

Christians Take Up Work on the Island of Tiber Begun by Pagans

ROME, April 14.—On the island of the Tiber, among the followers of St. John of God, there is a brother, Fra Arsenio, who is a famous dentist and who charges no fee for his work. His only diploma is a large sack full of the teeth that he has pulled.

An American lady wintering in Rome asked a man who knows all about Rome, ancient and modern, to give her some information about the "dentist monk" whom she saw in Rome who pulls teeth free, as her servant had a toothache and she, the lady, was not prepared to pay a dentist's bill, while it was a bother to have the maid about with a swollen face. The man directed her to the island once sacred to the worship of Aesculapius and now the home of Christian priests who minister to the sick, gave her the name of Fra Arsenio and told her the story of the island—a story of temples and their sick worshippers, of worn-out slaves exposed and left to die there of a charitable task begun by pagans, continued by Christians and carried on for twenty-two centuries—a curious story even for Rome.

Many centuries ago when Rome was but a small village perched on the Palatine hill, surrounded by woods and marshes and inhabited by a community of shepherds who grazed their flocks on the uplands of the Velia and the Oppian, there was down in the valley where flowed the river Tiber a spot among the reeds that grew on its banks where the waters of the stream rushed and surged as they broke against a low, wild island. It was merely a strip of land in the middle of the river, across which the Etruscans gazed with surprise at the square fortifications of the new people who had founded a city high up on the opposite bank. It was almost covered over and hidden by the waters that surrounded it, unexplored and therefore unknown.

This island in the course of time acquired a legendary origin. It was said that when the Romans expelled the Tarquins and seized their goods the golden corn was cast from the fields of Mars and thrown into the river. The current carried it toward the low island, the blind beggar and the sandbank. Here it stopped and the sand and mud of the river were mixed with it until it rose above the stream and became an island, and the Insula Tiberina, or Island of the Tiber, was thus formed.

Livy and Plutarch and other ancient writers recount the legend, but modern critics have explained it away and they only connect the name of Tarquin with the island of the Tiber, inasmuch as under him Roman and Etruscan worship became united and from the capitol they gradually spread down the river.

Ancus Marcius, fourth king of Rome, is said to have built a bridge of wooden piles—subleca, hence Pons Subleca—between the Janiculum, which he fortified to check the incursions of the Etruscans and the island. This was the first bridge across the Tiber and it was the bridge Horatius Coles held against the hosts of Porcena.

No iron was used in its original construction nor in subsequent repairs. Its memory lasted through the middle ages. In 1484 Pope Sixtus used the remains of its foundations of travertine to make cannon balls, and in 1577 the last traces of it were blown up to clear the bed of the river.

The bridge gave but small fame to the island, which remained uninhabited for several centuries, in fact until the year 591 B. C. Then pestilence raged in Rome and spread over all the city, with its narrow streets and high houses overcrowded with slaves, and for three long years the inhabitants died daily by hundreds.

So the senate sent to Epidaurus to request that Aesculapius, the tutelary god of that place, might come to avert the evil. The ambassadors returned with a sacred snake, the emblem of the god, which had found its own way into their ship and encircled itself in the cabin. When they arrived in the Tiber, the snake glided from the ship and swam to the island disappeared there, and in consequence a temple was built on the island to the Greek god of Medicine, whose worship was thus introduced into Rome.

The temple was called Asklepieia and more than a sanctuary or a place of worship was a hospital where poor people who could not afford to pay the doctor to cure their maladies, flocked and prayed and hoped that their health would be restored. Belief in the supernatural powers of divinity and therefore in miracles then was as strong as it is still today in many parts of Italy.

The temple had a community of priests who, besides attending to the worship of the god, ministered to the crowd of poor patients that came to be cured, and recommended remedies, baths and diets generally, which very often proved more successful than the intervention of the Greek god. The patients slept under the porticoes, and so great was their faith that they expected to be cured with the first light of dawn on the following morning.

The site of the temple was well adapted for a hospital, as it was outside the city walls and in an isolated position. It was patronized by the very poor, the freedmen who worked in the factories, the soldiers of the legions and the sailors from the galleys moored on the river.

