

## The Discovery and Problems of the Piltdown Skull.

By F. LANGFORD.

The discovery of the Piltdown Skull was first described. A Sussex naturalist, Mr. Dawson, while walking over Piltdown Common was led to inspect a gravel pit, in which he found, much to his surprise, pieces of human skull of a peculiar nature. With the aid of Dr. Smith-Woodward several more pieces of skull were found, and by him first pieced together.

This description preceded a brief résumé of the evidence on which the supposed age of the skull was based. Certain similar gravel-beds in France, which contained remains of the same animal species as those found with the skull, are considered to be Pliocene, so that there are good grounds for considering the skull to be of Pliocene age. As, however, the associated remains show signs of being water-worn, they may have been washed down from deposits higher up. The difficulties experienced in the reconstruction of the skull were indicated; how, owing to the absence of important portions much difference of opinion had arisen as to the shape of the original owner's head. The middle of the front of the skull was missing, making it very difficult to reconstruct the profile of the cranium, which is of such value in estimating the degree of intelligence. Professor Keith's view in the reconstruction differed widely from Dr. Smith-Woodward's; the former favoured a high-domed, almost modern skull, whilst a low, primitive one was reconstructed by the latter.

Among the many peculiarities of the skull (which in many ways was similar to that of modern man), may be mentioned the inconspicuous eyebrow ridges—a marked contrast to Neanderthal man—a broad, flat nose, as evidenced by the two nasal bones, and the great thickness of the cranial bones.

The mandible found with it, and said by some to belong to it, was in nearly all its features ape-like; e.g., a large pointed canine tooth, molars which formed nearly parallel rows on either side, and a chin which, in all probability, sloped appreciably backwards. Many authorities were doubtful as to whether the mandible and skull belonged to the same individual, while several

attributed the mandible to an adult chimpanzee. As, however, the process is missing by which the mandible articulates with the skull, there is considerable room for doubt.

Whatever disputes might arise over these ancient relics, it was fairly definitely proved that at a much more remote age than people had thought, a human being of a comparatively high level of intelligence was living in Britain.

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## Civilisations of the Stone Age.

By MILES C. BURKITT, M.A.

This paper is mainly concerned with the Art of the Stone Age, though reference will have to be made from time to time to the various types of stone and bone implements that are characteristic of the various epochs into which man's early history can be divided.

Geology has divided the world's history in five volumes and an introduction namely :—

- Recent—fifth volume.
- Quaternary—fourth volume.
- Tertiary—third volume.
- Mesozoic—second volume.
- Palæozoic—first volume.
- Pre-Cambrian—Introduction.

History begins with the fifth, while, if the so called eoliths are really man-made tools, Humanity began in the third volume. This paper is mainly concerned with the later chapters of volume four (quaternary times), and covers a period of time that may run from somewhere about 10,000 B.C.—20,000 B.C. This period therefore ends some 5,000 years earlier than the first historical records of the Mediterranean basin. This fourth volume of the world's history (quaternary times) is sub-divided geologically into chapters by the various cold and warm phases of the great ice age, while it is sub-divided archæologically into various periods that correspond to the various civilisations that flourished at