

# THE WORLDS OF TOMORROW

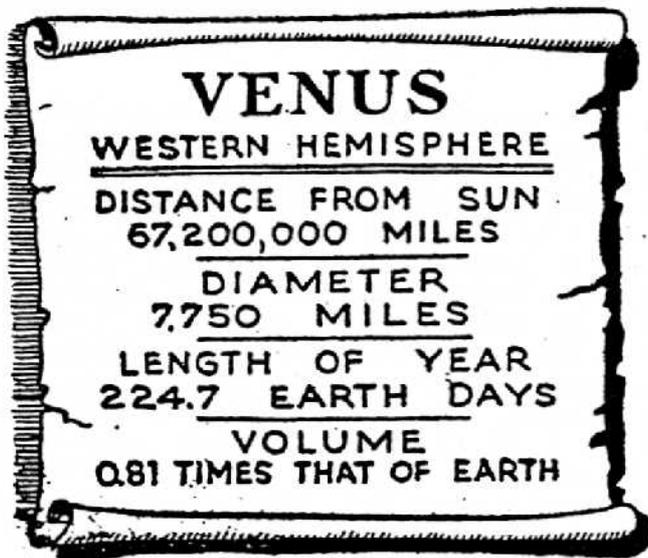
## VENUS, THE KEY TO THE PAST

**V**ENUS, the second planet from the Sun, is today a familiar world to every interplanetary traveler. Nearly everyone in these days is acquainted with its wonders, with its great swampy continents and wide seas; its dangerous Boiling Sea of spouting geysers and unique Sea-Forest whose giant trees grow right up from the ocean bed; its Great South Marsh whose swampy recesses hide a semi-intelligent, amphibian race; its weird Beast-Trees whose haunts are shunned; and its beautiful coastal cities.

The Venusians themselves, most aesthetic and handsome of all the planetary races and boasting the most beautiful women of the System, may be seen in every cosmopolitan city of the nine worlds. And their self-styled Swamp-men who boldly explore the recesses of the great marshes for valuable timbers and gums and herbs are rightly reckoned among the most hardy adventurers of any planet.

### SUBMERGED CITIES

But perhaps the most important feature of Venus from a scientific or historical viewpoint is the submerged ruined cities that lie deep in the Western Sea. These are almost the oldest ruins in the System, and have been comparatively well preserved by the mild chemical constitution of the Venusian seawater. And it



is now known that they are remnants of the most ancient civilization in the System's history – survivals of the half-legendary first humans of the System, who long ago built a great civilization upon the planets of our Sun.

We cannot do better in this respect than to quote from the classic work by Doctor Kas Karo of the Venusian Institute of Planetary Archaeology, entitled, *The First Solar Civilization*:

"When the first pioneering space-voyages were made by the Earthmen, Gorham Johnson and Mark Carew, in 1971 *et seq.*," writes Doctor Karo, "the intrepid explorers were amazed to discover that on every other planet of the System was a native human stock. It had previously been assumed that man had evolved on Earth, and that the other planets could not have human inhabitants. So this sudden revelation of human races on the other planets caused profound mystification.

"But we feel sure now that man did not originate on Earth. The evolutionary charts which had been constructed by Earthman scientists of the 19th and 20th centuries were greatly in error. They assumed that humanity had evolved from certain sub-human species whose fossils had been found in certain strata of the Earth. We are sure now that the sub-human species referred to were simply atavistic *degenerations* from the true human stock, a mere offshoot which quickly died out.

### ANCIENT CIVILIZATION

"For we know now that human races existed, not only upon Earth but upon the other planets also, many hundreds of millions of years ago. And what is even more astounding, that those ancient progenitors of the various planetary races had reached a state of civilization at least almost as high as that of the present advanced age.

"The first evidence of this unsuspected civilization of the past, which archaeologists now term the First Solar Civilization, came from certain strata of sedimentary rocks in the northern deserts of Mars. In those rocks were found remains of stone and metal implements of high perfection. Calculation of the age of the

strata by the familiar means of estimating radioactive degeneration adduced the startling information that these remnants of ancient civilization were at least a billion years old.

