U. S. to Watch Eclipse in Sumatra

Naval Observatory to Send Expedition in 1926.

By ISABEL M. LEWIS.
(Of United States Naval Observatory.)

Washington.—It is gratifying to American astronomers and others interested in the progress of science to know that the United States Naval observatory will carry on in the observation of total eclipses of the sun by sending an expedition to Sumatra to observe the total eclipse of January 14, 1926.

Through the unique opportunities that it possesses as a government institution under the control of the Navy department it is possible for the United States Naval observatory to advance the cause of astronomical science in some ways that are not within the reach of private institutions. This was evidenced in the sending forth of special time signals for the convenience of eclipse observers on the occasion of the last eclipse and in the observation of the eclipse from the navy dirigible, Los Angeles, by a group of scientists from the observatory under the lead of Capt. Edwin T. Pollock, superintendent of the Naval observatory.

An Augury for Success.

The interest shown by the present superintendent in promoting eclipse observations speaks well for the success of the eclipse expedition that will be sent forth from our national observatory before the year is over, the sixth since the year 1900. It is also in keeping with the traditions of the navy. Many astronomers of today recall the enthusiastic interest in the cause of astronomical research evidenced by Rear Admiral Colby M. Chester, superintendent of the Naval observatory in 1905, who headed an expedition sent out by this observatory to Africa and Spain to observe the eclipse of August 30, 1905, when a special line squadron of three vessels was detailed by the Navy department for the observation of the eclipse and a special appropriation of $5,000 was granted by congress.

An interesting report of the results of the observation of this eclipse, by the way, and of the eclipse of June 8, 1918, as well as notes of aviators on the eclipse of September 10, 1923, are contained in the "Publications of the U. S. Naval Observatory," second series, volume X, part 11, appendix, which has just recently come from the press.

There are some remarkably fine plates in this volume, photographs of corona and prominences, and drawings from negatives, in addition to the scientific discussion of the observations of these eclipses. The frontispiece is a reproduction in color of the painting of the corona of the eclipse of June 8, 1918, by the artist, Howard Russell Butler, who was a member of the Naval observatory eclipse expedition to Baker, Ore. There is also a reproduction in color of a painting by the same artist of the approach of the moon's shadow and of details in the structure of the prominences.

Earlier Eclipses Described.

An earlier volume of the "Publications of the U. S. Naval Observatory," published in 1905, dealt with results of the observations of the eclipses of May 28, 1900, and May 17, 1901, the former in North Carolina and Georgia and the latter in Sumatra. Both volumes are valuable contributions to the published records of eclipse observations. They will be followed by another volume dealing with the results of the observations of the eclipse of January 24, 1925, and January 14, 1926.

The eclipse of next January will be a fine one of four minutes' duration in the Indian ocean and over three minutes' duration in Sumatra, where it will occur in the afternoon. This eclipse will also be visible later in the afternoon and with shorter duration in Borneo and the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. It will occur on the east African coast near the equator shortly after sunrise.

If present plans are carried out there will be at least one other eclipse expedition sent out from the United States to observe this eclipse, the Sproul observatory expedition from Swarthmore college. This institution, whose department of astronomy is under the direction of Dr. John A. Miller, his been particularly active in observing recent eclipses. English, French and German observatories also are now planning to send expeditions.

Strange Finds Made in Clothes-Cleaning Plants

San Francisco.—The old saw that no man is a hero to his valet might be rewritten to say that no man, or woman either, is entirely a mystery to his or her dry cleaner, if one accepts the views of Miss Elizabeth Santry, receiver at a local dry cleaning establishment.

Miss Santry sums up her reactions severely as follows: "The men are unfaithful and careless. The women are stupid and indifferent."

She explains men are prone to leave love letters in their clothes, and that women make a habit of sending garments with jewelry adhering.

