

# Experts Warned Against Nobile Flight

*Aviation—Exploration*

General Nobile's airship "Italia," now down in the Arctic, was too small and slow for serious arctic exploration, and German authorities warned him against using it. This is the opinion of Dr. Walter Bruns, general secretary of the International Society for the Exploration of the Polar Regions by means of the Airship, generally known as "Aeroarctic." The society is particularly interested, as several of its members are with the Nobile expedition. Also, Aeroarctic is itself planning extensive polar explorations next year in the LZ 127, the gigantic Zeppelin now nearing completion at Friedrichshafen. This ship is six times as large as the Italia, and even larger than the American Los Angeles.

"In spite of its great sympathy towards the undertaking," said Dr. Bruns, "the Aeroarctic has had, from the very beginning, serious concern regarding the Expedition. It was pointed out to Nobile that, after the wonderful flight of the sister ship 'Norge,' too distant a goal for a new expedition this year should, before all things, be avoided for this very small type of airship. We know from our Berlin conferences with General Nobile that, because of the small size of the airship, the mass of the necessary reserves of ballast (in case the ship were covered with ice), and the

polar equipment requisite for a possible forced landing, had to be reduced greatly on account of the great distance.

"The small speed (about 53 miles per hour) of the airship required that General Nobile spend the month of April and the first half of May, the most precious time for polar work, awaiting favorable meteorological conditions. Already the flight to Nicholas II Land (Leninland) had demonstrated that it was really too late for further undertakings because of the prevalence of summer fogs. In addition to the unpromising meteorological conditions, General Nobile had to fix the base of his operations at Kings Bay in the Arctic itself, owing to the small radius of action of his airship. This again made him not only dependent upon the general weather conditions but also upon the local storm phenomena (winds, snowstorms, etc.) which are often very troublesome. The snow even penetrated the hangar and made it very inconvenient for the airship in its shelter.

"The very favorable flight to the Pole justified the hope that the return trip would likewise be propitious. Under good weather conditions, the journey from Kings Bay to the Pole and back is no great undertaking for an airship. This, however, is not the case, in view of

the small speed of the Italia, as soon as a moderately strong contrary wind arises, as apparently took place on the return trip. That General Nobile on approaching Spitzbergen met with strong adverse winds is, from a meteorological standpoint, not strange, since the region of Spitzbergen is in the area of storm paths which take their course from the North Atlantic along the Norwegian Coast and only gradually die out in the inner Arctic, i. e., become less dangerous for flights.

"Our Society has therefore, as is generally known, held firmly to the opinion that the solution of arctic problems should not be attempted with too small an airship. In order to be independent of especially unfavorable storm conditions of Spitzbergen, one should, before all else, establish his base for arctic exploration as far distant as possible from the Arctic. For this reason we plan for next year's expeditions, anchorages in Leningrad, and perhaps at Murmansk in Kola, and at Nome in Alaska. We wish also, in spite of the very great cruising radius of the new Zeppelin-airship which may be three times that of the 'Italia,' to establish anchorages on both sides of the Arctic in order to be approximately independent of meteorological factors during our journeys covering several days."

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## Swords of Northmen Found

*Archæology*

Elaborately engraved bronze swords and other rare relics estimated to be 3,000 years old or older have been unearthed on the Swedish island of Oeland in the Baltic Sea by the archæologist, K. A. Gustawsson, and his associates. The excavations have covered a period of many months. Expenses of the expedition have been met by the Swedish Academy of Antiquities.

The most remarkable find comprises 300 ancient graves covering a very large area. Many of these have the appearance of the so-called "judge-seats," found in various places in Sweden, which seems to indicate that these stone relics had nothing to do with the dispensation of justice in

olden times, but were in fact parts of the Viking's burial grounds.

The scientists are surprised at the length of some of these interment fields. One of them measures 3,281 feet. It is thought possible that the cemeteries borrowed their form from the island, which is narrow and long in shape.

The most magnificent stone mound from the bronze age is the one discovered north of the city of Borgholm. On account of its dominant position, overlooking the Koepings Bay, it is supposed that it must at one time have served as a landmark for sailors. Many of the stone mounds from this time are, in fact, claimed to have filled the same purpose.

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## Photograph for Bull's-Eye

*Invention*

The latest modification of the favorite pastime of American amusement parks — the "hit-the-nigger-and-get-a-cigar"—has just been patented in France by A. Dufour, and rewards the winner with a flashlight photograph of himself winning the prize. The darkly-complexioned victim is replaced by an effigy holding the cigar in his mouth, and the contestant tries to hit the cigar with a rubber ball. If he succeeds an automatic camera and flashlight is set off, and the winner receives the photograph.

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Physicians of ancient times noted that an attack of some contagious diseases protected the patient against another attack.