

Comment by the Editor

ANTIQUITIES

Tutankhamen lay in his kingly sarcophagus for centuries, adorned with precious ornaments and surrounded by the familiar articles of his brief career. In the course of time the rock debris of other sepulchers and the sifting sands of the desert valley covered his tomb. The boy king was forgotten, and his grave, escaping the ravages of enemies and vandals, kept the secrets of his mode of life and concealed the glory of ancient Egypt.

More than three thousand years elapsed. Then one day came a man from a strange land and a different civilization. A scholar he was, who could reconstruct the story of the past from archeological remnants of a long-lost culture. Penetrating to the inner chambers of the tomb, he was filled with wonder and amazement at the treasures there revealed. It was as though the light of a modern day had shown back through the darkness of a million nights and illuminated the art and industry, the customs and foibles of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

Scattered hither and yon in the valleys of Iowa are the tombs of a race more ancient than the Egyptians. Primitive and simple was the culture of the Indian mound builders and cave dwellers, but

the archeological chronicles of their life, handicraft, and religion are none the less interesting for that. Indeed, the fragmentary and prehistoric nature of the materials should only add zest to the research. Almost any Iowa cavern or wooded ravine may contain proof of the antiquity of man or evidence of human evolution before the "discovery" of America.

Five years ago, Professor Charles Reuben Keyes, of Cornell College, working under the auspices of the State Historical Society, began an extensive archeological survey of Iowa. His object was to find and record the sites of prehistoric man in this State. Much progress has been made — more than a thousand aboriginal places have been listed, innumerable artifacts have been examined, two new cultures have been tentatively identified and named — yet much more remains to be done. Many sites are still undiscovered, while some that are known to exist have not been definitely located. Thus far the work has raised more questions than it has answered; but that was partly its purpose.

J. E. B.