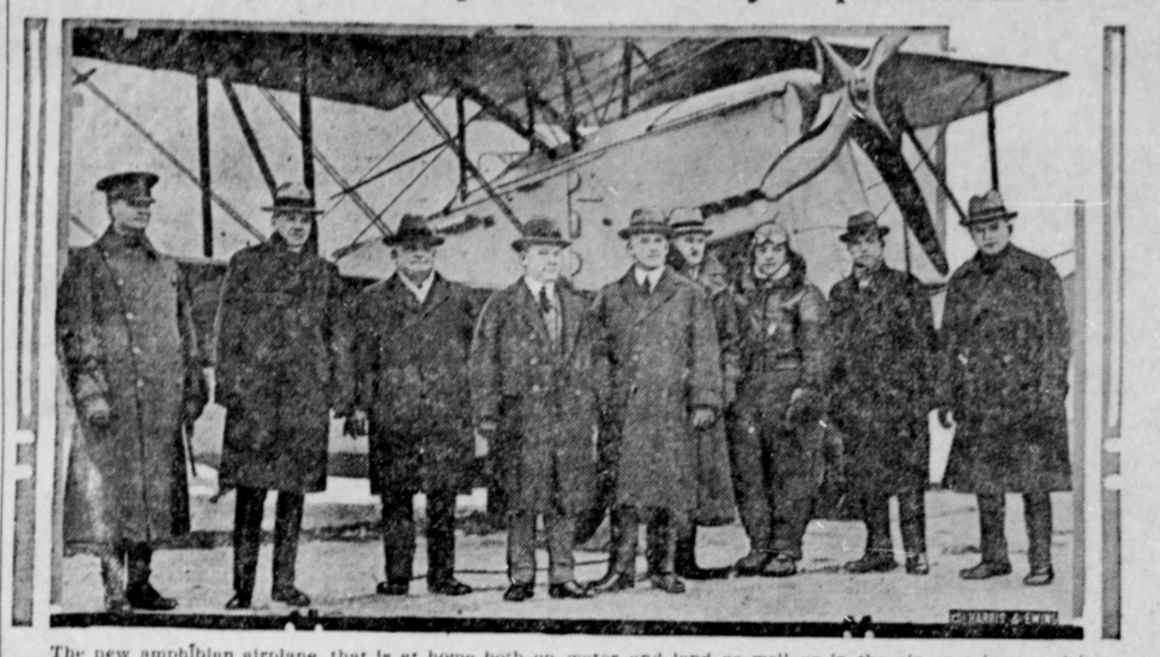
"Life in a dry cleaning office is just one piece of jewelry after another and one love letter on the heels of another. When we send the letters home in the cleaned clothes, wives always get them and trouble follows.

"I called one woman up at a hotel and told her we had her diamond sunburst, worth a fortune. She yawned and said, 'All right, dearie, I'll send a bellhop over some time today.'"

COLUMBUS MEMORIAL

Plans for a hemispherical tomb, topped by a latticed steel lighthouse 130 feet higher than the Eiffel tower, were displayed at a dinner to William E. Pulliam, receiver general of customs for Santo Domingo, as embodying many of the requisite features of a proposed Pan-American monument to Christopher Columbus, conceived by Mr. Pulliam ten years ago and now being promoted by him. B. W. Levitan is the architect and his plan, approved by the Pan-American Union, provides for a 1,080-foot lighthouse and wireless station on Torrecilla point in San Domingo harbor, flashing a four-ray beacon 200 miles. Its dome-shaped base would be a miniature of the earth north of the equator, with the routes taken by Columbus plainly indicated. Inside it Mr. Levitan plans a crypt, covered by a great crystal ball, to which the remains of the discoverer of America would be transferred from the Cathedral of Santo Domingo.

New Amphibian Airplane Viewed by Representatives



The new amphibian airplane, that is at home both on water and land as well as in the air, was inspected by a congressional committee at Bolling field. The machine was designed by Grover Loening of New York. Left to right in the group, standing before the new plane, are—Maj. H. B. Clagett, commander of Bolling field; Representatives Frank Reed, Florian Lampert, Randolph Perkins, A. S. Prall; Maj. Raycroft Walsh; Lieut. Wendell H. Brookley, who piloted the machine from New York to Washington; Mr. Loening, the designer, and Representative Roy O. Woodruff.

Seek for Cradle of First Civilization

Beloit College to Send Expedition to Africa.

Beloit, Wis.—Were the prehistoric ancestors of modern man natives of north Africa?

Will the theories of archeologists be revolutionized in regard to the cradle of prehistoric civilization?

