



THREE FAMOUS DRIFT COURSES

The "Fram" (1893-96), the Soviet North Pole ice floe station (1937-38), and the "Georgy Sedov" (1937-39). Inset: Capt. Konstantin Badigin, commander of the icebreaker "Georgy Sedov."

ECONOMICS

Fear Of "Have Nots" Seen Back Of Activity In New Guinea

THE NETHERLANDS, aware that Japan is "interested" in her precious Dutch colonies in the South Seas, has been entrenching for some time and with determined activity in the most neglected of these colonies—Dutch New Guinea.

In the past five years, official personnel in the Dutch half of the big island of New Guinea has increased fourfold, says a report on Dutch activity to the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations, in New York. Forestry

and farm experts have been set to testing the island's resources. Experimental plantings of rubber, coffee, cotton, and kapok have been made, and all except cotton have given promising returns.

A privately owned petroleum company and a mining company within the past two years have been exploring, using airplanes to cross fever-ridden jungles and rugged mountains. Deep boring for oil began this year. Another development company is interested in rubber, wood and sea products of the island.

Efforts to plant settlements of Europeans or Eurasians from other parts of the Dutch Indies have proved least successful of the ventures, and are discouraging to plans for speedy large-scale colonization.

Reason for intensive activity is the desire of the Dutch to show they are quite able to develop this region, thus wiping out any arguments to the contrary which "have-not" nations might raise. Also, Japan since 1932 has maintained an economic toe hold in Dutch New Guinea. Taking over an unsuccessful German concession, a Japanese firm collects damar gum, tries to grow cotton by aid of about 1,000 Japanese coolie laborers, and does a little sheep raising. A proposal in 1937 in Japan, to the effect that Japan gain a perpetual lease for colonization in Dutch New Guinea, aroused the Dutch to indignation and intensified their determination to possess this neglected colony in the full sense of the word.

Science News Letter, December 9, 1939

GEOGRAPHY

Floating Laboratory Ship Drifts in Arctic Ice

TWO YEARS adrift in the Arctic Ocean, the Soviet icebreaker *Georgy Sedov* is continuing her ice-locked voyage in the interests of science. She began her drift on Oct. 23, 1937, and is now far to the north of European Russia, a little to the east of the meridian of Archangel.

Locked in the ice, the *Georgy Sedov* progresses only as ocean currents and winds move her. The going is exceedingly slow—60 to 75 miles a month. This, however, matters little, for the ship is primarily a floating laboratory, for the systematic recording of data on meteorological and oceanographic conditions. The drift roughly parallels the famous course of the Norwegian ship *Fram* in 1893-96, but is considerably to the north. It lies over a part of the Arctic never before visited by ship or airplane.

When the *Georgy Sedov* started she was accompanied by two other icebreakers, the *Sadko* and the *Malygin*. These ships, however, returned in August, 1938, leaving their sister craft to continue her strenuous voyage alone.

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If experimenters' efforts to develop more efficient wood-burning stoves and furnaces succeed, they will open up wider markets for fuel wood, thereby helping woodland owners to sell much inferior wood that goes to waste.

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