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FIFTY YEARS OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

It has become necessary to postpone the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the charter of the museum for five years, namely, until 1924. It is hoped that this celebration may be marked by the completion of the entire southern half of the museum, as planned between 1870 and 1875, as the year 1924 will mark the period of half a century since the building was actually begun by the City of New York.

In the meantime at the request of the editor of SCIENCE, there is here presented a review of certain aspects of the development of the institution during its first fifty years, based on the *Annual Report* of the president to the trustees.

The American Museum has broken away from many old museum traditions and customs and has been constantly striking out along new lines in every branch of its activity. In exploration, while making North America our chief concern, we have reached out into South America, Africa, Asia, and, in certain branches, into Europe itself. The natural history of our new colonial wards, the Philippines and Porto Rico, are matters of intimate concern. In South America, through a series of expeditions we are exploring every part of the continent and have established most cordial personal as well as scientific relations.

This is in keeping with the world-wide extension of American interests and influence and is part of the inevitable participation of America in the world's affairs. Neither the American Museum, nor our government, nor our people can remain isolated or bound by the confines of our own continent. Thus, while more than ever an *American Museum*, our institution has become a *world* museum. In increasing degree it is bringing all parts of the world within the view of the millions

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