

to the conditions and environment of the Arctic regions. Until fairly recently the problems of communication and transportation only permitted in a limited degree the fundamental study of Arctic conditions on the spot. Much of the research had to be done elsewhere in laboratories in which Arctic conditions were simulated. With the great advances of the last decade, it has become possible at last to take science to the Arctic and to establish laboratories, observation stations and so on in the actual area. This major advance is proving of the first importance in solving the problems on which the development of the Arctic must depend.

Anyone who has examined the bulletin issued a couple of years ago by the Arctic Institute, under the title "A Programme of Desirable Scientific Investigations in Arctic North America", cannot fail to be impressed by the scope and variety of the work to be accomplished, ranging all the way from mapping and description, through meteorology, geology, biology, agronomy, and other large branches of science, to the anthropology and archeology of the native inhabitants. In all these sciences not a great deal more than a beginning has been made. In all of them there is room for the sort of unofficial international planning and encouragement that is provided by the Arctic Institute.

Let me illustrate by referring to a plan for this coming summer. It is supposed that the present Eskimo is a descendant of hardy nomads who wandered east from Asia as far as Greenland. A logical way of proving this is to trace the route followed along the Arctic coast and through the Arctic Islands. With this in mind the National Museum of Canada has invited two outstanding authorities, one from the United States and the other from Denmark, to work in the Canadian Arctic Islands with a Canadian archeologist in an effort to link up the traces of the migration in Alaska with those in Greenland. The American authority is here tonight. He is presiding over this dinner in the person of Dr. H.B. Collins, the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Arctic Institute.

To say, as some do, that interest in the Canadian Arctic has until recently been dormant for many years is an exaggeration. It is true that for a long period interest was mainly kept alive by explorers and fur traders and missionaries, and that it is now much more widely diffused. The development of far northern air-routes, the new consciousness that we have neighbours to the north, however remote they may be across the polar seas, the search for fresh sources of minerals essential to our civilization, the knowledge that our weather is determined by Arctic conditions, the desire to promote the welfare of the sparse native inhabitants - all these and other motives are combining with the zeal of the scientists to expand the limits of human knowledge by detailed research in Arctic conditions. The Arctic Institute of North America has taken in hand a task of such magnitude that it can count on attaining the venerable age of the Royal Society in Great Britain, now entering upon its fourth century, or of the American Philosophical Society, now in its third century, before it will have any difficulty in finding useful projects for study and research.

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