

scientific research, not because of any doubt as to its value or logic, but because of insidious dangers which are perhaps too obvious to require elaboration. If government financial support should carry with it government control of research programs or research workers, or if it should lead to political influence or lobbying for the distribution of funds, or if any consideration should dictate the administration of funds other than the inherent worth of a project or the capabilities of a scientist, or if the funds should fluctuate considerably in amount with the political fortunes of an administration or the varying ideas of Congress, then government support would probably do more harm than good, for large support by government would tend to discourage the support by private philanthropy which has been the backbone of

our scientific progress in the past and which will doubtless continue unless discouraged.

On the other hand, if government support of science were undertaken on an adequate scale and administered with the skill and experience that have already been developed in the handling of minor funds for science, such a program of federal support would certainly be a sound national investment, would be an uplifting intellectual and social influence and might well mean the difference between prosperity and economic catastrophe at no very distant date.

In this address I have raised certain questions which have many aspects and whose proper answer I do not know. They are questions, however, which challenge constructive thought and it may be that their wise solution can be attained.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

BRITISH MUSEUM'S EXPEDITION TO EAST AFRICA

THE trustees of the British Museum, according to the London *Times*, have arranged an expedition to British East Africa to study the ecological relations of animal and plant life in different areas of high altitude. It is well known that the combination of a nearly vertical sun, high altitude and copious rain has resulted in extraordinary development of vegetation, plants known in temperate regions of the size of shrubs reaching the size of trees, but no intensive and systematic study has yet been made of these areas. It is intended to ascertain what insects assist in fertilizing the flowers of the giant lobelias and groundsel.

The leaders, Dr. F. W. Edwards, entomologist, and Dr. George Taylor, botanist, from the British Museum (Natural History) sailed from England recently and will be away six months, having about four months for their work. The East African Governments are taking great interest in the expedition. The exploratory work will be almost entirely in Uganda, and the government is helping in many ways by financial aid and the loan of transport, and by allowing certain of their officers interested in either insects or plants to join the expedition for some period of its work. The expedition will also be joined by Mr. P. M. Synge, of the University of Cambridge, as assistant botanist and photographer, and Mr. John Ford, animal ecologist, of the University of Oxford, as assistant animal ecologist; both of them are already in East Africa. Allen Turner, of the Coryndon Memorial Museum, will act as guide and assist in collecting insects in the Aberdare Mountains. Of the Uganda officials, Mr. E. G. Gibbons, of the Medical Service, will be assistant entomologist

and act as camp steward for the whole period of the expedition; G. L. R. Hancock, of the Agricultural Service, will assist in the camp organization and in collecting insects and birds on the Ruwenzori Range; A. S. Thomas, of the Agricultural Service, will be assistant botanist during the expedition's work on Mount Ruwenzori, and W. G. Eggeling, of the Forestry Service, will spend about a fortnight with the expedition as assistant botanist. Mr. J. F. Shillito, of the Nyakasura Mission School, Fort Portal, will accompany the expedition as guide and assistant collector on the northern side of the Ruwenzori Range.

The leaders were expected to arrive at Mombasa on October 19, and after completing their arrangements they and the remainder of the party, who were to join the expedition at Nairobi, would spend the last week in October in the Aberdare Mountains in Kenya Colony. Their next objective is the Mufumbiro Range in the Birunga Mountains, where they will stay two or three weeks. In December they will return northwards and stay on the southern side of Mount Ruwenzori until the end of the month. At the beginning of January they will proceed to Fort Portal and stay on the northern side of the Ruwenzori Range until nearly the end of the month. On the way back to the coast they will spend three or four weeks collecting on Mount Elgon, and some of the party will proceed to the isolated peak of Moroto if conditions are favorable. The leaders expect to return from Mombasa to England on March 9.

RADIO ECHOES

THE *Technical News Bulletin* of the National Bureau of Standards reports that special signals are being transmitted from two European radio stations for the study of long-delay echoes. The signals and