

FOREWORD

An event which overshadows all others recorded in this issue is the total loss, with all hands, except one, of the *Pourquoi pas?* on the west coast of Iceland on September 16. Of her famous commander, Dr Charcot, there have been frequent references in former numbers, and we had the pleasure of publishing his portrait as a frontispiece as recently as July 1935.

It has been pointed out in many of the dignified obituaries which have been published, that Dr Charcot stood higher than anyone in his international attitude towards polar exploration; he was a friend and willing helper to all who were interested in the polar regions. He was particularly helpful both to this Institute, and to all recent Arctic expeditions going from England. Of the distinguished scientific colleagues who perished with him, we must pick out Dr Maurice Parat for special mention, since he visited the Institute last year, and discussed with the Director plans for a somewhat similar institution in France. The ship herself, of which we publish a photograph taken by a member of the Cambridge East Greenland Expedition, 1933, had served long and often in the polar seas, since her first voyage, in 1908–10, to the Antarctic.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of Amundsen's attainment of the South Pole was on December 14, 1936. We regret to record the death of one of his companions, Oscar Wisting, just ten days before that date. He died on board their old ship, the *Fram*, now a museum at Oslo.

Mr H. Whitney, a member of the 1908 Peary expedition, died in May 1936, in Montreal.

Amongst other losses by death, which will be regretted by our readers, we must mention that of Sir Joseph Kinsey, who was not only business manager to the Scott and Shackleton expeditions, but was the friend and patron of all other expeditions which sailed from New Zealand. Lord Invernairn, who, as Sir William Beardmore, supported Shackleton on his first and most famous expedition, died in April 1936. In November died the Rev. J. Gordon Hayes, who, as author of *Antarctica* and *The Conquest of the South Pole*, became known to many of the polar fraternity.

As usual at this time of the year, we are able to print condensed accounts of the work done in the past season. Interest in the Arctic is steadily

increasing, equally amongst the amateurs of the western nations of Europe, the older scientists of all countries, and particularly in that Department of the U.S.S.R., which is responsible for its Arctic resources. The bare statement of the voyages made by its ice-breakers alone is more impressive than ever.

In August of this year a proclamation was issued bringing into operation an Act passed by the Commonwealth Government providing for the acceptance, by the Commonwealth, of a sector of the Antarctic Continent, which is to be known as the Australian Antarctic Territory.

It is pleasant to record that Dr J. W. S. Marr has been awarded the W. S. Bruce Memorial Prize for 1936.

A dual echo of the stirring days of 1909, when Admiral Peary returned from his last successful journey, comes from the publication of his life by Professor W. H. Hobbs; and by a Bill before the American Congress to provide his companion on that journey, the negro Matthew Henson, with a pension.