

FOREWORD

With this number the *Polar Record* completes its fifth volume since publication began in 1931. Its growth has justified the optimism shown by the Committee of Management in launching it twenty years ago, and the editors are confident that it will continue to grow and develop both in its primary object of recording progress in polar affairs, and in quickening interest and providing perspective for its readers. The esteem which the editors seek for the journal must be based upon accuracy, width of cover, and the services which can be rendered to its readers.

It is a pleasure to record the successful establishment of Maudheim, the base of the Norwegian-British-Swedish Expedition to Dronning Maud Land in Antarctica. In future issues it is hoped to publish details of the expedition's progress, but meanwhile it can be reported that the expedition's charter-vessel *Norsel*, after tribulation in the ice and able assistance from the accompanying R.A.F. unit, successfully landed the wintering party. The base is in lat. $71^{\circ} 3' S.$, long. $11^{\circ} W.$ near Kapp Norvegia. A total of fifteen men of the three nations will undertake two years of intensive scientific effort.

The launching and chief organisation of the expedition must be attributed to the energy and influence of Dr Harald Sverdrup, whose photograph is published as the frontispiece of this issue. Dr Sverdrup first achieved fame as the chief scientist of the Norwegian North Polar Expedition with the *Maud* in the Arctic Ocean, 1918–25. Later he was director for many years of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography in California. It was on his return to his native Norway in 1948 to take over the directorship of Norsk Polarinstitut that the Dronning Maud Land expedition really received its impetus, although its originator was Professor Hans W:son Ahlmann of Sweden who first broached the idea of an international scientific expedition to Mr J. M. Wordie in 1945. In this connection it should be recorded that the Bishop of Portsmouth, then Director of the Scott Polar Research Institute, and Mr L. P. Kirwan, who had recently been appointed Director and Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, both played important parts in converting these ideas into realities.

This issue of the *Polar Record* does something to correct a recent paucity in what has been published on Canadian activities. In the next issue it is hoped that it will at last be possible to publish an account of the achievements of the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey in 1947, 1948 and 1949.

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