"At first, so overwhelming was the shattering of long-held concepts involved, most scientists refused to accept the evidence. But within a comparatively short time, the discovery of similar fragments in a rock form-

all was made. This was the famous submerged ruins in the southern part of the Western Sea, on Venus. They proved to be the wreck of a city that had been abandoned long ago due to the rising of the Venusian oceans. Since the rise of the sea had been due to the progressive condensation of the planet's hydrosphere, a simple calculation fixed the date of the city's life. It was in exact correspondence with the date indicated by the



ation deep in the Uranus caves confirmed the result. This time the evidence was beyond question. And planetary archaeologists were faced with the breath-taking fact that human existence in this Solar System went back more than a billion years.

#### THE GREATEST DISCOVERY

"It was not long after that the greatest discovery of

Martian and Uranian finds. This submerged ruined city was a city of more than a billion years ago.

"The excitement of all planetary archaeologists was intense. From all over the System they came to explore the ruins, Unfortunately, the ruins were in such a depth of ocean that crushing pressures made exploration highly hazardous. Several well-known planetary archaeologists, among them the brilliant Jovian savant,

Doctor Eeigor Raz, lost their lives from their scientific enthusiasm.

"It was not until efficient submarine boats and skilled deep-sea divers were brought from Neptune that the ruins could be explored and photographed on a thorough plan. The extent of the ruins was very great. And while a certain amount of decay had been inevitable, enough remained to shed a comparatively great light upon the First Solar Civilization.

"Especially, the discovery of many inscribed tablets proved intriguing. It is regrettable that these inscriptions remain still for the most part undeciphered – a challenge to the Champollons of our age. Professor Kenneth Lester, the late Earth authority, was believed to have been close to the solution when his work was ended by his untimely death. Those interested are referred to his fine monograph, *Remarks about the Recurrence of Certain Ideofoms is the Venusian Tablets*.

"But enough has been learned from examination of the ruins themselves to shed much illumination on the obscure early past of our race. It is certain that before 1 billion B.C. all the ten planets of our System – for there were then ten – were peopled by an intelligent human race. We do not know on which world that race originated. That problem is utterly beyond our present available evidence.

### **SPACE-SHIP NETWORKS**

"But we do know that in that remote age there were cities and civilized people on all our worlds, and that they were connected to one another by a network of space-ships. Their technic may have been greatly dissimilar to that of the present day. It is to be deplored that their metal machinery and instruments have almost without exception rusted away, and that what little we know of their life comes from pictured stones.

"How long that First Solar Civilization lasted is a moot point. Its decline must have begun well before eight hundred million years ago. And what caused its decline also is a question that must be discussed upon almost purely theoretical grounds.

"It is assumed that the civilization failed first on certain planets where natural conditions were most adverse. It is certain that the disturbed state of the outer planets in those times must have been a constant threat.

In passing, it is pertinent to note that the very fact that those giant outer worlds were colonized argues a high degree of scientific knowledge, since there must have been some way other than the gravitation-equalizer to combat the greater gravity, if whole peoples existed there.

"As we see it, the First Solar Civilization retrogressed first on one planet and then on another. On Venus, as has been stated, the retrogression was doubtless due to the steady rise of the Venusian seas due to hydrospheric condensation, and the consequent submergence of the more habitable lands. On Earth, the diastrophisms and glaciations of the late Paleozoic era were almost certainly the contributing cause. We are not yet sufficiently informed to hazard a guess as to the other planets, but undoubtedly the finger of decay touched one after another.

"Looking back with imaginative eyes, we can see the failing of that great civilization in all its pathos – the death-agony of a great empire, as the ships between the worlds became fewer and fewer, as the destroyed cities were rebuilt on an ever-smaller scale, as the technical knowledge and intricate skills died out more and more.

"So at last, the night of savagery came to grip all the worlds of the System. They forgot almost all the traditions of their great past, and the people of each planet imagined themselves the only humans in the universe. And except for the transitory flashes of revived civilization that briefly light that darkness on Mars and some of the other worlds, that night of isolation and ignorance was to continue until the pioneering Earthmen again flew forth to re-open the spaceways."

### **PLANETARY SECRETS**

Thus Doctor Kas Karo, in his scholarly work. It is perhaps necessary to point out, as he himself does, that his picture of the far past is necessarily somewhat theoretical, though of the existence of the First Solar Civilization there can be no doubt.

Whether or not his picture of our past is altered by future conceptions, it is certain that for a long time to come, planetary archaeologists will be laboring to read the secrets of our System's youth from the submerged ruins of Venus, the key to the past.