

## News and Views

### Origins of Modern Races of Mankind

SIR ARTHUR KEITH'S presidential address to the first Speleological Conference of the British Speleological Association held at Buxton on July 25 made a bold attempt to resolve a number of doubts and difficulties, which arise out of recent developments in the study of human palæontology. This, Sir Arthur was careful to point out, is a matter relevant to the purpose of the Conference in that discoveries of the remains of ancient types of man in caves have provided a great part of the material, which points to the necessity of recasting the current view that modern races, black, white, brown and yellow, evolved from a common mid-Pleistocene ancestral stock. It will be remembered that it has been demonstrated recently (see NATURE, 137, 73; 1936) that certain characteristics of the modern Mongolian are to be observed in the remains of Peking man found in the cave of Chou Kou Tien. Sir Arthur would go further. Not only does he too find resemblances to the Mongolian in Peking man, but he also observes Australian and Negro characteristics in *Pithecanthropus* from Java and the Kanam skull from East Africa respectively. From this evidence, therefore, he draws, somewhat tentatively, the conclusion that at the beginning of the Pleistocene, the ancestors of the Mongol, the Australian and the Negro were already in occupation of the continental areas now inhabited by their descendants; and that after their separation each race underwent a series of parallel evolutionary changes in teeth, jaws, brain and other features showing simian affinities.

In his search for further evidence in support of his hypothesis, Sir Arthur reviewed present knowledge of early man in the areas of distribution of the main divisions of *Homo sapiens*, with the view of showing how far they exhibit traces of this parallel course of evolution. In China, unfortunately, fossil forms of man, which lead on from *Sinanthropus* towards the Chinaman of to-day, have not yet been discovered. For the evolution of the Australian type, he referred to the evidence afforded by Wadjak man from Java, with its resemblance to Talgai man, the earliest known form of Australian, and the fossil remains of Solo man, also from Java. In Africa the geological horizon of Rhodesian man is uncertain, but the Kanam fragmentary jaw from Kenya is not incompatible with the anatomy of Rhodesian man. The Kanjera skulls from deposits of mid-Pleistocene date, or earlier, are the earliest and most primitive form of Negro known to us, while in cave deposits of late Pleistocene date Dr. L. S. B. Leakey discovered fossil remains of a type still existing in north-east Africa. The gap, however, between Rhodesian man and the Kanjera negro still remains. A further problem discussed as needing solution for the acceptance of the theory was the origin of the Caucasian, who does not appear until found in late Pleistocene

times as the Cromagnon man of the caves of France and other parts of Europe. For this type, Sir Arthur suggested a possible area of origin in western Asia. It is only when we accept some such view of independent, but parallel, evolution, Sir Arthur concluded, that we can give a coherent explanation of the facts known to us; but it serves only to deepen the mystery of human evolution, for it implies that the future of each race is latent in its genetic constitution. Throughout the Pleistocene period the separated branches of the human family appear to have been unfolding a programme of latent qualities inherited from a common ancestor of an earlier period.

### Historical Memorial in Hatton Garden

AN interesting memorial, the institution of which was organized by Mr. E. Kilburn Scott, was unveiled at St. Andrew's Parochial School, Hatton Garden, on July 25, by the Mayor of Holborn. Much mechanical pioneering started in the district. An early connexion with engineering was in 1804, when Richard Trevithick erected his first steam-carriage in Felton's workshop in Leather Lane. Scientific instrument making began about 1750, when the Italian, F. Pastorelli, began to make thermometers, barometers, etc., the business he founded being still carried on at No. 46. In 1850 Negretti and Zambra joined in similar work, and when the Holborn Viaduct was built, removed to the present site of the Gatehouse, in which Sir Christopher Hatton resided. In 1817, P. Norton Johnson refined platinum and other rare metals in the building No. 79, where similar work is still carried on by the firm he founded. The district has long been famous for watch- and clock-making, and the name of Lund, who made chronometers at No. 4 in 1836, is still well known. St. Geo. Lane-Fox, a pioneer in the making of electric incandescent lamps, was at No. 75 in 1881, and the lamp factory at Hammersmith, built by the Brush Electrical Company to make his lamps in 1888, was eventually taken over by the General Electric Co., Ltd.

THE large building at the corner of Hatton Wall, now partly occupied by Marryat and Scott and by Raphael's, became a centre of pioneer engineering because in the basement there was a boiler and steam engine which supplied power to various tenants. One of these in 1884 was Dr. S. Z. de Ferranti, pioneer of high-tension electric transmission. Another was Sir Hiram Maxim, who developed his first automatic machine-gun in 1889, and he tried it in the basement where Hyde, the engineer, had his power plant. C. F. Cross and E. Bevan, inventors of the viscose process for making rayon fibres from sulphite wood pulp, demonstrated their process in the same building. In the early 'nineties Mr. R. W. Paul, maker of electrical instruments at No. 44, was asked to make kinoscopes like those of Edison. In 1895 he made a projector to show