

## Safeguarding THE Treasures OF THE Louvre:



How the Clever Police Dogs Now Guard the Old Masters in the Louvre. Painting by L. Beroud in the Salon, Showing the Spot from Which the "Mona Lisa" Was Stolen.

Paris, February 8. The French Government is determined that "Mona Lisa" shall not be stolen again. Extraordinary precautions have now been taken to prevent this or any other of the treasures of the Louvre from being taken away. One of the first steps taken to safeguard the Louvre was to employ a number of dogs of the clever breed known as police dogs. One of them guards every fifty feet of wall space day and night. No man can now put a hand over the railing in front of the pictures without having a dog after him.

The next protective measure was to connect the pictures by a rod so that all those along a certain wall space can be locked up from one lock. Formerly every picture hung separately. Under the new arrangement each line of pictures hangs upon one flat rod by hooks in the frame, which only admit the rod when it is turned edgewise to the opening in the hook. Then the rod is turned so that the picture cannot be removed from it, and is locked in that position. Little chambers have also been constructed behind the carved moldings near the ceiling, from which

the guardians of the Louvre can secretly watch every person in the rooms. The knowledge that a hidden guardian is watching them is expected to have a terrifying effect on would-be thieves. The pictures have also been connected by electric wiring. Any tampering with them closes a circuit and causes an electric bell to ring loudly. The return of "Mona Lisa" has only emphasized the necessity of guarding against similar occurrences in future. The confession of Vincenzo Perugia has revealed the astonishing ease with which he was able to

### Police Dogs Locking Rods, Electric Signals and Spy Chambers to Stop the Next Man from Quietly Walking Off with an 'Old Master' as Perugia Took "Mona Lisa."



1 TAKING THE PAINTING DOWN FROM THE WALL



2. Perugia Removes the Painting from Its Heavy Frame.

walk away with what is probably the most valuable art treasure in the world.

It was on the morning of August 22, 1911, that the world was startled by the announcement that Leonardo da Vinci's great masterpiece had been stolen. Its disappearance from its accustomed place in the Salon Carré, or Square Salon, was noted on August 21. To some reporters who inquired intelligently about its disappearance the officials on that day explained that it had been taken down to be cleaned. On the following day the government decided that it was useless to attempt to conceal any longer the fact that it had been stolen. Its value was estimated at \$5,000,000.

It is interesting to recall some of the extraordinary speculations and theories that were advanced concerning its disappearance. Some argued that it was incredible that a government possession of such incalculable value could be taken by a common thief. They said that some person of great influence, a Cabinet Minister or other high official, had taken the picture to photograph it, had damaged it accidentally and was keeping it until he could repair it.

Another theory was that the mysterious psychological and sex influence of the picture would prove to be the clue to its disappearance. It is well known that this exquisite and subtly fascinating portrait of Mona Lisa del Giocondo exerts a very diverse influence upon the two sexes. Men of impressionable temperament are strongly drawn toward it and feel a deep and even passionate pleasure in the radiations of its "enigmatical smile." Women, on the other hand, are, with equal frequency, repelled by it, and are even stirred to hate and fury by the same smile. The partisans of this theory fell into two groups. One group said that a man mentally disordered by the strange fascination of the picture must have stolen it to enjoy its subtle charms in secret. The other group argued that a woman had taken it to vent the rage of her sex upon it.

One thing became clear from the mass of theories and interesting facts brought out by the episode. The contents of the Louvre were not, and never had been, well safeguarded. Pictures worth from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000 could have been pulled off their hooks at a favorable moment any day without detection.

Officials, moreover, had been in the habit of lending the art treasures to artists and persons of influence. It was stated that 250 pictures had been stolen or "borrowed" in the course of the nineteenth century. Gradually the months wore on and



3. He Looks for a Place to Hide the Frame In.

the recovery of the great picture came to be regarded as hopeless. Then, on December 12, 1913, came the news that it had been found.

An art dealer informed the director of the Uffizi Gallery at Florence that an Italian workman named Vincenzo Perugia had taken the picture and had it in Florence. This statement was verified and the "Mona Lisa" returned to France.

The confession of Perugia shows that the subtle psychological influence of this picture had, indeed, much to do with his act. Perugia said: "I am a patriotic Italian. I saw that the Louvre was filled with masterpieces stolen by Napoleon from Italy. I longed to take something back."

