs) attached to it, a deer's head (Macatl) being one of the twenty day signs of the Nahuatl month, and according to the Nahuatl method of noting time, this date would occur only once in a cycle of fifty-two years. It is not, however, explained why this particular day was chosen as the name of the warrior, although it is stated that it was not the day of his birth.

The life-history of Eight Deer is most ingeniously traced through the pages of the codex, but the most interesting fact established by Mr. Cooper Clark is that the history of the same individual is also told in five of the other extant pre-Columbian codices, namely, the Zouche (British Museum), the Vienna, the Bodleian, the Baker, and the Selden. By a careful comparison of these codices, Mr. Cooper Clark has not only been able to show that in part they tell the same story, but to supply incidents in the history of Eight Deer which are missing from the Codex Colombino owing to the destruction of a part of the manuscript.

Mr. Cooper Clark has further come to the conclusion that Eight Deer can be identified as the glyph attached to the figure of a warrior carved on one of the stone slabs from Monte Alban in Oaxaca (in the Zapotec country), now exhibited in the National Museum of Mexico, and from this he argues that the codices dealing with the story of Eight Deer must be of Zapotec and not Aztec origin, adding, "Not many Nahuatl codices

are likely to have survived the destruction by Archbishop Zumárraga of the temple libraries of Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and the other cities around the lakes, whereas, warned by the example of Mexico, the Zapotecs would have had ample time to secrete their records."

There is no difficulty in fixing the dates mentioned in the Codex Colombino within the fifty-two year cycle; the difficulty arises in determining in which cycle of fifty-two years the dates occur. If the events depicted are placed in the next cycle before the arrival of the Spaniards, the birth of Eight Deer would have taken place in the year 1491 A.D.; but Mr. Cooper Clark thinks that it more probably took place in the previous cycle, when the date would correspond to 1439 A.D.

The pamphlet is illustrated with plates most carefully drawn and coloured from the original manuscripts, showing how the same events in the life of Eight Deer are depicted in the Colombino, Zouche, Bodleian, and Becker codices.

Mr. Cooper Clark is to be heartily congratulated on his most painstaking achievement. The pamphlet was written for the few who are interested in ancient American civilisations, and can only be fully appreciated by those who have access to copies of the codices discussed; but even to the general reader it must be of interest as showing a native American method of recording historical events, and, moreover, as demonstrating how, by careful and intelligent examination and comparison, order and meaning may be evolved from the most obscure and unpromising material.

SUBMERGED RIVER-VALLEYS.

Monograph on the Sub-Oceanic Physiography of the North Atlantic Ocean. By Prof. Edward Hull, F.R.S. With a Chapter on the Sub-Oceanic Physical Features off the Coast of North America and the West Indian Islands, by Prof. J. W. W. Spencer. Pp. viii+41+xi plates. (London: E. Stanford, 1912.) Price 21s. net.

THIS is a folio publication with eleven excellent maps and nine short chapters of explanatory text, and an additional chapter by Prof. J. W. Winthrop Spencer. The author has based the work on a detailed study of the Admiralty charts showing the soundings over the continental shelf and the upper part of the continental slope off the western coasts of Europe and Africa, and this leads up to a statement of his views as to the cause of the Glacial Period.

It is pointed out that there are two principal schools of geographical evolution, the one believing that the ocean basins and the position of the chief continental areas retain traces of their