

BOTANICAL EXPEDITION RETURNS FROM BAY OF FUNDY

Bringing three 35-gallon barrels filled with about 800 pounds of specimens representing the inter-tidal vegetation of the Bay of Fundy, for use in a proposed exhibit of marine plant life, Mr. John R. Millar, leader of the Sewell Avery Botanical Expedition to Nova Scotia, returned to his post at Field Museum last month.

Mr. Millar has been exploring the shores of the Bay of Fundy, collecting the material, and making photographs and color notes for guidance in the construction of the projected ecological group, since the middle of July. The principal scene of operations was in the vicinity of Sandy Cove, about twenty miles south of Digby on the rocky narrow peninsula between the Bay of Fundy and St. Mary's Bay. Surveys were also made in New Brunswick, and on the United States side of the Bay of Fundy.

The Bay of Fundy offered exceptional collecting conditions for the gathering of kelps and other marine plants because of its extreme tidal conditions, the difference between high and low water levels reaching as much as fifty feet at the head of the bay. Mr. Millar was given valuable assistance and co-operation by Nova Scotian government officials and scientists of the Provincial Museum at Halifax.

The various types of seaweed collected have been preserved in formaldehyde preliminary to further treatment for their use in the Museum exhibit. Additional material for use in the group will be prepared in the Plant Reproduction Laboratories of the Department of Botany.

A STAY-AT-HOME TOUR OF ASIA IN NEW MUSEUM HALL

By C. MARTIN WILBUR

Curator of Chinese Archaeology and Ethnology

A fascinating journey of exploration through Asia, such as many dream of but few can take, awaits those who enter the new Hall of Asiatic Ethnology (Hall L), opened to the public last month. The exhibits include objects no longer to be found in their places of origin. They were prepared by Dr. Albert B. Lewis, of the Department of Anthropology staff.

Begin the tour with India. In this land of many peoples and diverse customs, civilization was already old in the time of Alexander the Great. In an inset case are displayed early Indian sculptures which veritably reflect Alexander's conquest in 328-326 B.C.

Material from more recent times in India fills nearly half the hall. Boys should delight in the collection of weapons and armor, by no means primitive, including swords of fine steel, daggers, spears, and battle axes, as well as enormous rhinoceros hide or metal shields and spiked steel helmets. Indian textiles will please women visitors: rich brocaded silks, dyed or woven in many colors, for shawls and other feminine apparel. There are turbans worn by men of various Indian regions, castes or occupations, and the male visitor, be he street sweeper or banker, may find the hat he would wear if he lived in India. Collections of curious musical instruments, ornamental brasses beautifully engraved or inlaid and incrustated with silver, and carved wooden architectural ornaments, will hold the attention of those interested in the arts.

Off the tip of India lies Ceylon. The culture of this island has many unique

features. Exhibited are elaborately carved Singhalese masks used in dances for exorcising demons, and others of kings, queens and heroes used in semi-historical plays. Models of boats and carts from India, Ceylon, Burma and Siam show types now crowded out by more efficient but less picturesque methods of transportation.

Far off the usual tourist route is a side trip to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, in the Bay of Bengal, where dwell two nearly extinct groups of primitive peoples. Their weapons and fishing equipment, together with curious ornaments and ugly wooden "scare devils" used to frighten away "evil spirits," fill one section of the hall.

Burma and Siam constitute a region with curious contrasts between the primitive cultures of their back country areas, and the advanced cultures of the cities. Two large Siamese shadow figures, mounted on glass and illuminated from behind, show them as they would appear to the spectator at a shadow play. Certain Siamese pottery on display is of a type now rarely found.

The traveler now goes northward, and arrives at Korea, which is closely linked in culture to China (amply represented in other Museum halls). Besides tools, household objects, and personal ornaments of every sort, there is an attractive display of Korean clothing, of both commonplace and elaborate types. Several cases contain wedding and mourning clothes, and some of the finest examples preserved anywhere of the strictly regulated ceremonial costumes and armor of the old Korean court. The Koreans are the great archers of eastern Asia—therefore an interesting part of the exhibit shows their archery equipment.

North of Korea, beyond Manchuria, is eastern Siberia, whose indigenous tribes lived by hunting, fishing, or herding. Their clothing, made from fishskin, leather or fur, often highly decorated, reflects their economy, as do their simple tools and weapons.

