

munications with regard to it should be addressed to one or other of the secretaries.

THE ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION OF COMMANDER RICHARD E. BYRD

THE National Geographic Society has announced that it will cooperate in the Antarctic expedition, sending observers and contributing \$25,000 toward equipment.

The society has issued the following announcement in connection with the expedition:

Conditions in striking contrast to those in the Arctic will be encountered by the Byrd expedition in the Antarctic. Instead of a vast expanse of sea and relatively low land, there is a high continent larger than Australia or the United States.

In the valleys of the Far North the summer sun brings moss, grass and flowers. But, in contrast, the bleak plateaus and mountains of the Antarctic harbor practically no living things because much of their area is perpetually blanketed by snow and ice.

Birds frequent the edge of the ice barrier where they can exist upon the creatures of the sea, but inland no life has been found because there is no vegetation.

The bears, wolves, foxes, rabbits, musk oxen and caribou of the Far North have not a single representative in the Far South known to man.

Commander Byrd's expedition will doubtless be able to augment the information contained upon the now meager maps of the Antarctic continent. Explorers can not sail along the coasts of this continent as they can along those of Australia or Africa.

The great ice barrier and pack ice keep ships at a distance, sometimes of several hundred miles. Only in a few isolated places has this barrier been penetrated. This condition is in contrast to that of Greenland, where the ice-cap extends to the coast in only a few places.

The present map of the Antarctic regions, therefore, is mostly blank, with a few patches of known territory along the coast and one or two narrow paths penetrating inland. The best known region is the land directly south of New Zealand traversed by Shackleton, Scott and Amundsen.

Among the important problems to be worked out by Commander Byrd are those relating to the meteorology of the southern continents and its effect on world weather, especially that of the southern hemisphere.

Although the field for zoological research in the Antarctic is narrow, the party will be on the lookout for any specimens that may be encountered in regions hitherto unvisited by man. Any rock specimens that give promise of adding to the geological knowledge of the unexplored continent will also be collected.

WOOD COLLECTIONS OF THE FIELD MUSEUM

WORK has been begun to make the wood collections at Field Museum of Natural History the most com-

prehensive and authoritative for scientific and economic reference purposes in the middle west.

Additions to the exhibits, rearrangements of them and revision of the labels are planned, all designed not only to increase the interest of the collections to the general public, but to make them also of direct service to men in the lumber business, government forestry officials and others interested in conservation and reforestation, to students and scientists specializing in this branch of botany, and to every user of wood for building or manufacturing purposes.

Professor Samuel J. Record, of Yale University School of Forestry, who has spent seventeen years in specialized research on woods and wood products, has been engaged to supervise this work, and is now at the museum. Professor Record, who has traveled widely in this country and abroad studying the various types of woods from the time of their growth in the forests through the various stages of logging and milling to their appearance as building materials or manufactured products, is the author of numerous volumes on this subject and editor of the magazine *Tropical Woods*.

A number of leading companies in the lumber and woodworking industries have indicated to the museum that they will cooperate in the work being undertaken.

Many woods from western states, some from the eastern states, and a large number from tropical and other foreign localities not heretofore included in the museum collections are to be added. These exhibits, like those already on display, will contain specimens of the trunk and foliage of the various trees as they appear in life, photographs illustrating their growth, maps showing their distribution, typical boards and specimens of the other principal economic products manufactured from them, and monographs containing the most important data regarding their growth, their properties and their uses.

Many lumber manufacturers and other users of wood are insufficiently acquainted with the various types of woods, and their uses, particularly the foreign woods. At the present time the amount of foreign woods coming into our markets is constantly increasing, owing to depletion of our own forests, and it is highly important to know which of these foreign woods are suited for various purposes, and which are not. As Chicago is the lumber center of the Middle West, the museum collections will be able to serve the entire industry in this region in adjusting itself to the new conditions which are appearing, and which will rapidly become more apparent in the near future. It is hoped that the museum's work may also furnish a contribution to the conservation and reforestation movements in this country, by supplying information which will advance these movements.