There was a custom in Rome which contributed in keeping the porticoes of the Asklepieia crowded. The owners of slaves afflicted by incurable maladies and therefore worthless used to have them carried to the island and left there.

Originally the owner of a slave had the right to kill him when he had no further use for him, and before the temple of Aesculapius was built on the island and his worship instituted in Rome, when a slave became ill beyond hope of recovery he was killed by his master. The priests of the Greek god acquired celebrity for curing the poor, and the god sometimes performed miracles, so that diseased slaves were no longer killed, but sent to the Asklepieia, and in such numbers that the porticoes at times were full of them.

Emperor Claudius abolished the custom and decreed that any slave abandoned or exposed should become a free man, and that any person who killed a diseased slave was guilty of the crime of murder. As a result the number of patients at the Asklepieia diminished. But the address of the place remained, and the grove of sacred trees that adorned the island, the shrines to other gods which in time were erected close to the temple, the many votive offerings which were hung on the walls as testimony of the healing powers of the Greek god, and the shapes given to the island, which was made to resemble a triangle, with an obelisk to serve the purpose of a mast, were not sufficient to change the aspect of the place, which was that of a hospital for poor people, a refuge

of poor, diseased humanity. Several inscriptions in Greek have been found bearing evidence of cures obtained through intercessions to the god. Celsus, the blind beggar, prostrated himself before the altar of the god and placed the five extended fingers of his right hand on it. He touched his eyes and recovered his sight.

Lucius, another beggar who was unable to sleep owing to great pains in his side, was cured by placing ashes from the sacrifices he offered on the affected side. The

Statue of Aesculapius from the Vatican Museum.

The Basilica of St. Bartholomew with the pillar that supplanted the obelisk.

The island of Tiber with its two bridges intact.

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Prattle of the Youngsters

One day small Edna's grandmother showed her a large old-fashioned cent. "Grandma," she said, after staring it up. "If they had such big cents when you was a girl, the dollars must have been whoppers."

It is not every one who proves the ineffectualness of inocula cures at 7 years of age. The father of the lad, who was about 7 years old, was a physician, and when the child found difficulty in getting to sleep was ready with advice. "Will tell you something that will soon get you to sleep," he said. "You begin and count slowly up to 100, and then another hundred, and so on, and before you know it you'll be sleeping. Try it tonight when you go to bed."

Everything remained quiet that night until the father went to retire. As he

passed the boy's bed a little voice piped: "Papa." "Yes, my boy." "What comes after trillions?" But the wakeful youngster's query was not answered; his father had vanished into his own bedroom.