"I thought of taking a Raphael, a Titian, a Correggio and several other masterpieces. But the Mona Lisa seemed to me much more appealing. 'Here she is, I give her back to my country. It is the greatest sacrifice of my life.' From Perugia's confession it appeared that he had worked as a painter for a decorating contractor of 280 Rue St. Honore, Paris. He worked as a painter on the Louvre for some weeks, but gave up this work on January 24, 1911. Between this date and August 21 he meditated upon and carried out his plan for stealing the Mona Lisa.

It was 7 o'clock in the morning of August 21 when he entered the Louvre. The building was open then for the workmen and guardians or caretakers, but the general public was not admitted that day. Perugia wore the long blouse commonly used by French workmen, especially by house painters. He looked, of course, like a man working on the building. He walked straight up to the picture in the deserted Salon Carré and took it from the hooks by which it was hung. A man standing on the floor could reach his hand to the top of the small picture.



4. He Leaves It Behind a Door at the Head of a Stairway.

Then he realized that the frame would be heavy and hard to conceal. He quickly removed the picture from the frame. He left the picture lying in the salon and carried the frame to a doorway a few yards away at the head of a small stairway and left it outside the door.

Then he returned for the picture. He thrust it under his loose blouse, where it was scarcely noticeable. Hearing footsteps, he decided to leave hurriedly by the small stairway where he had left the frame. As he went out he put the key in his pocket to prevent any one pursuing him that way.

Having reached the ground, he crossed the Courtyard of the Sphinx, and then passed out through the gateway known as the Porte Visconti, which faces on the Seine. The French authorities summoned Perugia, together with all the workmen who had worked on the Louvre at the time of or just before the theft. He proved that he had not worked there since January 24, and this seemed sufficient explanation. No one discovered that he was the thief until he revealed it himself.

The New Method of Protecting the Pictures in the Louvre by a Locked Rod, Which Holds a Complete Line of Them So That They Cannot Be Removed. Figure 1 Shows the Rod Locked So That the Frame (Here Drawn Without a Picture) Cannot Be Removed. Figure 2 Shows the Rod Unlocked and Turned to Permit the Removal of the Pictures.



Fig. 1. THE ROD LOCKED

Fig. 2. THE ROD UNLOCKED



5. He Returns and Hides the Picture Under His Blouse.



6. He Goes Through the Door, Locks It Behind Him and Walks Down to the Street.

## Americans Who Lived in Underground Prairie Homes 3,500 Years Ago

PROFESSOR ROBERT W. GILDER, archaeologist for the University of Nebraska, has made the curious discovery that the familiar "buffalo wallows" of the West were never made by buffaloes. They are, instead, the ruins of underground dwellings in which thousands of years ago lived a race which vanished other thousands of years ago. The "wallows" were thought to be what their name indicates even by the Indians, thus proving that the red men themselves knew nothing of the race that made the dens.

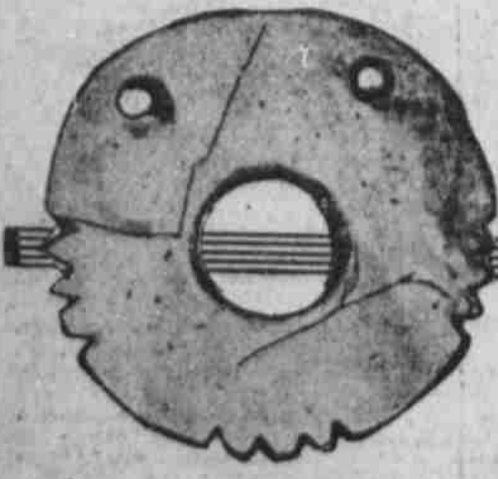
The modern Indians were just as much surprised as the whites when they discovered what Professor Gilder was taking out of the old indentations. The archaeologist would point to one of the wallows and then tell his little audience just what he would find in it. This he was enabled to do by reason of the curious similarity in the arrangement of and the things found in the dens. The Indians were appalled, however, by what they thought his uncanny insight, and now they call him "Man-Who-Sees-Through-the-Ground."

This curious people were skilled in the art of making pottery and in turning out realistic heads and figurines in clay and stone. All their underground houses and caves were built in the shape of squares. These rectangles, oddly enough, do not square like many primeval dwellings, with the points of the compass, but with the North Star, which is a few degrees off due north. The majority of the caves have their entrances at the south, and some have inclines fifty feet long leading down to the door.

