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## ARCHEOLOGY

The great public interest in the Dead Sea Scrolls, (to which two of these columns have been devoted), has in the popular mind shoved into the background other recent archeological discoveries, some of which are at least as important as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Among these one of the most significant was the discovery of the group of materials that is now spoken of as the Ugaritic Texts, but was formerly generally designated as the Ras Shamra Texts. If it were not that we are living in a period of so many great and varied discoveries in archeology, the discovery and interpretation of these texts would have ranked as one of the most outstanding and interesting developments in the whole story of antiquity.

Ras Shamra is a place on the northern coast of Syria, where the remains of an ancient city have been unearthed. This city was called Ugarit, a name already familiar to archeologists, from mentions in Egyptian and Hittite documents.

In 1929 the distinguished French archeologist, C. F. A. Schaeffer, who was about to visit certain archeological places in Syria, then under control of the French, stopped at the headquarters of the Department of Antiquities. As he was leaving, the Director remarked rather casually: "On the way to the place that you are to visit first, you will pass near a spot called Ras Shamra. For some years the natives have been informing us that they believe there are ancient remains buried there and that we ought to excavate. Usually such local people know nothing whatever about such matters and their suggestions are not worth following up. However, these people keep asking, and so in