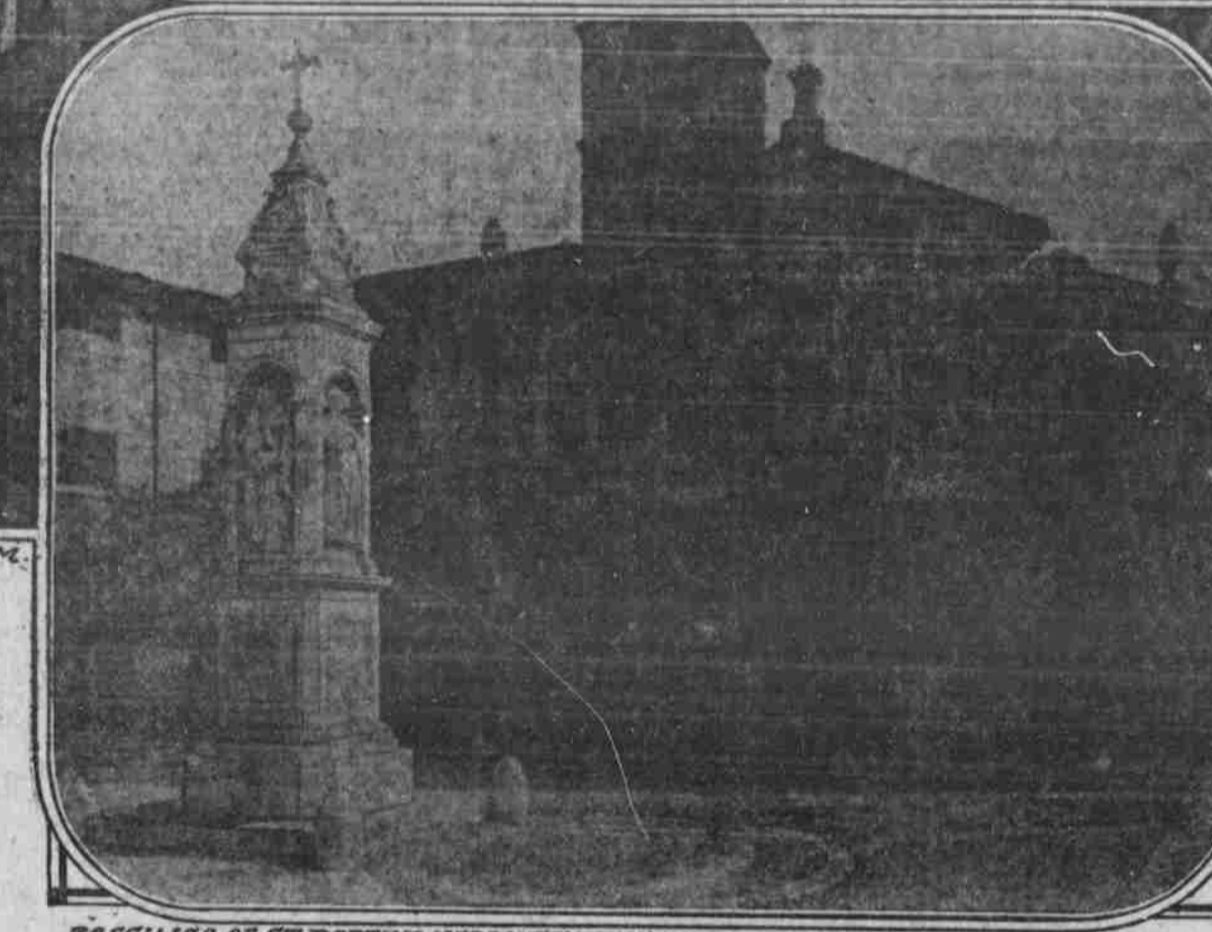
Sandy and Donald McArthur were newly imported from the Scottish hills and the rich twang to their speech was a source of much amusement to the school children, who almost without exception did not come from English speaking homes themselves.

When reading about bees Sandy says, "Oh, I sleep in a wee bit of a hawk at home." When urged to remove his top coat, which fitted uncomfortably the small pants, he steadily refused. When the teacher persisted in her efforts he at last cried out in desperation: "But I can't take off me coat—me pants is bust."

discovered by two cowboys riding along the Bad Lands of Montana. One of these noticed a protruding, weathered bone coming out of the side of a cliff and held it to be a buffalo bone, while the other took the view that it was probably a fragment of a worthless fossil animal. In order to prove his theory he dismounted and proceeded to kick off the tops of precious ribs exposed above ground. These, being brittle, immediately fell in broken pieces, thus conclusively proving to the dissenting cowboy that they were fossils and not the bones of a modern buffalo. Soon afterward another ranchman, a bit more wise, heard of the find, realized the possible value of the buried bones, having been around the camps of the fossil explorers, and traded a six-shooter to the first cowboy discoverer for his interest in the bone claim. The new owner sold his right for a small sum to Barnum Brown, one of the field explorers of the Museum of Natural History's paleontological depart-



THE ISLAND OF THE TIBER WITH ITS TWO BRIDGES INTACT.