Those mysterious folk, the Ainu, who live in the island of Yezo (Hokkaido) in northern Japan, are the last people to be visited. In ancient times they dwelt over most of the islands of Japan, but were slowly driven northward by the relentless advance of the Japanese. Now they are a mere remnant of a once vigorous race of hunters and fishers. Formerly their strangely ornamented clothing was made of elm bark, fishskin, or in winter of fur and skin; now they most often wear clothing made from Japanese cotton. Their household objects, weapons, and clothing, all are decorated in a geometric art.

Among those who appear as donors of gift material in the collections in this hall are: the late Martin A. Ryerson, the late H. N. Higinbotham, Mrs. Douglas Smith, Mrs. James W. Scott, Mr. Richard Matteson, Mr. Robert H. Baker, Mr. F. P. Bhungara, Mr. Theodore A. Shaw, Mr. Frederick R. Babcock, Mr. Robert H. Fleming, Mrs. James Horton, Mr. Gustavus Goward, Mr. C. Suydam Cutting, Mr. Paul J. Rupprecht, Mr. E. B. Grossman, Miss Caroline Wicker, the late Edward E. Ayer, Miss Katherine Reed, the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda, Mr. Homer E. Sargent, the late Cyrus H. McCormick, the late Arthur B. Jones, the late William Wrigley, Jr., the Maharaja of Jaipur, Mr. T. H. Pandian, Mrs. L. N. Kneeland, the late Mrs. Elizabeth Dunlap Christie, and Mr. E. D. Hester.

Three Etruscan painted sarcophagi from about 500 B.C. form a noteworthy exhibit in Edward E. and Emma B. Ayer Hall.

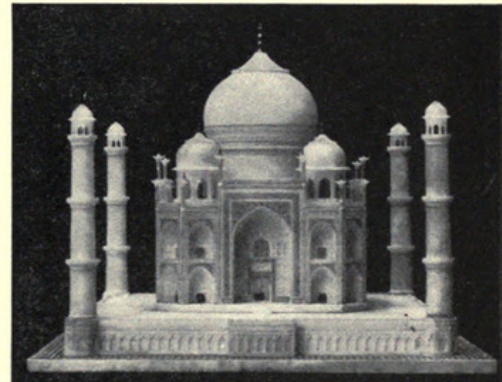
THINGS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

Model of the Taj Mahal

An alabaster model of the famous Taj Mahal, which exquisitely reproduces in miniature every important detail of that beautiful structure at Agra, India, is now installed among the exhibits in a new Oriental hall (Hall L) opened last month.

The model, in addition to giving an accurate impression of the appearance of the white marble mausoleum, is itself an interesting example of the native art of the country. The alabaster has been skillfully carved to represent this architectural gem of India, with its magnificent dome, and tall intricately fashioned minarets at each of the four corners of the temple's terrace faithfully reproduced. The strikingly executed white marble trellis-work screens of the original, which admit light into the central apartment, have been reproduced with painstaking exactness in the model.

The building of the Taj Mahal was begun in 1632 and finished in 1653, at the order of the Emperor Shah Jahan, to honor the memory of his wife, the Empress Arjumand Banu Bogam. The first word of her title "Mumtaz Mahal" (the Chosen One of the



India's Architectural Gem

Model of the Taj Mahal, carved in alabaster by a sculptor of the region near Agra where the original mausoleum stands. The miniature reproduces with delicate accuracy the intricate details of the building. On exhibition in Hall L of the Museum.

Palace) has been corrupted into "Taj," thus giving the mausoleum the name Taj Mahal. The structure cost nearly \$23,000,000, and 20,000 men worked daily for 22 years in erecting it. The spandrels, angles, and architectural details are inlaid with agates, bloodstones, jaspers and other semi-precious gems. The temple is 186 feet square; its dome reaches 191 feet in height.

The Museum's model of the Taj Mahal is a gift from Mr. Sidney Weiss, of Chicago.

YOU SHOULD READ—

Pheasants, Their Lives and Homes, by William Beebe, Director of Tropical Research, New York Zoological Society.

"A magnificent edition of Beebe's famous Monograph of the Pheasants, the most authoritative work ever produced on this important, colorful and fascinating family of birds," says Rudderford Boulton, Curator of Birds at Field Museum. Profusely illustrated with half-tones, and thirty plates in color by Fuertes, Lodge, Thorburn, and other artists. More than 600 pages of text.

At the MUSEUM BOOK SHOP: \$3.50.



Wilbur, C. Martin. 1938. "A Stay-At-Home Tour of Asia in New Museum Hall."
Field Museum news 9(10), 3-3.

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