

THE POLAR RECORD

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FOREWORD

In this issue we print the formal text of certain land claims in the Antarctic; others are yet to come and will appear in later numbers. In endeavouring to preserve the unbiased attitude proper to an international institute we feel it necessary to refrain from comment, printing only the statements of claim.

Plans for the International Polar Exhibition at Bergen in 1940 are progressing steadily. It is expected that the British section of the Exhibition will be worthy of the honourable part this nation has taken in polar exploration and the Institute will be well represented in the collections. It seems certain that an international polar conference will be held at some stage of the Exhibition, which lasts from May to September.

We are glad to report that plans are now complete for another British Antarctic expedition to the Falkland Islands Dependencies. Those who have followed the fortunes of Mr Rymill's British Graham Land Expedition, 1934-37, are familiar with the great sledge journey which led to the discovery of King George VI Sound. Dr G. C. L. Bertram, who was a member of that party, will lead the new expedition, which has as its object the extension of Rymill's discoveries. The new expedition will travel by ship down the west coast of Graham Land, and Dr Bertram plans to make his base near the mouth of the Sound itself. The proposals, which were approved by the Royal Geographical Society in November 1938, include sledge journeys direct south through the Sound to the western boundary of the Dependency, south-eastwards to the head of the Weddell Sea, and north-eastwards so as to connect with Nordenskjöld's old base at Snow Hill Island.

In the *Annual Report* of the Institute, reprinted in this issue, it will be noticed that the governing body, the Committee of Management, has been given powers to increase its numbers by co-option. This change in the

constitution of the Committee should make available the counsels of men of wide experience who would not normally have been eligible under the former regulations.

The Committee is about to launch an appeal for a Development Fund. The activities as well as the importance of the Institute have for some time outrun its financial resources, and some such appeal is urgently required lest the steady progress of the past should be reduced.

The Committee is most anxious, for instance, to make improvements in *The Polar Record*, to bring the Library up to date, and to make alterations in the museum section. It is also conscious that the amount of voluntary assistance called upon at present, while a very pleasant feature, is not economically sound, since it is not available indefinitely.

As frontispiece for this issue we have a portrait of the senior authority on the polar regions in America. After many years of actual exploration in the Arctic, Mr Vilhjalmur Stefansson became at once the acknowledged exponent and champion of a mode of Arctic travel best described in his own phrase as "living on the land". His writings on the friendly Arctic in all its aspects are now equalled by his researches into its past history.

OBITUARY

The death of Dr W. H. Neale recalls a great Arctic adventure in which he played a prominent part nearly sixty years ago. He accompanied Mr B. Leigh-Smith as surgeon and naturalist on his two voyages to Franz Josef Land in 1880 and 1881–82. When the *Eira* was crushed in the ice, Dr Neale was at first much worried by the loss of all the lime-juice, then believed to be the only safeguard against scurvy. He was given charge of the rationing, and successfully kept the party in perfect health throughout the winter on a diet of fresh bear and walrus meat. He made no further voyages, but throughout a long life of active medical work, he never lost his interest in the Arctic.

We also regret to announce the death of Carl F. Herlofson, the Norwegian whaling pioneer. He began his whaling career off Iceland in 1896. When the northern industry began to fail, he was one of the first to investigate southern waters, and in 1928–29 he was manager of the