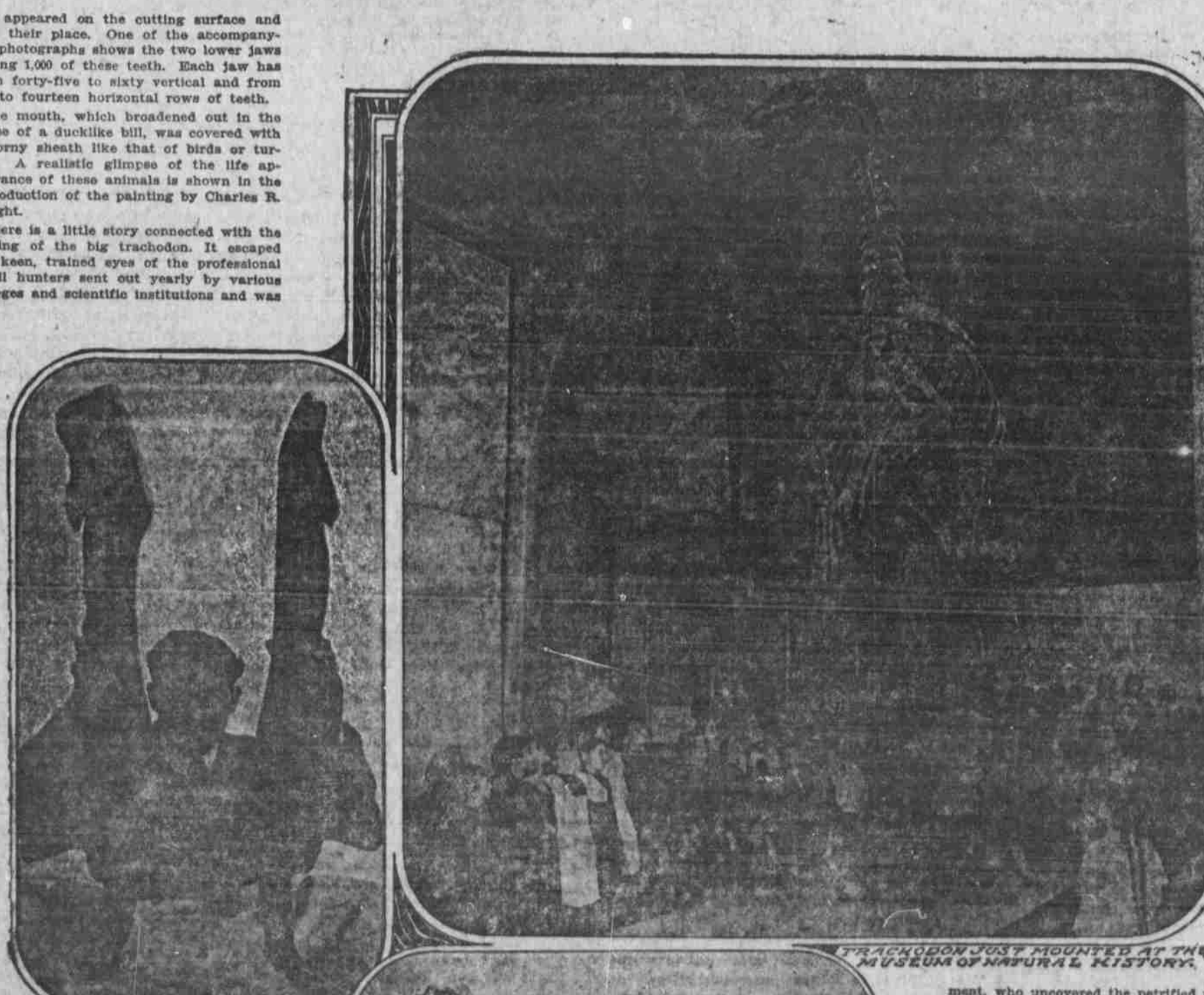
BASILICA OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW WITH THE PILLAR THAT SUPPLANTED THE OBLISK.

