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ARAUCARIA, GREAT CONIFER OF SOUTH AMERICA, SHOWN IN MURAL PAINTING

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The Museum's Staff Artist, Mr. Charles A. Corwin, is continuing his work on the series of mural paintings of botanical subjects, and these are now beginning to fill the spaces between the pilasters on the west wall of the Hall of Plant Life (Hall 29). A recent addition is a landscape from the timbered lake region of the Andes of southern Chile. There, and to a less extent also to the south and west over a small area on the Argentine side of the Cordillera, the magnificent Chilean pine forms one of the few impressive stands of coniferous forest to be found in South America. The scene depicted in the painting is from a photograph from Tolhuaca, province of Malleco, published in Reiche's volume, *The Vegetation of Chile* (1907) and repeated in Engler and Prantl, *Pflanzenfamilien*.

The conifers on the whole are a characteristic feature of the vegetation of the northern hemisphere rather than of the southern, where, however, they are by no means lacking. This appears to be as true of many past geological periods as of the present. The conifer group in a wide sense includes the yews, cypresses, and cedars, widely scattered over both hemispheres, as well as the more familiar larches, spruces, pines and firs, but to most people the word conifer denotes especially the latter, the most common and abundant types in the north temperate zone. On the North American continent these extend from the Arctic circle southward well into Mexico, with a few species of pine growing south to Guatemala and one or two even in Nicaragua where they reach their southern limit.

Totally absent from the American tropics, the pine-like type of conifer reappears, as if in a strange and foreign guise, in the Araucarias of southern Chile and southern Brazil—respectively, the Chilean and the Brazilian, or Paraná, pine. These constitute

a remnant, apparently representing the last recession on the American continent of an ancient coniferous group shown by its fossil remains once to have been common in the entire northern hemisphere as far north as Greenland. It is evident that it formerly had a wider distribution also in the southern hemisphere, extending farther southward in the general area of its present home. In this connection it is of interest to note that fossilized and extremely well preserved cones

tree of New Zealand (source of the well-known kauri resin), and the graceful Norfolk Island pine (*Araucaria excelsa*) of which small specimens are often cultivated as house-plants.

The Chilean pine, growing almost to the line of perpetual snow in the Andes, is the hardiest of the entire group. It is sometimes seen cultivated in the warmer parts of the United States, especially in Florida and on the Pacific coast. Because of its great

botanical interest, and as a precaution against its total extinction, easily possible in view of its limited natural range, the establishment of the Chilean pine on a somewhat extensive scale in the United States has been proposed by Professor Wieland, who considers the neighborhood of Klamath Lake in the Cascade Mountains to offer a suitable locality with conditions of soil and climate resembling those of its Chilean habitat.

The Paraná pine, less robust and apparently more exacting as to climatic and other environmental factors, is rarely seen cultivated outside of its proper area. This extends from the State of São Paulo, or even southern Minas and Espírito Santo, to Rio Grande do Sul, a territory which a poetically

minded Brazilian botanist therefore calls Araucarilandia.

Both of the South American species are valuable timber trees. They yield a dense and uniform, fine-grained, cypress-like wood of great importance in a continent practically without other coniferous lumber. The large globose cones of both South American species, likewise the Australian ones, furnish edible seeds, considerably larger than those of our piñon pines, and greatly esteemed in their native country.

Specimens of Araucaria cones and seeds are displayed in one of the cases devoted to the conifers in Hall 29, and Araucaria wood as illustrated by Paraná pine is to be seen among the foreign woods in Hall 27.



Tall Pines in a Chilean Landscape

The Araucaria, ancient trees of South America, as represented in recent addition to series of murals on botanical subjects which are being placed on walls of the Hall of Plant Life. The paintings are the work of Staff Artist Charles A. Corwin. There will be fifteen altogether, of which six are now on view.

of an extinct Araucaria were discovered a few years ago by a Field Museum expedition in Patagonia, and have recently formed the subject of an elaborate monograph by Professor G. R. Wieland of Yale.

The name Araucaria is from Arauco, one of the two Chilean provinces in which these trees are found. The entire group as now existing is represented by about a dozen species scattered from South America to New Zealand and Australia, New Caledonia, New Hebrides, Norfolk Islands, Malaya, the Philippines and Cochinchina. These include the so-called monkey puzzles, with narrow, stiff and spine-like leaves closely applied to the branches as in the Chile pine, the bunya-bunya of Australia, the kauri

sheep, commonly called black sheep; the Canada or bighorn sheep, and the California sheep. The exhibit is of special interest, particularly to sportsmen for purposes of comparison. The animals are mounted on rock, typical of their natural habitat. One of the specimens was presented by Mr.

Boardman Conover, Research Associate in Ornithology on the Museum staff; and one is a gift from Mr. William J. Morden, formerly of Chicago, now of New York.

The Stone's mountain sheep is represented also in a striking habitat group in Hall 16, prepared by the late Carl E. Akeley.

WILD SHEEP OF AMERICA

The four principal species of wild mountain sheep of North America are exhibited together in a case in George M. Pullman Hall (Hall 13). They are Dall's sheep, also known as the white Alaska sheep; Stone's



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