

## ANTHROPOLOGY

Chairman: MRS. GEORGE F. MARTIN, Newburgh, Indiana

Paul Gebhard, Indiana University, was elected chairman for 1953

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### ABSTRACTS

**Agricultural ceremonies in Peru.** T. J. MAXWELL, Indiana University.—Throughout the Central Andes which lie in Bolivia and Peru, there is a strong development of ceremonialism which for the main part attempts to acquire divine favor for the benefit of the crops. The economy of these countries is highly dependent upon agriculture and by far the most numerous of the farmers are the Quechua and Aymara Indians. The ceremonies connected with each agricultural activity of the present day Indians have been compared with the ceremonies practiced by the Inca at the time of the Spanish conquest. The conclusion is that no ceremony has survived intact but that individual rites within the ceremonies of today are predominantly derived from the Inca. Spanish introduction has been limited for the most part to a few symbols from the Christian Church. The concept of earth mother which was known and venerated by the Inca has not only survived but increased in importance. There has been some identification of her with the Virgin Mary.

**Experiments with beveled edged projectile points and knives.** ARTHUR GEORGE SMITH, Norwalk, Ohio.—The practice of beveling the edges of chipped artifacts can be traced back into Paleo-Indian time. The object of this practice was not to spin a shaft in flight but to form a more efficient tool. Experiments made by the writer using such points to tip arrows proved that the bevel had no effect on the flight, and that they were too large to penetrate tough hide.

The small beveled points common in the Southeast were made in this fashion for ease of fabrication from refractory stones.

The large types were knives and they are the most efficient stone tool for flaying animals, cutting up meat or woodworking. When dulled they were resharpened making the blade narrower and the edges steeper. Some were worked into a rounded end. These are not only a good scraping tool but ideal for cleaning fish. In fact these tools are a Stone Age Boy Scout knife.

**The Aztec Festival of Xilomen.** PAUL WEATHERWAX, Indiana University.—This festival, which was held in the Aztec eighth month, beginning on June 25, was ostensibly a religious ceremony designed to honor the goddess of green corn, to bring the corn crop safely through the critical period of flowering and pollination, and to pacify the common people with free food and entertainment during the leanest month of the year. From incidental remarks made by the old Spanish chroniclers, however, it is believed that the celebration had still another significant function: it held the attention of the restless people at a time when it was imperative that they restrain themselves from wasting the green corn by eating it before it was fully developed.