

## REVIEWS

### A MEGALONYX TOOTH FROM THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, CANADA.

By CHESTER STOCK AND HORACE G. RICHARDS. *Science*, Vol. 110, No. 2870 (December 1949) pp. 709-10; figure.

### POSTGLACIAL MARINE SUBMERGENCE OF ARCTIC NORTH AMERICA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE MACKENZIE DELTA.

By HORACE G. RICHARDS. *Proc. Amer. Phil. Soc.* Vol. 94, No. 1 (1950) pp. 31-7; illustrations and sketch-map.

Both these papers record fossils found in the Northwest Territories.

"A *Megalonyx* tooth from the Northwest Territories" describes the discovery of the tooth of a ground sloth from the vicinity of Lower Carp Lake, north of Great Slave Lake. The ground sloths were a South American group that entered North America in Pliocene time, and left numerous remains in the Pleistocene of eastern and southwestern United States. They probably survived into post-Pleistocene time. This is the first record of a ground sloth from Canada, and is of special interest because of its subarctic occurrence. The authors note that a toe bone referred to *Megalonyx* had previously been found near Fairbanks, Alaska.

L. S. RUSSELL

In "Postglacial marine submergence of arctic North America" Dr. Richards gives a rambling summary of post-glacial marine submergence around the shores of North America north and west to Nome, and includes remarks on the migration of man and post-Pleistocene climatic changes of the Mackenzie Delta.

Dr. Richards' field work, made in the course of a brief visit to the Mackenzie Delta and Herschel Island, yielded some fossils and some notes on the formation of pingos.

As a whole the article lacks the true perspective which can only be obtained from a broad background knowledge of the region. This is also shown in the list of references which contains the titles of twenty-five papers but many giving a

general background knowledge of the regions are lacking, such as the reports of the Geological Survey of Canada. The value of the paper lies in the lists of fossils collected.

H. S. BOSTOCK

### NEW COMPASS OF THE WORLD: a symposium on political geography.

Edited by HANS W. WEIGERT, VILHJALMUR STEFANSSON, RICHARD EDES HARRISON. *New York: The Macmillan Company*, 1949. 8½ x 5½ inches; xix + 375 pages; maps and diagrams. \$5.50.

This is a new work, although its title may confuse those who know of the earlier 'Compass of the world', published in 1944, by the same group of editors. 'New compass' is a symposium of twenty-three articles written by nineteen authors. The nature of the book can be judged from the titles of its five "chapters" into which the articles have been grouped: "The Arctic and Antarctic spheres"; "The heartland and the expansion of the U.S.S.R."; "New frontiers in central Europe"; "Strategic areas and life lines"; "Asia: one half of mankind."

Among its purposes, the book is intended to bring the reader "up to date on post-war developments in political geography". Some of the articles are reprinted, with revisions, from various journals in which they appeared as far back as 1946, but the majority are published here for the first time. Richard Edes Harrison adds greatly to the usefulness of the symposium by his admirable maps and diagrams.

Readers of *Arctic* may be particularly interested in the four sections of the first chapter: "The Soviet Union moves north" by V. Stefansson, "Canada's northward course" by Richard Finnie, "Canada: power vacuum, or pivot area?" by J. W. Watson, and "The Antarctic sphere of interest" by Lawrence Martin. Other articles having "high-latitude" interest include "Yakutia and the future of the north" by Owen Lattimore, and "The rail, water, and air transport system of the Soviet Union" by E. C. Ropes.

The first two sections—by Stefansson

and Finnie—content themselves with a brief statement of recent developments in the northern parts of the U.S.S.R. and Canada, supplemented by the fervent hope that the resources of arctic North America may be developed with the energy and enterprise shown on the other side of the polar basin.

J. W. Watson's article is a commentary on military geography with some reference to northern Canada. Much of it has no direct link with arctic affairs—the author discusses British-Canadian relations from the Sudan to Esquimalt, and not always with complete historical accuracy. When, for example, on page 46 he states that

"In 1922 . . . British troops were involved in the war between Greece and Turkey . . . Canada refused to commit itself. . ."

he is less precise in his facts than a historian should be.

Only in the last two or three pages does the author deal directly with arctic Canada, and then he is inclined to give a military tinge to events which had other purposes. In writing

". . . it was announced in May, 1947, that nine joint bases would be established in the Arctic by the United States and Canada. While these are primarily weather and observation stations and civil air bases, they could easily be fitted out for military purposes. Canada has involved itself deeply in the protection of America."

he is giving an impression that is misleading. The stations referred to were of course *weather* stations, controlled by the weather bureaus of Canada and the United States. They were not in 1947, and are not now, "civil air bases"—and the depressing number of crashes at them by large aircraft gives ground for doubt as to whether anything can be done

"easily" in such regions, even if it were to be attempted. Writers on military subjects have a special obligation to check their facts, knowing the unfriendly political ends to which their material may be put.

Those familiar with Colonel Lawrence Martin's writings on the Antarctic will need no hints from this reviewer as to the nature of his article. Although a part of it is titled "The political geography of the Antarctic" it is really a highly selective statement about some explorations of that region. In his efforts to claim territory for his native land, Colonel Martin is sometimes unintentionally amusing, as when he writes:

"The young and competent discoverer of Antarctica revisited Marguerite Bay in November 1821. The United States settlement there at Stonington Island was reoccupied in 1947 by Commander Finn Ronne . . ."

He then continues

"With these discoveries in the years from 1819 to the present century begins the public demonstration by the United States of America that we intend to settle and establish sovereignty in the portion of Antarctica south of Cape Horn, and probably in all other parts of the continent within the Western Hemisphere."

Fortunately for world sanity and friendly relations with other nations, "The United States of America" intends nothing of the sort if we may accept official statements from Washington. While Colonel Martin's section of 'New compass of the world' provides entertaining reading and a few incidental facts not previously published, it should not be taken either in North America or abroad as a serious statement of United States policies in the Antarctic.

TREVOR LLOYD