

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

CANADIAN FIELD EXPEDITIONS

THE official announcement of the Mines and Geology Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, states that the summer work of the National Museum of Canada will include biological and botanical investigations to be carried on in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario, with archeological studies in Ontario.

The work is being directed toward the gathering of new information on Canadian fauna, flora and native races, and the acquiring of new specimens for the museum. R. M. Anderson, chief of the division of biology, is studying mammals in the Waterton Lakes district of Alberta; H. M. Laing is continuing a biological survey of the coast of British Columbia, with particular reference this year to the area in the vicinity of Bella Coola; Angus Shortt is continuing a study of bird life in Manitoba which is being carried out from Churchill southward to the International boundary. Work this year will be chiefly in the vicinity of Dauphin; R. C. Hosie is continuing with his botanical studies of the region north of Lake Superior, and W. J. Wintenberg will make excavations in the vicinity of Waubaushene on what may prove to be the site of an old fort of historic interest.

Fifty-eight survey and exploratory parties, comprising a force of nearly three hundred men, have been assigned to field work this year by the Mines and Geology Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources. The parties, most of which have already left Ottawa, will map and investigate areas in every mineral producing province in the Dominion and in Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

There are forty-one parties engaged in geological investigations and seventeen in topographical mapping. Of the former, nine are in British Columbia, two in Alberta, four in Saskatchewan, five in Manitoba, four in Ontario, six in Quebec, three each in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, two in Yukon and one in the Northwest Territories. In addition to these, one party is engaged in the collection of mineral specimens in eastern Canada.

Three of the seventeen topographical parties have been assigned to British Columbia, four to Alberta, one to Saskatchewan, three to Quebec, one to Nova Scotia and three to the Northwest Territories. One party is engaged in physiographic studies in the eastern Arctic.

MARINE STUDIOS

MARINE STUDIOS, a project comprising what is said to be the largest aquarium in the world and the only specially designed under-water motion picture studio, was opened to the public on June 23 at Marineland, eighteen miles south of St. Augustine.

This undertaking is the outcome of the efforts of W. Douglas Burden, associate curator and trustee of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and his associates to portray the undersea world in natural surroundings, so that sea life under conditions as nearly identical as possible with those in which it exists in its natural state might be observed and photographed. In carrying out this plan Mr. Burden has had the cooperation of Ilia A. Tolstoy, grandson of Leo Tolstoy, the Russian writer, Miss Lillian Koehler, and their associates who have worked together from the beginning.

The undertaking revolves largely around the construction of the aquarium itself. Instead of the usual method of presentation whereby each species is segregated in its own small compartment, two large tanks present a facsimile reproduction of submarine life with each species playing the same part that it does in the ocean.

One tank is rectangular, 100 feet long, 50 feet wide and 18 feet deep; the other is circular, 75 feet in diameter and 11 feet deep. Enclosed galleries are built around each tank with observation platforms at different levels from which the public may view the spectacle of undersea life through more than 200 portholes built into the side of the tanks. The tanks and portholes were designed under the direction of a motion-picture engineer, who worked out in advance the various camera angles necessary to afford the greatest latitude in the filming of scenes.

The aquarium has been stocked with thousands of specimens, some rare in captivity. Two porpoises, a mother and her offspring, weighing probably 850 and 150 pounds, respectively, are believed to be the only two in the world in captivity; while two sawfish, one of which weighs over 1,000 pounds and is 14 feet, 8½ inches long, are the two largest in captivity. Other interesting specimens include five penguins imported from South Africa and South America, two large loggerhead turtles, numerous large sharks, rays, catfish, shrimp and thousands of coral and reef fish from off the Keys.

The formal opening ceremonies were conducted by Walter B. Frazer, mayor of St. Augustine, as master of ceremonies, with U. S. Senator Claude Pepper, Frank V. B. Couch, mayor of Daytona Beach; C. V. Whitney, and W. Douglas Burden participating.

THE MOUNTAIN LAKE BIOLOGICAL STATION

THE Mountain Lake Biological Station of the University of Virginia opened on June 20 for its ninth session. Instruction is given in two terms of five weeks each.