Beloit college will send an expedition next summer to seek light on these matters, Dean George L. Collie, head of the department of anthropology at Beloit and curator of Logan museum, announced. Beloit will be represented on the expedition by Alonzo Pond, graduate of Beloit in 1918, a research worker for the college, and one who last year added the now famous Aurignacian necklace and other important specimens to the collection at Logan museum at Beloit, which, anthropologists say, is the finest teaching collection in the United States.

The expedition will be financed by Frank G. Logan, Chicago, patron of art and archeology. Pond will co-operate with M. Maurice Reygrasse, governor general of Algiers, whom Pond describes the leading African archeologist.

Men in France Seen as Offshoot.

Archeologists have accepted France heretofore as the birthplace of many of the ancestors of humans of today, and the cradle of prehistoric civilization, but reports of recent discoveries in French Algiers seem to indicate that the remnants found in the caves of France are merely those left by the offshoot from the original stock.

It may be that parallel civilizations were developed in France and in northern Africa, but the character of the material found in Africa indicates that the Aurignacian and Neolithic man may have lived there some time before the date set for the earliest remains of man found in Europe. Large quantities of archeological remains of early man have been found in Algiers—tools, pottery, dolmans and ornaments. The only collection of this material in the United States is at Logan museum, Beloit.

The expedition which is being sent out by Beloit to survey this territory will travel on racing camels in order to cover as much ground as possible in the short season in which it is possible for white people to travel in the Sahara. The party will start its journey in Africa some time in October, for before then and after March the heat is so intense that travel is impossible. The military escort, furnished by the French government, will vary with conditions and depend on the advice of the commanders of the various military posts in the sectors.

Route of Expedition.

The party will start from Algiers and go directly to Oran, on the Mediterranean, the next stop being at Ani Sefra, from whence it will continue south to Colomb Beshan, which is in the mountains along the eastern border of Morocco, thence to the Great Eastern Erg, finally arriving at Insalah. The return journey will proceed by way of the valley of Oned Mya, Inifek, Obargla and Biskra, ending at Tebessa. The entire trip probably will consume six months, covering about 4,000 miles.

Besides the archeological work, which is the main object of the expedition, opportunity will be offered to study the Touareg Hoggar, one of the most savage tribes of Africa, about which practically nothing is known.

The work of this party will be in practically virgin territory, as far as the archeologist is concerned, since the only research work that has been done there consists of one short trip made by M. Reygasse a short time ago. The discoveries made at that time were so important and aroused so much comment in the scientific world, that Mr. Pond determined on the expedition which is now being prepared.

Decorated for Her Heroic Acts

Mrs. Samuel Burleigh Milton, prominent Washington woman, has been presented with a coast guard life saving medal for the rescue of two persons from Chesapeake bay more than a year ago. In presenting the medal, Admiral Billard, commandant of the United States coast guard, declared that it was an unusual and conspicuous award and that it was bestowed only in cases of rare bravery. Mrs. Milton saved a boy from drowning in August, 1923, and also Miss Rose Cohen, a war worker from St. Louis.

Bamboo World's Best Timber Grass

Provides Wood of More Uses Than Any Tree.

Washington, D. C.—Chicago celebrates the two-score anniversary of chop suey, and illustrates how a luncheon fad among State street shoppers literally transformed hillside landscapes in Japan and China.

"Chop suey is a stranger to China—it is as American as the ice cream soda or 'hot dog,' but its making requires bamboo sprouts from China and Japan," says a bulletin from the Washington, D. C., headquarters of the National Geographic society. "When the United States began buying the succulent sprouts the effect upon the thrifty farmers of Honshu and Kiangsu was akin to a Nebraska granger finding acres of weeds turned to wheat. 'Edible bamboo' had been scrub bamboo; soon its yield vied with 'timber bamboo.'

Jack-and-the-Bamboo-Stalk

"Of course it did not take an American food fancy to show the Orient that bamboo sprouts were good eating. The Japanese variety of the grass which yields the most luscious sprouts is known as 'Moso'—a designation that goes back to the '24 paragons of Chinese filial piety.'

"Once a widowed mother, so the story goes, fell ill in midwinter, and longed for hot broth of bamboo shoots. Her devoted son dug down in the snow to find them for her, and the gods rewarded his piety by raising up shoots that grew to an amazing size. Japanese artists, to this day, perpetuate this Jack-and-the-bamboo-stalk legend by their drawings of the boy, Moso.

