

*The Plant Exploring Expedition to Brazil.*

Heretofore the Agricultural Explorers of the office have gone out singly. With the departure of Mr. P. H. Dorsett, Plant Introducer of this Office, Mr. A. D. Shamel, Physiologist of the Office of Pomological and Horticultural Investigations, and Mr. Wilson Popenoe, Agricultural Explorer of this office, a new policy has been inaugurated; that of sending out an expedition of men who supplement each other and can work together in the investigation of any new plant introduction problem which may present itself.

The time required and the large amounts of capital involved in the establishment of a new agricultural industry, make it seem imperative in the future, that the first investigation of any foreign plant culture should be more thorough than it is possible for one man travelling alone to make, burdened as he necessarily is with all the details of travel.

Through the hearty cooperation of Mr. Stubenrauch, in charge of the Office of Pomological and Horticultural Investigations, it has been possible to organize this expedition and send as a most important member of it Mr. A. D. Shamel, the Physiologist of that office, who is without doubt the best equipped man in the world to study the Navel orange industry of southern Brazil.

Mr. Shamel's remarkable discovery that there are at least nine distinct strains or types of the Bahia Navel orange represented in the California orchards has raised the question as to whether or not Mr. William Saunders' importation in 1870 brought in the best Navel in existence at Bahia and whether this remarkable variety has varied in Bahia as it has in California. The investigations of Dr. Lounsbury of Cape Town some years ago revealed the fact that the Bahia Navel orange growers recognize two types of Seville orange stocks and that one is superior to the other.

It is hoped that Mr. Shamel, with the assistance of the other members of the expedition will be able to make a thorough investigation of the matter. So little is known of the plant resources of this great unexplored area of Southern Brazil, that the expedition may be expected to discover new forms of valuable plants which are not in the literature. The high plateaus visited by occasional frosts, and the borders of the large arid regions surrounded by sub-tropical forests are habitats where forms are likely to be found which will be subject to acclimatization in our Southern States.