

CHRISTIAN PLAQUE OF BRONZE FROM THE THEATER
AT MINTURNÆ, ITALY

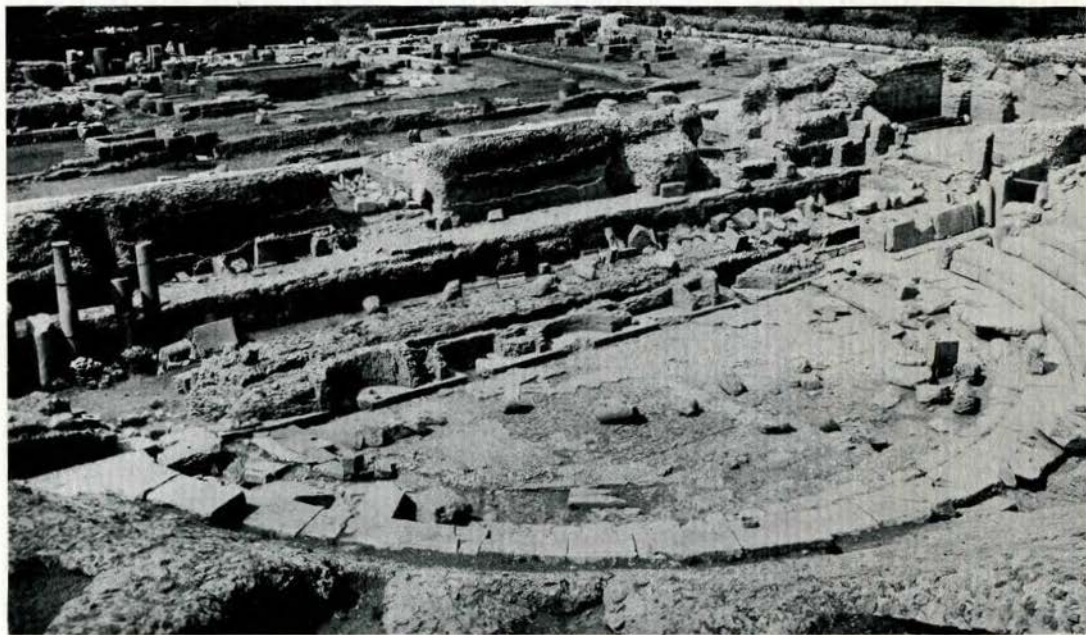
enough duplication of stone and bone material to show that it belongs to the same culture that was found near Cordova, Alaska, while all the rest consisted either of wood or of grass mats, things that do not ordinarily have any chance of survival. Some of the stone objects found on the surface of the cave were of the same type as those excavated, testifying to the antiquity of the surface material, though it is probable that the dug-out canoes are of comparatively more recent date, since it is difficult to imagine that wood could remain so well preserved over a period of a hundred and fifty years or more.

*The Expedition
to Minturnæ*

DURING the first season at Minturnæ, Italy, the Museum's expedition (as reported from time to time in these pages) cleared two blocks of the city: in one of these was revealed the Forum of the Roman Colony which was established at Minturnæ in 295 B. C.; in the other was found a double portico surrounding a temple identified as the Temple of Julius Cæsar. Five other temples were discovered, including the colonial Capitolium which stood in the Forum. Furthermore, the excavators were able to ascertain the exact dimensions of the pre-Roman city and to clear a short stretch of the colonial enceinte.

It is now possible to summarize Dr. Jotham Johnson's report on the admirable accomplishments of the second season, which was brought to a close during the past summer. The principal objectives of this season were the excavation of the Augustan theater and the delimitation of the wall of the Roman colony, which was completely hidden underground. The latter objective was not wholly attained, owing to the unexpectedly great extent of the early city.

Commencing with a pentagonal tower (one of three or four such so far found in all Italy) on the north side of the town, the wall was traced westward across the Appian Way, and, with two



THE THEATER AT MINTURNÆ, ITALY, SHOWING SEATS, THE ORCHESTRA, AND THE
SCENE BUILDING. THE REPUBLICAN FORUM IS IN THE BACKGROUND

intervening square towers, continued beyond the limits set for excavation. Still further west, where the famous Minturnæ aqueduct reaches the city, are two towers once bridged by an arch which had been thought to constitute the gate through which passed the Appian Way. Upon clearing the foundations of these towers, blocks of the colonial wall were found in place beneath, and the wall here ran north and south, showing that the corner had been turned and that this was the western boundary. The pavement of the passage through the gate failed to reveal the deep wheel ruts, the product of sixteen hundred years of traffic, elsewhere to be found along the Appian Way. It became evident that the real Appian Way ran just to the south of this gate which was itself the Appian Gate of the original colony wall, but modified and transformed by later additions into a triumphal double or perhaps triple entrance.

In the Augustan theater [Plate VIII] the excavators cleared the stage, the orchestra, and the lower cavea. The whole cavea rested on high vaults, made necessary by the absence of any hillside slope, and the structure thus shows kinship with the typical amphitheater rather than with the usual Roman theater. Access to the upper seats was had by monumental stairways. The drainage system of the theater was most elaborate; small tributary channels lead from every section into an ample covered sewer draining into the river Liris.

Fantastic animal heads were sculptured in the parapet separating the cavea from the orchestra circle. More important than these sculptures were two Imperial portrait heads, one of which, originally carved in the first century A. D., had at a later period been recut to form another likeness. From a large number of marble fragments it was possible to restore four other sculptures: a charming Hermes freely adapted from the famous Praxitelean statue at Olympia, and representations of Artemis, Hercules, and Bacchus. These statuettes, three feet high, together with others

probably ornamented a series of low niches which formed the front of the stage. In one of the outer arcades of the theater was discovered a bronze plaque [Plate VII] commemorative of a Roman consul of about A. D. 500 and bearing the Christian symbols: the first tangible proof of Christianity to be found at Minturnæ.

During the first season a trench sunk against the base of a monument in the Imperial Forum brought to light a deposit of discards from the kiln of a local potter of about 200 B. C. Further investigation and study of this deposit during the past season revealed a hitherto unimagined scope in the work of the ancient potter. Altogether a hundred and ten different sizes and shapes were found: familiar black Campanian ware; other black ware; toy vessels an inch high and clay writing-tablets, belonging rather to the Etruscan tomb furniture of an earlier century; hard, fine, yellow pottery; Campanian coarse ware for kitchen and commercial use; lamps, clay votive offerings, roof tiles, drain pipes, and other objects were among this extraordinarily varied deposit. The presence of three different signature stamps on various pieces indicates that the potter was perhaps not an individual but rather a syndicate or cooperative group. Six coins found in the deposit will be valuable for dating purposes.

A Model of a

Roman Town House

IN response to many requests coming from all over the country, the Museum is about to publish an accurate scale model of a Roman Town House typical of the residences found during the excavations at Pompeii, Herculaneum, and other south Italian cities and belonging to the period of the first century B. C. and the first century A. D. The model, which measures about two by four feet and stands ten inches high, is printed on water-color paper mounted on cardboard; it is in sections and is accompanied by full directions for assembling and coloring. It was