

## A NATURALIST IN THE SOUTH SEAS

EXCERPTS FROM LECTURE BY KARL P. SCHMIDT

*Chief Curator, Dept. of Zoology, Field Museum of Natural History,  
Chicago, Illinois*

**T**HE ROMANTIC interest in museum expeditions to far-away and exotic regions in search of collections for study and display is still greater when such an expedition is foot-loose in a beautiful sailing yacht and one is able to visit out-of-the-way islands and cast anchor in little visited ports. . . . Our glimpse of the islands of the Pacific will take us through the Polynesian Archipelagos, to the islands of Melanesia, inhabited by curly-headed black peoples, and to the great island of New Guinea, now so familiar and so vitally important to us in the daily news.

The Galapagos Islands have formed a focus of biological interest since the visit of Charles Darwin in 1835, and have become familiar to naturalists during the

following century from the visits of successive expeditions and groups of scientists. It is noteworthy that the scientific interest of these extraordinary islands is not yet exhausted, and that they are now of the utmost political and military interest to us in the present war.

Far-off islands and ports visited by the Crane Pacific Expedition have now fallen into the hands of the Japanese. It is interesting that one of the services naturalists can offer to the war effort springs from their knowledge of the geography of such regions, now suddenly become of the most vital importance to us and to our sons.

(This lecture was accompanied by colored slides.)