This mysterious people dwelt by millions on the prairies. Professor Gilder has uncovered near the west bank of the Missouri River, near Omaha, what appears to have been a metropolis of the race. Ethnologists who have examined the relics have found no resemblance with either the pre-Columbian Indians or with the mound builders. There is no clue to indicate who these people were or how they were wiped out. Nor is it clear what conditions

forced a whole race to live in burrows beneath the ground. However, among the ruins of the long-ruled burrows Professor Gilder has found a little carved head of pink soapstone. The little pink head is Egyptian in every feature. It is delicately carved and highly polished. It is Egyptian in headdress, having even the rectangular earguard worn by the Egyptians. It is more than Egyptian. It resembles the face of Ramesses II, himself, if the marble busts in Oriental museums to-day are images of the Egyptian King and the mummy unearthed in the sands of Egypt in 1881 and now reposing in the Boulaq Museum at Cairo is really his corpse. Another clay image has the pronouncedly sloping eyes peculiar to Chinese.

Geologists have furnished some assistance to the archaeologists in determining the probable age of the ruins. It takes years for black soil to accumulate where it is not washed in. This soil accumulates from decaying grasses. Darwin once made an experiment in the accretion of soil, and computed that but little over an inch collected in a hundred years. How many centuries, then, may have gone while these two or three feet of black soil have gathered on the sunken roofs of the fallen cave homes! At least a thousand years before Christ, say the geologists, our cave-dwellers dropped into oblivion and their homes had begun to decay. In uncovering something over thirty of these homes Professor Gilder has established the general character of the caves and their contents. The floor is strewn with charred sticks, reeds, coarse grasses and charred corn-cobs. In the floor of every cave is found a cache where most of the domestic utensils and the other valuables are hidden. It is in this cache that the archaeologist always seeks. Sometimes there are several in the same cave. The mouth of the cache is always found plugged with a layer of burnt clay. On top of this is a layer of ashes. Beneath all, the cavity hides like a jug or bottle, often to the size of a hoghead.



A Shell Gorget Worn as an Ornament by the Women of the Vanished People.



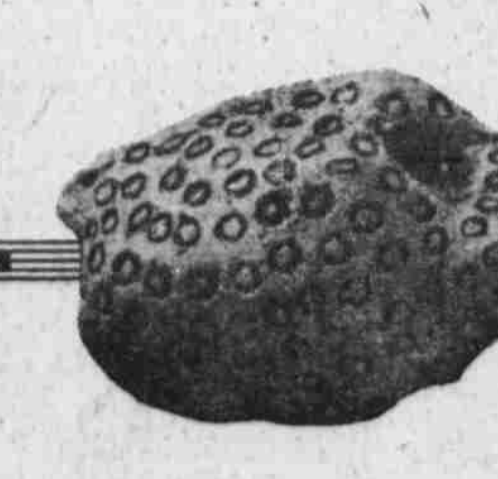
A Fish Hook of Bone. Note the Curious Arrangement of Notches.



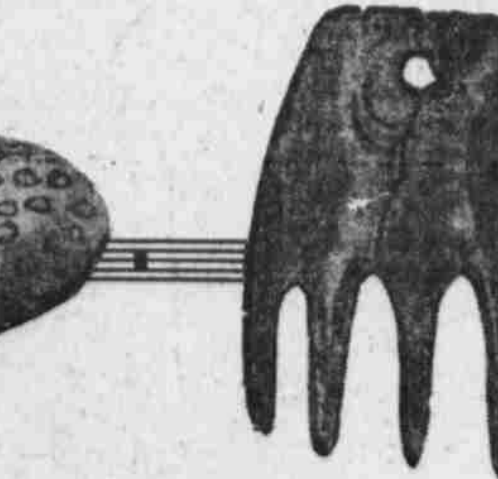
A Clay Head That Depicts, No Doubt, the Facial Characteristics of the Vanished Race.



Soapstone Head with Marked Egyptian Characteristics Found in a "Wallow Ruin."



A Pipe Made in the Shape of a Frog. The Material is Glazed Clay.



An Elk Horn Comb Used by an American Woman 3500 Years Ago.