

Section, will be present in his official capacity, and services of the necessary photographers and observers have been arranged for. Through the cooperation of the Pan-American Airways the best means of air transportation has been obtained.

It is expected that the survey will not only reveal much new information regarding unknown sites in Middle America, but will serve to demonstrate further the great value of the aeroplane to archaeological research.

*A Chinese
Pottery Jar*

ALTHOUGH not immediately striking in appearance, the Chinese bottle-vase recently added to the Museum's collections and reproduced on Plate VIII is, nevertheless, a piece of considerable artistic and historical importance. The light grey clay from which the piece is made is a ware most commonly associated with the Han dynasty in China, and more closely with the Later or Eastern Han which ruled from about the beginning of our era till the second century A. D. Yet the form of this vessel is not strictly Han: it is somewhat too graceful, its contours too slight, whereas typical Han pieces are rather more rugged and stout. It appertains, indeed, more closely to the shapes prevalent during the T'ang and later dynasties, wherefore it is possible, on

this evidence, to refer it to the fifth or sixth century; in other words it is perhaps a transition piece made of the characteristic ware of one epoch but in the shape of the succeeding.

The most interesting feature of the jar, however, is its decoration, which, apart from the turned lines on the shoulder and the bands about the neck, consists in the repeated impression of a big-horned sheep stamped in rows about the body.

This stamp is a decorative motive that can be classified as of the Animal Style, which, though its origin, spread, and influence is as yet insufficiently understood, is found uniting the artistic expressions of different and distant peoples. We know the Animal Style penetrated Mongolia at an early date; whether or no Chinese craftsmen adopted it extensively is not yet, we feel, clearly demonstrated; if they did they altered its distinctive qualities so considerably that the Style might be said to have invigorated Chinese art during the Han dynasty without materially altering its course or its fundamental principles.

The present jar is almost certainly of Chinese workmanship; the stamp, on the other hand, is not a Chinese adaptation of the Animal Style but more purely Mongolian or Siberian in character. Though much conven-



CHINESE POTTERY JAR OF THE ANIMAL STYLE

tionalized, the sheep is bold and vigorous in design, displaying the keen appreciation for animal form so distinctive of its origin. We are probably safe in assuming that the Chinese potter, finding a fragment of bronze harness furniture from Mongolia with this little beast cast on it, made himself a small stamp to decorate his vessel in this unusual fashion.

It is only possible to indicate in so brief a note as this the important questions such a piece brings to the fore and to depend upon the future to elicit correct answers.

The jar is repaired and restored slightly about the neck and lip, but is otherwise intact. It is important to note that it is one of a pair, the mate being now in the Louvre.

*The False Door
of Ptah-Arit*

THIS false door of limestone came from the tomb of Ptah-Arit, or Ari, as he is variously called in the inscriptions. The former name means, literally, "The god Ptah has made." The door belongs to the Sixth dynasty (about 2600 B. C.), and probably came from Sakkara. When *in situ*, it must have been erected in the chapel of the tomb, near the upper end of the concealed shaft which was situated just outside the chapel and lead from the underground burial chamber to the top of the