Citizens Who Inhabited Montana Three Million Years Ago

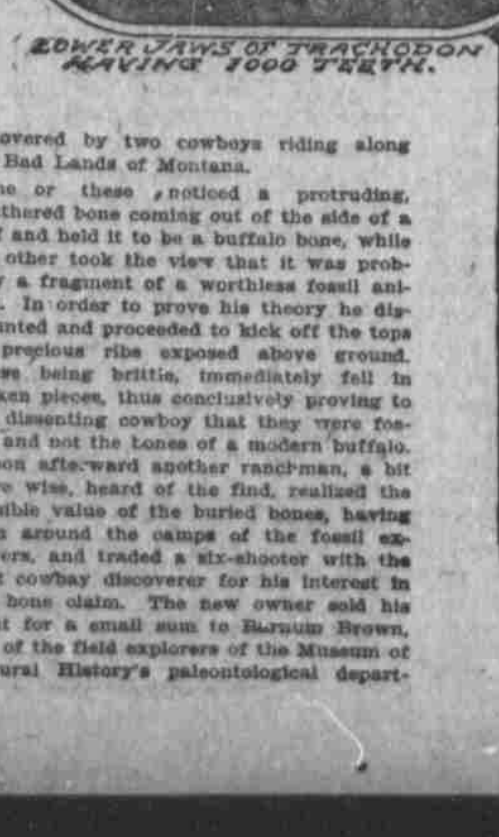
NEW YORK, April 25.—Prof. Henry F. Osborn, curator of vertebrate paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History, has just put on exhibition in the new dinosaur hall two specimens of the trachodon or duck bill dinosaur, a gigantic herbivorous creature which roamed western America in primeval times. One specimen is shown in a rearing attitude, which was probably a customary pose of the trachodon in life, while the other alongside is represented as feeding.

An idea of the size and appearance of the trachodon may be had from the accompanying picture, in which a group of school children are seen looking the big fellow over. In mounting the other specimen Prof. Osborn has departed from the usual methods and has supplied a view of a dinosaur at dinner as it might have been seen some millions of years ago. This is the first time that such a thing has been shown. The trachodon is shown feeding on various tropical fruits and plants. Casts have been made of various specimens of fossil fish, leaves, rushes, etc., found near the remains of the trachodon, and these have been scattered about the mounted specimen, thus giving an accurate picture of the creature in the act of feeding.

The queer shaped monster was nearly thirty feet long. The trachodon, which is shown standing, towers up kangaroo fashion some seventeen feet in the air, the two short fore limbs only a few feet in length, dangling in marked contrast to the long and powerful hind limbs. The might reptile was one of the ancient inhabitants of Montana and flourished some three or more millions of years ago, during the upper cretaceous period, near the close of the age of reptiles. One of the remarkable features of the beast was that in his large head, nearly four feet long by two feet wide, there were some 2,000 teeth, the greatest number possessed by any animal in the world. This dental battery was used in nibbling fruits and bearing up and munching various water plants and other soft substances which grew on the lake and river bottoms, as the dinosaur was entirely herbivorous. The simple teeth were closely packed together, were rodlike and slightly notched, and were arranged like a mosaic pavement. The enamel was only on one side, on the inside in the lower jaw and the outside in the upper jaw. As the teeth were worn away another



TRACHODON JUST MOUNTED AT THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.



LOWER JAWS OF TRACHODON LEAVING 2000 TEETH.



THE APPEARANCE OF THE TRACHODON, SHOWS A MINIATURE BY CHARLES KNIGHT.

church in 1316, and gave it the name of St. Bartholomew, which it still bears. The body of the saint was brought from Beneventum and placed here.

Opposite this church is the Hospital of St. John of God, also called Benetrattelli, under the care of a confraternity of brethren who nurse the sick and continue traditions of the priests of Aesculapius. The island is thus still dedicated to the spirit of healing.

In 1656 the whole island was converted into a hospital for those stricken with the plague. A small garden, probably all that remains of the sacred grove of pagan times, is now used as a morgue.

Fragments of the ancient temples are still to be seen, although the island has been greatly modernized and altered. Six years ago when the new embankment of the river was being built the foundations or pits of the main temple were found filled with discarded ex-votos, arms, hands, feet, breasts, modeled in terra cotta.

There are still the two bridges that connected the island with the banks of the Tiber. One, the ancient Pons Fabricius, built of stone in the place of the old wooden one in 60 B. C. by L. Fabricius, has two arches and a small flood arch in the central pier. It is now called Ponte Quattro Capri (Bridges of the Four Heads), from two herms of Janus which still adorn its parapet, and it is still intact, having withstood the vicissitudes of nearly 2,000 years.

The other, now called the Ponte St. Bartholomew, originally built by Lucius Cestius in B. C. 46, and restored by the Emperors Valentinian, Valens and Gratian, was pulled down by the municipal authorities in 1388 and rebuilt with the exception of the central arch, which is still the ancient one.

