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Review of Stations Paleolithiques du Sud-ouest Wyoming by Etienne B. Renaud

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And so in the case of the Race of Man:
 What is overt is not all.
 But as in the case of the firefly:
 The repressed may be mightily small!

Walt Taylor

Review of Stations paeolithiques du Sud-ouest Wyoming by Etienne B. Renaud from "Revue anthropologie", vo. 46, nos. 7-9, pp216-238.

Brief:- This article is similar in nature to one in English issued by the University of Denver last year. In the summer of 1935, two amateur archaeologists discovered near Lyman, Wyoming, on the Lincoln Highway a number of campsites and workshops having what appear to be Paleolithic types of implements similar to those of Eastern Europe. Dr. Renaud was notified of this discovery and promptly investigated; the results were the discovery of 1,100 implements of what he terms "Chellean, Acheulean, and Clactonian" types, and nine sites of these interesting occurrences. These sites do not extend much farther west than a few miles west of Lyman, and are found along an old river terrace.

The type of country in which these sites occur is dry, sand-gravel desert with no vegetation other than a low-lying desert shrub form. There are so-called ancient implements which are distinguished by their size and by being covered with patination and "desert varnish", the second type is that of small finished implements of quartzite without patination and "desert varnish". These so-called ancient implements have one other diagnostic feature which shows in a number of cases; this is "rolling."

Dr. Renaud's earliest type he calls "Chellean" and is characterized by "Chellean type of coup de poings". The material is chert and heavily patinated. A few "Pre-Chellean" and "Acheulwan" coup de poings have been recognized according to Dr. Renaud.

Critique:- The illustrated material in the article is rather poor, being incomplete, and none of the specimens shown show any form of the "rolling" which typifies the earliest group. For the most part the implements are similar to many which Dr. Holmes a number of years ago illustrates in his work on American lithic industries (B.A.E., bull. 65) as being rejects. Also chert is an easily patinated material; there are a number of specimens in the collections of the Laboratory of Anthropology coming from a cache near Tucumcari which show a patination to a depth of slightly over a quarter of an inch. These specimens are not very old, not much over two or three centuries. "Desert varnish", the other diagnostic item, has been noticed on many specimens from the Eastern area of New Mexico; this is indicative of age, but it may not take centuries under dry, hot, and windy conditions all of which are fulfilled at these sites. The unpatinated and unvarnished material and implements are all of quartzite, a material which undergoes but slight changes in relation to the other used materials. We might assume that these unpatinated implements may be of the Historic Period, and their makers used the terraces for their workshops as did the prehistoric Indians, and that the patinated implements are those rejects (as Holmes has pointed out) found in many workshops of the former Indians, but being of the Prehistoric period. Tipi-rings are also very abundant in the neighborhood of all these workshops.

Even with the above criticism, it is best that this material be further investigated by geologists and other archaeologists

to determine once and for all the exact nature of these implements and their occurrence and their relationship to other materials found in workshops with reject material in other areas.

Joe H. Toulouse, III

SUMMARY OF PLEISTOCENE FINDS IN NORTH AMERICA

Up until 1927 evidence of man older than Basket Maker II was very scanty. Finds had been made previous to this, but due to the lack of associated evidence, they were not given much attention. Then with the finding of an entirely different type of projectile point associated with an extinct species of bison near Folsom, New Mexico, the finds of ancient man started on an upward trend. People became Folsom Point conscious; even amateurs started on the search for ancient man. Due to this extensive searching on the part of Anthropologists, pot-hunters, and interested amateurs a number of new points have been found that are of an age comparable to the Folsom culture. These finds are represented by the Yuma points, Abilene points, Silver Lake points, Pinto points, and Gypsum Cave points. This, of course, has added more terms for the poor archaeologist to remember, but it is about the only sensible way for these different types to become known to all with the least amount of difficulty and confusion. It might be said that they are of comparable age to the best of our knowledge, if this be so, why do we not call them Pleistocene and eliminate all this bothersome terminology? So far the term "Pleistocene" is not being used to cover all these types, and it should not be used this way in the future, because these different types do represent different cultures and they must be segregated. It would be just as wrong to do this, as it would be to lump the Seri and Eskimo together and call them Recent.

These finds have been placed at an age, by competent geologists, somewhere between 10,000 to 15,000 years old, with the exception of the Abilene finds, which have been placed in the Sangamon interglacial by M. M. Leighton. The Wolf Creek find has also been placed somewhat older. The points found there are somewhat Yuman, but do not portray an ideal type of it. The bison found there is also an extinct type and differs from the bison found with the Folsom culture. The Wolf Creek bison is a flat-horn type and has been given the name Bison Figginsi. This find was made prior to the Folsom find, so the men in charge were not expecting any artifacts, and unfortunately these were not retained in situ. Consequently, this very valuable find has not been given very much publicity, let us hope that more of its nature will turn up in the near future.

Of these ancient cultures, human skeletal remains in direct association are now the most sought for. These finds bearing closely on the problem than any of the others are the Minnesota Woman, Brown's Valley Man, recovered by Jenks, and Homo novusmundus obtained by Figgins from the Cimarron Valley of New Mexico, near the Folsom site. The Minnesota Woman's extreme antiquity has been rudely disproved by Geolo-