"The actual facts about the bamboo are fabulous enough. It is a grass, and provides wood of more numerous uses than any tree. One root may project a hundred straight, polished, jointed stems into the air; these grow as high as 120 feet; and their rate of growth has been marked at more than two feet a day.

"A Chinese or Japanese family eat bamboo, sleep under it, sail the river on it, write with a pen and paper made from it, comb their hair with it, cut their food with it, pipe water with it, and make their bird cages of it. Western people multiplied its uses by their inventions and employ it for airplanes, flutes, hairpins, porch screens and phonograph needles.

Comparable to Coconut and Date.

"Bamboo has been called one of nature's most valuable gifts to man. In parts of Kiangsu province, China, and in large tracts of rural Japan, it would not be amiss to speak of the bamboo age; keeping in mind, however, that the 'bamboo civilization' is much farther advanced than the 'date palm civilization' of the Sahara or the 'coconut palm civilizations' of the South Sea islands.

"The giant bamboos are true grasses. They send underground stems long distances through the soil, binding it together with hard, flintlike root stalks, or rhizomes. From this network of roots and rhizomes they send upward the most rapid-growing shoots of any plant known. While the shoots are so fresh and tender that they can be snapped off with the hand and cooked to an asparagus-like delicacy, bamboo wood is the strongest known timber for its weight, and its hard, siliceous exterior makes it serve for knives and whetstones.

"Despite its numerous uses the grass is valued also for its beauty. The trees of China and Japan lend a charm to many landscapes. 'They are waving plumes of delicate green foliage, which, whether seen against the skyline or backed by a darker mass of forest, always give a peculiar softness to the scene.'

"Makers of scores of manufactured products would be inconvenienced if they were deprived of bamboo; epicures would be saddened; but the American small boy would be desolated if the millions of bamboo poles shipped here every year were cut off. What would he do for his fishing rods?"

Court Rules Teeth Not Part of Body

Potsdam, Germany.—It's no crime here to knock a man's teeth out. A local court decided that there was no "bodily injury" involved when a piano player clipped a guest in a cabaret so hard that eight of his teeth came out. The court reasoned that the teeth—anatomically speaking—were not a part of the body. The learned judge opined that it was simple enough to buy some store teeth to replace the missing eight.

COAL MADE TO ORDER

In the University of Illinois laboratories at Urbana is this oak piling which was originally 30 feet long and which was driven for 30 hours with a 5,000-pound steam hammer into a bed of gravel. It is now 8½ feet long and part of the wood, by heat and pressure, has been transformed into coal. In the picture the coal formation is quite noticeable between the wires on the right-hand side of the piling.

Famous Brittany Church Destroyed by Lightning

Morlaix, France.—Fire destroyed the Fifteenth-century church of St. Jean-du-Doigt, near here, one of the most famous shrines in Brittany, during a storm. Lightning struck and set fire to an adjoining house and the flames ignited the church steeple. The villagers formed a bucket brigade, but their efforts were fruitless, and many wept as they saw their beloved church consumed. The famous reliquary containing a finger of John the Baptist, which drew pilgrims from all Brittany, was saved, as were the ancient sacred vessels.

The old timber bridge at North Seaton, England, spanning River Wansbeck, has been in use for well over a half century.

Gathering Books for the Sailors

More than 32,000 books have been received to date in the American Merchant Marine Library association's annual drive for books for seamen. Miss Anna H. Lingsweiler of the association is shown opening packages, which continue to pour in.

Cross-Words Crowding Gum-Chewing Habit

Washington.—Gum chewing may be dying out in the United States, its greatest stronghold. The gum-chewing stenographer may be in the process of being eliminated by the one who works cross-word puzzles.

At any rate, the imports of chicle, the raw material for gum decreased last year. Only $4,123,000 worth of the elastic substance derived from the milky juice of the sapodilla tree was brought in from Mexico, Honduras and the British West Indies—a decrease of a half-million dollars from the previous year, according to Department of Commerce figures.

Europe, however, may take up the gum chewer's burden. Nearly 3,000,000 pounds of American-made chewing gum, valued at $1,385,000, was exported during the year, of which France took the largest part.