In the center of the piazza, in front of the Church of St. Bartholomew, where once stood the obelisk that formed the mast of the island ship, there is now a pillar with four niches adorned with the statues of St. Bartholomew, St. Paulinus of Nola, St. Francis and St. John of God, four humble men who spent their lives in works of charity, ministering to the sick. They have taken the place of the Greek god Aesculapius, just as the Franciscan monks and the followers of St. John of God have taken the place and are still doing the work of the pagan priests.

The Italian government has seized the monasteries, which are now divided into tenement houses, but a narrow strip of land has been left to the monks, and here they have a small hospital of seventy beds where they devote themselves entirely to the care of the sick poor, some twelve hundred of whom pass through the hospital every year, besides the many cases relieved in the reception rooms.

Such is the Island of the Tiber today. Sick slaves are no longer exposed and left to die here, but every lady living in Rome will send her servant girl to the hospital in case of need.

Prima Facie Evidence. "Come, Willie," said his mother, "don't be so selfish. Let your little brother play with your marbles a while." "But," protested Willie, "he means to keep them always." "Oh, I guess not." "I guess yes. 'Cause he's swallowed two of 'em already."

carvorous dinosaurs, namely, the tyrannosaurus, and the three-horned monster, the triceratops. These were the deadly enemies of the trachodons and constantly attacked and preyed upon them.

The remains of the dinosaurs of herbivorous types are more frequently found than those of the flesh-eating dinosaurs, and their skeletons are likewise preserved more complete, all the parts being usually united together. Remains of large carnivorous dinosaurs are never found intact, but scattered in different localities.

Mining a big dinosaur's remains without damaging the brittle bones is a slow and delicate operation, requiring special care and skill. The uncovering of the trachodon's skeleton was successfully accomplished by Mr. Brown and one assistant after some three weeks of patient work, including blasting, digging and tunnelling in the sides of the cliff.

To insure safety during shipment and to aid in the setting of the much fractured bones they were handled after the fashion of a surgeon's treatment of a broken leg. The bones were treated with shellac and incased in layers of plaster and strengthened by strips of wood tightly bound around with wet rawhide. The various sections of the beast were then boxed up and carried by wagon to the railroad. The trip one way took fourteen days and was as long and dreary a bit of hauling as any would want to undertake.

When the trachodon was received at the laboratory of the museum there was another task requiring patience, time and skill. The massive and fragile bones had to be cleaned and adjusted, steel frames were had to be prepared to support the skeleton and the final mounting of the gigantic reptile's skeleton in a lifelike attitude required anatomical study as well as mechanical construction. Chief Preparator Adam Hermann and his assistant, Charles Lamb, worked under Prof. Osborn's direction, while Otto and Charles Falkenberg made the delicate casts showing the fruit, foliage, etc., used on the base and modeled in the few missing parts on the skeleton.

As will be seen, the trachodon was shaped somewhat like a kangaroo, with short fore legs, long hind limbs and an extremely long tail. The fore legs were about one-sixth the size of the hind ones. It is thought from the size and shape of the foot bones that the front legs could not have borne much weight and were probably used only in supporting the front part of the body when the animal was feeding and in aiding it to recover an upright position. There are four toes on the front foot and the hind legs have three developed toes ending in broad hoofs.

One of the principal features in the makeup of this monster vegetarian was the long tail. This was adapted to propel the creature's body at a rapid rate in water and likewise served to balance it when assuming an upright position on land. The trachodons are thought to have been rapid and expert swimmers. Having no armor or means of defense, their tails afforded them a means of escape from the attacks of the land dinosaurs by swiftly propelling them into the water far out of the reach of their enemies.

In fact, on the left hind foot of this skeleton there are three sharp spines, which are the marks of the teeth of some hungry flesh eater.

The disappearance from the face of the earth of the trachodons and the contemporaneous carnivorous dinosaurs about the end of the cretaceous age was almost simultaneous the world over. Paleontologists, notably Prof. Osborn, have several explanations to present in regard to this, one being that the beasts were unable to cope with changing and unpropitious conditions, which cut off their food supply.